

THE JOURNAL
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
BUDDHIST STUDIES

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Volume 13

1990

Number 2

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Sa-skya Paṇḍita the “Polemicist”: Ancient Debates and Modern Interpretations

by David Jackson

*I am not overfond of polemicals;
they are almost as bad as galenicals.*

B. Barton (1844)¹

One of the reasons for the lasting fame of the great Tibetan savant Sa-skya Paṇḍita (1182-1251) was his reasoned criticisms of certain of the interpretations and practices of his fellow Buddhists in Tibet. These doctrinal and philosophical criticisms, which he expressed in such major works as the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* and *Tshad ma rigs gter*, inspired a large number of further comments by later generations of Sa-skya-pa scholars,² and after a silence of about three centuries, they also provoked a number of detailed rebuttals from the Dwags-po bKa'-brgyud-pa schools, among others. Lately Sa-skya Paṇḍita's critical writings have also begun to attract the attention of modern scholars, with the result that three discussions on related topics have appeared so far in the present journal alone.³ Though some of the conclusions reached in them need to be reexamined, these articles have contributed to a better understanding of the history of doctrinal interpretation in Tibetan Buddhism and the important role Sa-skya Paṇḍita (or Sa-paṇ, as he is known for short) played in it. They have also been thought-provoking, helping as they do to bring into focus a number of methodological questions regarding both the methods of traditional Buddhist scholarship and how modern scholars can best study the tradition.

It is a truism that before you can accurately evaluate a given scholarly contribution, you need to determine what its

proposed aims and methods were. This holds just as true for a hot-off-the-press article of modern scholarship as for a traditional treatise penned by a 13th-century savant. Usually one can agree with or at least understand the proposed methods and basic goals aimed at in a work of scholarship, whereas it is in the realm of application where most disagreements arise. Simply to clarify the aims and methods often helps resolve problems or at least helps establish an agreed framework within which the problems can be better addressed and understood. In the present study I would therefore like to reexamine three contributions on “Sa-skya Paṇḍita the ‘polemicist,’” namely those by Roger Jackson, Leonard van der Kuijp, and Michael Broido, trying to clarify their purposes and methods, and then taking another look at some of their conclusions.⁴

The Three Articles

(A) *Roger Jackson: A First Attempt*

Roger Jackson began the discussion with his article “Sa skya paṇḍita’s Account of the bSam yas Debate: History as Polemic.”⁵ He concerned himself here not with a direct study of the doctrinal debate that is held to have taken place at bSam-yas in the late 8th century, but aimed instead at contributing to a “history of history,” i.e., he attempted to examine Sa-paṇ’s account of the debate in order to show how this account reflected the more contemporary concerns of its author. To do this, he translated the historical passage from Sa-paṇ’s treatise the *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal* and then extracted those elements which he took to show a willful altering of the tradition by Sa-paṇ to suit his own doctrinal purposes.

R.J. advanced two main theses as being probably true about Sa-paṇ’s account: (1) that Sa-paṇ altered the wording of the argumentation within the account of the debate in order to accord with his own interest in logic, and (2) that he attempted to discredit his contemporary bKa’-brgyud-pa opponents by ascribing their doctrine called White Panacea to the Chinese master at the bSam-yas debate. In other words, R.J. accused Sa-paṇ of tampering with the historical transmission of this account and, worse still, with falsifying the account for the purpose of fabricating evidence that he or others could then turn

against doctrinal opponents. These are fairly serious charges against a figure who is acknowledged by the Buddhists of Tibet to be one of the greatest lights in their religious and intellectual history.

How did R.J. attempt to establish these allegations? His primary method was to argue from the absence of sources that prove to the contrary. In the first case (p. 94) he reasoned that "*in no other account . . . is the dilemma employed so consistently.*" Therefore: "*In the absence of any corroborating evidence, it is safest to assume that the speech attributed to Kamalaśīla by Sa skya Paṇḍita reflects more closely what a Buddhist logician would like the ācārya to have said than what he actually said*" (italics mine).

On the second point too his reasoning was similar. He summarized his argumentation very clearly (p. 96): "The conclusion is reasonable because [a] the White Panacea is mentioned as the bSam yas Chinese school *in no other text*, [b] *there is no evidence* that there ever existed any Chinese school called the White Panacea,⁶ [c] *there is no other indication* that the White Panacea existed as far back as the eighth century, . . . and [d] Sa skya Paṇḍita's virulent opposition to the White Panacea and other *māhamudrā* teachings gave him a motive for attempting to discredit them." (Italics mine.)

The great danger or even the fallacy of arguing from "silence" or from a lack of available sources showing the contrary is well known in historiography. The trouble in many cases is that sources supporting the very opposite can turn up at any time. And this is precisely what has happened here. A version of the *sBa bzhed* early Tibetan history which contains Sa-paṇ's version of the debate almost verbatim was published from Beijing in 1980, showing that Sa-paṇ's account in its wording and content could well have been a faithful transmission of received tradition.⁷ (Sa-paṇ himself was aware of the possibility that his account of the debate might be doubted, and therefore in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* and elsewhere he took pains to mention his sources, though what these sources were was apparently not clearly understood by R.J.)⁸ That recently published version of the *sBa bzhed* and another newly available source, the *Chos 'byung* of Nyang-ral (fl. 12th c.), show now that the "White Panacea" (Tib.: *dkar po chig thub*) is mentioned in other probably earlier sources as a doctrine of the Chinese at

the bSam-yas debate.⁹ Moreover, the mention of a panacea as a suitable comparison for the simultaneous (*cig car*) and self-sufficient method occurs in the Tun-Huang Chinese materials in a work attributed to the Chinese master who is said to have participated in the controversy, Mo-ho-yen, as has been known since the publication in 1952 of P. Demiéville's classic study of the debate.¹⁰

But one of the reasons advanced by R.J. to prove his thesis remains to be considered—the one which supposedly established Sa-paṇ's motive for doctoring the historical account. This was namely that Sa-skya Paṇḍita's opposition to the White Panacea and other Mahāmudrā teachings was "virulent" or "violent." The implication seems to be that Sa-paṇ would stoop to dirty tricks to get his way, so great was his animosity toward his opponents. But where is there evidence of "virulence" or "violence" in what Sa-paṇ says about the *dkar po chig thub* doctrine in his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal, sDom gsum rab dbye*, or other works? His opposition is certainly strong, but it is reasoned and principled, and is directed against doctrines and not persons. For this, R.J. did not cite any evidence from Sa-paṇ's writings, but rather refers to the interesting defence of the bKa'-brgyud-pa *dkar po chig thub* teaching assembled in a fairly even-handed way by Thu'u-bkwan Chos-kyi-nyi-ma (1737-1802) in his famed *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* (kha 24b ff.). Thu'u-bkwan here evinces considerable respect toward Sa-paṇ even when voicing his disagreements with him.¹¹ There is no evidence here at least that Sa-paṇ's views should be considered "violent" or "virulent." Therefore the reasoning of R.J. here seems to me to be either somewhat circular ("Sa-paṇ attempted to discredit them because he wanted to discredit them") or it is an attack upon the character of Sa-paṇ the man ("He attempted to discredit them because he was driven by virulent and violent animosities"). But R.J. did not give the impression of trying to make a lot of easy mileage out of this kind of argumentation, and he displayed even a certain sympathy for Sa-paṇ by trying to reconstruct the thought processes that might have led him to his conclusions (p. 95).

A few additional remarks might be added about R.J.'s translation and findings. Though his translation is generally reliable, it breaks down in the key sentences in which the *dkar po chig thub* doctrine is described or characterized. He trans-

lated (p. 91): "...When one examines the mind, that is the White Panacea." And (p. 92): "...Meditating non-discursively, one attains Buddhahood just by the examination of the mind." And finally (p. 93): "...the White Panacea, which accepts that Buddhahood is attained by pointing to the mind." The key terms which R.J. rendered as "examines the mind" and "pointing to the mind" are *sems rtogs* "to understand the [nature of] mind and *sems ngo 'phrod* "directly to meet and recognize the [nature of] mind." An understanding of these key terms is a prerequisite for grasping what was mainly at issue here for Sa-paṅ, and they will be discussed in more detail below.¹²

Another point, this one of a more methodological nature, has to do with R.J.'s total reliance upon the writings of other schools (including passages from works criticizing Sa-paṅ's views) in order to gain his understanding of the main criticisms attempted by Sa-paṅ in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*. Though in the account of the bSam-yas debate found in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* Kamalaśīla indeed refutes what he takes to be a sort of nihilistic quietism involving the rejection of words, deeds and conceptual thought, in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* Sa-paṅ himself criticizes the *dkar po chig thub* notion of the bKa'-brgyud-pas along not entirely identical lines, and he is not out to refute as his specific target a tradition which embraced the rejection of all "mentation" (*gid la byed pa: manasikāra*).¹³ Moreover he did not claim that the practice of *bodhicitta* generation was *not followed* by his opponents; on the contrary, he tried to point out that his opponent's practice of *bodhicitta* was incompatible with the special claims of self-sufficiency they seemed to make about the practice of Mahāmudrā as *dkar po chig thub* and indeed with the very concept *chig thub*. These points will be discussed again below in more detail, but for now it is enough to remind ourselves of the obvious—that in polemical writings the opponent's view may receive a somewhat slanted or even distorted presentation. It behooves the modern researcher to read, to the extent that it is still possible, the views of both sides in their original contexts.

It is safe to conclude that an interpretative, second-order "history of history" of this kind, though an interesting undertaking in principle, was in practice here premature given the small number of primary sources utilized and the lack of

thorough and definitive “first-order” studies. Roger Jackson’s basic insight that Sa-paṅ used “history” in the *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal* to add weight to a doctrinal criticism was correct and is certainly worth noting. But it was wrong to try to wring too much from the available evidence.

(B) *L. van der Kuijp: A Note on Newly Available Sources*

The second contribution to this discussion was a brief note by L. van der Kuijp entitled “On the Sources for Sa-skyā Paṅḍita’s Notes on the bSam-yas Debate.”¹⁴ It appeared some four years later and was an attempt at disproving R. Jackson’s basic thesis that Sa-paṅ had unfairly employed history as polemic or that Sa-paṅ “was the first Tibetan scholar to ‘use’ Hva shang Mahāyāna in this way, and ... perhaps the most egregious ...” To demonstrate this, van der Kuijp listed a number of historical sources that R.J. did not have access to or did not use. To begin with, he mentioned (p. 148) one important source predating Sa-paṅ’s *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal*, viz. the *Chos ’byung* of Nyang-ral Nyi-ma’i-’od-zer (1124-1192 or 1136-1204), and also pointed out a close correspondence between it and the parallel passages found in the *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal* and in another of Sa-paṅ’s works, the *sKyes bu dam pa rnams la spring ba’i yi ge*. He also (pp. 149f) traced a number of references to the word *dkar po chig thub* as the name of a drug within Tibetan medicine. Finally he mentioned (p. 151) the existence of the recently-discovered version of the *sBa bzhed* published from Beijing, which gives the *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal* account almost verbatim, and said that a similar account was attributed explicitly to “the *sBa bzhed*” by the *sDom gsum rab dbye* commentator sPos-khang-pa (fl. early-15th c.) and by the bKa’-brgyud-pa historian dPa’-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-ba.¹⁵

Van der Kuijp summarized his conclusions as follows (p. 151): “This would seem to indicate that the association of *dkar po chig thub* with the Chinese goes back to pre-*phyi dar* [i.e. pre-11th c.] Tibetan literature, and that there just might be some substance to Sa paṅ’s linkage of some of the Dwags po bKa’ brgyud pa doctrines with those promulgated by the Chinese in eighth-century Tibet.”¹⁶ Then he concluded on a more cautious note, pointing out the necessity to investigate the exact refe-

rents of *dkar po chig thub*, leaving open the possibility that they were very different for the Hwa-shang and the later Dwags-po bKa'-brgyud-pa.¹⁷

(C) *M. Broido: Reinterpretations with the Help of Padma-dkar-po*

The third contribution on this topic, that of Michael Broido, was an article entitled "Sa-skyā Paṇḍita, the White Panacea and the Hwa-shang Doctrine."¹⁸ It is unlike the first two in its aims and methods, and it raises methodological questions of a quite different nature because it attempts not to describe or analyze a sectarian controversy but rather to revive or reenact one.

At present, detailed investigations that treat or compare the doctrines of more than one master from different schools and eras are very difficult within the scholarly discipline of Tibetan Buddhist studies. This is true first of all because definitive descriptions and analyses of the main masters and their systems have yet to be made. At this stage non-Tibetan scholars are just beginning to map out the most salient and important features in this still largely unknown terrain by studying the major treatises of individual major Tibetan teachers in order to describe their main doctrinal conclusions as well as the methods and circumstances that led to them. For the present, it is usually an ambitious enough project just to try to understand a given master in his own terms and within the context of his own school.

This prospect of doing largely synchronous and descriptive studies may sound somewhat limited and unappealing, but I am not suggesting that such investigations should be pursued in a complete historical vacuum. One of the most interesting things to try to learn is what the great masters thought of their predecessors' and contemporaries' doctrines. Often the best way to understand a particular teaching is as a further development or opposing reaction to what has gone before, and so sometimes one must simply plunge in, knowing the limitations of one's own knowledge. But the danger in doing so is that one is probably not in a position to do the second tradition justice in drawing comparisons and reaching conclusions. Now

if such dangers exist for ordinary comparative studies, then the situation is of course even trickier when one attempts to treat a full-blown doctrinal controversy. And a fair and impartial presentation becomes even more difficult if the modern scholar also has a personal stake in the outcome of the debate—i.e., if the scholar has partly or wholly adopted the tradition of one master and tries to present to the world the contents of a controversy in which that master was in basic disagreement with one of his opponents. In the practice of scholarship, the goal must always be to present both sides of a debate as accurately as possible. But this goal is unattainable if a scholar adopts the prejudices of one side and treats the ideas of the other side as *a priori* unworthy of serious consideration.

The fundamental problem with Broido's article, in my view, is that he has adopted a traditional sectarian approach, and in doing so he has not made any effort to counterbalance the innate weaknesses of this one-sided method. He does not concern himself with investigating or describing the views of Sa-skya Paṇḍita except very cursorily; mainly he repeats their rebuttal by the 16th-century bKa'-brgyud-pa scholar Padma-dkar-po, though with some additional discussions and expansions. Broido's special expertise on Padma-dkar-po to some extent compensates for the shortcomings of his approach. But in the study of a controversial discussion, I believe the main challenge is to understand what *both* sides have to say and to present the disagreement from *both* points of view. In this respect B.'s article leaves much to be desired. I cannot claim to have achieved in the following pages this ideal balance either, but I hope that by my presenting here Sa-pan's views a little more clearly and assembling more references to the opinions of both sides, future discussions of the controversy can be more balanced and fruitful.

The Main Aim and the Theses to be Proven

B.'s main aim in writing his article was to show that Sa-pan was guilty in his *sDom gsum rab dbye* of a completely unfair and unjustified polemic against the bKa'-brgyud-pa (which for B. is primarily represented by the later scholar Padma-dkar-po

[1527-1592] and the 'Brug-pa school). In order to do this, he presents Padma-dkar-po's defence of certain Mahāmudrā doctrines (mainly from Padma-dkar-po's *Phyag chen rgyal ba'i gan mdzod*) in reply to some of Sa-pan's "attacks" found in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*.

B. begins his article by summarizing his understanding of Sa-pan's negative attitude towards the *dkar po chig thub* doctrine, outlining what he (B. himself) takes to be the basic idea behind this term for the bKa'-brgyud-pas, and then asserting (p. 28) that Sa-pan in his *sDom gsum rab dbye* "ignores the views of the bKa'-brgyud-pas and takes the word to stand for a complete quietism, a 'do-nothing' attitude towards the doctrine, and claims further that this was the heresy of the Hwa-shang." B. then tells us that he will present Padma-dkar-po's reply to "some of these attacks" and advances nine particular theses of his own for which he will bring forward evidence. These nine theses (numbered A through K, with I and J missing) can be divided into three groups according to their subject matter:

[I.] The first four mainly have to do with showing the correct bKa'-brgyud-pa view on *dkar po chig thub* and showing that Sa-pan was accordingly wrong about it:

A. That *dkar po chig thub* was used by Zhang Tshal-pa in the sense of "(mahāmudrā as) the only cure for the defilements" and that this was in order to convey a particular idea.

B. That evidence is lacking for a systematic use of the term before Zhang Tshal-pa.

C. That Padma-dkar-po never uses the term on his own account, though he accepts the thesis of Zhang Tshal-pa.

D. That Sa-pan in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* was not working with any clear conception (1) of the term *dkar po chig thub* or (2) of the Hwa-shang doctrine.

[II.] With the second half of thesis D, Broido reaches his second main contention, namely that Sa-pan has misrepresented the bKa'-brgyud-pa position in his comparing it to the doctrine of the Hwa-shang. B. asserts (D-2) that Sa-pan was unclear about the Hwa-shang doctrine and:

E. That Padma-dkar-po rejects that his tradition merely follows the Hwa-shang tradition.

F. That in rejecting this, Padma-dkar-po mainly follows the position of Kamalaśīla, though sometimes he agrees with the Hwa-shang. And further that Sa-paṅ has failed to differentiate the notions of *amanasikāra* as used by the Hwa-shang and by Maitrīpāda.

G. That Sa-paṅ's identification of the "sudden gate" teachings of the Hwa-shang and the "sudden path" of the bKa'-brgyud-pas was confused.

H. That the notion of the "sudden path" personality applies only to the *tantras*. In the *sūtras* the problem never arises.

[III.] The final thesis of B. has to do with the alleged personal motivation of Sa-paṅ for making a certain criticism in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, namely:

K. That Sa-paṅ has attacked the "five aspects" *lNga ldan* system of the 'Bri-gung-pa with particular force, and that this may be explained by his personal animosity toward Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje-rgyal-po.

The Term dkar po chig thub

B. starts out by trying to establish the basic meaning of the term *dkar po chig thub* in general and then to clarify exactly what the early bKa'-brgyud-pa masters, and Zhang Tshal-pa (Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa brTson-'grus-grags-pa, 1123-1193) in particular, understood by the term. There is nothing wrong with using a later, more systematized layer of the tradition such as the writings of Padma-dkar-po to help clarify an earlier level of that tradition—as B. indeed does—but the primary sources should naturally be the writings of the early bKa'-brgyud-pa masters who used the term.

The *dkar po chig thub*, as B. realizes, is a medical metaphor applied to a spiritual practice or realization.¹⁹ He, along with R. Jackson and L. van der Kuijp, employs the conventional English rendering "white panacea" for this term. But neither he nor other scholars have ever investigated or explained the term itself in any detail. It is clear, however, that originally the term literally signified a certain white (*dkar po*) drug that was believed by itself alone (*chig*) to be able (*thub*) to effect a cure—hence, *dkar po chig thub* was a white self-sufficient "simple" or

medical remedy of one constituent.²⁰ The key element of the term is *chig thub*: “singly or solely (*chig*) capable or efficacious (*thub*).” The expression *chig thub pa* was defined already in the dictionary of S. C. Das as “to be able to do a thing alone,” and in the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, we find *chig thub* defined as: “which helps by itself” and “independently able” (*gcig pus phan thogs pa dang/ rang rkya ’pher ba*). In medicine the word has the same sense, as shown in the recent dictionary of medical terms, *gSo ba rig pa’i tshig mdzod g.yu thog dgongs rgyan*, where *chig thub sman* is defined as: “a term for a medicine that possesses the property [lit.: the power] of being able to overcome the disease by itself singly, without depending on such things as compounding (*sbyor sde*) and an ‘assistant’ [*grogs*, i.e., another drug given together with it?].”²¹

As a metaphor for a religious doctrine or practice, a *dkar po chig thub* is likewise a “panacea” of a similar “simple” and self-sufficient kind. It is a teaching through which, by the power of realizing or knowing this one thing alone (*gcig shes*), a person is able to be completely liberated (*kun grol*). Or to use another expression familiar to the bKa’-brgyud-pa tradition (Padma-dkar-po, *rGyal ba’i gan mdzod* 55a.6), it is the notion that by a single understanding or realization, all stages and paths are traversed (*rtogs pa gcig gis sa lam ma lus pa bgröd*). In other words, whether it was a medicine or a doctrine, a *dkar po chig thub* was thought to be a single thing which was sufficient to effect the complete desired result. So while the English word “panacea” captures some of the word’s semantic range (a *dkar po chig thub* is by extension also a cure-all or “universal medicine”), the Tibetan *chig thub* fundamentally denotes “simple self-sufficiency,” or the capability to do a thing alone.

That this was the sense of the term for many early and later bKa’-brgyud-pas is attested to by various sources. Thu’u-bkwan Chos-kyi-nyi-ma (kha 26a.4) quotes from the *Phyag chen gsal sgron* of Nor-bzang:

The early bKa’-brgyud-pa masters’ terming of the cultivation of Mahāmudrā as the “White Self-sufficient Simple” (*dkar po chig thub*) had in mind that the ultimate fruit will be attained simply (*gcig pus*) by means of the meditative cultivation of ultimate reality through the Original Mind’s having arisen as the nature of the Great Bliss.²²

rDo-rje-shes-rab (fl. 13th c.), a disciple of 'Bri-gung Shes-rab-'byung-gnas (1187-1241), gets at the same thing in his *dGongs gcig 'grel pa rdo shes ma* (*dGongs gcig yig cha*, II 407 = 22b):

The lord sGam-po-pa, drawing a metaphor from medicine, said: "This [teaching] of mine [of the] seeing of the nature of mind is called 'the White Self-sufficient Simple.'" To that, some great scholars have said:

"Does that White Self-sufficient Simple of yours need *bodhicitta* and dedication of merit or not? If it needs them, the Self-sufficient [or Singly Efficacious] Simple will become triple."

[But] it has been authoritatively taught: "It is sufficient even doing [it] without merit dedication and *bodhicitta* which are other than the White Self-sufficient Simple. From the standpoint of liberation from cyclic existence with its three cosmic spheres, even taking the White Self-sufficient Simple by itself alone is sufficient."²³

Zhang Tshal-pa teaches some of the same ideas near the beginning of his treatise, the *Phyag chen lam zab* [or: *lam mchog*] *mthar thug*, though not using the term *dkar po chig thub*:

[When] one definitely understands [the nature of] one's own mind, all the gnoses of *nirvāṇa* will arise as great bliss. Therefore, since everything without exception issues forth from one's own mind alone, if one recognizes the reality of one's own mind, one will come to know the reality of all sentient beings. [By] knowing that, one knows all *dharma*s such as *nirvāṇa*. Thoroughly understanding all *dharma*s, one passes beyond the whole of the three-realm [universe]. *By knowing the one, one becomes learned in all*. If the root falls over, the leaves naturally fall over. Therefore establish only [the nature of] one's own mind.²⁴

B.'s portrayal of how the term *dkar po chig thub* was understood by the early bKa'-brgyud-pas is somewhat different. To begin with he takes it (p. 27) as basically indicating a cure-all, but that when used by bKa'-brgyud-pas such as Zhang Tshal-pa on their own account, the idea is that once the disease has

been cured, “there is no need to take any further medicine.” Then on p. 28 he says that Zhang Tshal-pa uses it in the sense of “(*mahāmudrā* as) the only cure for the defilements,” thus departing significantly from the idea of a cure-all. What, then, does this notion of “only cure” convey? B. says it means that “once *mahāmudrā* has been attained, there is no more effort to be made, and the practitioner should act effortlessly”

He believes this to be plainly supported by Zhang Tshal-pa’s *dKar po chig thub tu bstan pa* chapter of the *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug*, but he fails to show how or where the text indicates the sense of “only cure” or enjoins the practitioner to act in any way, effortlessly or not. Actually, the main point of the chapter is rather to describe what is effortlessly and simultaneously brought to perfect completion by the practitioner in the moment of understanding the nature of one’s own mind, namely: the totality of all excellent spiritual qualities or attainments. B. believes (p. 54) that this chapter mainly shows how the various aspects of the Buddhist path “are complete when *various conditions* are satisfied” (italics mine), thus missing the central point that it is this very realization of the nature of mind which is taken here to be by itself sufficient for bringing the path instantaneously to its highest, final fruition, i.e., to Buddhahood. That this is the gist of Zhang Tshal-pa’s teaching in this chapter is indicated in the first verse:

In the moment of realizing [the true nature of] one’s own mind, all “white” (i.e., excellent, virtuous) qualities without exception are effortlessly completed simultaneously.²⁵

According to Zhang Tshal-pa, in the understanding of (the true nature of) one’s own mind (*rang sems rtogs pa*) all the excellent realizations of the path and of Buddhahood come to perfection. Namely, all these excellent qualities are brought to perfection instantly and simultaneously in the realization of mind itself (*sems nyid*), whose nature is for instance like the sky (*bar snang lta bu*) and free from all discursive elaborations (*spros bral*). B. (p. 31) explains that “. . . the whole chapter is a series of aphorisms listing the various stages of Buddhist practice and saying *what has to be the case for them to be complete*. This question of completeness is adumbrated for the moment of *abhisam-*

bodhi.” He then refers to the *abhisambodhi* chapter of the *Abhisamayālamkāra* and Padma-dkar-po’s notes on that.²⁶ But surely Zhang Tshal-pa was not expressing or basing himself on the latter doctrine here. The idea is rather that all attainments are won or perfected simultaneously in the moment that the *gcig-car* individual gains the insight into *mahāmudrā*; the notion of stages or of gradual attainments is thus excluded for one who achieves this realization. For such a one, the fruit is already complete. That this was a radical doctrine liable to misinterpretation was no doubt felt by Zhang Tshal-pa himself, for he felt it necessary to add four final lines to the end of the chapter as a sort of afterthought or corrective, these lines reaffirming that until one has reached this insight that destroys the postulation of a substantial self, there *does* exist a conventional path of practices along with the fruition of *karma* and the imperative to avoid evil and cultivate virtue.²⁷

According to B., Zhang Tshal-pa expressed his thesis using the term *dkar po chig thub* in the sense of “‘(*mahāmudrā* as) the only cure for defilements,’ that is, to convey the idea that once *mahāmudrā* has been attained, there is no more effort to be made, and the practitioner should act effortlessly.” The idea that there is no more effort to be made once *mahāmudrā* is attained belongs to a closely related set of concepts and it is also there by *implication*, but what Zhang Tshal-pa actually makes explicit here is more positive, namely that all spiritual attainments are brought to perfection spontaneously and effortlessly in the moment of the realization of one’s mind as *mahāmudrā*. The term *dkar po chig thub* is in fact nowhere explicitly defined in the chapter, and Zhang Tshal-pa actually uses it only once there, i.e., in the title appearing at the chapter’s end. There it is used metaphorically to characterize the main point of the chapter: that the realization of the nature of mind is sufficient in and of itself to bring about instantaneously the consummation of all virtuous qualities, including Buddhahood itself.²⁸

It is good that B. took the trouble to quote from this important text at length because it illustrates a *dkar po chig thub* notion as it was taught by a great master prior to Sa-pan, and not how it was later interpreted (if we exclude the possibility of later editorial changes or additions to the text). As for B.’s own

understandings of the term *dkar po chig thub*, however, I think they were based not on the contents of this chapter but rather on something else, perhaps another occurrence of the term in Zhang Tshal-pa in the chapter on “vows” (*dam tshig*) from which B. quotes the last three lines after commenting (p. 54): “the whole subject of the [*dkar po chig thub*] chapter is *not going beyond* this completeness. Zhang Tshal-pa makes this even more explicit in an earlier passage.”²⁹ The last two verses of the passage B. then refers to could be translated as follows:³⁰

Having seen the nature of one’s mind, one should abandon all harm to the mind.

After the realization of non-duality has arisen, one should avoid all specially directed activities (*ched du bya ba*). (3)

In all cases one’s own mind should be made the “judge” (lit.: “the witnessing arbiter,” *dpang po*).

Having realized the reality of *not going outside* “the true nature of things” (*dbyings*), that “not-to-be-guarded” (*srung du med*) is the highest pledge. [It] is called the “White Self-sufficient Simple.” (4)

Here too the term *dkar po chig thub* is not defined, though the ultimate reality inherent in one’s own mind (and specifically realizing it as the “not-to-be-guarded”) is taken to be the singly decisive factor even in the context of vows or pledges.³¹ As Zhang said (v. 4a): “In all cases one’s own mind should be made the ‘judge.’”

B. perhaps takes this passage to indicate the fundamental sense of the term (i.e., as “once *mahāmudrā* has been attained, there is no more effort to be made, and the practitioner should act effortlessly”) because Zhang also states here: “After the realization of non-duality has arisen, one should avoid all specifically directed activities (*ched du bya ba*).” In addition, Padma-dkar-po too seems to be getting at something similar in a comment that B. translates (p. 41): “To seek for another means after having attained this *mahāmudrā* would be like looking for the same elephant which one had already found and abandoned [and this is the point of the White Panacea]” (the comment in square brackets was added by B.).³² On the other hand, there can be no doubt that Zhang understood the term

dkar po chig thub as a metaphor standing for a singly efficacious or self-sufficient means, for he has used the term and glossed it unequivocally in another work, the *Man ngag snying po gsal ba'i bstan bcos*. There, he speaks of pleasing the religious master (who will introduce the disciple to the *mahāmudrā* insight) as being the singly decisive factor which brings about realization independently and without recourse to other things:³³

That which pleases the guru
brings about full completion without depending on anything
else;
that is the great “White Self-sufficient Simple.”

Zhang Tshal-pa thus uses the term *dkar po chig thub* in at least three different contexts—i.e., soteriology, gnoseology, and ethics—and in each case uses it to characterize a single factor which he believed to be by itself sufficient to effect the highest good. In his view: (1) the evocation of the realized guru’s spiritual power or grace is sufficient by itself to effect realization in the qualified student, (2) the insight into the nature of mind so conferred to the disciple is sufficient to actualize all enlightened qualities and realizations, and (3) the liberating insight into the nature of mind likewise has the power to resolve all moral dilemmas.

Further Theses about the dKar po chig thub

B. further aims to show (thesis B) that there was no systematic use of the term in a technical sense before Zhang Tshal-pa or as part of any doctrinal scheme. This would indeed be worth trying to demonstrate, but in the end B. never translates or discusses in detail the known instances of sGam-po-pa’s use of the term (two of which he lists on p. 63, n. 9), and he makes no effort to show that they were less “systematic” or “technical” than Zhang Tshal-pa’s use. If normally sGam-po-pa (1079-1153) preferred to avoid such terms, would we be wrong in placing some importance on the exceptional cases when he did use the term in question? It is very important for understanding the whole controversy to know exactly where and how sGam-po-pa and other early great bKa’-brgyud-pa masters

used this key term, and we can be grateful to B. for also quoting (without translation or discussion) a fragmentary extract from one passage where sGam-po-pa uses the word. There (p. 27) the term is glossed by the phrase *gcig shes kun grol* ("complete liberation through knowing one thing").³⁴

Thesis C is that Padma-dkar-po never uses the term on his own account, though he agrees with Zhang Tshal-pa's usage of the word. In fact Padma-dkar-po does employ the word at least once in the *rGyal ba'i gan mdzod* on his own account, i.e., in a passage that is not a reply to the criticisms of others. At the end of his *Nges tshig mdo rgyud gnyis kar bstan tshul* section, Padma-dkar-po takes the notion of (Mahāmudrā as) *dkar po chig thub* to refer to an ultimate single "metatheory" of soteriology which relativizes, so to speak, the concept of the ultimate spiritual goal or fruit and integrates it in a special way with the ground and the path, in consonance with the tantric notion of "making the fruit the path" (*'bras bu lam byed*). As he states just before the beginning of the *De dkar po chig thub tu 'gro ba'i gnad bshad pa* section (48a.2): "Therefore, though from the standpoint of the mind (*blo ngor*), the stages of 'basis to be purified' (*sbyang gzhi*), 'purifier' (*sbyong byed*) and 'purified fruit' (*sbyangs 'bras*) may be acceptable, still in ultimate reality nothing of the sort is established, and consequently this Mahāmudrā has been termed a 'White Self-sufficient Simple' (*dkar po chig thub*)."³⁵ This is apparently connected with what B. refers to on p. 34: "*dKar-po chig-thub*—remaining in Mahāmudrā as the place of origin of the *dharmas*—is precisely what holds the many together as one, and so is not itself subject to the notions of one and many (*gcig dang du bral*), even in a purely logical sense."³⁶ In any case, thesis C is of no direct relevance to B.'s reply to Sa-pan's criticisms, although it may have some historical significance otherwise. Yet I am not clear what inference if any we are supposed to draw from it—though surely not that the concepts expressed by the term were unimportant or that the term was considered problematic by the later tradition as embodied by Padma-dkar-po.

Thesis D-1 is that Sa-pan is not working with any clear conception of the *dkar po chig thub* in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*. On p. 28, B. states very clearly what for him is Sa-pan's opinion: "[Sa-pan] takes the word to stand for a complete quietism, a

'do-nothing' attitude toward the doctrine . . ." Where did he find this "clear" conception of Sa-paṅ's view, if Sa-paṅ himself was unclear on this point? It must be admitted that the treatment of the bSam-yas debate is quite abbreviated in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*. But I wonder why he did not look at the accounts that he knew to exist elsewhere, such as in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*. Again in footnote 3 (p. 62) he alleges that "As in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, so also here [in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*] Sa skya Paṅḍita makes no attempt to state what he understands by *dkar po chig thub*." This may indicate that B. did not go through all the relevant passages of the work.³⁷ Nevertheless, he did trace two or three of the relevant quotations directly addressed by Padma-dkar-po back to some version of the *sDom gsum rab dbye*.³⁸ But he did not search out or discuss in the main body of his article any of the other passages which clarify Sa-paṅ's conception of the *dkar po chig thub*.³⁹

In a future article I plan to present in more detail the usage of the term by Sa-paṅ, but briefly put, for him the *dkar po chig thub* signified a self-sufficient simple medicine which had become a metaphor used by others to characterize a spiritual method as self-sufficient and singular. He understood the proponents of this self-sufficient method to maintain in particular that the attainment of Buddhahood can arise simply through the understanding (*rtogs pa*) of the nature of mind (*sems*) or the direct meeting and recognition (*ngo 'phrod pa*) of mind (*sems*). B. in a postscript (p. 48) translates one of the passages stating precisely this, a quotation from the *sKyes bu dam pa rnam la spring ba'i yi ge*: ". . . To know one's own mind is to rise into buddhahood. Thus if the nature of mind is known, there is [i.e. this is] *dkar-po chig-thub* . . ."⁴⁰ Could there be a simpler or clearer statement of Sa-paṅ's basic conception than this? And in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* (*tha* 48b.5), which was the original point of departure for R. Jackson's article, Sa-paṅ repeats a summary characterization of the doctrine as attributed to the Hwa-shang: "Words have no pith. One will not achieve Buddhahood through a *dharma* of *vyavahāra* [i.e., involving language and conventional practices]. If one understands the mind, [that] is the 'White Panacea'" (*tshig la snying po med tha snyad kyi chos kyi 'tshang mi rgya sems rtogs na dkar po chig thub yin*). Sa-paṅ presents the doctrine once again in the same source (49b.2) as main-

taining that “Through a doctrine that involves the doing of things to be done [or religious duties?] one will not awaken to Buddhahood. One awakens to Buddhahood simply through the understanding of mind, having cultivated non-conceptualizing” (*bya byed kyi chos kyis 'tshang mi rgya bas rnam par mi rtog pa bsgoms nas sems rtogs pa nyid kyis 'tshang rgya*).

Logical Implications as Forceful Attacks

It would be tedious to go one-by-one through all the remaining theses and the evidence advanced to prove them; instead, I would like to examine in the following pages his translations of Padma-dkar-po's replies and just a few other passages of particular methodological interest. Let us begin with the last thesis (i.e., thesis K), in which B. asserted that Sa-paṅ attacked the “fivefold” (*lNga ldan*) system of the 'Bri-gung-pas with particular force. The reason suggested for this was Sa-paṅ's personal animosity towards Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje-rgyal-po. Where is Sa-paṅ supposed to have made this attack? It is in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* where he says (*na* 34a.2):

Some say that the dedication of merit is needed after cultivating this “self-sufficient simple” (or “singly efficacious”) (*chig thub*) [practice]. In that case the “self-sufficient simple” would become two-fold. If, in addition to that, one requires such things as going for refuge, the generation of *bodhicitta*, and meditative practice involving a tutelary deity, the “self-sufficient simple” would be manifold. Therefore such a tradition of a “self-sufficient simple” (*chig thub*) [practice] has not been taught by the Buddha.⁴¹

There is of course nothing here that could be taken as unusually hard-hitting or forceful. It is just Sa-paṅ's plainly worded demonstration of the contradiction he sees implicit in using the term *chig thub* (“self-sufficient”) to designate one out of two or more essential elements in a system of religious practice. B. (p. 34), however, considers this to be a sharp assault formulated “semi-explicitly” against the 'Bri-gung-pas, and he finds something to be “especially pigheaded” about it as so directed.

B. has no doubt correctly understood from Padma-dkar-po's reply that the *lNga ldan* ("fivefold") system or a similar doctrinal tradition is the implied subject of the criticism (to the extent that it simultaneously maintains a self-sufficient simple method). B. lists the five factors of this system, as he understands them, on p. 39:

1. *bodhicitta-mahāmudrā*
2. *devakāya-m.*
3. devotional *m.*
4. *abhiṣeka-m.*
5. *vidyā-m.*

In a quotation of 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rten-mgon-po given by Thu'u-bkwan (*kha* 23a-24a), however, as well as in numerous other sources, a somewhat different list of the five factors of the *lNga ldan* system is found (including one more element of practice mentioned by Sa-paṅ i.e., *bsngo ba*):

1. *byang chub kyi sems bsgom pa* (meditative cultivation of *bodhicitta*)
2. *rang lus lhar bsgom pa* (visualization of one's body as a deity)
3. *bla ma la mos gus bsgom pa* (cultivation of devotion toward the guru)
4. *mi rtog pa'i lta ba bsgom pa* (meditative cultivation of the non-discursive view)
5. *bsngo smon gyi rgyas 'debs* (conclusion through sealing with a prayer of merit dedication)

Insofar as Sa-paṅ's criticism has to do with the *lNga ldan* system, it probably refers to this standard formulation of it and not to the apparently mistaken one presented by B.⁴²

Sa-paṅ's analysis here is a continuation of his criticism of the notion of *chig thub* and of teachings which claim to be a single method that is in and of itself sufficient for effecting the attainment of Buddhahood. The Sa-skyapa commentator Gorams-pa bSod-nams-seng-ge (1429-1489) (*ta* 138b.6), who flourished in the century before Padma-dkar-po, identified such masters as Dwags-po lha-rje (sGam-po-pa) as the holder of the views criticized in these lines, namely that the *dkar po chig thub* (i.e., *mahāmudrā* as so characterized) should be practiced with concluding dedication of merit, or with the introductory stages of refuge and *bodhicitta*, and the *yi-dam* deity visualiza-

tion.⁴³ There is no reason to suppose that Go-rams-pa would not have attributed this doctrine to the 'Bri-gung-pas had he known of any special grounds for doing so; he makes a great many such attributions elsewhere. Another very important Sa-skyapa scholar, Shākya-mchog-ldan (1427-1507), similarly identifies the originators of the criticized view as "those maintaining the tradition of the Lord sGam-po" (*rje sgam po'i [b]rgyud 'dzin rnams*).⁴⁴ These attributions show that for the Sa-skyapa commentarial tradition too this verse was not a known attack of "particular force" specifically against the founder of the 'Bri-gung-pa school or against Phag-mo-gru-pa.⁴⁵

Some of B.'s difficulties in interpreting the above passage in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* may stem from his almost total reliance upon Padma-dkar-po. The latter's reply to Sa-pan's critical observations is not always very clear, and the most interesting comments start only after a long series of quotations. At first Padma-dkar-po (50b.5) merely states:

This is a childish criticism. If it is correct, then you too would not be able yourself to arrange the two stages [of tantric meditation] (*krama*) as two stages. This is also talk which is blind regarding the realm of the ultimate truth, [because] in our own tradition this very thing is the generation of the ultimate *bodhicitta*....⁴⁶

Padma-dkar-po thus begins his reply by accusing Sa-pan of saying something here that would be incompatible with the latter's own system. Evidently he takes Sa-pan to be denying that a spiritual practice in general may be two-fold or manifold, which is exactly the opposite of the view Sa-pan actually maintains. In other words, Padma-dkar-po apparently misunderstands this as a criticism of a two-staged practice including *mahāmudrā* and the dedication of merit, instead of as a criticism of the validity of the term or concept "self-sufficiency" (*chig thub*) within a tradition which maintains that more than one essential element of religious practice is necessary. As his next point, Padma-dkar-po replies to Sa-pan's question regarding whether (relative) *bodhicitta* (as a preparatory practice for the *dkar po chig thub*) is essential by saying that "in our tradition this [*dkar po chig thub*] is the ultimate *bodhicitta* generation." But

by introducing the ultimate *bodhicitta* into the discussion and identifying it as the main practice, he refrains from directly addressing the real issue. B. in his translation (p. 39) has completely misconstrued the last two sentences of this passage.⁴⁷

But after his (at least to me) somewhat unclear initial retorts and after several quotations, Padma-dkar-po finally does show that he knows very clearly what Sa-paṅ is getting at (i.e., that he is criticizing the notion of “self-sufficiency” [*chig thub*]), and he summarizes the discussion at one point with the words (p. 54b.1): “The above [quotation] shows that by knowing that one thing alone, one understands the whole of this other host of knowable things as clearly as if it were a myrobalan fruit laid out in the palm of one’s hand. This is what is called in bKa’-brgyud-pa terminology ‘liberation of all [by] knowing one’ (*gcig shes kun grol*).” Many quotes follow, and one of the basic points Padma-dkar-po thereby makes is that in many authentic scriptures a single important teaching or practice is said to be in some sense sufficient or decisive.⁴⁸ At one point (55a.6) he summarizes again: “The above quote also shows the sense of the bKa’-brgyud-pa saying ‘By a single realization, all stages and paths are traversed’” (*rtogs pa gcig gis sa lam ma lus bgrod*), though this sentence has dropped out of B.’s translation. B. extracts as the main point from these quotes the following (p. 40-41): “The essential point is that what is thereby gained is always the same, even though the methods differ; and so once one method has been pursued to the end, there is no need to take up another.” Then he makes a direct reference to a verse by Padma-dkar-po that he quoted at the beginning of the article (p. 27), which contains the phrase *gcig shes kun grol* (“complete liberation through knowing one thing”).

To Sa-paṅ’s criticism that a manifold method cannot reasonably be termed “self-sufficient” or “singly efficacious,” B. himself (cf. p. 33f) would perhaps reply that the term *dkar po chig thub* can mean various things and in fact covers many of the meanings of *mahāmudrā*, though with some special nuances. As a ground and goal it is essentially one, but as a path it is various. And in its widest usage as the ultimate single overarching concept and underlying practice of this ultra-soteriology, it is not subject to conventional logical analysis. In B.’s own terms: “The seal (*mudrā*) is the understanding that in each

case, items of that general category depend on the feature-universal for their identity as items of that category.” And (p. 34): “*dKar-po chig-thub*—remaining in *mahāmudrā* as the place of origin of the *dharmas*—is precisely what holds the many together as one, and so is not itself subject to the notions of one and many (*gcig dang du bral*), even in a purely conventional logical sense.”

This broad interpretation is plausible, and it accords with Padma-dkar-po in places. But what remains to be done—if it is possible—is to trace these interpretations back and demonstrate that rJe sGam-po-pa and bla-ma Zhang intended this in their usages of the term.

Personal Animosity and Circumstantial Evidence

The thesis that Sa-paṅ in the above-mentioned verses of the *sDom gsum rab dbye* has attacked the *lNga ldan* system with particular force is not justified, because here Sa-paṅ is criticizing the notion of soteriological self-sufficiency and mentions the separate elements of the *lNga ldan* system to point out an inconsistency with the notion of *chig thub* (and not to reject a multiple-element method as such, or to criticize these particular elements, which he accepts). Nevertheless it may be instructive to go on and have a look at the argumentation B. subsequently gives.

Having apparently not clearly understood what Sa-paṅ was getting at, and having convinced himself that Sa-paṅ is an unprincipled opponent of the worst sort, B. tries to make his charge stick through circumstantial evidence and traditional *ad hominem* attack. By attributing base personal motives to Sa-paṅ, he thinks (p. 34) the whole thing “may become slightly more comprehensible (though not really excusable).” The line of reasoning he advances goes something like this:

- (1) The attack is perhaps directed against 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rten-mgon-po, since this system was a 'Bri-gung-pa specialty.
- (2) The real originator of the teaching was the latter's teacher, Phag-mo-gru-pa.
- (3) Phag-mo-gru-pa had been a disciple of Sa-paṅ's grandfather Sa-chen Kun-dga'-snying-po, but later studied under sGam-po-pa.

(4) After sGam-po-pa's death in 1153, Phag-mo-gru-pa sought Sa-chen out and tried to speak with him, but had to go away without being able to do so. This might have indicated a falling out between the two.

(5) The name of Phag-mo-gru-pa subsequently has not been heard of much in the Sa-skyapa tradition.

(6) Therefore "it is tempting to speculate that Sa-skyapa Paṇḍita's attack on the *Inga ldan* system may have been motivated by animosity toward Phag-mo-gru-pa, rather than towards sGam-po-pa or 'Bri-gung-pa."

What B. assumes is that Sa-paṇ is motivated by personal animosity toward somebody, and that this fairly bland verse in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* is not only a doctrinal criticism but also a personal attack against somebody. Rather than attempting to address directly the arguments Sa-paṇ raises, he replies with a tempting speculation that amounts to an attack on Sa-paṇ's character. But in so doing, what he fails to see is that there is no real need for personal factors to enter into the doctrinal discussion at this stage. Sa-paṇ is criticizing the term and notion of *chig thub*. It is perfectly consistent *doctrinally* for him to make his criticisms, so what further motive does he need? If Sa-paṇ were departing from his normal doctrine to make a criticism, then it would be reasonable to search elsewhere for a motive.

Even supposing that personal factors may have been strongly at work here, there is not sufficient evidence in this case to establish those that B. suggests. The sources are not very clear about what transpired on that last meeting between Sa-chen Kun-dga'-snying-po and Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje-rgyal-po twenty-five years before Sa-paṇ's birth, and it would be very problematic to assert that whatever happened, it was the main factor motivating Sa-paṇ some seventy-five years later when he penned the above verses (he is said to have written the *sDom gsum rab dbye* in c. 1232). Certainly Phag-mo-gru-pa was not a target of hatred or animosity for subsequent followers of the Sa-skyapa tradition. The cave where Phag-mo-gru-pa had meditated in Sa-skyapa was considered a shrine worthy of respect, and it was renovated in the 16th century by the Sa-skyapa hierarch sNgags-'chang Kun-dga'-rin-chen (1517-1584).⁴⁹ And, as the late Dezhung Rinpoche (1906-1987) once told me, Phag-mo-gru-pa was spoken of respectfully also

by one of the recent main transmitters of the *Lam 'bras*, sGa-ston Ngag-dbang-legs-pa (1864-1941), who appreciated his commentary on the (*Lam 'bras*) *rDo rje tshig rkang*, called the *dPe dzod ma*.

The interpretation of what happened between Sa-chen and Phag-mo-gru-pa hinges in large part on the understanding of a single term found in the Tibetan sources: *spyān rtsa 'gyur*, an expression unfortunately not attested in any dictionary accessible to me. In the *Blue Annals* of 'Gos lo-tṣā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal (*nya* 69a), the following passage occurs:

*de nas yar byon te bla ma sa skya pa chen po de sngar nga la khams pa
shes rab can gsung zhing mnyes/ da shes rab 'di 'dra ba skyes pas khong
gi drung du phyin la zhu dgos dgongs nas/ slar yang sa skyar byon pas/
da res ni dri ba tsam yang mi mdzad par spyān rtsa 'gyur 'dug pas/
phyir 'ong du phebs nas mtshal sgang du bzhugs.*

G. Roerich (p. 559) translated the key sentences: "But on this occasion Sa-skyā-pa did not ask him a single question, and seemed to be displeased. Phag-mo-gru-pa returned home." Thus, Roerich took *spyān rtsa 'gyur 'dug* to mean "seemed to be displeased," i.e., to indicate a change in attitude for the worse. In that case, the whole passage could be translated:

Then [i.e., after completing the *stūpa* for the recently deceased sGam-po-pa], he went West [to gTsang], and thinking, "Previously the *bla-ma* Sa-skyā-pa chen-po referred to me affectionately as 'the Wise Khams-pa'; now that such great discriminative wisdom has been born in me, I should go to his presence and tell him," he went once again to Sa-skyā. This time [however] without so much as questioning him, [Sa-chen] seemed to show a worsened attitude. Therefore he [Phag-mo-gru-pa] returned back, and dwelled at mTshal-sgang.

Padma-dkar-po gives a similar account in his *Chos 'byung* (271a, as quoted by B., p. 64, n. 22), though with some interesting differences:

*de nas yar byon te thugs la bla ma sa skya pa chen po de chos dri ba la
dgyes pas da nga la bshod rgyu thogs pa med snyam byon/ d[a] res dri ba
tsam yang mi mdzad par spyān rtsa 'gyur 'dug pas/ bla ma de myur
'grongs par mkhyen/*

Here Padma-dkar-po understood the phrase *spyān rtsa 'gyur* as a portent of impending death. This would more or less fit the known facts, since Sa-chen did die within a relatively short time (in 1158).

The noun *spyān rtsa* is the honorific for *mig rtsa*, which denotes the blood vessels or nerves of the eye. *Mig rtsa 'khrugs pa* for instance is defined by Jäschke as “the blood vessels [of the sclerotic] irritated, reddened.” For this part of the eye to redden or darken could be understood as a sign of anger or displeasure. In addition, another term derived from *mig rtsa* has a negative meaning, namely *mig rtsa can*, which signifies “stingy, miserly.”⁵⁰ A Ladakhi friend, however, understood *mig rtsa 'gyur* to mean *mig rtsa 'bab*. He said the latter had a more specifically medical meaning, indicating the occurrence of a particular change in a person's eyes indicating a sickness (perhaps a dull, sunken look or lack of liveliness in the eyes?). Following this medical interpretation, the passage from Padma-dkar-po could be translated:

Then going West [to gTsang], he went [to Sa-skyā] thinking: “Because the bla-ma Sa-skyā-pa chen-po loves to inquire about religion, [I should meet him again, since] I am now unimpeded in having things to tell [him]. [But] at that time without so much as asking questions, [Sa-chen's] eye-“veins” seemed to have changed [for the worse]. Therefore [Phag-mo-gru-pa] knew that this master would soon die.

This more medical interpretation is also borne out even more clearly by a third version of the story preserved within a historical work of the 'Ba'-ra-ba bKa'-brgyud-pa tradition, where, moreover, there is no indication of a falling out between the two. Following sGam-po-pa's death, and after staying for some time at 'On Tshal-sgang, where he trained a number of great meditators, Phag-mo-gru-pa is said to have gone back to Sa-skyā, accompanied by sGom bSod and several other old disciples of his, bringing with him a manuscript of the large *Prajñāpāramitā* that had recently been executed by some disciples or patrons in his honor. At Sa-skyā the teachers requested [and received? (*zhus*)] the four tantric consecrations [from Sa-chen]. It was sufficient for Phag-mo-gru-pa to give what he had for

offerings, but still he expected to be questioned by Sa-chen about religious things, since his teacher had been fond of doing so in the past.

[Phag-mo-gru-pa] thought: "After I went to sGam-po, my discriminative understanding has increased a hundredfold. Realization has arisen. If the *bla-ma* questions me about this, [my realization which is unimpeded] regarding all *dharma*s like a spear waving in the air, I must give an answer." But he was not questioned like before. [Phag-mo-gru-pa later] said "My *bla-ma* will probably not have a long life. His eye-'veins' have changed [for the worse]. He stopped without questioning about religion. That is a sign of [impending] death." Accordingly, [it transpired that Sa-chen] passed away when about a half a year had elapsed.⁵¹

From this source, which is the most detailed of the three, one gets the impression that the relations between the two remained correct until the end.⁵² Sectarian divisions among the gSar-ma-pa tantric traditions were not in the mid-12th century as strongly established and institutionalized as they became later. Nor was there any rule that a religious master such as Phag-mo-gru-pa should study under or acknowledge only one teacher. Indeed, both he and Sa-chen had studied under many masters, among whom they each revered two or three in a special way. Phag-mo-gru-pa would seem to have continued to hold not only sGam-po-pa but also Sa-chen in the very highest esteem.⁵³ That Phag-mo-gru-pa considered the *Lam 'bras* teachings which he had received from Sa-chen still to be very valuable is also indicated by the fact that he transmitted them later to his disciple gLing-ras (from whom they were passed down through gTsang-pa rGya-ras and the 'Brug-pa lineage to Padma-dkar-po).⁵⁴ Therefore, rather than pointing to the relations between Sa-chen and Phag-mo-gru-pa as an instance of incipient sectarian ill-will, one could just as easily interpret them as showing its successful avoidance. It would be useful to find and compare occurrences of *spyān rtsa 'gyur* and the related terms in other contexts or to have them explained by other Tibetan scholars. In any case, B.'s apparent understanding of the term *spyān rtsa 'gyur* as indicating an unwillingness or refusal to meet with someone (pp. 34 and 64, n. 22) can

probably be excluded, since according to the sources Sa-chen and Phag-mo-gru-pa did meet: the only thing that failed to take place was the expected questioning.

By viewing this episode through the magnifying but distorting lens of later sectarianism and finding here a source for hostile feelings, one does not take into account the nature of the special relation between a genuine master and devoted disciple within the Mantrayāna tradition. Within that context, a rupture between the two is almost unthinkable, and it is explicitly rejected as impossible by no less an authority than Padma-dkar-po when he discusses this very episode again in his record of teachings received (*gsan yig*). Here, in connection with the *Lam 'bras* lineage he had received, Padma-dkar-po gives the following account:⁵⁵

The great “Sugata” [Phag-mo-gru-pa] was the most learned of his [Sa-chen’s] disciples, and [Sa-chen] proclaimed him to have attained the realization of the Path of Seeing. Later he [Phag-mo-gru-pa] went to sGam-po. Then when he [later] went into the presence of his teacher [Sa-chen again], [the latter] looked with clouded eyes (*spyan sprin 'gyur*). With regard to this, others think that he was not pleased that [Phag-mo-gru-pa] had become the disciple of sGam-po-pa, and they even say this. But how could such a thing be possible for genuine masters? For they intentionally apply one to those [teachings] by which one is [best] trained and from which the maximum benefit will come to sentient beings. To think of it as like the discarding and accepting of religious teachers is purely [the erroneous conception illustrated by] the maxim of “the strict monk [?] (*jo gdan*) drunk on beer.”⁵⁶ Moreover, [eventually] it [all] actually came to pass in accordance with the statement by the lord Phag-mo-gru-pa himself, who said this was a sign that the teacher would not live long.

Here Padma-dkar-po used the new term *spyan sprin* in place of *spyan rtsa*. *Spyan sprin* means a cataract or a clouding of the cornea, and this reinforces the other medical interpretations. Still, it is interesting to note that the accounts of this event were sufficiently ambiguous that 16th-century Tibetans were already interpreting it in different ways.

No matter how these terms are to be understood (and even

without Padma-dkar-po's unequivocal rejection of their interpretation as indicating Sa-chen Kun-dga'-snying-po's displeasure), the interpretation of these events as establishing Sa-pan's motives for writing two or three verses seventy-five years after the fact could never be more than an extremely shaky hypothesis at best. B. too seems to sense that he is walking on thin ice here since he characterizes his theory as something which is "tempting" to "speculate."

* * *

One problem with discussions that arise in reply to prior polemics—whether traditional or modern—is that they tend almost automatically to continue the previous polemical tone and framework of discussion. The presentation is selective, and almost inevitably it is at least a bit slanted, if only for increased rhetorical effect. But the readers of Buddhist controversial writings, like the real participants in Buddhist debates, should always bear in mind that what is at issue is normally single points of doctrinal interpretation or practice, or at most a restricted system of religious practices or philosophical ideas, and that one Buddhist opponent is not normally attempting to throw out the whole Buddhist tradition of the other side. Within the traditional context, to do so completely would be to risk committing the great evil of "discarding religion" (*chos spong ba'i las*). There always remains between two Tibetan Buddhists a large, commonly acknowledged body of scripture, doctrine and practice which both maintain. Otherwise there would be very little common ground for discussion and very little scope to prove or disprove anything of mutual doctrinal interest.⁵⁷ In a Buddhist doctrinal controversy, the goal is of course to show that the particular teaching in question is unacceptable to the opponent himself as a Buddhist in general or as a follower of the Buddhist tradition he professes in particular.

Moreover, within the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist tradition scholars usually differentiate clearly between criticizing faults of doctrine (*chos kyi skyon*) and criticizing personal or individual faults (*gang zag gi skyon*).⁵⁸ Personal faults can have no bearing on the substance of a doctrinal discussion, and to introduce them into a debate would thus constitute a "defeat" for the one who did so. But the trouble with this idealized scholarly ethic

was that its application was not always so clear-cut: a plain criticism of the religious doctrines taught and practiced by another could easily have the same emotional impact as a personally directed slap to the face, especially to those not trained in dialectical disputation and who habitually identified doctrines with persons. To say: "The Buddha never taught this," or: "To practice or teach this vitiates the essentials of the Buddha's teachings," could easily provoke some Tibetan Buddhists to feelings of outrage and righteous indignation, just as it still can today.

Sa-pan's criticisms were often phrased in rigorous and straightforward terms, and therefore some adherents of the criticized traditions felt that he had overstepped the boundaries of mere doctrinal criticism, and that in doing so he could only have been motivated by vindictive personal animosity.⁵⁹ B. is not the first to seek out the old relation of Sa-chen with Phag-mo-gru-pa as a possible historical explanation for later tensions or animosities between the Sa-skyapa and bKa'-brgyud-pa—I had previously heard this suggested by others within the living bKa'-brgyud-pa tradition, and Padma-dkarpo records the existence of this theory in the 16th century in the course of his firm rejection of it. But if one really wants to attribute the writing of a specific passage in Sa-pan's *sDom gsum rab dbye* to such supposed old animosities, it would be better to examine carefully also the sections in the same work where the author discusses what had motivated him. Sa-pan himself was fully aware that his motives for making such criticisms would be questioned, and therefore he devoted one of the final sections of the *sDom gsum rab dbye* to a discussion of the legitimate aims and motivations of doctrinal criticism as well as to the history of such criticisms in India and Tibet. At the end of the treatise he listed the various religious lineages that he had received himself, and he denied accordingly that his criticisms were one-sidedly biased.⁶⁰ Before that, he declared that if perchance in an uncollected moment he has been guilty of any vilification of others, he renounces that as a morally reprehensible mistake.⁶¹ But as he explained further:

If you say that the differentiation of erroneous from correct religion is anger and jealousy, in that case, how [otherwise] are sentient beings to be saved from the ocean of Cyclic Existence?⁶²

To differentiate carefully right doctrines from wrong was thus for Sa-pan crucial to the task of establishing and maintaining the Buddhist Doctrine, and thereby making possible Liberation itself. As he tried to show in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* at some length, criticisms or philosophical disputations between schools as attempts to settle conflicting doctrinal claims were legitimate and very important parts of religious scholarship in the Indo-Tibetan tradition. Tibetan Buddhists by and large came to accept that there can be *principled* and justified "controversy" or doctrinal disputation.⁶³ This was accepted as legitimate also by Indian philosophy in general, as well as by Dharmakīrti and his school in particular, whose views came to influence the whole Tibetan learned tradition. In Dharmakīrti's manual of disputation, the *Vādanyāya*, it is maintained that proper disputation should be for the sake of investigating and explaining the truth, and not motivated merely by the desire to win.⁶⁴ Disputation must use honest methods: sound reasoning grounded in objective fact or based on the citation of scriptures accepted by the opponent was the sole criterion by which a definitive judgment could be reached.⁶⁵ It must also avoid blameworthy methods such as misrepresenting or falsifying evidence, personal attacks, abusive language, etc. Within this tradition, even "minor" faults such as redundancy or irrelevancy were considered grounds for "defeat," for the only two legitimate functions of a debater were soundly to state either the arguments proving his position or the reasoning which refutes that of the opponent.⁶⁶ Not every scholar of the tradition lived up to these strict ideals completely in every case. The modern scholar in fact must sometimes sift very carefully through later polemical discussions to try to glean what is substantial discussion from what is occasionally just dialectical cleverness or even pure sophistry. Nevertheless the underlying ideal of a fair, objective and rational search for truth was always present, and within the tradition it was this high standard against which doctrinal discussions ultimately were judged.

Implications and Interpretations

Let us return now to B.'s article and see how he presented Padma-dkar-po's criticism of another passage from the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, this one just preceding the discussion in connection with the "Fivefold" (*lNga ldan*) system. As mentioned above, Sa-pan identified the *dkar po chig thub* as a doctrine claiming that one can attain Buddhahood through the single method of understanding the nature of one's mind. He questioned the validity of any "self-sufficient" or "singly efficacious" (*chig thub*) practice from the point of view of causation, and this is his subject here. Sa-pan raises the question: Is it acceptable that the three *kāyas* of Buddhahood could arise from a simple or unitary cause? In his *Phyag chen rgyal ba'i gan mdzod* (49a.4), Padma-dkar-po quotes this verse from the *sDom gsum rab dbye* (p. 34a.1):

Some say that the result [or fruit] of the three *kāyas* arises from the *dkar po chig thub*. However, a result cannot arise from a single thing. Even if a single result could arise from a single thing, that result too would be a single thing, like the cessation (*nirodha*) of the *śrāvaka*.⁶⁷

According to Go-rams-pa (*ta* 138b.3), the holders of this position included Zhang Tshal-pa *et al.* As seen above, the latter did propound that all qualities of Buddhahood are instantly and spontaneously realized in the understanding of the nature of mind, and he specifically mentions the three Bodies (*kāya*) as understood as being perfectly complete in the mind (in the moment of *mahāmudrā* realization) in such places as f. 22a.3 (*sku gsum ye shes lnga ldan gyi / / sang rgyas rang la tshang ngo zer / / 'di rang yin par da gdod shes / /*), f. 22a.6 (*sku gsum* [22b] *yon tan sems la rdzogs*), and f. 31b.3 (*'bras bu sku gsum de ru rdzogs*). Padma-dkar-po (49a) attempts to defend this view, replying to begin with through a purely dialectical objection, asserting that Sa-pan has disproved or contradicted his own position (*rang la gnod*) because the middle statement [or line of verse] (i.e., the Tibetan phrase corresponding to: "like the cessation of the *śrāvaka*") is refuted by the final two. Why? He asserts that Sa-pan himself has granted that a manifold result cannot arise

from a single cause, but then he speaks of the *śrāvaka's nirodha* as an example of "an effect that arises from a single cause."⁶⁸

Padma-dkar-po and B. (p. 37) are apparently misled by the wording of this versified argument and fail to see that Sa-paṅ cites the example of the *śrāvaka's nirodha* merely as a simple (non-manifold) effect and not as a simple effect *from a single cause*.⁶⁹ What Sa-paṅ is engaged in is eliciting a hypothetical consequence from a purely hypothetical and contrafactual supposition. He is saying: "Even supposing that there could be such an effect, what would it be like? It would be single (or simple), like the *śrāvaka's nirodha*, and not threefold." It is not self-contradictory for Sa-paṅ to cite the *arhat's nirodha* as an example of a spiritual fruit that is simple or single (and also unsatisfactory), whereas to cite it as an example of a simple result *from a single cause* would indeed be self-contradictory. The placement of the example phrase between the supposition and its hypothetical result (and the somewhat elliptical versified phrasing) make it unclear at first sight what is meant.

I do not think Padma-dkar-po's misunderstanding was intentional or that he was here attempting to skirt the main issue by means of a dialectical quibble based on a conscious misinterpretation. Such a strategy would trivialize the discussion (though such ploys are also not completely unknown in Indian and Tibetan Buddhist controversial writings, in spite of their having been unequivocally rejected by Dharmakīrti). Apparently Padma-dkar-po considered Sa-paṅ's wording of his argument to be either genuinely self-contradictory or else so hopelessly ambiguous that this needed to be pointed out.

On the other hand, Padma-dkar-po did understand that the main thrust in this and the following passage of the *sDom gsum rab dbye* was to criticize a notion of *mahāmudrā* as a singly efficient and self-sufficient practice, for as seen above he does eventually reply to just this point through various quotations from scripture, and he also sums up his own ideas to the same effect. (He begins his more substantive rebuttal with the words [49b.1]: "[Sa-paṅ's] meaning too is unacceptable" *don yang mi 'thad te*.) He goes on to give what according to B. (p. 38) is "a series of nine [i.e., eight?] quotations that simultaneously illustrate four points." All of these quotations would be acceptable to Sa-paṅ in their own particular contexts. But I cannot find

where the fourth point, that “it is essential not to go beyond this one *mahāmudrā*” (which for B. is an especially characteristic topic of the *dkar po chig thub*), is illustrated in any of the quotations, to say nothing of in all eight quotations simultaneously.

Even in the beginning of this same [*Phyag chen*] *de dkar po chig thub tu 'gro ba'i gnad bshad pa* section of the *Phyag chen rgyal ba'i gan mdzod*, Padma-dkar-po makes clear that in his own system this idea of self-sufficiency or single efficaciousness or something similar is maintained. He begins the chapter by quoting Mar-pa's commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra*, apparently tracing back the germ of the *dkar po chig thub* idea to the passage:

All factors of existence (*dharmas*) from the subtle [read: “stable, static” *brtan pa*] to the “moving” (or “dynamic” *g.yo ba*) are not established on their own account. Having made oneself thus understand this spontaneously and innately born (*sahaja*) nature alone as the [correct] theory, meditatively to cultivate it is referred to in the *Tantra* by the passage beginning with “equality.” And [that] meditative cultivation too is to place [the mind] equally in the spontaneously and innately born gnosis without [distinguishing] concentrated meditations (*samāhita*) and post-meditative states (*prṣṭhalabdha*). If viewed by a person who understands such a *mahāmudrā*, all factors of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* arise from it and are its emanations [read: *'phrul*]. This is shown by the passage [in the *Hevajra Tantra*] beginning with the word “I” (*nga*).

Accordingly, if even a man with little merit who, having understood that the whole of theory, meditative cultivation, and action are *mahāmudrā* and having cultivated [that] for a long time, will attain realization, it goes without saying that others [of greater merit will do so]. The sense of these words is shown by the passage [in the *Hevajra Tantra*] beginning with the words “like that” (*de ltar*).⁷⁰

B. in his translation (p. 37) has misconstrued this passage, partly through not understanding which words were quotations from the *Tantra* (he did not trace the quotation referred to). The lines being commented upon are *Hevajra Tantra*, part I, chapter viii, verses 39-42.⁷¹ Padma-dkar-po concludes this section with the comment: “So at the time of realization (*rtogs*

pa), we do not maintain (*'dod pa*) any *dharma* at all other than *mahāmudrā*.”⁷²

The next quote, from Jñānakīrti's *Tattvāvatāra* (found in the Peking Tanjur, vol. 81, p. 126.4.3), includes several sentences which are essential to the discussion. For instance: “Then just to gain competence [or mastery] in that (*de la goms pa nyid*) is to complete perfectly all results without exception. Thus this, just the cultivation of non-dual *mahāmudrā*, [as that] which brings about all results without exception, is a common possession of all *yogins*.”⁷³

Sa-paṅ is against the notion that certain teachings or practices being taught as “*dkar po chig thub*” can be self-sufficient causes for bringing about Buddhahood, or that, in general, any single meditative or religious practice can claim to be in and of itself the sufficient cause for Buddhahood. Wherever the scriptures teach a single practice as being self-sufficient in effecting complete liberation, he says this is to be taken as a statement of provisional meaning or of special or hidden intent.⁷⁴ Throughout, his intention is to stress the necessity for manifold skillful means (*thabs*) in addition to insight into *sūnyatā*, and to affirm that this was the definitive meaning taught by the Buddha.⁷⁵ The second step of his discussion I have already described, namely his attempt to point out the self-contradiction implicit in first terming a practice “self-sufficient” (*chig thub*) and then integrating it into a general system of practice in which other preparatory, main and concluding factors are said to be necessary. But before that, Sa-paṅ presents the difficulty that such a notion of causal self-sufficiency is incompatible with accepted notions of causation, and by this reasoning implies that a single practice cannot be a self-sufficient soteriological means. In presenting Padma-dkar-po's reply, B. correctly understands the main point at issue, but goes on (p. 38) to add the commentary: “In any case, these arguments of Sa-skyā Paṅḍita are irrelevant, since we are not talking about causation in a technical sense.” B. here is right, at least technically speaking, if he means to say that ordinary causation is held not to function at the very moment of the attainment of Buddhahood, the moment bridging the conditioned causes and the unconditioned fruit. Yet Sa-paṅ apparently considered his remarks to have soteriological relevance because

some people did think that a single simple practice was capable literally of causing in and of itself the full realization of Buddhahood, including the three *kāyas*.

According to the *sDom gsum rab dbye* commentator Go-rams-pa (*ta* 138b.3), the people who maintained this opinion included Zhang Tshal-pa *et al.*, and indeed the latter taught that all the qualities of Buddhahood are realized instantaneously and simultaneously when one reaches the realization of the nature of mind (as *mahāmudrā*) through the *gcig-car* individual's method. Go-rams-pa's understanding was that such masters had taught that by means of meditatively cultivating insight into *sūnyatā* alone, the so-called "White Self-sufficient Simple," the three *kāyas* will arise.⁷⁶ The great adept Zhang Tshal-pa would probably have replied that his method was not really singular and that it incorporated both method and wisdom (he spoke against "emptiness devoid of skillful method and discriminative understanding" [*thabs shes bral ba'i stong nyid*] on p. 27a.3). He may have also discounted the importance of the term *dkar po chig thub* and its implications. He was not overly concerned with words, terms or concepts, and had no great love for the fine distinctions of the scholiast or logician (see his treatise, pp. 8b and 34a.5). Sa-pan by contrast, was clearly convinced of the importance of the basic doctrinal notions and terms as well as their logical and philosophical implications,⁷⁷ and he was concerned to what extent a method such as Zhang Tshal-pa's could claim to include skillful means (*upāya*: *thabs*) since for him it seemed to be a one-sided cultivation of insight into emptiness. Later in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* (p. 315.4.4 = *na* 38b.4) he returns to the same basic point, asserting that some people considered [the realization of the ultimate as] the mere absence of discursive elaborations (*spros bral rkyang pa*) to be a *dkar po chig thub*. This too, in Sa-pan's opinion, will not suffice for bringing about the attainment of Buddhahood.

There can be no doubt that some early masters of the Mahāmudrā tradition made very special if not radical claims for their doctrine. Assertions of its "self-sufficiency" (*chig thub*) or "all-at-once or instantaneous decisiveness" (*chig chod*)⁷⁸ for instance were made more than once by Zhang Tshal-pa, and one pair of lines to this effect attracted the attention of Sa-pan

so much that he repeated them in his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* (*tha* 52b.2): "The ignorant one errs who considers the stages and paths [as existing] in the instantaneously decisive *mahāmudrā*."⁷⁹ Go-rams-pa (*ta* 140b.5) correctly attributes these lines to Zhang Tshal-pa. Thu'u-bkwan does the same, quoting more of the passage (with slightly different readings) and interpreting it as relegating to the level of erroneous and non-definitive interpretation the alternative bKa'-brgyud-pa teaching that the systematization of the Mahāmudrā path according to the four yogas (*rnal 'byor bzhi*) entails the gradual passing through the stages and paths.⁸⁰ These lines are also quoted by bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal⁸¹ and Padma-dkar-po.⁸² The same lines can indeed be located in Zhang Tshal-pa's *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug* treatise,⁸³ though I present these references mainly for the convenience of anyone who would like to take this up in more detail in the future.⁸⁴

Interesting Comparisons

One of the most interesting sections of the article is where B. compares the views of Ho-shang Mo-ho-yen and Padma-dkar-po (p. 41ff). But the author cannot rest content with presenting important similarities and differences. Evidently he wishes to prove his thesis (D-2) that Sa-pan was not working with any clear conception of the Hwa-shang's views, though one of his immediate aims is to show that Sa-pan's linkage of an 8th-century Chinese doctrine with that of certain 12th-century bKa'-brgyud-pa masters was empty invective in which Sa-pan distorted the Hwa-shang's views. B. believes he can show this by pointing out any difference at all between, on the one hand, the opinions of the 16th-century Padma-dkar-po and, on the other hand, the ancient Chinese and Tibetan materials on Mo-ho-yen as retrieved from Tun-huang and investigated and translated by modern scholars.⁸⁵ In his own words (p. 45):

... This kind of more detailed comparison really does show up the hollowness and emptiness of Sa-skya Paṇḍita's invective. Because Sa-skya Paṇḍita has not taken any trouble to make clear in exactly what ways the *mahāmudrā* is like the Chinese or the Hwa-shang view, he can be refuted by pointing to any difference one can find; ...

His reasoning seems to be that Sa-paṅ, by not specifying which points of the two “*dkar po chig thub*” traditions are the same, has equated them completely, and that this can be shown to be erroneous by finding any difference at all between the Mahāmudrā views of Padma-dkar-po and the views of Mo-ho-yen found in the Tun-Huang documents.

I must admit that I am having some difficulty following the line of argumentation at this point, and I am no less dis-oriented when I read to the end of the sentence just quoted: “...he [Sa-paṅ] can be refuted by pointing to any difference one can find; and of course Padma-dkar-po has no difficulty in finding important and substantial differences.” Up until now I, and I take it the majority of readers with me, had assumed that it was B. who was making comparisons and finding differences between what Padma-dkar-po said and what recent research on the ancient documents can tell us. Now why is *Padma-dkar-po himself* popping up here? Will it be differences which Padma-dkar-po points out between his understanding of the Hwa-shang and his understanding of the bKa’-brgyud-pa that will serve to “refute” Sa-paṅ? In a more general way, too, I am not clear about the role Padma-dkar-po is supposed to be playing here. Are his views in some respect essential, or would any earlier or later bKa’-brgyud-pa master do just as well? Or are we to think that Padma-dkar-po, as spokesman for “the bKa’-brgyud-pas,” maintained exactly the same opinions as the masters such as Zhang Tshal-pa who lived four centuries before? Surely a comparison of these two different sets of materials (Padma-dkar-po and translated excerpts from Tun-Huang documents) cannot really prove anything about whether Sa-paṅ misinterpreted or consciously misused his sources. (Incidentally, I cannot find any precise mention of which works or passages in Padma-dkar-po’s writings B. used for this “comparison,” and it would have been useful to have the citations in order to be able to check what Padma-dkar-po said in the original.)

I wonder whether B. can really be demanding more of Sa-paṅ than that he did the best he could within his own cultural context, in his own historical period, and using the documents available to him. Is B. trying to prove the hollowness of Sa-paṅ’s “invective” by using the latest results of modern scholars

who have access to the ancient Tibetan and Chinese documents from Tun-huang? Surely to do so would be unrealistic and inappropriate.

When it comes to his main authority, Padma-dkar-po, B. is more charitable. On p. 46 he writes that though Padma-dkar-po is perhaps not completely unbiased (i.e., from a Western scholarly standpoint), “*within the Tibetan cultural context* he was completely successful” (italics mine). Though indeed, “...we have no need to take everything he says at its face value.” But this dual-level scheme of standards or criteria for some reason does not apply to Sa-pan.

The premise underlying B.’s reasoning in the above passage is that Sa-pan has *completely* identified the *mahāmudrā* with the Hwa-shang view and has not specified in what way he takes the Hwa-shang’s doctrine and later *dkar po chig thub* notion to be alike. B. was led to this because he did not understand Sa-pan’s conception of *dkar po chig thub* and thus could not make out what essential elements were in Sa-pan’s view shared between the two traditions. But Sa-pan has made clear what common soteriological error in his opinion unites the two as *dkar po chig thub*: namely, the notion that a non-conceptual realization of the nature of mind is in and of itself sufficient to bring about the attainment of Buddhahood.

Perhaps B.’s understandings have been influenced by Padma-dkar-po’s argumentation, which likewise attempts to refute a “complete” identification. But actually Sa-pan does not always identify the two traditions down to the last detail. He states in one place that the Tibetan “*dkar po chig thub*” teaching, which he terms a “present-day Mahāmudrā” is “for the most part” or “to a large extent” (*phal cher*) a Chinese religious tradition. He has said this in so many words in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* at the end of the passage criticizing the *dkar po chig thub* notion and summarizing the bSam-yas debate.⁸⁶

da lta'i phyag rgya chen po ni / /
phal cher rgya nag chos lugs yin / /⁸⁷

When he criticizes the Tibetan *dkar po chig thub* elsewhere, he specifies certain doctrines or instructions known to be taught in the Dwags-po bka'-brgyud-pa in connection with their

Mahāmudrā teachings; in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* (50b.2) he specifies, for instance, the three “delaying diversions” or “deviations” (*gol sa*), the four “occasions of lapsing” (*shor sa*) and the simile of spinning the Brahmin’s sacred cord. He states for example (52a.4) that the latter simile is *like* the Hwa-shang’s simile of the eagle or *garuḍa* (*khyung*) in the traditional account; he does not assert that the two doctrines were formulated in exactly the same ways.

Nevertheless, insofar as it cites historical precedent, Sa-pan’s argument has no force unless he is identifying the two doctrines at least in their essential details. At one point in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* (50b.5) he says: “This is to follow (*rjes su 'brang ba*) the White Self-sufficient Simple of China” (*'di rgya nag gi dkar po chig thub kyi rjes su 'brang ba yin...*). Then as a reason showing that this doctrine contradicts the *sūtras* and *tantras* and is unacceptable when examined by reasoning, he states (51a.3): “[And it is unacceptable] because it is not even slightly different from the Chinese master’s White Self-sufficient Simple” (*rgya nag mkhan po'i dkar po chig thub dang khyad par cung zad med pa'i phyir ro*).⁸⁸ By identifying it in this way with a doctrine already refuted by Kamalaśīla, Sa-pan indeed cites a historical precedent to give his argument additional force. The implication he wants to draw is that no further refutation of the doctrine is really needed, since it had already been authoritatively repudiated and officially rejected. But by not qualifying his statement with something like “in its basic doctrine” and thus seemingly identifying the two doctrines *completely* in this passage, Sa-pan has strictly speaking phrased his reason too strongly and has contradicted his earlier qualified statements. Perhaps he did this in order to give his argument added rhetorical impact, or maybe it was just an oversight. In any case this was not *mere* rhetoric—he did consider the two traditions to share one and the same fundamental error, namely the teaching that to realize the nature of mind through non-conceptualization suffices to bring about Buddhahood.⁸⁹

Scholasticism versus Direct Experience

In the next paragraph of the article (p. 45) B. clarifies more about his attitude toward Sa-pan. He finds something to be fundamentally objectionable about the variety of Tibetan Buddhism which he takes to be “represented by Sa-skyā Paṇḍita—thoroughly scholastic, and considering only the graded path . . .,” and he wants in particular to warn contemporary scholars not to repeat “the very mistakes of Sa-skyā Paṇḍita,” those errors being to identify Tibetan Buddhism wholly with the “scholastic tendencies” in Indian Buddhism and to link any elements stressing “direct experience” with China.

I really wonder whether such a condemnatory view of Sa-pan as “thoroughly scholastic, and considering only the graded path” is justified in B.’s own thinking. To turn the tables, in what way is Padma-dkar-po less “thoroughly scholastic” than Sa-pan? Is it a question of method or of doctrine? Padma-dkar-po can be quite scholastic in his own method, and B. himself (p. 57)—whose own work too is seldom if ever unscholastic—extols the superiority of Padma-dkar-po’s *Phyag chen rgyal ba’i gan mdzod* over the *Phyag chen zla zer* of Dwags-po (or sGam-po-pa) bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal:⁹⁰

Valuable though it is, the *Zla-zer* is merely a compendium of aphorisms and *man-ngag*. The *Gan-mdzod* is a work of reconstruction; that is, it provides an articulated structure, within which the mass of traditional details can be seen as intelligibly ordered.

If we try to determine what analytical methods Padma-dkar-po uses to give his material its intelligible order, what do we find if not the common scholastic technique which he shares to a great extent with Sa-pan? As a “scholastic” (*mtshan nyid pa*) philosopher Padma-dkar-po automatically stands somewhere in the wider Sa-skyā / gSang-phu tradition.⁹¹ In his study of the logical and epistemological theories of Dharmakīrti’s *Pramāṇavārttika*, for instance, he was a recipient of a lineage which had been transmitted to all of Tibet by Sa-skyā Paṇḍita himself. (Padma-dkar-po acknowledges this graciously in his writ-

ings and refers to Sa-paṅ on occasion with words of highest respect and honor, praising him as “the bodily manifestation [*sprul pa’i sku*] of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.”⁹²) In other words, Padma-dkar-po had received some of the dialectical and philosophical tools he used for answering the old criticisms of Sa-paṅ from the very tradition of Sa-paṅ as transmitted by later similarly minded scholars such as Bu-ston of the 14th century or Rong-ston of the 15th.⁹³ Why is Padma-dkar-po honored with the designation “*kun-mkhyen*” (“omniscient one”) within his tradition if not largely in recognition of his great scholastic achievements? Why did he write so many scholastic treatises, and why are many of them still used as scholastic manuals in the traditional seminaries, if the scholastic method is basically bad? (And despite Padma-dkar-po’s difficult style, we still might well wonder whether it is not precisely the scholastic superiority of Padma-dkar-po’s penetrating analyses that recommends them to a Western scholar such as B. over those of many other bKa’-brgyud-pa writers.)

I can only conclude that B. is not against the scholastic method itself, but only against something he considers as bad or lopsided scholasticism. He takes Sa-paṅ to be “*thoroughly* scholastic” and to consider “*only* the graded path.” But this too perhaps shows merely a basic doctrinal preconception or bias, and in any case it cannot be established from a reading of Sa-paṅ’s biographies or from his own writings. Sa-paṅ himself was of course very much concerned with gaining “direct experience” and to that end he was a highly accomplished practitioner of tantric meditation.⁹⁴ It would be strange indeed if even this does not qualify as direct experience simply because it was not the doctrine followed by the *gcig car ba* individuals of the Mahāmudrā.

The impression I sometimes get is that B. is not addressing the specifics of what Sa-paṅ actually taught or practiced, but is instead attacking a straw man, in this case making Sa-paṅ the Tibetan prototype for the popular image of the fastidious, persnickety *paṇḍita* or the hair-splitting and over-intellectual but contemplatively unaccomplished Geshe, a stock character who is typically made the butt of dismissive criticisms in certain bKa’-brgyud-pa writings as well as in the related popular culture. But there is much more at stake here than just the

rejection of a popular stereotype or the condemnation of scholastic “gradualism” in favor of “simultaneist” direct meditative experience. Both sides of the conflict or tension alluded to were embodied for instance in the person of Padma-dkar-po, and both have been present in the bKa’-brgyud-pa tradition since the time of rJe sGam-po-pa himself, for it was he who first tried in that Tibetan order to integrate the disciplines of monasticism and scholasticism (stemming primarily from the bKa’-gdams-pa order) with the ascetic practices and transcending yogic insights of the anchorite.⁹⁵

A Suggestion for Modern Researchers: Trace Each Doctrine

B. in his next paragraph (p. 46) sets forth the program he hopes will help modern researchers avoid “the very mistakes of Sa-skya Paṇḍita.” But in doing so, he could hardly have stated better Sa-paṅ’s own preferred procedure: “Really, there is no alternative for asking, separately for each system of doctrine or doctrinal notion found in the Tibetan literature: did this come from India? did it come from China? or is it a Tibetan innovation?” In leading his contemporaries to face up to these same critically framed questions, Sa-paṅ was unusual in his day. Behind Sa-paṅ’s inquiry lies the old official decision (accepted also by Padma-dkar-po) that for the Tibetans, India should be counted as the one valid origin for Buddhist doctrines. The fundamental point that B. seems to miss throughout is that Sa-paṅ does in fact accept as genuine the original bKa’-brgyud-pa doctrines which are based on the teachings of Indian masters such as Nāropa and Maitrīpāda, and which were transmitted from them through such recognized masters as Mar-pa the translator and his greatest disciple Mi-la ras-pa. He is *not* launched upon a full-scale rejection of bKa’-brgyud-pa doctrines in general or of every teaching on Mahāmudrā in particular. What Sa-paṅ doubts is whether *certain* teachings or interpretations that gained later popularity can indeed be traced back to Nāropa, for instance, or were even taught in the Tibetan tradition until sometime after Mar-pa or Mi-la ras-pa. If these specific teachings did not accord with the widely recognized doctrines of Indian Buddhism, i.e., if they seemed to be later Tibetan innovations or introductions from some

unknown source, then according to Sa-paṅ they deserved critical investigation.⁹⁶ For Sa-paṅ, the Mahāmudrā as *dkar po chig thub*—with its similar name and certain strong doctrinal and terminological resemblances to the Hwa-shang’s teachings as they were portrayed in some of the traditional sources available to him—was one such case. Can we really fault then either Sa-paṅ’s method or, within their own cultural context, even his conclusions?⁹⁷

As B. acknowledges, Padma-dkar-po himself had the intention of proving the Indian origin of his tradition. Like Sa-paṅ, he was not “unbiased” in this regard. But with all due respect to Padma-dkar-po’s achievements, I cannot follow B. (p. 46) when he gives the impression that Padma-dkar-po was completely successful within the Tibetan cultural context in establishing his views on the main historical or doctrinal points in question to everyone’s satisfaction. In fact he did not have the last word on these subjects in his *Phyag chen rgyal ba’i gan mdzod*; in due course the Sa-skyapa scholar Mang-thos Klu-sgrubrgya-mtsho (1523-1596) replied to Padma-dkar-po’s remarks, and this led to still more discussion.⁹⁸ Moreover it is a bit misleading to say that Padma-dkar-po established once and for all that the bKa’-brgyud-pa doctrines were not “merely Tibetan or Chinese inventions,” for that was never really in question. Sa-paṅ for one did not doubt the authentic Indian origins of such fundamental bKa’-brgyud-pa doctrines as the *Six Dharmas of Nāroṇa* (*Nā ro chos drug*) that had been transmitted by Mar-pa and Mi-la.⁹⁹

A Common dKar po chig thub

In his own way even B. asserts indirectly that the bKa’-brgyud-pas accept a *dkar po chig thub* doctrine that can be found also in the very writings of the historical Mo-ho-yen or his school (though of course without positing a historical connection between them). B. (p. 45) freely accepts the existence of important doctrinal parallels between the two traditions, and he points out as a key point acceptable to Mo-ho-yen (who said the following) and “the bKa’-brgyud-pas” (as represented by his understanding of Padma-dkar-po):

... If concepts arise, one should not think anywhere of being or non-being, purity or impurity, emptiness or the absence thereof, etc. One does not think of non-thinking either. ... But if one were to experience non-examination and does not act according to these concepts, or accept them or become attached to them, then every instant of mind is liberated at every moment.¹⁰⁰

As B. has stated already in connection with one sense of *mahāmudrā* (p. 32):

... The realization of *mahāmudrā* as the great seal means just letting the mind rest in its experiencing *without becoming attached to the labelling concepts* which arise in the course of experience.... *dKar-po chig-thub* is another way of expressing this same idea.

But in reading the article one can almost fail to notice this point, for it is certainly not stressed. (It is also open to question whether traditional bKa'-brgyud-pas would agree here.)

Sa-paṅ himself probably would not have said that such a meditational practice could play no role in the Buddhist path. But he would have wanted to clarify the precise contribution to the attainment of Buddhahood that such a practice could claim to make. In the meantime he would be in agreement with Padma-dkar-po (as portrayed by Broido) in totally rejecting such claims as (pp. 42-43):

A. If one sees conceptions as no conceptions, one sees the Tathāgata. To understand this single thought is in itself the greatest merit, surpassing by far all the merits that one could obtain by cultivating good *dharmas*....¹⁰¹

And (p. 43):

G. When conceptualizations are given up, there is an automatic attainment of all virtues.¹⁰²

Sa-paṅ considered the "self-sufficient simple method" (*dkar po chig thub*) doctrines, both Tibetan and Chinese (as portrayed in his sources), to be making these or similar claims. The paral-

lels become all the more obvious when one substitutes “understanding the nature of mind through non-conceptualization” for the phrases “seeing conceptions as no conceptions” or “giving up conceptualizations.” Broido therefore overstates the case when he says (p. 31): “There is not the *slightest reason* to think that what is described by Zhang Tshal-pa in this famous work has *anything* to do with quietism or the views of Ho-shang Mo-ho-yen...” (italics mine). Zhang Tshal-pa himself indicates his own awareness that this doctrine might easily be (mis)understood as a one-sided emphasis on the contemplation of the highest reality to the exclusion of other standard religious practices, or as a denial or abrogation of the normal moral imperatives. This is shown for instance by the final lines of the *dKar po chig thub* chapter (31b.5), where he says as a sort of corrective that until the liberating insight *is* gained, there indeed does exist the normal path of practice. On the other hand he teaches that once the *mahāmudrā* insight into non-duality has been attained by the *gcig-car* individual, *then* the practitioner should allow himself or herself to act *ad libitum*, not thinking “This is to be done and this is not to be done.”¹⁰³

Moreover, to find something the least bit similar with the Ho-shang’s views, one merely needs to compare statement G. of the Ho-shang quoted above with the opening verse of Zhang Tshal-pa’s *dKar po chig thub* chapter.¹⁰⁴ There are other striking similarities or parallels too, such as the passage of Mo-ho-yen’s writings devoted to showing how the single practice of non-discrimination brings all six or ten perfections to completion.¹⁰⁵ B. curiously enough has failed to mention even the occurrence of the “panacea” or “self-sufficient single medicine” notions in Mo-ho-yen’s writings, though any comparison must take this into account.¹⁰⁶ It is probably also worth noting that Zhang Tshal-pa in his chapter on the “Fruit” (*’Bras bu’i le’u*, the tenth chapter, p. 104 = 28b) spoke approvingly of the hawk’s or eagle’s (*khra*) sudden swoop from the sky to seize a fruit as like the *gcig-car* individual’s procedure for coming to see the *dharma-makāya*, in contrast to the monkey’s laborious limb-by-limb ascent from below.¹⁰⁷ The example of the sudden descent of the similar *khyung* bird is of course attributed to Mo-ho-yen and criticized in the account Sa-pan gives of the bSam-yas debate in the *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal* (49b.2) based on older

Tibetan materials (it is found in the alternative *sBa bzhed* tradition), and it may have been a Tibetan adaptation or extension of a bird simile that Mo-ho-yen himself used for the *cig-car* realization.¹⁰⁸

Final Arguments

After trying to take into account the new sources mentioned in van der Kuijp's note, B. marshals his final arguments (pp. 49-50). As before, the goal is to prove something concerning Sa-skyā Paṇḍita, namely that it was unjustified for Sa-paṇ to drag Ho-shang Mo-ho-yen into the discussion of the Tibetan *dkar po chig thub*. B. attempts to demonstrate this by enumerating and then exhausting all logical possibilities, viz. by showing that the above is true whether (a) the Chinese used the term similarly to the bKa'-brgyud-pas, or (b) whether they used it differently. But as previously, he overlooks the fact that whether Sa-paṇ's criticisms "stand convicted of polemic"¹⁰⁹ can only be decided by establishing that he doctored or twisted the sources available to him in order to suit his own sectarian ends. One would have to show that he misinterpreted or misused his sources, or that his conclusions were unreasonable given what he could or should have known on the subject. But instead, B. pursues the investigation on a different level, using sources that could not prove anything regarding what materials Sa-paṇ used or whether he used them in good faith.

In other words, though he thinks he is establishing Sa-paṇ's guilt of polemical invective, B. is actually trying just to prove that Sa-paṇ was historically wrong, thus combining and confusing two very distinct things. What B. apparently fails to see is that one can be innocent of malicious, unjustified criticism and still be historically wrong. It is also conceivable that a person be accidentally correct about the historical facts and at the same time be guilty of unprincipled polemic (i.e., if the *available* sources had to be twisted to reach the conclusion that promoted the desired sectarian end). But he evidently believes that there is a necessary connection here between historical correctness and non-polemicizing, and between historical error and unjustified controversy. Hence his unabated concern with showing the error of Sa-paṇ and his overlooking the significance of the sources mentioned by van der Kuijp.

Even the historical facts are not as cut and dried as they are portrayed. B. claims (p. 50, a) to have shown decisively that the Tibetan use of the term *dkar po chig thub* “does not apply directly to the doctrines of Mo-ho-yen.” Yet until he has studied and described in more detail the relevant teachings by Zhang Tshal-pa and Mo-ho-yen, he will not have anything firm to compare and cannot exclude the possible existence of important similarities. He has also not established convincingly his blanket statements that Zhang Tshal-pa’s *dkar po chig thub* was strictly non-Vajrayāna or that it consists “of perfectly orthodox and innocuous limitation principles relating to the paths, stages, and pāramitās....” On p. 35 he has already informed us that (according to Padma-dkar-po) in contrast to the general non-Mantrayāna doctrine of the Hwa-shang, “the Indian *cig-car-ba* doctrine of Tīlopa [and] Nāropa ... is a *va-jrayāna* doctrine.” Was Zhang Tshal-pa’s doctrine in fact different from this one? In his own treatise Zhang Tshal-pa makes it plain that the special method of the *cig-car-ba* that he teaches belongs neither to the usual Pāramitā nor the usual Tantra paths, transcending as it were both (in his view) essentially *rim-gyis-pa* methods.¹¹⁰ After summarizing the *rim-gyis-pa* paths in chapter 4, Zhang Tshal-pa then (11b.3) introduces the practice of the *cig-car-ba* individual, showing it in actual practice to include nevertheless certain Mahāyāna and Mantrayāna elements:

The simultaneist (*cig-char-ba*) individual should gratify a lineage-possessing guru with his body, life, and whatever things he has. Possessing *abhiṣeka*¹¹¹ or “spiritual impelling force” (*byin brlabs*), propelled by *bodhicitta*, and possessing the yoga of [oneself as] the deity, from the very beginning one should cultivate the definitive meaning, *mahāmudrā*. The guru who possesses the elixir of realization will introduce one to the gnosis one possesses, like a treasure in the palm of one’s hands, and though there is nothing to be meditatively cultivated and nothing to do the cultivating, one should not be distracted from the non-cultivated.¹¹²

The main subject of Zhang Tshal-pa’s treatise is of course just this special path, which is “the ultimate of profound paths” (*lam zab mthar thug*). The *dKar po chig thub tu bstan pa* chapter in

particular concerns itself with showing, in the context of spiritual fruition, that this secret¹¹³ and profound path is a singly and instantaneously effective complete spiritual “cure.”¹¹⁴

The only way to understand Zhang Tshal-pa’s doctrines in a more complete and definitive way is to investigate Zhang’s life and writings systematically.¹¹⁵ The mere fact of the existence of a “White Self-sufficient Simple” (*dkar po chig thub*) notion among the mid- or late-12th-century bKa’-brgyud-pa teachings or the mere fact of Zhang Tshal-pa’s studies with a certain early Dwags-po bKa’-brgyud-pa master does not prove anything definite about the origin of the notion or about his own interpretations or uses of it. Reasoning like the following does not lead very far:¹¹⁶

The White Panacea is in the mainstream of the Kagyudpa tradition.

Zhang was a disciple of sGom-pa, who was a disciple of sGam-po-pa.

Therefore Zhang stands squarely in a lineage going back to the Indian *siddhas*.

Therefore the White Panacea belongs to the second diffusion of Buddhism, whereas Chinese influence was felt in the first diffusion, and— the White Panacea’s determinable antecedents are Indian, not Chinese.

Just how “squarely” Zhang stands in the lineage remains to be proved, and it begs the question to assume from the outset that the teachings he received or developed on this point derived purely from the Dwags-po bKa’-brgyud-pa tradition, which in turn is assumed by definition to be completely gSar-ma-pa and purely Indian in origin.¹¹⁷ The whole thing could have been expressed better in a single descriptive sentence: “The notion of a ‘self-sufficient white simple’ (*dkar po chig thub*) was employed in Tibet most notably by the master Zhang Tshal-pa, one of whose basic doctrinal affiliations lay with the Dwags-po bKa’-brgyud-pas (a gSar-ma-pa or New-Translation-Era school), having received Mahāmudrā teachings from sGom-pa Tshul-khrims-snying-po (1116-1169), the nephew and successor of sGam-po-pa whose lineages are held to go back to Indian *siddhas*.” Of course nothing firm can be inferred from

this information alone about Zhang Tshal-pa's particular interpretations of the notion of a soteriological or spiritual self-sufficient (*chig thub*) factor or even, strictly speaking, where it ultimately originated or what influenced his formulation of it.¹¹⁸

I doubt that anybody would nowadays reject out of hand the possible ultimate origin of this or closely related doctrines within the Indian *siddha* movement. But exactly how it was transmitted to Tibet and how it was subsequently developed and interpreted remain unclear. Was the kernel an Indian notion which was extensively recast or reformulated some generations after its arrival in Tibet? If so, what influenced its reinterpretation, and was it accepted and understood in the same way by all later bKa'-brgyud-pa masters? The more radical interpretations of a self-sufficient and simple (*chig thub*) soteriology and the related notion of the *gcig-car-ba*'s all-at-once or instantaneous (*chig chod*) realization not entailing the passing gradually through the paths and stages, for instance, seem not to have been taught so unilaterally by every later "mainstream" bKa'-brgyud-pa master. 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rten-mgon-po (1143-1217), for instance, apparently denied that the progressive succession through the ten stages could be circumvented or that all qualities of Buddhahood could be attained instantaneously by the *yogin* who realizes the nature of mind. As the latter taught in the thirteenth and fourteenth main points of his *dGongs gcig* doctrine: "all paths are traversed through the ten stages" (*lam thams cad sa bcus bgrod*) and "all paths are entered gradually" (*lam thams cad rim gyis 'jug*).¹¹⁹ 'Bri-gung rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa, an authoritative 17th-century commentator of the 'Bri-gung-pa, explained (II 45 = 23a.4):

But as for what is maintained by the Mahāmudrā and rDzogs-pa-chen-po, i.e., that Buddhahood is attained by an instantaneous realization: if there were a path apart from the two—Sūtra and Mantra—and which is other than [a matter of relative] speed as in the previous example [in which the very fast gradual path was merely designated as "instantaneous,"] this would entail a path which was not taught by the Buddha. Consequently the basic doctrine of such a path is difficult to be known by the mind. Therefore the attainment of perfect Bud-

dhahood is achieved through the force of bringing to completion of the two preparatory assemblages [which participate in the working] of moral cause and result.¹²⁰

But, as seen above, Zhang Tshal-pa maintained the radical simultaneist and instantaneous approach (identified here by Rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa as characteristic of the Mahāmudrā and rDzogs-chen), and he referred disparagingly to the opposing notion of gradual realization with the words: "The ignorant one errs who considers the stages and paths [as existing] in the instantaneously decisive Mahāmudrā."¹²¹

Until we know our way safely through the tributaries and sometimes divergent side channels of the key bKa'-brgyud-pa masters' teachings, it is thus dangerous to launch every controversial doctrinal notion immediately into the still uncharted "mainstream." For the present, each teacher or doctrine needs to be studied in his or its own right, especially in a school such as this which otherwise shows a fair number of diverging doctrinal interpretations. It is true that there is no alternative to asking, separately for each system of doctrine or doctrinal notion found in the Tibetan literature: did this come from India? did it come from China? or is it a Tibetan innovation? And having asked ourselves these questions, there is also no alternative but to admit that it is often neither easy nor uncomplicated to give satisfactory answers. The only starting point is carefully to study and describe the doctrine or notion in question in terms of its own system, preferably as it appears within the writings of a single early authoritative master or of a closely linked school. In the present case the notion or notions of a self-sufficient simple spiritual factor or method (*dkar po chig thub*) need to be understood as they were set forth by Zhang Tshal-pa and his tradition, and then they should be traced back to sGam-po-pa and carefully and systematically placed within the framework of the latter's Mahāmudrā teachings. Having described this in detail (and having indicated any important differences of interpretation between those two that may have existed), one could then usefully try to go on to determine how sGam-po-pa reached his own special doctrinal formulations, what he based them on, and what elements, if any, could be justly called his own special emphases or even his "innova-

tions.”¹²² Only then will we be in a better position to understand such traditional statements about the sources of or influences on his teachings as the following by Thu’u-bkwan Chos-kyi-nyi-ma:

Regarding the matchless Dwags-po rin-po-che’s [i.e., sGam-po-pa’s] composition of treatises proving the existence of the [Buddha’s] teaching of emptiness in the *pāramitā* tradition to be Mahāmudrā by quoting many *sūtra* quotations, some have said: “Such words of the *sūtras* do not appear in the canon of the Translated Word (*bka’ gyur*).” Nevertheless [regarding this] my omniscient guru has said: “Those *sūtras* are found within the canon of the Translated Word translated into Chinese. And though they are not worded in exactly identical ways, [passages with] the same sense can be seen also in some other *sūtras* translated into Tibetan, such as the [*sūtra*] *Sangs rgyas mngon sum du bzhugs pa’i mdo*, which is now [available?].¹²³

Or the statement of bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal in his *Phyag chen zla ba’i ’od zer*.¹²⁴

Although in the Practice Lineage down to the great Reverend [Mi-la] they mainly cultivated in meditation the instructions of the Mantrayāna, and taught the practical instructions on the Mahāmudrā appropriately at the times of [instructions on] Inner Heat and Luminous Awareness, nevertheless that Lord sGam-po-pa, motivated by unlimited compassion, singled out and brought to the fore this instruction of the Essential Sense, the Mahāmudrā, in order that all disciples—high and low—could easily realize [it]. And by [his] so teaching it, [this Mahāmudrā instruction] increased very much and became widespread, and it became the sole path used by all people of fortunate endowments.

As long as a Tibetan school maintains the primacy of received tradition—i.e., as long as the primary duty of a religious teacher is held to be the faithful realization, transmitting and defending of received tradition—for so long will the question of authentic, historically demonstrable Indian origins remain very important for its followers. But if, on the other hand, the tradition derives from a new revelation or major doctrinal development, or if it affirms in an iconoclastic spirit the

primacy of direct experience, then of course a different approach to the questions of “origins” and “traditionalism” may also be justifiable for it. One of the great interests of the bKa’-brgyud-pa tradition is how its masters attempted in different ways to reach their own balance between the claims of received tradition and immediate experience, though of course a tension between these two poles can also be found to greater or lesser degrees in all the Tibetan schools and indeed probably among all living religious traditions.

Conclusions

No tradition-minded follower of the Dwags-po bKa’-brgyud-pa can be blamed for wanting to show that the historical thesis of Sa-pan—namely, that there was a historical connection between the Hwa-shang Mo-ho-yen’s doctrine and the 12th-century Mahāmudrā’s *gcig-car-ba* teachings through the reading of older texts recovered from caches¹²⁵—was wrong, or at least for trying to show that it cannot be directly substantiated by the available evidence. But to exclude this possibility once and for all or to establish definitively the origins of the Mahāmudrā simultaneist doctrine will require a much more detailed knowledge of the history of Tibetan Buddhism from the 9th through the 12th centuries (and of its interactions with Indian and Chinese Buddhism) than what we are likely to possess for some time.¹²⁶ Therefore, at present the most fruitful approach for illuminating this problem will probably be a comparative one, an attempt to describe and gauge the most salient similarities and differences between the main traditions involved. One would have to begin by identifying and describing the key terms and doctrines called into question and then tracing them (and other closely related terms, examples, citations and doctrinal formulations) in all the pertinent writings that are available, including if possible even texts from early Tibetan traditions whose possible roles as intermediaries in the transmission have yet to be clarified or excluded. The broader thematic discussions and typological comparisons must be based at every step upon a careful and accurate philological and historical treatment of the terms and texts.

But if, on the other hand, the main objective is to demonstrate something about how Sa-paṅ himself reached his conclusions or what motivated his writings, this would entail a somewhat different choice of materials. To establish how Sa-paṅ (rightly or wrongly) understood the simple and self-sufficient (*chig thub*) soteriology ascribed to the 8th-century Chinese master Mo-ho-yen or to disprove any links between whatever Sa-paṅ should have understood and the “White Self-sufficient Simple” (*dkar po chig thub*) notion of certain 12th-century bKa’-brgyud-pas, the researcher will have to examine in detail the sources immediately bearing on this. The only way to proceed here, even if the sole motive is to “refute” Sa-paṅ, would be to go through the relevant passages in Sa-paṅ’s works and the early historical sources he cites or may have used, and to compare them with what the great early bKa’-brgyud-pa masters such as sGam-po-pa and Zhang Tshal-pa said on this and closely related subjects. Any other method could not yield satisfactory results.

These historical and doctrinal problems have been discussed within the Tibetan tradition for generations, and it is unlikely that foreign scholars will suddenly stumble upon easy solutions to them. Moreover, it has to be admitted that from the point of view of modern scholarship, both Sa-skyā Paṅḍita and Padma-dkar-po have sometimes oversimplified things in the course of their critical discussions. Nevertheless, their criticisms can be very useful for modern scholars if used judiciously, for they isolate and highlight many of the key concepts and doctrinal issues that were considered essential but that were interpreted differently by the different schools and masters. If used incautiously, however, such writings can misinform the reader because they seldom show the complete context of a controversial remark or notion, and therefore without additional confirmation from the writings of the criticized tradition itself they should never be trusted unconditionally as telling the whole story.

Obviously such controversial writings can be dangerous in the hands of any scholar who is not intimately familiar with both traditions or who is not scrupulously trying to avoid using them one-sidedly. But the intrinsic interest and importance of the polemical treatises are so great that modern scholars cannot simply shun these works like some sort of Pandora’s box.

Regardless of the formidable difficulties they entail and despite the new controversies they may occasionally provoke, such writings when carefully studied can also reveal like nothing else the multifaceted complexity and diverse richness that have always been characteristic of Tibetan Buddhism.

Notes

1. B. Barton, *Select.* (1849), p. 63, as quoted in the Oxford English Dictionary under the entry "polemical." A *galenical* is a remedy such as the 2nd-century Greek physician Galen prescribed, e.g., a vegetable simple.

2. For a survey of some of these, see D. Jackson (1983).

3. R. Jackson (1982), van der Kuijp (1986), and Broido (1987). A more recent discussion of several of the same points is found in the recent book of Karmay (1988), pp. 197-200. The first brief discussion of the *dkar po chig thub* controversy in Western scholarship was given by Stein (1971), a recent English translation of which has also appeared. See now Stein (1987), p. 58, n. 15. See also D. Seyfort Ruegg (1989), which appeared too late to be cited in detail below, but which contains many relevant discussions.

4. In later publications I hope to study in more detail the aims and methods of Sa-paṅ's own scholarship, and to take a closer look at the conclusions he reached regarding the subjects dealt with in the above-mentioned three articles.

5. R. Jackson (1982).

6. The reasoning in (a) and (b) that there was no Chinese *school* called "the White Panacea" either in bSam-yas or China is not quite to the point because *dkar po chig thub* was not a school name but rather a doctrinal notion.

7. This was noted by van der Kuijp (1986), p. 151.

8. Sa-paṅ lists four sources in his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, pp. 25.3.6 and 25.4.1, and also three in his *sKyes bu dam pa*, p. 332.4. See D. Jackson (1987), pp. 402f. That three sources were mentioned in the latter text was noticed already by Vostrikov (1970), p. 25, n. 55.

9. Van der Kuijp (1986), pp. 148f.

10. Demiéville (1952), pp. 122f. See also Gómez (1983), p. 92, quoting the same passage from the *Ching li chüeh*, p. 146b:

According to the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, there is a certain medicinal herb that will cure all diseases in those who take it. It is the same with this absence of reflection and inspection.

This passage had previously been translated into English in E. Conze, *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: 1959), p. 217. The term Mo-ho-yen uses is not, however, a direct equivalent of *dkar po chig thub*, though he uses it in the sense of a panacea and single, self-sufficient medicine. Cf. Broido (1987), pp. 51f, whose mention of these references was not taken from Demiéville (1952) or Gómez (1983), but rather was drawn from the Jordan Lectures given by Professor D. Seyfort Ruegg at SOAS in the Spring of 1987, the published version of which has now appeared (D. Seyfort Ruegg [1989]).

11. Thu'u-bkwan refers to Sa-skya Paṇḍita in this same chapter for instance as "Jam-mgon Sa-pan" on p. 170.1 (*kha* 25b).

12. R. Jackson seems to have read *sems rtog / brtags* instead of *sems rtogs*, and also *sems ngo sprod* instead of *sems ngo 'phrod*. Sa-pan understands the Chinese masters to have taught an understanding of the mind gained through a method which avoided conceptualizing and intellectual examining. It is interesting to note that *myi rtog pa* in the Tun Huang texts can mean "no-examining" (as a translation of the Chinese *pu kuan*). See Broughton (1983), pp. 66, n. 79. See also the more general comments of Gómez (1983a), p. 398, on *rnam par mi rtog pa* (Skt. *nirvikalpa* or *avikalpa*).

13. Cf. the comments of Thu'u-bkwan, p. 170.4 (*kha* 25b.4), which portray these criticisms as having been so directed, and therefore reject them as unsatisfactory: *ci yang yid la mi byed pa'i phyogs ni min par gsal bas sdom gsum gyi dgag pa rnam thub chod kyi gsung du mngon no*. Sa-pan never seems to mention specifically that the Tibetan *dkar po chig thub* involved the lack of "mentation" (*manasi-kāra*, *yid la byed pa*), but uses instead such terms as "non-discursiveness" (*nirvikalpa*: *rnam par mi rtog pa*) even when characterizing the Hwa-shang's doctrine in his presentation of the traditional history of the bSam-yas debate. In the above-mentioned passage, Thu'u-bkwan tries to exculpate Zhang precisely because this doctrine of "complete non-mentation" (*ci yang yid la mi byed pa*) is not to be found in Zhang's treatise. It was a typical later bKa'-brgyud-pa understanding that Sa-pan was "hostile" especially to Maitrīpāda's non-mentation cycle. See Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1257, who translates Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, p. 11.3 (6a.3). Here other bKa'-gdams-pas are also said to have shared this basically negative attitude, which Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje attributed originally to Grolung-pa's criticisms of the *Yid la mi byed pa* as not being Madhyamaka.

Cf. Lopez (1988), p. 266, who translates lCang-skya Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje's discussion of this topic as follows: "The term 'One Pure Power' (*dKar-po-chig-thub*) was not disseminated widely after Shang-tsel-ba (Zhang-tshal-pa) who wrote a treatise which is concerned mainly with the One Pure Power. It appears that this was the main object refuted by Mañjunātha Sa-gya Paṇḍita. Later many of our own and other [sects] refuted this position. If Shang-tsel-ba's own assertion rests in the position that mind is not to be directed to anything, then these refutations are correct; I do not wish to elaborate on it in detail."

With reference to strictly "non-discursive" meditation, cf. the criticism of this by Zhang, *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug*, p. 78.2, and that of sGam-po-pa, vol. 2, p. 111.6, who criticizes those who would stop all discursive thought (*rtog pa*): *la las rtog pa byung tshad bkag nas rtog med la blo dril 'jog pa la yon tan du blta ste / des lam gcod mi nus ye shes phye bo bya ba yin /*. On the other hand, within the lNga ldan system for instance the main theory to be cultivated and realized was called specifically the *mi rtog pa'i lta ba*.

14. Van der Kuijp (1986). He had already referred to some aspects of this problem in a footnote to his published dissertation (1983), p. 304, n. 303, though wrongly identifying the *dkar po chig thub* with the *dGongs gcig*.

15. Though dPa'-bo gTsong-lag-phreng-ba retells this tradition, he did not accept it as genuine. See his *Chos 'byung*, vol. 1, p. 397 (*ja* 122a), and also Karmay (1988), p. 200, n. 112.

16. Van der Kuijp here has evidently assumed that the section in the *sBa bzhed* corresponding to Sa-pan's account goes back to the *phyi-dar* period, whereas all we can safely say at present is that it had appeared by the mid- or late-12th century. Its importance is thus not as a "smoking gun" proving the historical link that Sa-pan alleged to exist between the traditions. Rather, it (together with Myang-ral's history) shows primarily that Sa-pan's account was based on a historical tradition which was already established in his day and was not fabricated by him. On the other hand, we cannot exclude the possibility that the account was first set down considerably earlier than the late-12th century, for it contains elements that can be traced to still older sources. Cf. also Karmay (1988), p. 200, who dates the seeming origin of this account of the debate to the eleventh century, and "most probably prior to sGam-po-pa's elaboration of his Phyag chen theory," though he does not explain his basis for pushing this dating back another century.

17. There is nothing in van der Kuijp's straightforward remarks in this article that could be considered "an intemperate attack on [R.] Jackson's conclusions" (cf. Broido [1987], p. 50).

18. Broido (1987).

19. In Stein (1987), p. 58, n. 15, the English translation for the term is given as: "the white one capable of acting alone (once only?)," which is closer to the Tibetan. See also Karmay (1988), p. 197: "the white one that has power of itself." Lhalungpa (1986), p. 439, n. 19, translated it as "omnipotent white path," and Lopez (1987), p. 266, as the "One Pure Power."

For a curious modern occurrence of the term, see the Tibetan foreword by H. H. the Dalai Lama to the Japanese publication Hiroki Fujika, *Tibetan Buddhist Art* (Tokyo: Hakushuisha Publishing Co., 1984), p. 2, where the following sentence occurs: *nyi hong dang hi ma la ya'i ri rgyud kyi yul dang/ rgyal khams rnam sa thag ring yang thub bstan la dad snang dkar po chig thub kyi ngang tshul la ngo mtshar chen po thob byung*. His Holiness probably did not expect anyone to catch this allusion.

20. The word *simple* as a noun is defined in *Chambers 20th Century Dictionary* (Edinburgh: 1983) as "a simple person (also collectively) or thing: a medicine of one constituent: hence a medicinal herb." In *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, Second Edition (Cleveland & New York: 1971), the second definition for *simple* as a noun is: "a medicinal herb or medicine obtained from a herb: so called because each vegetable was supposed to possess its particular virtue and therefore to constitute a simple remedy." Some other dictionaries mark the medical meanings as archaisms.

21. dBang-'dus, *Bod gangs can pa'i gso ba rig pa'i dpal ldan rgyud bzhi sogs kyi brda dang dka' gnad 'ga' zhig bkrol tshig mdzod g.yu thog dgongs rgyan*, p. 157: *chig thub sman/ sbyor sde dang grogs sogs la bltos ma dgos par gcig gis nad 'joms thub pa'i nus pa ldan pa'i sman gyi ming ste/*. This information was drawn from De'u-dmar dge-bshes, as dBang-'dus goes on to state (*ibid.*): *de'u dmar dge bshes bstan 'dzin phun tshogs kyis mdzad pa'i gso rig skor gyi ming tshig nyer mkho'i don gsal las/*

chig thub ces pa brda rnying ste/ /

brda gzar rnam la gcig thub 'byung/ /

sbyor sde grogs sogs ma bltos par/ /

gcig gis nad 'joms sman gyi ming / /
zhes gsungs pa ltar ro / .

Thus the *dkar po chig thub* as a drug was some “simple,” i.e., a medicine of one constituent; perhaps a medicinal herb or vegetable simple.

22. Thu'u-bkwan Chos-kyi-nyi-ma, p. 171.4 (*kha* 26a.4): *bka' brgyud gong ma rnams kyis phyag rgya chen po bsgom pa la dkar po chig thub ces gsungs pa yang mnyug sems bde ba chen po 'i ngo bor skyes pas gnas lugs bsgom pa gcig pus mthar thug gi 'bras bu thob par 'gyur pa la dgongs pa yin la / .*

23. rDo-rje-shes-rab (fl. 13th c.), *Khyad par lta bsgom spyod pa'i tshoms. [dGongs gcig 'grel pa rdo shes ma], dGongs gcig yig cha*, vol. 2, p. 407 (22b): *rje sgam po pas sman la dpe byas nas nga'i sems kyi ngo bo mthong ba 'di dkar po gcig thub bya ba yin gsung / de la mkhas pa chen po 'ga' zhig gi zhal nas /*

khyed kyi dkar po gcig thub la / /
sems bskyed bsngo ba dgos mi dgos / /
dgos na cig thub gsum du 'gyur / /
gsung ste / dkar po cig thub las gzhan pa'i [b]sngo ba sems bskyed med par byas kyang chog kham s gsum gyi 'khor ba las thar pa'i ngos nas / dkar po cig thub rkyang du byas kyang chog gsung / / .

A similar quotation is given by Shākya-mchog-ldan, *Legs bshad gser gyi thur ma*, Collected Works, vol. 7, p. 85 (43a). The points are basically the same, though they are worded differently: *dgongs gcig tu / rje sgam po pas / sman la dper mdzad nas / nga'i sems nyid rtogs pa 'di sman dkar po gcig thub dang 'dra / de la mkhas pa chen po gcig gis rgol ba na / khyod kyi dkar po gcig thub de la bsngo ba dang sems skyed dgos sam mi dgos zer ba la / gcig thub kyi ngos nas mi dgos byas kyang chog / 'khor ba las thar pa rkyang pa'i ngos nas gcig thub yin zer ba byas kyang chog.*

24. Zhang Tshal-pa, *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug*, p. 53 (3a):

rang sems nges rtogs mya ngan 'das pa yi / /
ye shes mtha' yas bde ba chen por shar / /
de phyir ma lus rang gi sems nyid las / /
'phros phyir rang sems chos nyid ngo shes na / /
sems can kun gyi chos nyid shes par 'gyur / /
de shes mya ngan 'das sogs chos kun shes / /
chos kun yongs shes kham s gsum kun las 'das / /
gcig shes pas ni kun la mkhas par 'gyur / /
rtsa ba 'gyel bas lo 'dab ngang gis 'gyel / /
de phyir rang sems gcig pu gtan la dbab / /

Cf. I. halungpa (1986), p. 212. On the similar stressing of the need to establish all appearances as mind (*snang ba sems su sgrub pa*) as a preliminary stage of meditation in the Sa-skyapa and other pre-dGe-lugs-pa schools, see D. Jackson (1987), p. 427, n. 144.

25. Zhang Tshal-pa, p. 107.5 (30a.5):

rang sems rtogs pa'i skad cig mar / /
dkar po 'i yon tan ma lus pa / /
bsgrub pa med par dus gcig rdzogs / /

Probably there is a word play here, since the word *dkar po* appears once, and *cig / gcig* appears twice. Here the element *dkar po* is a quality of what comes to completion, instead of the agent effecting that, and *cig / gcig* forms a part of both the ideas of “an instant” *skad cig ma* and “simultaneous” *dus gcig*.

26. It is interesting to note that Sa-pan in his *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 320.3.3 (na 48a.3), records the existence in the early 1200s of a distinct tradition of practical instructions on the simultaneous realization of Buddhahood which had been formulated apparently in connection with this passage of the *Abhisamayālamkāra*, referring to it as “*skabs brgyad cig char bsgom pa*.”

27. Zhang Tshal-pa, p. 110.5 (31b.5):

ji srid bdag 'dzin yod kyi bar / /

lta sgom spyod 'bras dam tshig yod / /

las dang las kyi nram smin yod / /

sdig spangs bsod nams bsag pa gces / /

28. The question of whether this “Buddhahood” is in fact real Buddhahood is addressed by sGam-po-pa in his *Lam rim mdor bsdus*, who teaches there that it is not yet actual Buddhahood but it is present as a full potentiality which is prevented from appearing by the presence of the body which is the fruit of previous *karma*. Nevertheless it will actualize in the intermediate stage (*bar do*) immediately after death. See his *Collected Works*, vol. 2, p. 240.3. (This “graduated” teaching also includes mention of the *rnal 'byor bzhi*.)

sGam-po-pa explains this idea by making use of the metaphors of the lion cub or the eagle or *garuḍa* chick (*khyung phrug*) that springs forth fully developed at birth, but which until its birth is kept sealed up by the womb or egg (240.4). See also his *Dus gsum*, Works, vol. 1, p. 407.3: *yon tan thams cad nam mngon du byed ce na / lus rgya dang bral ba'i dus su'o / /*. Later he qualifies and explains (p. 407.7): *chos nyid rtogs pa'i phyir sangs rgyas yin par 'dra yang yon tan mi mnyam te / ...*

sGam-po-pa on occasion does portray the rDzogs-chen as occupying a parallel doctrinal position to the Mahāmudrā as a practical instruction (*man ngag*) of the Mantrayāna *rdzogs rim*, and on occasion even seems to identify the two. See his *Tshogs bshad legs mdzes ma*, p.220.2 and his *Tshogs chos yon tan phun tshogs*, p. 269.1. In the first source, p. 220.7, he characterized the Mahāmudrā as *phyag chen dri med zang thal*. On the other hand, in his *Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan*, p. 438-39, he distanced himself from what he portrays as the more extreme *cig-car-ba* doctrines of the rDzogs-pa chen-po. According to a characterization of the rDzogs-chen attributed to the dge-bshes brGya-yon-bdag appearing just before in the same work (p. 438.1), the rDzogs-chen-pa typically maintained: “If you attain realization (*rtogs*) in the morning, you awaken to Buddhahood in the morning; if you attain realization in the evening, you awaken to Buddhahood in the evening” (*nang rtogs na nang sangs rgya / nub rtogs na nub sangs rgya*). sGam-po-pa maintains that there are three paths (Pāramitāyāna, Mantra and Mahāmudrā), and also two individuals (*rim-gyis-pa* and *cig-car-ba*), but says that the latter approach is extremely difficult and that he considers himself a “gradualist” (*rim-gyis-pa*). He goes on to relate that once when Mi-la ras-pa was in the company of many people sGam-po-pa asked him what rDzogs-chen was like, to which Mi-la replied that his teacher Mar-pa had said: “Though some people say it is not the *Dharma* (*chos men pa*), that is not [so], but it is a *dharma* belonging to the sixth or seventh *bhūmi* and above.” Then [Mi-la] pointed to a little boy of about five years of age and said, “The followers of the rDzogs-chen are like him. It is like this child saying that he has the powers of a twenty-five-year-old [adult]. The followers of the rDzogs-chen too speak of ‘Buddhahood now,’ but it is not really meaningful.” (*Chos men pa* is apparently a misspelling

for *chos min pa*, and presumably not a corruption based on *ston min pa*, which was the traditional Tibetan rendering of the Chinese equivalent for “cig-car”, i.e., *tun men*; see also Padma-dkar-po, *Chos 'byung*, p. 391 [*ka cha* 196a.5], where *men* occurs instead of *min*: *de la rgya men bod men zer skyon gtong te / .*)

The same image of the *khyung* chick in its shell is used by Zhang Tshal-pa in his *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug* (p. 91 = 22a) in connection with the attainment of *sgom med*, the fourth and ultimate stage in the fourfold system of the *rnal 'byor bzhi*. There he teaches:

The capacities of the *khyung* come to completion within the egg-shell. When it leaves the egg-shell, it flies in the heights of the sky. The excellent qualities of the three Bodies (*kāya*) are complete within the mind. The [powers of working] for the benefit of others arise after the [constraining] “seal” of the body has been destroyed [at death].

Zhang stresses the instantaneous nature of the attainment of *mahāmudrā* through his use of the term *chig chod*, using the simile of a lamp in darkness (whose light instantly fills the darkness). He also uses the simile of the early morning sun (103.5 = 28a), saying that even though immediately upon the attainment of the realization of non-duality sufferings are not removed and the powers or capacities of the enlightened qualities do not arise, still one should not criticize it as not being the Path of Seeing. For even though in the morning immediately after sunrise the sun does not have the power capable of melting ice and does not warm the earth and stones, one should not deprecate it as not being the sun. Cf. the use of the example of the sun's sudden appearance in the morning but its gradual melting of the frost as the second example for sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation used by the Ch'an master Kuei-feng Tsung-mi (780-841). See Gregory (1987), p. 286.

To stress that the *mahāmudrā* realization entails a radically altered view of causation and conceptually conceived reality, Zhang compares the instantaneously effective *mahāmudrā* to the fruit of the breadfruit tree (which arises simultaneously with the growth of the parent tree, and for which the standard categories of cause and effect thus do not apply), stating:

The instantaneously effective *mahāmudrā*, like the fruit of the breadfruit [tree], is simultaneous in cause and effect, and [in it,] phenomenal marks dissolve of themselves.

He goes on (p. 104 = 28b.4) to mention the metaphor of the sudden descent of the hawks (*khra*) from above, in contrast with the gradual limb-by-limb ascent of the monkeys from below. Elsewhere (p. 83.4) he uses the image of the monkey running up and down the tree as a symbol for mental activities against the background of the unchanging mind.

The 16th-century bKa'-brgyud-pa master bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal mentions the example of the lion cub and *khyung* chick while defending the notion that the appearance of enlightened qualities can be delayed, in reply to a criticism of this notion (by Sa-paṅ). He similarly quotes lines from Zhang Tshal-pa. See Lhalungpa (1986), pp. 406f; bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, pp. 375b-376a. I have not yet been able to find a defence of this notion by Padma-dkar-po.

The criticism by Sa-paṅ is found in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 309.4.6 (*na* 26b), in connection with a criticism of those who would identify minor medita-

tive attainments or realizations as the *ārya's* "path of seeing" (*mthong lam*), no doubt referring to the passage of Zhang just discussed. He denies that the explanation in terms of the *garuḍa's* egg is found in any [authentic] *sūtra* or *tantra* of the Mahāyāna, and finds the whole notion strange, like someone saying that the rays of the sun which rises today will not come into being until tomorrow morning.

These images and notions entered Tibetan Buddhism at an early stage, and according to gNubs Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes (10th c.?), they were accepted and used by the tantric tradition of the (rNying-ma) *Mahāyogā*, as well as by the early rDzogs-chen, apparently. In the *bSam gtan mig sgron's* chapter devoted to the *Mahāyoga*, the two ways of attaining *nirvāṇa* are discussed. After mentioning a number of early Tibetan masters who attained enlightenment without leaving their body, Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes mentions the attainment of liberation immediately after death (p. 278 = 179b). The simile of the *khyung* and lion is said in a (later?) explanatory note to be "stated in numerous scriptures of the Mantra[yāna]" (*gsang sngags kyi bka' du ma las 'byung*). The simile of the lion-cub alone is mentioned two folios later (p. 281 = 141a) in two quotations, in connection with the special points of superiority of the Mantra over the (*sūtra*-based) *Madhyamaka*. The works quoted are the [*Dris lan*] *lNga bcu pa* and the [*Las kyi Me long*, which I have yet to identify.

A fundamental passage in which these similes are employed is quoted at great length by Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes in an earlier section of his work (p. 40 = 20b.6). Here not only the *khyung* chick and lion cub are mentioned, but also the metaphor of the *kalaviṅka* bird, which can sing while yet in its egg. In a (later?) explanatory annotation, this quotation is said to be from the '*Od srungs le'u*, presumably referring to section 84 of the *Kāśyapa-parivarta Sūtra* where the *kalaviṅka* bird image is indeed employed in a related sense.

The *khyung* and lion are also used as images of fearlessness by Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes. The 8th-century Tibetan Ch'an master sBa Shang-shing is also said in the rNying-ma *gter-ma bKa' thang sde lnga* to have used a lion simile similarly. See G. Tucci (1958), p. 73, l. 16-19 (*Minor Buddhist Texts II*), as cited also by J. Broughton (1983), p. 54, n. 24.

The example of the perfectly developed *garuḍa* or eagle (*khyung chen*) chick within the egg is also found in a rDzogs-chen *tantra*, *lTa ba ye shes gting rdzogs kyi rgyud* (p. 52), here explaining how Buddhahood is present in a full potential form but kept from manifesting by the present body: *dus ni da lta byung ba lus kyi[s] sgribs/ dper na khyung chen sgong nga'i nang na gshog rgyas kyang/ sgo nga ma chag [bar] 'phur mi nus pa bzhin/*. (Cited by Karmay [1988], p. 185, n. 58.)

These specific images may well have entered early Tibetan Buddhist tradition through the writings and teachings of Ch'an masters such as Mo-ho-yen. In one of the Tibetan fragments of the latter's writings recovered from Tun Huang (Stein 709, second fragment, f. 9a), Mo-ho-yen uses precisely the similes of a lion cub and a special bird as two of the very few comparisons that are suitable for his method, which yields simultaneous and immediate realization (another acceptable simile being that of a panacea, as he states in another source). Gómez (1983), p. 116, has translated the relevant passage: "This may be compared to the lion cub that even before it has opened its eyes brings terror

to the other animals, or to the young of the *kalavinka* bird who upon leaving their eggs are able to fly like their mother. The qualities of this contemplation cannot be easily compared with other things in this world.”

29. Broido seems to understand the phrase *dbyings las mi 'da' ba'i don* as expressing the idea “not going beyond completeness.” sGam-po-pa (Works, vol. 2, p. 375.7) defines the term *dbyings* as “the defining mark [or true nature] of all factors of existence” (*chos thams cad kyi mtshan nyid*), i.e., what is known in the insight into ultimate reality. The term is here paired and contrasted with “gnosis” (*ye shes*), which he defines as “the pure nature of mind, which is luminous” (*sems nyid rnam par dag pa 'od gsal ba*).

The idea of “completeness” is of course an essential aspect of the notion of *chig thub*: it is something that suffices alone to effect the complete result. See also Broido (p. 32), who states: “The Tibetans emphasize the notion of ‘not going beyond’ as part of ‘seal.’” Cf. sGam-po-pa, Works, vol. 2, p. 103.7: *rang gi sems ma bcos pa de nyid rtogs na / snang grags kyi chos thams cad de'i ngo bo las ma 'das pa'o / de rtogs nas de las gzhan pa'i chos [104] sku cig yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyis rgyud rnam su / bla ma rje btsun grub pa thob pa rnam kyis kyang / de las ma gzigs pa yin /*. Cf. also the idea of completeness expressed through the word *zin* in the rDzogs-chen system.

30. Zhang Tshal-pa, p. 99.5 (26a.5):

dam tshig ji ltar bsrung zhe na / /
dang po'i las pa'i dus tshod du / /
so sor thar pa'i sdom pa sogs / /
bde gshegs bla ma'i bka' mi bcag / / (1)
rtsa rlung bsgom pa'i dus tshod du / /
bde drod mi mthun phyogs rnam spang / /
mi rlog nyams myong shar gyur nas / /
ting 'dzin 'gal rkyen thams cad spang / / (2)
rang sems ngo bo mthong gyur nas / /
sems la gnod pa thams cad spang / /
gnyis med rlogs pa shar nas ni / /
ched du bya ba thams cad spang / / (3)
kun la rang sems dpang por zhog / /
dbyings las mi [26b] 'da'i don rtogs nas / /
srung du med de dam tshig mchog / /
dkar po gcig thub bya ba yin / / (4)
dam tshig le'u ste dgu pa'o / / /

The first two verses of this short ninth chapter of Zhang's treatise could also be translated:

How are the pledges to be observed? At the time of [being] a beginner, one should not break the command of the Tathāgata-Guru [regarding] the vows such as the *pratimokṣa* [monastic discipline]. (1)

At the time of cultivating the “channels” (*rtsa*) and “winds” (*rlung*), one should abandon all things not conducive to bliss and heat. After the experience of non-conceptualizing (*mi rlog*) has arisen, one should avoid all factors inimical to meditative absorptions (*samādhi*). (2)

Zhang's comment thus occurs in a system of practice in which the monastic vows are taken to be mainly the concern of "beginners." The system includes the realization of: special tantric yogas, the experience of non-conceptualization, the nature of one's own mind, non-duality, and the "not going beyond the true nature of things" (*dbyings las mi 'da' ba'i don*).

31. Cf. sGam-po-pa, *Lam rim mdor bsodus*, p. 240.2, whose explanation of the *sgom med rnal 'byor* would seem to correspond to the *srung du med* referred to by Zhang: *chos thams cad mnyam pa nyid du thag chod pas / spang bya spang du med / gnyen po [b]sten du med / sangs rgyas sgrub tu med / 'khor ba spang du med / bsgom bya sgom byed med par 'byung ste / de nyid sgom med kyi rnal 'byor bya ba yin no / / de tsa na rang gi sems kho nar 'dug pas . . .*

32. This apparently derives from the famous analogy of the spiritual path as the searching for and finding of an elephant or ox (*glang po*), as mentioned by sGam-po-pa, *rJe phag mo gru pa'i zhus lan*, p. 489.3: *glang po rnyed nas rjes mi btsal*.

The way that he reached the second part of thesis C., namely that Padma-dkar-po accepts the thesis "expressed by Zhang Tshal-pa," was thus apparently to look elsewhere in Zhang Tshal-pa to find something that accorded better with his understanding of Padma-dkar-po. The latter does also express elsewhere the idea of "self-sufficiency" or "single efficaciousness" and B. (p. 37) translates, for instance: "So at the time of understanding there is no need to consider any other *dharma* than *mahāmudrā*."

33. Zhang Tshal-pa, *Writings*, p. 711.7:

*gang gis bla [712] ma mnyes byed pa / /
gang la'ang mi ltos phun sum 'tshogs / /
dkar po chig thub chen po yin / /*

In this work Zhang stresses the need for the disciple's previous preparation and for the guru's grace, and says (p. 705.7-706.1) that when through those conditions one realizes the ultimate reality of one's own mind (*rang gi sems kyiis [= kyi] de kho na nyid rtogs par gyur na*), one goes in that very moment to the highest level of all the Buddhas (*dus gsum gyis sangs rgyas thams cad kyi go 'phang mchog skad cig de nyid la bsgrod par byed do / /*). Others of less merit, however, will not understand this doctrine, and therefore it is important to keep it very secret, he adds.

Very similar teachings are expressed in his *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug*, pp. 78.6-79.1 (15b-16a), though here two factors are stressed as necessary for the attainment of realization: the teacher's grace and the student's previously acquired merit. Later, on p. 96 (24b.1), he stresses the master's grace as the singly decisive factor: *bla ma'i byin brlabs 'ba' zhig yin / /*. Zhang devoted another brief treatise to the importance of the guru's grace: *gNad kyi man ngag*, *Writings*, pp. 696.7-703.5, and stresses the same point in his *Mal dbu dkar la gdams pa*, p. 656.4.

34. One occurrence of the term in sGam-po-pa's writings is in the latter's reply to the questions of his learned Khams-pa disciple Phag-mo-gru-pa, *rJe phag mo gru pa'i zhus lan*, p. 471.7. There he speaks of the realization he teaches as being utterly beyond the range of intellectual understanding (being "unknown even by a greatly learned man or *paṇḍita*") and that it is only arises through the grace of the teacher who transmits it non-verbally. He adds: "When it is born, since this has become a White Self-sufficient Simple, i.e., full liberation through

knowing one thing, Buddha[hood] is acquired in oneself." The Tibetan reads: *'di mkhas pa paṇḍitas kyang mi shes / shes rab kyis mi rtogs / rtog ge ba'i spyod yul ma yin /* [p. 472] [*sgom don?* (unclear)] *rgyud la skye ba la bla ma rtogs ldan cig la slob mas mos gus byas byin brlabs kyis stobs kyis lshig dang bral ba blo'i yul las 'das pa las rab 'char te / ngo bo 'phags pa klu sgrub la sogs pa mkhas pa rnam's kyang khas len dang bral ba yin te / ...* [canonical quotations follow]

... *de skyes pa'i dus na / dkar po cig thub cig shes kun grol du song bas / sangs rgyas rang la rnyed /*

On the subject of the limitations of the "paṇḍita's" approach, which uses concepts and words, cf. also the *Tshogs chos chen mo* (included in sGam-po-pa's works but which was not set down in its final form until some generations after sGam-po-pa by dPal Shes-rab-gzhon-nu), p. 348.5 (re: *tha mal gyi shes pa*): *de rtogs na paṇḍita rig pa'i gnas lnga la mkhas pa bas kyang yon tan che / paṇḍita ni don sphyi'i rnam pa yul du byed / sgra mishan nyid du byed pa yin / kun shes cig bdugs bya ba yin / 'di rtogs na cig shes kun la mkhas pa bya ba yin /*

The term *dkar po chig thub* appears in sGam-po-pa's writings a second time in the latter's first words in his *Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan*, p. 376.7. Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa had received the instructions from sGam-po-pa and had experienced after a few days of meditating an experience of great lucidity, and he had no idea where it had come from. sGam-po-pa advised him: "That is the 'White Self-sufficient Simple.' Such will always occur tomorrow, the next day, and later, and therefore you should use a warm curtain behind you, wear thin clothing, and so meditate. You will probably be able to bind consciousness (*shes pa*) to your service." Tib.: *de dkar po chig thub bya ba yin gsung / sang gnangs dang dus physis rtag tu de tsug 'ong ba yin pas rgyab yol dro bar gyis / gos bsrab par gyis las [= la?] bsgoms dang / shes pa [b]kol tu blub par 'dug gis gsung /*

sGam-po-pa's third usage of the term is also in his *Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan*, p. 380.2. In this context Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa has requested explanations of the *Thabs lam*. sGam-po-pa replies by stressing the sufficiency of what he always teaches (*kun tu bshad pa des chog*), adding: "If you too are able to cultivate it still more, it will suffice to foster just that" (*khyed rang yang da rung bsgom nus na de skyangs pas chog par 'dug*). Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa asks: "If I am able to cultivate [it], will that suffice?" (*bsgom nus na des chog gam*). rJe sGam-po-pa answers: "The 'White Self-sufficient Single' refers to that. I too have nothing besides that" (*dkar po cig thub de la byed pa yin / nga la yang de las med*). Cf. also his *Collected Works*, vol. 2, p. 327.5: *nga la blta rgyu sems nyid gcig pu las med / /*

The same conception, phrased as *gcig shes kun la mkhas pa*, is found in a song of Mi-la ras-pa as recorded in the biography by gTsang-smyon Heruka (1452-1507). See Karmay (1988), p. 198. For this term in sGam-po-pa, see also for instance his *Tshogs chos chen mo*, p. 348, as quoted previously in this note, and the *Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan*, p. 452.6.

The 13th-century 'Bri-gung bKa'-brgyud-pa commentator rDo-rje-shes-rab, as quoted in note 23, specified in his *dGongs gcig 'grel pa rdo shes ma* that the *dkar po chig thub* was identified by sGam-po-pa precisely with "seeing" or "realizing" the nature of mind.

35. Padma-dkar-po, *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, 48a.2: *de bas na blo ngor sbyang gzhi sbyong byed sbyangs 'bras ky'i go rim yang rigs la / gnas tshul la de lta bu gang yang*

ma grub pas phyag rgya chen po 'di la dkar po chig thub ces gsungs so / /. In light of this statement, I wonder whether Broido's description (pp. 29f) of Padma-dkar-po's view of the Mahāmudrā *cig-car* individual's path as being "a view about the path, and not the goal" is quite adequate. It would seem to be a special view about the relation of the path and goal. Cf. also *ibid*, p. 194.4 (4b.4): *gzhi dang lam / lam dang 'bras bu gnyis su mi phyed pas cig car ba'i lam bstan /*.

The term *dkar po chig thub* of course also occurs within the rubric or title *De dkar po chig thub tu 'gro ba'i gnad bshad pa* which Padma-dkar-po gives to the whole discussion and which is similar to Zhang's chapter title *dKar po chig thub tu bstan pa'i le'u*.

36. Much of what Broido presents in his broadened interpretation of the term is standard tantric theory acceptable also to Sa-pan and others. Tantric philosophy is based on a special approach to causation and soteriology; it is, after all, the "Resultant Mantra Vehicle" (*'bras bu sngags kyi theg pa*), as opposed to the "Causal Defining-mark Vehicle" (*rgyu mtshan nyid kyi theg pa*) where the normal theories of causation hold sway. In the *Lam 'bras* tantric precepts of the Sa-skyapa based on the Hevajra cycle and traced back to the Indian *siddha* Virupa, one also finds similar instructions on "the path which includes its fruit" (*lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i gdams ngag*), "the fruit that includes its path" (*'bras bu lam dang bcas pa'i gdams ngag*), and "that by knowing a single thing, one knows many" (*gcig shes pas mang po shes pa'i gdams ngag*).

37. Broido states, p. 62, note 3: "I shall make less use of this source [the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*]."

38. He did not identify in the bibliography which version of the work he consulted. In any case, it was not from the Derge edition of the *Sa skya bka' 'bum* (reprinted Tokyo: Tōyō Bunko, 1968), which is considered by the tradition to be the standard edition of the Sa-skyapa masters' writings and which should, if possible, be cited in modern scholarship in the absence of a critical edition.

39. In his postscript, p. 48, Broido does, however, repeat one quotation from Sa-pan's *sKyes bu dam pa rnam la spring ba'i yi ge*, drawing it from van der Kuijp's article.

40. The insertion in square brackets is mine. It would have been better to have translated this phrase as: "this is (*yin*) the *dkar po chig thub*," i.e., clearly differentiating the verb *yin pa* from *yod pa*. Broido, p. 48, mistakenly explains the term *ngo 'phrod pa* as "to show the nature of a thing," citing Jäschke and Das. But he actually refers to the definition found for the verb *ngo sprod pa* and misses the fundamental distinction between that transitive and active verb and the former, which is the corresponding intransitive verb meaning "to have been introduced to" or "to recognize and understand [the nature of a thing]," i.e., the verb form in which the result or experience undergone by the grammatical "patient" is stressed.

41. Sa-pan, *sDom gsum rab dbye*, 34a.2:

'ga' zhig chig thub bsgom pa yi / /
rjes la bsngo ba bya dgos zer / /
'o na chig thub gnyis su 'gyur / /
de la'ang skyabs 'gro sems bskyed dang / /
yi dam lha bsgom la sogs pa / /

dgos na chig thub du mar gyur / /
des na chig thub 'di 'dra'i lugs / /
rdzogs sangs rgyas kyis gsungs pa med / /

On the necessity of *bodhicitta* as a separately cultivated aspect of the path in Kamalaśīla's view, in contrast with the opposing view of Mo-ho-yen, see Gómez (1987), p. 112.

42. Cf. the different *Phyag rgya chen po lnga ldan* presented in sGam-po-pa's works, vol. 2, p. 380.2f.

43. See also sGam-po-pa, *rJe phag mo gru pa'i zhus lan*, p. 470.3, where Dags-po lha-rje advises the cultivation of *bodhicitta* with devotion to the guru and integrated *gtum-mo* and *mahāmudrā*. Cf. p. 488.5 where there is a reference to the bKa'-gdams-pa position that relative *bodhicitta* should be cultivated before ultimate *bodhicitta*: *jo bo bka' gdams pa kun gyi zhal nas / stong pa nyid bsgom sngas na kun rdzob byang chub kyi sems ma 'byongs par stong pa nyid du bsgoms pas nyan thos su gol nas / ...* Cf. also vol. 2, p. 113.7: *rje rin po che'i zhal nas / byang chub kyi sems rnam pa gnyis med na sangs mi rgya ba yin gsung ba / kun rdzob byang chub sems skye ba'i rgyu tshang bar byas nas smon 'jug kyi dam bca' bya / ... don dam than cig skyes pa'i gnyug ma yin no gsung / .*

44. Shākya-mchog-ldan, *Legs bshad gser gyi thur ma*, Collected Works, vol. 7, p. 85: *gzhung 'dir yang / la la gcig thub sgom pa yi / / rjes la bsngo ba bya dgos zer / / zhes sogs rnam kyang / rje dags po'i [b]rgyud 'dzin rnam la gsung ba yin pas so / /*. In this section Shākya-mchog-ldan displays a familiarity with the *dGongs gcig* system, quoting it explicitly twice (pp. 84.2 and 85.1) in connection with sGam-po-pa's views on the *chen po gsum gyis ma reg pa* and *dkar po chig thub*.

Karmay (1988), p. 199, states: "Although Sa-pan's chronic doubts about sGam-po-pa's *Phyag chen* had a lasting influence on later Tibetan Buddhist writers, his criticism has never really been accepted as valid. On the contrary, his views are refuted even by eminent Sa skya pa scholastics, like Śākya mchog ldan..." Actually Shākya-mchog-ldan agrees with Sa-pan to a considerable extent when commenting on controversial passages in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, saying for instance that little can be seen to distinguish the theory (*lta ba*) of the master Mo-ho-yen as better or worse than that of the (Mahāmudrā) exponents of this bKa'-brgyud (*bka' brgyud 'di pa / rgya nag mkhan po dang lta ba la bzang ngan mi snang yang /*), though he stresses the superiority of the practice (*spyod pa*) of the latter, and warns that it should not be falsely criticized. See *ibid.*, p. 85.3. Before that, after specifying carefully (on p. 84) which particular unacceptable doctrinal statements of early bKa'-brgyud-pas he believed Sa-pan had in mind when he criticized the "latter-day Mahāmudrā" as a "Chinese-tradition rDzogs-chen," he concludes: *don de dag mi 'thad pa'i dbang du mdzad nas / deng sang gi phyag rgya chen po dang / rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen gnyis don gcig tu mdzad nas 'gog par mdzad pa'i gzhung rnam gsungs pa yin no / /*. Still later (p. 192) he explains Sa-pan's position without indicating any disagreement: *'o na ci zhe na / mid la yan chad du ni / nā ro pa'i [b]rgyud 'dzin dag la nā ro'i chos drug de las gzhan / lam 'bras dang / phyag chen gyi ming can dkar po chig thub sogs la goms par byed pa med la / rje dags po lha rjes / chos drug kho na rang [b]rgyud la nan tan du goms par byed pa bor nas / phyag rgya chen po'i ming 'dags can gyi dkar po gcig thub la sgom du byas pa dang / phag mo gru pas lam 'bras goms pas grub pa brnyes pa lta bu / nā ro ta pa las gzhan gyi gdam*

ngag sgom bzhin du/ bryud pa gzhan de dag gsang nas/ rje nā ro pa kho na'i [b]rgyud 'dzin du 'dod pa ni rang gzhan gyi lugs gnyis dang 'gal/ zhes bstan bcos mdzad pa 'dis ni/ ... And again in the next section (p. 194.6) he presents Sa-pan's position as being precisely: *'o na ci zhe na/ rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen la phyag rgya chen por ming btags pa de sgom bzhin du/ nā ro'i bryud pa 'ded na lugs gnyis dang 'gal zhes pa'i don te/ ji skad du/ gzhung 'di nyid las/ da lta'i phyag rgya chen po ni/ / phal cher rgya nag chos lugs yin/ / ...*

Shākya-mchog-ldan's attitude toward these criticisms by Sa-pan is thus hardly one of overt rejection in these contexts. It is mainly when he writes a treatise specifically in defence of the Phyag-chen and as a follower of the latter tradition that he expresses contrary opinions or tries to clarify the disagreements and misunderstandings. In his *Phyag rgya chen po gsal bar byed pa'i bstan bcos tshangs pa'i 'khor los gzhan blo'i dregs pa nyams byed*, Collected Works, vol. 17, p. 344 (7b), for instance, he explains and justifies the *dkar po chig thub* notion:

The "white self-sufficient simple" refers exclusively to theory, but it is not an expression denying [the importance of] the preparatory accumulations of merit. Moreover, it means precisely that the *mahāmudrā* by itself alone is sufficient, there being no necessity to exert oneself in applying separate remedies to the individual *kleśas* and thought-constructions.

*dkar po chig thub zhes bya ba / /
lta ba rkyang pa'i ldog cha nas / /
yin gyi bsod nams tshogs dag la / /
skur ba 'debs pa'i tshig ma yin / /
de yang nyon mongs rnam par rtog / /
so so 'i gnyen po tha dad la / /
'bad mi dgos par phyag rgya che / /
gcig pus chog pa'i don nyid do / /*

Just before (p. 344.2), he referred to the Hwa-shang comparison:

*lta ba yas babs hwa shang gi / /
bsgom dang mtshungs zhes gsungs mod kyang / /
sngags lugs phal cher lta ba nas / /
brtsams te lam la 'jug par bshad / /*

Then in his *Phyag rgya chen po'i shan byed* [the first of two identically titled works], Collected Works, vol. 17, p. 365, he summarizes very clearly the opposing lines of argument of Sa-pan, which had been introduced and discussed from another viewpoint on pp. 355-6. Also, in his *gSer gyi thur ma las brtsams pa'i dogs good kyi 'bel gnam rab gsal rnam nges sam/ nges don rab gsal*, Collected Works, vol. 17, pp. 529.5 and 541.5, he discusses the references to the "*rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen*" within a larger exposition of the mentions of the r.Nying-ma-pa in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, and he clarifies his own quoting of 'Bri-gung dPal-'dzin's criticisms in the *gSer gyi thur ma*.

Moreover, within the Sa-skyapa scholastic tradition, Shākya-mchog-ldan's attitude toward the Phyag-chen tradition (which incidentally stood him in good stead with his Rin-spungpa patrons) was a highly unusual—if not unique—exception; all other Sa-skyapa *sDom gsum rab dbye* commentators to my knowledge accept and follow Sa-pan's position as they understand it without such reservations or qualifications. (I doubt whether another example like

Shākya-mchog-ldan is to be found among eminent Sa-skyapa scholars.) Thus, it is incorrect to assert that Sa-pan's criticisms "have *never* really been accepted as valid," for that would ignore the main thrust of subsequent Sa-skyapa scholarship and the writings of such influential masters as Go-rams-pa and the four great earlier commentators that Shākya-mchog-ldan had based his own *sDom gsum rab dbye* studies on. For a listing of the extensive commentatorial literature on the *sDom gsum rab dbye* by some twenty-seven Sa-skyapa scholars who followed Sa-pan's interpretations more or less faithfully, see D. Jackson (1983), pp. 12-23.

In other contexts Karmay (1988) does admit, albeit somewhat grudgingly, that certain of Sa-pan's critical comments in the *sDom gsum rab dbye* are found to be not lacking in basis when one investigates the earlier sources and traditions in more detail. For example on p. 148 he states: "His [Sa-pan's] contention [regarding the *theg pa dgu*] is not simply philosophical pedantry as it may seem." And on p. 200: "It is therefore this particular version of the account of the debate containing the question of dKar po chig thub and the two terms on which Sa-pan's criticism of Phyag chen, however misleading it sounds, is based."

45. It is a little curious that Padma-dkar-po quoted the next two lines of the *sDom gsum rab dbye* out of context. This lack of clear context has completely thrown off Broido's translation (p. 39). The words begin the discussion of another point, and they read:

thub pas stong nyid bsngags pa ni / /
dngos por 'dzin pa bzlog phyir yin / /

"The Muni's celebration of voidness was for the purpose of averting the postulation of existing entities."

46. Padma-dkar-po, 50b.5: *'di ni byis pa'i klan ka ste / 'thad na rang nyid la'ang rim gnyis rim gnyis su bzhas rgyu mi yong / 'di yang don dam pa'i phyogs su long gtam ste / kho bo cag gi lugs [5]a) la 'di ka don dam pa'i sems bskyed yin pas /*

47. Padma-dkar-po then goes on to quote various scriptures, in order, according to Broido (p. 40), to show that each of the five aspects of *mahāmudrā* of the *lNga ldan* system is treated as standing for the whole. It hardly needs mentioning that Sa-pan would have accepted these scriptures in their respective Mantrāyana or Pāramitāyāna contexts, and it does not necessarily follow that for him all these Indian sources were "foolishly confused" (cf. Broido, *ibid.*). Doctrinal confusion in Sa-pan's opinion does not subsist in the scriptures, but rather in their erroneous interpretation, as he goes on to discuss explicitly in the following verses of the *sDom gsum rab dbye*.

48. In another context, Padma-dkar-po carefully specifies in his *Klan ka gzhom pa'i gtam*, p. 556.5 (*zha nga* 2b) that he does not accept a cultivation of merely non-discursiveness (*mi rtoḡ pa*) as being by itself sufficient, contrary to what the Hwa-shang is said to have held, and here he enumerates *nam par mi rtoḡ pa* as just one of many stages of practice entailed in the practice of the Mahāmudrā.

49. See van der Kuijp (1987), p. 132, who cites 'Jam-mgon A-mes-zhabs's biography of Kun-dga'-rin-chen, pp. 112-113.

50. See M. Goldstein, *Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan* (Kathmandu: 1975).

51. *bKa' brgyud gser phreng chen mo: Biographies of Eminent Gurus in the Transmission Lineage of Teachings of the 'Ba'-ra dKar-brgyud-pa Sect*, p. 343.2 (ja phag gru 5a.2):

de nas yar byon nas 'on gyi tshal sgang du bzhugs/ bsgom chen 'ga' re yang skyangs/ gsung rabs rgyas pa la sogs pa'i bsnyen bkur yang dpag tu med pa byung/ rgyas pa de sa skya ru spyan' drangs nas/ sgom bsod la sogs pa'i slob ma bgres po khrid nas/ slob dpon rnams dbang gi bzhi po yang zhus/ 'bul ba skur bas chog pa yin te/ bla ma chos 'dri ba la dgyes pas/ nga sgam por phyin nas sh[e]s rab [b]rgya 'gyur du song/ rtogs pa skyes/ chos thams cad ni nam snga' la mdung skor ba dang 'dra ba 'di/ bla ma 'dri tsam na/ lan gdab dgos snyam pa la sngar bzhin 'dri ma byung/ nga'i bla ma la sku tshe ring po mi yongs par 'dug/ spyan rtsa 'gyur song chos mi 'dri bar chad de 'grongs [344] ltags [better: ltas] yin gsung tsa na/ lo phyed tsam lon pa dang 'das so // The parallel passage in the sTag-lung bKa'-brgyud-pa gSer phreng omits this episode. See Chos 'byung ngo mtshar rgya mtsho (Tashijong: 1972), vol. 1, p. 251.

52. See also the account of dPa'-bo g'Tsug-lag-phreng-ba, vol. 1, p. 815, which concludes: *bla ma sa skya pa sngon nas nga la chos 'dri zhing mnyes pa la da kho bo chos thams cad nam mkha' la mdung bskor ba ltar song ba 'di la bla ma'i lan tshul bzhin gdab dgos snyam nas 'bul ba rnams skyel pa dang sgres pa 'ga' dbang bskur zhu 'dod dang bcas byon/ ... da res chos kyang mi 'dri/ spyan rtsa'ang 'gyur 'dug ste 'grongs ltas ma lags sam gsung te myur du grongs/ . It might be useful to trace this episode in the oldest and longest biographies of Phag-mo-gru-pa, such as that by 'Bri-gung skyob-pa 'Jig-rten-mgon-po or the one by Chos-kyi-ye-shes entitled *dPal phag mo gru pa'i rnam thar rin po che'i phreng ba* which was published in *The Collected Works of Phag-mo-gru-pa rDo-rje-rgyal-po* (Gangtok: 1976), pp. 5-62.*

53. More light on their relation may be shed by the text *rJe btsun sa skya pa dang dpal phag mo gru pa gnyis kyi zhus lan*, which is included in the list of Phag-mu-gru-pa's works in the bibliographical compilation: Grags-pa (ed.), *Bod kyi bstan bcos khag cig gi mtshan byang dri med shel dkar phreng ba* (mTsho-sngon: mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1985), p. 159.

Zhang Tshal-pa was similar in holding a non-Mahāmudrā teacher, rGa lo-tsa-ba, in the highest respect. He also honored the memory of Sa-chen Kun-dga'-snying-po, who had been the teacher of his master rJe-btsun gShen-pa. In his *[b]rGyud pa sna tshogs*, p. 442.1, Zhang mentions Sa-chen with the following words: "He who was like the crest-jewel from among many people in the Kaliyuga, the lord Sa-skyapa, master of a treasury of instructions" (*rtsod pa'i dus skye bo mang po'i nang nas gtsug gi nor bu lta bur gyur pa rje sa [s]kyapa ga gdams ngag gi mdzod mnga' ba*). The same rje-btsun gShen-pa was a teacher of the *Lam 'bras* to Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa.

54. See Padma-dkar-po, *bKa' brgyud kyi bka' 'bum gsil bu rnams kyi gsan yig*, *Collected Works*, vol. 4, pp. 460-464 (*nga na* 76b-78b).

55. Padma-dkar-po, *bKa' brgyud kyi bka' 'bum gsil bu rnams kyi gsan yig*, *Collected Works*, vol. 4, pp. 461.5 (*nga na* 77a.5): *bde gshegs chen po 'di'i slob ma'i mkhas shos mthong lam gyi rtogs pa thob par gsung pa yin/ phyis sgam por byon/ de nas bla ma'i spyan sngar byon dus spyan sprin 'gyur ba gzigs pa la/ gzhan dag sgam po pa'i slob ma byas pa la ma mnyes so yang snyam/ gleng yang gleng ngo/ mtshan nyid [77b]*

dang ldan pa'i bla ma dag la de 'dra ga la srid/ gang gis 'dul ba dang/ gang las sems can la phan thogs che ba la de dag ched du sbyor ba mdzad pa'i phyir ro/ / bla ma spong len lla bur sem[s] pa ni jo gdan chang bzi'i glam dpe nyid do/ / de yang phag gru nyid kyis bla ma yun ring du mi bzhugs pa'i mtshan mar gsungs pa ltar thog tu bab bo/ /.

In the passage just before this, Padma-dkar-po sharply rejects a similar negative and sectarian interpretation regarding the relation of Sa-chen and Phag-mo-gru-pa as “the words of a fool” (*blun po'i tshig*).

56. I am not familiar with the maxim or saying *jo gdan chang bzi*. The word *jo gdan* is evidently not correctly defined in any dictionary to which I have access, but the similar word *jo stan* apparently refers to a monk of a strict monastic discipline, and *jo gdan* may be an alternative spelling for it. Except in a few exceptional circumstances, *jo gdan* does not refer to a Jo-nang abbot (*jo nang gi gdan sa pa*), as some dictionaries suggest when they list the word at all.

Regarding the term *jo stan*, it is presumably the abbreviation of *jo bo stan gcig pa*. The gDan-gcig-pas or sTan-gcig-pas were strict monastic adherents who kept “the discipline of a single mat” (*stan gcig gi brtul zhugs*), and a community of them known by this name was based in 'Phan-po at the Jo-stan tshogs-pa of Jo-stan-thang. Some teachers of the “Female *gcod*” (*mo gcod*) tradition such as bla-ma sTan-gcig-pa gZhon-nu-tshul-khrims (fl. c. 1200), who was also known as Jo-stan-thang-pa, were based there. See the *Blue Annals*, p. 993. In the reproduction of the Tibetan text, see p. 955 (*pa* 7a). Note that here folios 7 of fascicles *pa* and *ba* have been exchanged in the reprint edition. Thus pp. 955-6 and pp. 881-2 appear in the wrong places. See also the *Yar klung jo bo'i chos 'byung* (Chengdu: 1988), pp. 77 and 179f, where the monastic communities founded as a result of Śākyāśrībhadrā's activities are referred to as *jo gdan tshogs pa* and *jo dan sde* (sic).

57. Broido (p. 62, n. 3, and p. 66, n. 67) has misinterpreted Sa-pan as calling his opponents “outsiders” [i.e., non-Buddhists] by the word *phyi rabs*, not realizing that the word means “later or recent generation” (cf. *phyi pa* or *phyi rol mu stegs pa*). Sa-pan does however say (*Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, 48b.4) that he considers the traditions he criticizes there to be “neither Śrāvaka nor Mahāyānā but which is held [by the opponent] to be the Buddha's Doctrine” (*nyan thos dang theg chen gnyis ka ma yin pa sangs rgyas kyi bstan par 'dod pa*). That a teaching must fit in somewhere within the usual doctrinal classes, such as Buddhist or non-Buddhist, Mahāyāna or non-Mahāyāna, tantric or non-tantric was accepted by nearly everyone. Although in some extreme interpretations the Mahāmudrā was proposed to be a third (or even fourth) class of teachings outside of both non-tantric Mahāyāna and tantra (see for instance Lhalungpa transl. [1986], pp. 110-112, quoting sGam-po-pa), others have not maintained such a threefold scheme because of the unacceptable doctrinal difficulties it would entail. See for instance 'Bri-gung rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa, p. 45 (23a): *mdo sngags gnyis las tha dad pa'i lam zhig yod na rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyis ma gsungs pa'i lam du thal bas*, and rDo-rje-shes-rab, vol. 1, p. 396.1 (ngā 25a.1). See also Broido, pp. 46 and 50, who in formulating his final arguments sharply distinguishes between Vajrayāna and non-Vajrayāna Mahāyānā as a mutually exclusive pair. According to him, a Mahāmudrā doctrine must be either one or the other. See also his theses G and H, p. 30.

For sGam-po-pa's three-fold division of the path, see for instance his *Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan*, pp. 418 and 438. In the first passage he gives two alternatives: 1) *rjes dpag lam du byed pa = mtshan nyid*

2) *byin brlabs lam du byed pa = sngags*

3) *mngon sum lam du byed pa = phyag chen*

or—

1) *gzhi spong ba'i lam = phar phyin*

2) *gzhi sgyur ba'i lam = sngags*

3) *gzhi shes pa'i lam = phyag chen*

In other contexts he follows the more standard classifications. See for instance his *Tshogs chos legs mdzes ma*, pp. 172.1, where he contrasts the Pāramitāyāna as *tshogs kyi lam* with the Mantrayāna which is *thabs kyi lam*. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 219-220 where he enumerates the usual pairs: *drang don / nges don*, *theg chen / theg chung*, *phar phyin / 'bras bu sngags*, *bskyod rim / rdzogs rim*, and finally *rdzogs chen / phyag chen*.

58. One of the "four reliances" (*rton pa bzhi*) was that one should rely not on the person but on the doctrine. Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje suggested that critics of the Mahāmudrā (such as Sa-pan) have deviated from this principle through "hostility." See Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1262; Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, p. 15 (8a.5): *rton pa bzhi la rton pa na chos la rton gyi / gang zag la mi rton par zhal nas gsungs pa la sdang dbang gis de las bzlog pa'i phyir ro / /*.

59. bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, for instance, attributes the criticisms of Sa-pan to a sheer wish to criticize, questioning whether Sa-pan was dispassionate in his criticism or uninfluenced by personal feelings, jealousy, etc. See Lhalungpa (1986), pp. 105f et passim; bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, p. 93b.6: *smra 'dod pa tsam du zad*, p. 94b.1: *rang gi zhe 'dod bden par sgrub pa'i rdzun rib kho nar snang ste /*, p. 94b.4: *ma nges bzhin du bsnyon nas smra ba gzur gnas rnam kyi spyod yul ma yin pa'i phyir /*, p. 97a.6: *phrag dog gis sgo nas sgro btags kyi skur 'debs smra bar mi rung*, etc. As mentioned above, Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje takes a similar tack. See the translation of Seyfort Ruegg (1988), pp. 1257 and 1262, and Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, pp. 11 and 15 (6a.3 and 8a.5). Padma-dkar-po too becomes on occasion quite exuberant in his criticisms, terming Sa-pan's comments "a madman's words" (*smyon pa'i tshig*) in his *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, pp. 580.1 (198b) or as "bod smyon mchong," *ibid.*, p. 589.3 (203a). In his *Klan ka gzhom pa'i glam*, p. 563 (*zha nga 6a*) he states that the mere objections (*klan ka*) of a biased ordinary individual (*so so skye bo*) cannot disprove anything because such people praise their own side and dispraise the positions of others: *so so skye bo dag ni rang gi la bstod / gzhan phyogs la smod pas / de dag gis klan ka tsam gyis ci la gnod /* and adds that there is no use gazing with the blind eye of bias: *phyogs 'dzin zhar ba'i mig des bltas kyang ci / /*.

60. Sa-pan, *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 320.3.6 (*na 48a.d*):

de phyir chos rnam phal cher thos / /

des na bdag la phyogs lung med / /

de phyir gzu bos dpyad pa 'di / /

blo ldan rnam kyi 'di ltar zung / /

61. *Ibid.*, p. 319.4.4 (46b.4):

bdag ni sems can kun la byams / /

gang zag kun la bdag mi smod / /

brgya la mnyam par ma bzhang pas / /

smad pa srid na'ang sdig de bshags / /

62. *Ibid.*, p. 320.1.2 (47a.2):

chos log pa dang ma log pa'i / /
rnam par dbye ba byas pa la / /
sdang dang phrag dog yin zer na / /
'o na 'khor ba'i rgya mtsho las / /
sems can rnam ni ji ltar bsgral / /

Cf. also *ibid.*, 46b.

63. sGam-po-pa in his *Tshogs chos legs mdzes ma*, p. 187, advises his followers to avoid sectarianism and not to indulge in criticisms of other religious traditions, specifying the great faults this would entail for both followers of *sūtra* and *tantra*. He does allow as an exception criticisms through which one rejects a lower philosophical theory and enters a higher one, as is mentioned in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Cf. Padma-dkar-po, *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, p. 189.3-6 (3a), who accepts the legitimacy of doctrinal criticisms and exhorts others not to get angry when their own traditions are criticized!

64. See Steinkellner (1988), pp. 1441-43. See also the discussion in Sa-pan's *mKhas pa rnam 'jug pa'i sgo*, III 12-13 (D. Jackson [1987], p. 329) and the references in the same publication, p. 378, n. 27. Sa-pan stresses there the fundamental motivation as being to maintain one's own doctrines honestly.

65. The situation was of course far more complicated in actual practice, because both sides could maintain some scriptures which one of them interpreted for instance to be of only "provisional meaning" (*drang don*). To avoid a self-contradiction, they could interpret the contradictory scripture as not having "definitive meaning" (*nges don*).

66. This was stated by Dharmakīrti in the opening verse of his *Vādanyāya*. See for instance D. Jackson (1987), p. 324 and n. 11.

67. Sa-pan, *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 34a.1:

kha cig dkar po chig thub las / /
'bras bu sku gsum 'byung zhes zer / /
gcig las 'bras bu 'byung mi nus / /
gal te gcig las 'bras bu zhig / /
byung yang nyan thos 'gog pa bzhin / /
'bras bu de yang gcig tu 'gyur / /

68. Padma-dkar-po, *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, p. 49a: *tshig bar ma phyi ma gnyis kyis bkag pas na rang la gnod do / / rgyu mtshan / gcig las 'bras [49b] bu ma 'byung bar kha tshon bcad nas / yang nyan thos kyi 'gog pa rgyu gcig las 'byung ba'i 'bras bur bshad pas so / /*

69. For a similar traditional response to these criticisms by Padma-dkar-po (which I located after completing the rest of this article), see also Ngag-dbang-chos-grags, *sDom pa gsum gyi rab tu dbye ba'i rnam bshad legs par bshad pa zla 'od nor bu* (New Delhi: 1978), p. 376 (188b): *sprul sku mchog padma dkar pos / 'di la snga phyi 'gal lo zhes pa'i sun 'byin gnang ba ni mi 'thad de / gal te zhes dang / 'byung yang zhes pa'i tshig nus kyis rtag pa mtha' bzung tsam gsungs pa yin la / ci ste de la sun 'byin gnang na gzhung lugs chen po kun la 'o brgyal 'byung ngo / nyan thos 'gog pa bzhin zhes pa yang / spyir 'bras bu gcig gi dpe tsam ma gtsogs rgyu gcig las byung ba'i 'bras bu gcig gi dper 'dzin pa ma yin no / /*

For Sa-pan, incidentally, there are no *chig thub* methods. The *nirodha* of the *arhat* arises from a number of causes and factors, one of which being the generation of the intention (*sems bskyed*) to attain arhatship. For a mention of this *sems bskyed*, see his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, p. 5.3.1 = *tha* 10a: "For generating the Thought [of Awakening] (*bodhicitta*), there are two main traditions: that of the Śrāvaka schools and that of the Great Vehicle schools. In the Śrāvaka schools, one produces the thought of attaining one of three goals: Arhatship, Pratyekabuddhahood, and perfect, complete Buddhahood."

70. Padma-dkar-po, *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, p. 279.3 (nga 48a): *lo tsā ba chen po'i brtag pa gnyis pa'i rgyud 'grel du/ phra ba nas g.yo ba'i bar gyi chos thams cad rang rgyud par grub pa med do/ /*

lhan cig skyes pa'i rang bzhin nyid de ltar lta ba rtogs par byas nas bsgom pa ni mnyam nyid la sogs pa ste/ bsgom pa yang mnyam gzhas rjes thob med par lhan cig skyes pa'i ye shes su mtshungs par bzhag go/ /

de lta bu'i phyag rgya chen po rtogs pa'i gang zag gis bltas na 'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa'i chos thams cad de las byung zhing de'i rnam [48b] par 'khrul [= 'phrul] pa yin te/ nga la sogs pa gsungs so/ /

de ltar na lta sgom spyod pa thams cad phyag rgya chen por shes nas dus yun ring por bsgoms na bsod nams chung ba'i mis kyang 'grub na gzhan lta ci smos zhes bstan pa ni/ de ltar la sogs pas bstan to/ /

71. *Hewajra Tantra*, part I, chapter viii, verses 39-42. See Snellgrove (1959), vol. 2, p. 31:

gang rnam de rnam brtan dang g.yo/ /
'di lam zhes bya nga nyid de/ /
mnyam nyid mtshungs par 'dod pa nyid/ /
ro mnyam de nyid bsgom pa ni/ / (39)

mnyam zhes bya ba mtshungs par brjod/ /
de yi 'khor lo ro zhes brjod/ /
sgom pa ro gcig mnyam pa nyid/ /
'dis ni don gyis brjod par bya/ / (40)

nga las 'gro ba thams cad 'byung/ /
nga las gnas gsum po yang 'byung/ /
nga yi 'di kun khyab pa ste/ /
'gro ba'i rang bzhin gzhan ma mthong/ / (41)

de ltar rnal 'byor pas shes na/ /
shin tu mnyam gzhas gang goms pa/ /
bsod nams chung ba'i mi yis kyang/ /
de yi 'grub pa the tsom med/ / (42)

Cf. the translation of this passage, vol. 1, p. 77.

72. Padma-dkar-po, *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, p. 280 (nga 48b.3): *rtogs pa'i tshes phyag rgya chen po las gzhan pa'i chos ci yang mi 'dod pas so/ /*

73. Jñānakīrti, *Tattvāvatāra*, Peking Tanjur, *rgyud 'grel* 58 [nu] 46a = vol. 81, p. 126.4: *de nas de la goms pa nyid 'bras bu ma lus pa yongs su rdzogs pa yin te/ de ltar na 'di ni phyag rgya chen po gnyis su med pa'i sgom pa nyid 'bras bu ma lus pa thob par byed pa [P reads: par] rnal 'byor pa thams cad kyi thun mong yin no/ /*

Broido has rendered this: "Thus, its cultivation leads completely to countless results. Accordingly, the cultivation of non-dual *mahāmudrā* is what all yogins who attain countless results have in common."

It is essential in Tibetan to distinguish carefully the active, transitive verbal forms (which enter into the ergative construction), such as *sgom* "to cultivate," from the corresponding non-active forms, in which the result of such actions is stressed, namely here: *goms* "to have gained mastery [through cultivation]" or "to have internalized something [as the result of cultivation]."

74. Sa-pan, *sKyes bu dam pa, na* 73b (= 3b) summarized this point: "And as it is said in the *Vairocanābhisambodhi Tantra*:

The teaching [by the Buddha] of disciplines and gnosis which possess no means was expounded by the Great Hero for the sake of introducing the *śrāvakas* into that. Those who are the Buddhas of the past, present and future attained the unconditioned highest vehicle having trained in that [path] which possesses methods and discriminative knowledge.

"And likewise it is not taught in any *sūtra*, *tantra* or great treatise that one can awaken to Buddhahood by a White Self-Sufficient Simple as distinct from [through] the perfectly replete possession of methods and discriminative knowledge. It is indeed taught in [some] *sūtras* and *tantras* that one can gain Buddhahood by merely respectfully saluting or circumambulating, and by offering one flower, or by reciting a single *dhāraṇī*, or by reciting just the name of the Buddha, or by a single act of worshipful reverence, or by the arising of a single thought of *bodhicitta*, or by the mere understanding of emptiness. Yet one should understand those as being [statements with special] intention (*dgongs pa*) or allusion (*ldem dgongs*), but they are not direct expression."

75. On Kamalaśīla's similar rejection of any one segment of the *bodhisattva*'s path as sufficient for yielding the highest Buddhahood, see Gómez (1987), pp. 116f.

76. Go-rams-pa (*ta* 138b.3): *zhang tshal pa la sogs pa kha cig / dkar po chig thub zhes bya ba / stong nyid kho na bsgom pa las 'bras bu sku gsum 'byung zhes zer ba.*

77. See Sa-pan's remarks in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 303.3.2 (*na* 14a):

*la la rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi / /
gsung rab tshig don zab mo dang / /
grub thob rnam dang mkhas rnam kyi / /
shin tu legs par bshad pa'i chos / /
tshig gi na ya yin pas na / /
dgos pa med pas dor zhes zer / / . . .*

This point of view is attributed by Go-rams-pa in his commentary (p. 152a) to "zhang tshal pa dang / bka' phyag pa la la."

78. The same terms and ideas as well as the related *gcig shes* and *gcig grol* also appear as aspects of a fundamental concept in the rDzogs-chen, which Karmay (1988), p. 48, terms "singleness" or "oneness." See also *ibid.*, pp. 49 and 198, where in the former citation *chig chod* is translated as "enough by itself."

For an occurrence of *chig chod* in a Mahāmudrā context, see dPa'-bo gTsong-lag-phreng-ba, vol. 1, p. 799f: *sems kyi ngo bo ston pa phyag rgya chen po chig chod*. See also Lhalungpa (1986), pp. 402 and 404, who translates occurrences of the

term in Zhang and bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal (p. 371b) as “attainable in one stride” and “all-in-one.” Cf. sGam-po-pa, Works, vol. 1, pp. 421.7-422.1.

bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, p. 201 (101a.3), also characterizes this doctrine as: *mdo sngags kyi gzhung lam la ma bltos par phyag rgya chen po'i lam gcig chod kyis grol bar bzhed pa yin la /*, cf. Lhalungpa (1986), who translates, p. 112: “the *only* path of instantaneous realization, which does not depend on the paths of the sūtras and tantras” (italics mine).

79. The Tibetan text: *phyag rgya chen po chig chod la / / sa lam brtsi ba'i rmongs pa 'khrul / /* The word *chig chod* here is apparently adjectival instead of verbal, and the *la* not a verbal particle. Cf. the translation of Lhalungpa (1986), p. 402. The same quote appears at least twice elsewhere in Sa-paṅ's *bka' 'bum*, in minor works. The first is the *bKa' gdams do kor* (p. 403.4.5), where it is said:

*phyag rgya chen po chig chod la / /
sa lam brtsi ba'i rmongs pha [sic] 'khrul / /
de skad zer ba bstan pa yi / /
bdud tshig yin pas rna ba dgab / /*

The second occurrence is in the work *rTogs ldan rgyan po'i dris lan*, p. 335.3.1 (na 79b), which is attributed to his disciple Bi-ji.

80. Thu'u-bkwan, p. 165.2 (*kha* 23a.2):

*phyag rgya chen po gcig chod la / /
rmongs pas sa lam brtsi ba 'khrul / /
'on kyang rmongs pa dga' ba'i phyir / /
mtshan nyid theg pa'i sa lam rnams / /
'dir yang dod po rtsi bar bya / /*

sGam-po-pa, *Lam rim mdor bsdu*s, pp. 239f, taught the four yogas in connection with a path of graded practices leading to *mahāmudrā*.

81. Lhalungpa (1986), p. 402: “The great seal is attainable in one stride. It is deluded ignorance to divide it into grounds and paths.” bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, p. 371b, quotes Zhang favorably here and follows his views. The text reads nearly the same as in Thu'u-bkwan. The same translator (*ibid.*) translates *chig chod* in the immediately following passage as “all-in-one.”

82. Padma-dkar-po, *Klan ka gzhom pa'i gnam*, p. 561.6 (*zha nga* 5a.6).

83. Zhang Tshal-pa, p. 103.3 (28a.3):

*phyag rgya chen po chig chod la / /
rmongs pa sa lam rtsi ba 'khrul / /
'on kyang rmongs pa dga' ba'i phyir / /
mtshan nyid theg pa'i sa lam rnams / /
'dir yang 'dod pas rtsi bar bya / /*

Cf. also p. 28b.3.

84. See also Shākya-mchog-ldan, *Collected Works*, vol. 17, p. 361.6-7, who quotes two of these lines as a preliminary to his discussion of the *Mahāmudrā* in this tradition.

Cf. 'Bri-gung rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa, *dGongs gcig rnam bshad nyi ma'i snang ba* [composed 1633], 'Bri-gung-pa Texts, vol. 2, p. 45 = 23a.1, who speaks out in favor of the opposing opinion, in defence of the statement by 'Bri-gung skyob-pa 'Jig-rten-mgon-po: *gal te mtshan nyid theg par sa lam rim bgrod du mthun kyang sngags bla med kyis lam brtsi mi dgos par skad cig mar 'dod na / sngags lam gyi rtsa*

ba smin grol las gzhan med la / . . . Cf. the parallel passage in *rDo-rje-shes-rab*, vol. 1, p. 395.7 (*nga* 24b.7).

Zhang Tshal-pa held to the contrary that such gradualist teachings were not the ultimate intent of the Buddha but were taught rather with provisional meaning for ignorant disciples (p. 104 = 28b):

sa dang lam gyi rim pa dang / /
drod rtags khyad par so so kun / /
rim 'jug gdul bya drang don du / /
thub pas ldem por gsungs pa la / /
rmongs rnams nyi tshé'i phyogs char zhen / /

gdul bya'i mtho dman bsam mi khyab / /
sangs rgyas gsung rabs bsam mi khyab / /
rang rang gzhung dang ma mthun yang / /
smad cing spang bar mi bya zhing / /
nam zhig go bar smon lam thob / /

See also sGam-po-pa, *Tshogs bshad legs mdzes ma*, p. 234.5, where the *sūtras* and *tantras* (as opposed to direct instructions, *man ngag*) are said to degenerate or fall to the level of conceptualization (*don spyi'i rnam pa la shor*). Among *man ngag*, the *rim-gyis-pa* gradualist teaching is said there to be of provisional meaning (*drang don*) and the *cig-car-ba* is of definitive meaning (*nges don*). Cf. his *Tshogs chos yon tan phun tshogs*, pp. 265 and 268.2, where it is specifically the Pāramitāyāna method which is said to be limited to grasping the subject as a conceptually conceived universal, and not the Mantrayāna.

The last lines in the above quote from Zhang seem to be intended to ward off criticisms from adherents of other systems: "Though it may not accord with your own basic texts, you should not disparage and abandon it, but rather you should make a formal resolution [or prayer] that you at some future time will understand it."

Zhang wrote a small treatise on the four yogas, the *Nyams rnal 'byor rnam pa bzhi* (Writings, pp. 499.5ff.), in which he states that this was given for the *rim-gyis-pa* individual (*'on kyang rims kyis pa'i gang zag rnams la dgongs nas* [510] *dam pa gong mas sgom chen rnams kyi nyams rnal 'byor pa* [sic] *rnams [= rnam] bzhir phyé ba yin*).

85. He bases himself on the article of Gómez (1983), who surveys the contributions of Japanese scholars.

86. One of the reasons that Sa-pan may have tended to link these doctrines with China and with earlier Tibetan tradition, in addition to the "typological" similarities, was that the Mahāmudrā as presented in the *lhan cig skyes sbyor* and related systems was apparently not well known or widely recognized as an established Indian Buddhist doctrine by the Indian scholars with whom he had contacts. He may have reasoned that if it was not known from India, it must have come from elsewhere.

The junior paṇḍita Vibhūticandra, with whom Sa-pan had studied together under Śākyaśrībhadra, is said to have criticized the Mahāmudrā of the early 'Bri-gung-pa in particular (in c. 1207, before Sa-pan rejoined the group and received ordination at Myang-smad in 1208), saying their Mahāmudrā doctrine was a "great lie" (*nor 'bri khung ba che zer te phyag rgya chen po ba 'di rdzun*

che ba yin zer byas pas). This account given in the biography of Sa-paṅ's teacher Śākyaśrībhadrā (1127-1225) by bSod-nams-dpal-bzang-po, would not seem to be a later fabrication for the purpose of discrediting the Mahāmudrā, for if anything, it is meant to show that in spite of Śākyaśrībhadrā's refusal to visit 'Bri-gung though he was twice invited, the great Kashmiri master respected and approved of the 'Bri-gung-pa ('Jig-rten-mgon-po), saying he was an emanation of Nāgārjuna. The reason he is said to have given for not coming is that some among his Tibetan followers (specifically certain bKa'-gdams-pa and gDan-gcig-pas) might possibly accrue demerit in relation to the 'Bri-gung-pa if he accepted the invitation there [because of their lack of faith in that *bla-ma*] (*de nas 'bri khung pa rnam la chos rje'i zhal nas nga'i 'khor la bka' gdams pa dang gdan gcig pa la sogs pa mang bas / khyed la las phyin ci log bsags pa srid*). See bSod-nams-dpal-bzang-po, *Sa'i steng na 'gran zla dang bral ba kha che paṅḍi ta shākya shrī bhadrā'i rnam thar*, p. 45a-b. 'Gos lo-tṣā-ba (Roerich, transl., *Blue Annals*, p. 1070) also mentions Śākyaśrībhadrā's refusal of two invitations to 'Bri-gung, though he gives no further details. It is interesting to see that Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje cites Śākyaśrībhadrā as one of the Indian sources (besides Mitrāyogin) of the Mahāmudrā teachings received and transmitted by Khro-phu lo-tṣā-ba. See Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1261; Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, p. 15 (8a.2).

Sa-paṅ was thus by no means the first to question the origins and validity of certain Mahāmudrā teachings followed in the Dwags-po bka'-brgyud, though that is a common misconception (see for instance Lhalungpa [1986], pp. 434f, n. 73). In fact, resistance to this or similar teachings is said to have gone back a long ways among the Tibetans. The bKa'-gdams-pa tradition, beginning with the master 'Brom-ston rGyal-ba'i-'byung-gnas, is said from the beginning to have objected to the Mahāmudrā's being taught (he was concerned in general about the suitability of *tantra*-based doctrines for the Tibetans), and later some bKa'-gdams-pas took a more neutral attitude of non-approval, saying the Mahāmudrā should neither be practiced nor criticized. See the *Blue Annals*, pp. 268 (ca 13b) and 843-4 (da 3a-b), and Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1273, n. 98. Moreover Zhang Tshal-pa, writing sometime in the period ca. 1160-ca. 1190, already mentions in one of his autobiographies (*rNam thar shes rab grub ma*, p. 49.3) the criticisms of others who doubted that certain points of the Mahāmudrā doctrine under discussion were possible, and who in this way abandon the Buddhist teaching (*'di mi srid zer nas / dam pa'i chos spong du 'ong pa yin*). But he had tried to show the reverse by quoting statements from a *tantra* and from the sayings of Saraha, and he then replied himself: "As for whether it is possible or not, look at the mind!" (*srid dam mi srid pa sems la ltos /*). A little later (p. 50.1) he mentions that the same opponents (who are said to imagine themselves to be learned though they merely mouth words like a parrot) call this teaching an erroneous doctrine (*log chos*). See also his similar remarks on p. 52.5. The same opponents are addressed in his *sNa tshogs zhi gnas*, Writings, p. 623.3.

In his *Mal dbu dkar la gdams pa* (Writings, p. 657.5), which was evidently addressed to a *dge-bshes* of a non-bKa'-brgyud-pa tradition who had asked him to be frank, he also mentions those who were repelled by his doctrine of a sudden realization which arises from within through the guru's grace (which he

says can occur only very rarely), and who were especially troubled by the notion that this alone was the decisive thing: 'di cig phu yin zer ba 'di shin tu mi 'thad zer nas / [s]kyug log log song ba mang du byung / da sun nas dang po zer ba 'di 'tsher ba gda' / dge bshes pa nyid kyi gsung nas ngo bsrung ma byed gsungs pas drang por bgyis pa lags / /

Even the approach of sGam-po-pa and that of his successor sGom-tshul are said to have been criticized by others, who included dialectically trained scholars (*mtshan nyid pa*). The former is said to have incurred the criticism of certain great scholars of scholasticism and Buddhist philosophy by introducing young monks directly into *mahāmudrā* insight without their having received any prior religious educational training, and thus “wasting” many bright young monks. (*Blue Annals*, p. 460; Tibetan text p. 400.5 = *nya* 25b): *thos bsam sngon du ma song ba'i btsun chung mang po yang rtogs pa la bkod pas / mtshan nyid pa'i dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen po 'ga' zhig gis / blo gsal mang po sgam po pas chud zos su bcug ces 'bar ba la / gsung gis / mtshan nyid pa rnam nga la bka' bkyon te / ...* The great master Gro-lung-pa (fl. early 1100s) of gSang-pu is also said to have criticized certain *amanasikāra* doctrines of Maitrīpāda as not being the Madhyamaka, which the later bKa'-brgyud-pas took to be the starting point for various criticisms of their central doctrines by Sa-pan and a number of bKa'-gdams-pas. See Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1257, translating Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, p. 11 (6a.2): *lugs 'di dbu mar 'chad pa la rigs par smra ba gro lung pa sogs dpyod ldan mang pos ma rangs nas a ma na si pa sogs ci rigs kyi lugs dbu ma pa'i lugs dang mi mthun zhes 'gogs par mdzad la / tshig 'di tsaṃ la brten nas sa skya paṅ chen dang / bka' gdams pa ci rigs pa zhig gis / rje btsun mai tri pa'i chos rnam par dag pa a ma na sa'i skor thams cad la sdang zhen byed pa dang / .* sGom-tshul, too, was criticized by some who had never met him but who had nevertheless reviled him from afar, as alluded to in a verse of praise composed in his honor by gTsang-nag-pa, one of Phywa-pa's main students (*Blue Annals.*, p. 465; Tibetan p. 405 = *nya* 28a.2): *skal med skye bo ring nas ngan brjod kyang / / .*

Thus, by the mid-to-late-12th century these doctrines and their upholders had already come under fire, notably from dialectically trained scholars (*rtog ge pa* or *mtshan nyid pa*) who in that period in Central Tibet probably belonged to the circle of Phywa-pa Chos-kyi-seng-ge (1109-1169) and his disciples or successors, i.e., to the gSang-phu Ne'u-thog tradition. But as just mentioned, the criticisms were not unanimous. The great scholar gTsang-nag brTson-'grus-seng-ge, for instance, is said to have renounced such a negative attitude after meeting sGom-tshul personally. Moreover, a bKa'-gdams-pa *dge-bshes* who honored sGom-tshul was Phyag-sor-ba: see *ibid.*, p. 456; *nya* 28a.2.

Already by sGam-po-pa's time the dialectically oriented scholars (*mtshan nyid pa*) of rNgog and Phywa-pa's tradition were thus recognized as a distinct significant trend in the religious life of Tibet. sGam-po-pa in *Dus gsum*, p. 453.3, mentions the bKa'-gdams, mTshan-nyid-pa and sNgags-pa traditions as distinct from the Mahāmudrā. Elsewhere in the same work (p. 437.7) he repeats an enumeration of traditions attributed to the *dge-bshes* brGya-yon-bdag:

- 1) rDzogs-chen
- 2) mTshan-nyid-pa, who dissolve false conceptions through reasoning
- 3) Pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa, who stress method and wisdom

4) sNgags-pa

5) bKa'-gdams-pa, whose special instructions utilize the threefold division of personality types into great, middling and lesser

Cf. his biography, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, p. 112.5, where mTshan-nyid-pas are distinguished from bKa'-gdams-pas.

One of the above-mentioned opposing scholars may have been the "later dialectician who hates the profound meaning" (*phyis kyi rtog ge pa zab don la ldang ba*) suspected and accused by dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-pa of concocting and inserting the account which relates the reasoning involving the *garuḍa* or *khyung* simile—i.e., the account that is found in some *sBa bzhed* histories in which Kamalaśīla is said to have refuted the Hwa-shang by this argumentation and that is repeated by Myang-ral and by Sa-pan in his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*. See dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-pa, vol. 1, p. 397 (ja 122a): *hwa shang gi dpe don dgag pa de dag kyang nus pa dman te nam mkha' lding gcig char du 'dab gshog rdzogs pa los yong ste 'jig rten gdags pa las nam mkha' lding brdzus skyes bshad pa'i phyir don yang ma khegs te rnam par mi rtog pa sgom pa ni rang lugs la yang 'dod dgos la de'i tshes sngar gyi thal tshur ldog na 'khor gsum ga la lan gyis dben pa'i phyir ro / / des na rgya gar gyi mkhas pa nyi zla lta bu la de 'dra'i rigs pa'i mu ge gar ldang / de dag ni phyis kyi rtog ge pa zab don la ldang ba chos spong la mkhas nyams dang phrag dog la khyad nor re ba rnam kyis bcug par go sla'o / /*. Zhang himself used the swooping hawk example in his *Phyag chen zab lam mthar thug* (p. 104.1 = 28b) as will be quoted below.

87. Sa-pan, *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 309.3.4 (na 26a.4). A few lines before, he typifies this "Chinese tradition" as a "Chinese-tradition rDzogs-chen" (*rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen*). See p. 309.2.5 (na 25b). This linking of the rDzogs-chen with Chinese teachings propagated in 8th-century Tibet was taken to be a fantastic if not sacrilegious absurdity by certain later bKa'-brgyud-pa scholars. See for example bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal (f.94a, *Lhalungpa transl.* [1986], p. 105), who criticizes this on the grounds that Sa-pan is here saying the Chinese system is the same as the tantric *Atiyoga* rDzogs-chen. Padma-dkar-po, *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, p. 579 (nga 198a) interprets Sa-pan as making this same identification, and says that the *sūtra*-based refutations by Kamalaśīla would not have held water had they been directed toward a tantric system such as the *Atiyoga* rDzogs-chen. He challenges upholders of Sa-pan's views to cite the specifics: where did this Chinese tradition spread and into whose hands in Tibet did it first come? See also his *dGe bshes mar yul pa'i dris lan legs par bshad pa'i gzhi*, vol. 21, p. 582 (zha da 15b): *rab dbye ba rang la 'di thad du tig tig med de / rgya nag [16a] lugs kyi rdzogs chen zhes smros pas so / / sgom rim gyi lo rgyus rting mar theg chen mdo lugs kyi gdams ngag ston pas 'od srungs la gnang ba rgya gar ba bcu / rgya nag po pa bcu / bod du 'ongs pa'i hwa shang ma hā yan nar bcas pa la gtad / gal te 'di rdzogs chen pa yin na de ni theg pa rim pa dgur 'dod pa'i rise mo yin pas ka ma la shī las mdo lung gi dgag pa sun 'byin ltar snang du 'gro /*. See also Broido, p. 64, n. 34. Probably the first discussions of the above *sDom gsum rab dbye* passage in the Western literature are in Stein (1971), p. 9, and (1972), p. 23, n. 3. A recent discussion is Karmay (1988), p. 198. For references to other discussions, see D. Jackson (1987), pp. 47-8.

In spite of the strong denials of many, within the rDzogs-chen tradition itself such a link was nevertheless sometimes admitted. See for instance Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa, *gNas lugs kyi mdzod*, p. 33b, as cited by Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1257, note 37. See also Karmay (1988), p. 93, n. 42, who lists the rDzogs-chen masters A-ro Ye-shes-'byung-gnas (11th c.) and Sog-zlog-pa (1552-1624) as having asserted that the rDzogs-chen received one of its transmissions through a succession of seven Chinese masters (though Sog-zlog-pa predictably denying the specifically Ch'an connection). Kaḥ-thog rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu (1698-1755), however, states that the lineage of seven emanated [Chinese] teachers (*sprul pa bdun brgyud*) of the *bka' thang* is precisely the Ch'an lineage down to Mo-ho-yen, and certain other rNying-ma masters such as 'Jigs-med gling-pa (1728-1791) defended the Chinese *cig-car-ba* teachings, as Karmay also notes (*ibid.*, and p. 96, n. 60). Karmay (1988, *passim*) contributes importantly to the question by distinguishing the early rDzogs-chen from some of the other distinct strands of early (i.e., 9th-10th c.) Tibetan Buddhism, especially from the Tibetan *cig-car-ba* tradition descending from Mo-ho-yen. In this he follows the *bSam gtan mig sgron* of sNubs Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes (10th c.?). He therefore also (pp. 89f) discounts the ready identifications of the rDzogs-chen with Ch'an made on two occasions by G. Tucci (1958), *Minor Buddhist Texts II*, based for instance on a passage in the *Blon po'i bka' thang*, and in this Karmay accords with the cautious stance of P. Kvaerne (1983), pp. 368, 384, and 386, n. 5. But Karmay goes a bit too far at one point (p. 91) in asserting: "The author of [the *Blon po'i bka' thang*] therefore had no access to documents comparable to those of Tun-huang as has been assumed . . ." for other research has uncovered some striking overlaps by comparing the relevant sections of the *Blon po'i bka' thang* and the *bSam gtan mig sgron* with Pelliot Tib. 116. See Broughton (1983), p. 51, n. 7, who refers to the findings of Okimoto.

As noted above, sGam-po-pa sometimes portrays the rDzogs-chen as occupying a parallel doctrinal position to the Mahāmudrā as one of two practical instructions (*man ngag*) of the Mantrayāna *rdzogs rim*, and on occasion even seems to identify the two as being the same ultimate third path beyond the Pāramitāyāna and Tantra. See his *Tshogs bshad legs mdzes ma*, p. 220.2: *rdzogs pa'i rim pa gdam[s] ngag ston/ de la gnyis/ rdzogs pa chen po'i man ngag dang phyag rgya chen po gnyis yod pa las/*. And his *Tshogs chos yon tan phun tshogs*, p. 269.1: *[gsum pa] nyon mongs pa ye shes chen po'i gzhir shes pa ni gsang sngags bla na med pa phyag rgya chen po'i don dam/ rdzogs pa chen po'i don te/*. On the other hand, sGam-po-pa also sometimes distanced himself from what he portrayed as the more radical and unrealistically extreme *cig-car-ba* doctrines of the rDzogs-pa chen-po. See his *Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhus lan*, pp. 438-39, as translated above, note 28.

88. As Sa-pan also said in the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 309.2.5 (*na* 25b.5):

The present Mahāmudrā and the Chinese tradition of rDzogs-chen are in substance (*don la*) the same, except for their substituting the terms "descent from above" and "ascent from below" for "gradualist" and "simultaneist."

*da lta'i phyag rgya chen po dang / /
rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen la / /*

yas 'bab dang ni mas 'dzegs gnyis / /
rim gyis pa dang cig char bar / /
ming 'dogs bsgyur ba ma gtogs pa / /
don la khyad par dbye ba med / /

89. In Chinese Buddhism, and especially in Ch'an, it was by no means uncommon to propound such a teaching; in fact, "see the nature and achieve Buddhahood" became the paradigmatic statement of Ch'an gnoseology, according to Buswell (1987), p. 341. The idea is also expressed in the concise saying on Ch'an practice traditionally attributed to Bodhidharma: "A separate transmission outside the scriptures, / No reliance upon words and letters, / Directly pointing to the human mind, / See the nature and achieve Buddhahood." See Buswell (1988), p. 250, note 1, who refers to further discussion of this saying in D. T. Suzuki's *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (London: 1958), vol. 1, p. 176. The first Chinese master to state "see your own nature and become a Buddha" was apparently Seng-liang, who flourished in the early 6th century and was inspired to that statement by a passage in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. See Chappell (1983), p. 123, note 19.

The Ch'an master Wu-chu (714-774) openly and at all times taught his doctrine of no-thought, encouraging his students simply to see their nature and become a Buddha. See S. Yanagida (1983), p. 34. Some of the teachings of Ma-tsu Tao-i (709-788) would also be familiar to Tibetan followers of radical simultaneist approaches. According to him, it is the encounter with the words of the master—who directly points to the mind—that is able to awaken the student to enlightenment. Awakening to the essence of mind occurs instantaneously; cultivation means simply to let the mind act spontaneously. And "since cultivation is just the functioning of that essence, it is also instantaneously perfected, leaving nothing further either to develop or to be overcome." See Buswell, Jr. (1987), p. 340. By the Sung dynasty (960-1279), Ch'an had justified itself as "first, an independent transmission of Buddhism separate from the doctrinal teachings, and second as an abrupt approach to spiritual attainment that involved nothing more than the direct vision of the enlightened nature of the human mind" (*ibid.*, pp. 321f.). Sa-paṅ could well have come into direct contact with late-Sung exponents of Ch'an while at the court of the Mongol prince Köden in ca. 1250, though his criticisms of the *dkar po chig thub* were probably formulated before this.

90. It would be most useful to know more about the relation between these two scholars and their works. Padma-dkar-po writes in his author's colophon that he had written his own work in response to a request to do so from bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal that he had received a long time before. Had bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal in the meantime already completed his own treatise?

91. Padma-dkar-po in his *Chos 'byung*, p. 382 (*ka cha* 191b) mentions that the entire scholastic tradition of Tibet for a time in the late-14th/early-15th century became "Sa-skyapa" owing to the great influence of g.Yag-ston Sangs-rgyas-dpal (1348-1414) and Red-mdā'ba gZhon-nu-blo-gros (1349-1412) who were teaching, so to speak, "competitively" at Sa-skyapa in those days: 'gran bshad mdzad pa'i stobs kyis mdo slob 'dod thams cad der tshogs pas kun sa skya par song/. They in turn had received important lineages from the old seminary of gSang-phu,

and indeed g.Yag-ston and his chief disciple Rong-ston both were active as teachers also at the latter establishment.

92. Padma-dkar-po in his *Chos 'byung bstan pa'i padma rgyas pa'i nyin byed*, p. 381 (*ka cha* 191a.2) respectfully acknowledges the indebtedness of the whole later Tibetan learned tradition to Sa-skya Paṇḍita, especially through the latter's disciple 'U-yug-pa (who had also studied under Myal-zhig at gSang-phu) with the following words: 'u yug pa bsod nams seng ge sa skya/ khong gis 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyi sprul pa'i sku sa paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan la nram 'grel gsan de bshad pas/ da lta'i tshad ma thams cad kyi thug sar gyur pa yin/. See also Padma-dkar-po's *bKa' brgyud kyi bka' 'bum* . . . , p. 431.3, where he records receiving another lineage from Sa-pan and refers to him as: 'jam pa'i dbyangs paṇḍi ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan.

Padma-dkar-po composed two major treatises on *pramāṇa*, which were included at the end of the first volume of his collected works in the gNam 'Brug Se-ba Byang-chub-gling edition: the *Tshad ma mdo dang sde bdun gyi don gtan la phab pa'i bstan bcos rje btsun 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyi dgongs rgyan* and *Tshad ma mdo dang bcas pa'i spyi don rigs pa'i snying po*.

93. I have not yet been able to trace Padma-dkar-po's *tshad ma* and *phar phyin* lineages precisely, but no doubt the main ones passed through Rong-ston (1367-1449) and (for *Phar-phyin* at least) probably also Bu-ston (1290-1364). Padma-dkar-po describes the important contributions of these two and others in his *Chos 'byung*, pp. 381f (*ka cha* 191a-b). Some of his scholastic lineages link up with the traditions of gSer-mdog-can and Shākya-mchog-ldan (1428-1507), who had studied under Rong-ston as a youth and who was mainly a student of Rong-ston's disciple Don-yod-dpal-ba (1398-1483?). Others come from the school of ('Bras-yul) sKyed-tshal near Rin-spungs, a continuation of Rong-ston's tradition through the activities of his student Byams-chen rab-'byams-pa Sangs-rgyas-'phel (1412-1485) and the latter's students such as Go-rams-pa (1429-1489). Padma-dkar-po's autobiography, *Sems dpa' chen po padma dkar po'i rnam thar thugs rje chen po'i zlos gar*, Collected Works, vol. 3, p. 410 (*ga nya* 35b.2), mentions his youthful studies of some of Shākya-mchog-ldan's writings on *pramāṇa*. On p. 404 Padma-dkar-po speaks very highly of Shākya-mchog-ldan's immediate disciple (Bya Paṇḍita) bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, whereas his teachers preferred 'Bum rab-'byams-pa from sKyed-tshal. Elsewhere he records receiving certain other non-tantric lineages of 'Bum rab-'byams-pa Rin-chen-chos-dbang from the latter's disciples Brag-sle-ba and 'Thel mkhan-chen Chos-rgyal-lhun-grub. See Padma-dkar-po, *bKa' brgyud bla ma*, pp. 459.2, 464.1, and 467.2.

94. The great importance of the experiential component for Sa-pan can be witnessed even in his most "scholastic" and "gradualist" writings, such as in his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, p. 31.4.3 (62b.3) where in his discussion of the two truths, his ultimate position is not that of the scholastic philosopher (he explicitly rejects here the scholastically worked out Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika systems) but rather that of the meditator of the Mantrayāna.

95. See for instance dPa'-bo gT̄sug-lag-phreng-pa, vol. 1, p. 815, who identified this trend as having been continued by Phag-mo-gru-pa, including the heavy emphasis on the *Vinaya*: *rje dwags po'i lugs bka' phyag chu bo gnyis dres kho nas bskyangs shing 'dul ba la gts'o bor mdzad/*. Cf. Roerich transl. (1975), p. 560,

Tib., *nya* 69a.5). Phag-mo-gru-pa is said to have preferred ordained disciples, Gling Ras-pa being one of the notable exceptions to this preference. He used to avoid visiting inside the houses and villages of lay people. Like Zhang, he had previously also studied some under rGwa-lo, though in temperament and approach he and Zhang were strikingly different. According to the *Blue Annals* (p. 557f; Tib. p. 487 = *nya* 68a.5) the two of them knew each other and went together as companions to sGam-po for their first time (in the early 1150s). There is no record of Zhang's ever having met sGam-po-pa, but rather his connections were with the latter's nephew and successor sGom-pa Tshul-khrims-snying-po, who had been appointed monastic leader by sGam-po-pa in 1150.

96. Sa-paṅ held as a general principle the importance of following a doctrine which was known and widely acknowledged in India as genuine, and which had been transmitted, taught and translated in a recognized lineage. See his *mKhas 'jug* II 3 (p. 94.4.6 = 28b.6), and D. Jackson (1987), pp. 4f. This approach was held to have been officially decreed after the bSam-yas debate, as mentioned in dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-pa, vol. 1, p. 380:

lo tsās ma bsgyur paṅḍitas ma bshad / /
rgyal pos bka' btags sbyin bdag ma byas pa'i / /
chos la spyad du mi gnang bka' khriṃs bsgrags / /

97. Sa-paṅ's procedure is a common one in critical scholarship. He began from a sense that something was anomalous or out of place doctrinally in a text or teaching, which led him to suspect that the doubtful doctrines had been later introductions into the tradition, for which he believed he had found convincing proof in some of the available historical sources and other writings. dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-pa similarly sensed that something was amiss with the alternative *sBa bzhed* historical account which Sa-paṅ had probably used, alleging that it was obviously a later insertion by a scholar hostile to his tradition. Even among modern scholars such a line is not uncommon. It was used for instance by R. Jackson (1982), who sensed that historically and methodologically there might be something amiss in Sa-paṅ's account in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, and hypothesized by way of explanation that its author had modified and introduced new elements into the historical tradition.

98. These writings of Klu-sgrub-rgya-mtsho were the three works: 1) *Phyag chen rtsod spong*, 2) *Phyag chen rang lugs*, and 3) *Phyag chen rtsod spong gi yang lan*. The third would seem to be the secondary reply entitled *Yang lan mkhas pa'i mig thur* which was printed at 'Dar Grang-mo-che. See D. Jackson (1983), p. 20. For a subsequent response to some of Padma-dkar-po's replies, see also Ngag-dbang-chos-grags, *sDom pa gsum gyi rab tu dbye ba'i rnam bshad legs par bshad pa zla 'od nor bu* (New Delhi: 1978), p. 376 (188b), as quoted above, n. 69.

99. Sa-paṅ received three traditions of the *Nā ro chos drug* as well as various *doha* teachings, including those of Maitrīpāda, as he himself records near the end of the *sDom gsum rab dbye* (p. 320.3.4 = *na* 48a.4). As he said in a previous passage, any criticisms he made of this *Phyag rgya chen po* tradition could only be made through pointing out contradictions with what Nāropa had taught (p. 317.1.2 = *na* 41a.2):

de bzhin phyag rgya pa yang ni / /
nā ro pa la mos byed cing / /

nā ro'i gzhung dang 'gal gyur na / /
phyag rgya pa la gnod pa yin / /

This is an instance of the general rule that only internal contradictions have any force to disprove when criticizing another tradition through scriptural citation. A little later he cites the authority of Mar-pa's lineage of the *Nā ro chos drug* (p. 317.1.6 = na 41a.6).

To this, the later bKa'-brgyud reply would seem to be that this special transmission of the Mahāmudrā was not transmitted by Nāropa but rather by Maitrīpāda, it being the quintessential sense of the Mahāmudrā (*phyag rgya chen po snying po'i don*) realized by Saraha and transmitted to Nāgārjuna and then to the latter's student Śavari, who was Maitrīpāda's master. See dPa'-bo gTsong-lag-phreng-pa, vol. 1, p. 772. See also bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal's account in *Lhalungpa transl.* (1986), p. 117; Tib. p. 106a. Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje too portrayed the "*Yid la mi byed pa'i dbu ma*" of Maitrīpāda as that "Madhyamaka" which Mar-pa, Mi-la and sGam-po-pa were teaching. See Seyfort Ruegg (1988), pp. 1256-58; Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, pp. 10-11 (5b-6a).

On the other hand, Sa-pan's tracing of the lineage through Nāropa was not unfair, because this is precisely what Zhang Tshal-pa himself did in his own lineage record, *[b]rGyud pa sna tshogs*, Writings, p. 439.2: *phyag rgya chen po dang / nā ro pa'i chos drug 'di'i dbang du byas na / bcom ldan 'das rdo rje 'chang gis sprul pa te lo pas / nā ro pa la byin gyis brlabs / des mar pa lo tsha ba la byin gyis brlabs / mar rngog rnam gnyis kyis rje btsun mi la ras pa la bshad / des bla ma dags po nyid sgom pa la bshad / des bla ma dags po sgom tshul la bshad / des bdag la gnang ba'o' / .* The *Lam cig char ba* is also considered by Zhang to be a teaching of Nāropa. See his *Bla ma sna tshogs kyi tho byang*, p. 427.3: *rje btsun rin po che yer pa ba las / lam cig char ba la sogs pa nā ro pa'i gdams ngag sna tshogs / thogs bab la sogs pa mi tri pa'i gdams ngag sna tshogs / ...* The lineage for the *Lam cig char ba* is given as follows (*[b]rGyud pa sna tshogs*, 436.4): *lam cig char ba dang / rims kyis pa dang / kha 'thor ba'i dbang du byas na / bcom ldan 'das dpal dgyes pa rdo rje / sa bcu pa'i byang chub sems rdo rje snying po la bshad / des sprul pa'i sku te lo pa la bshad / des nā ro pa la bshad / des rje btsun mar pa lho brag pa la bshad / des rje btsun [r]ngog ri bo ba la bshad / mar pa rngog gnyis kyis rje btsun mi la ras pa la bshad / des rje btsun gling ka ba 'bri sgom ras chen la bshad / des rnal 'byor chen po mal yer pa la bshad / des zhang gi sbrang ban bdag la gnang ba'o' / .* sGam-po-pa too stressed Nāropa as the main source of the lineage (Works, vol. 1, p. 445.6), though elsewhere he sometimes coordinates Nāropa's teachings (as *bsgom yod* and *lam dus su*) with Maitrīpāda's (as *bsgom med* and *'bras bu'i dus su*). See also the discussion of Shākya-mchog-ldan in his *Legs bshad gser gyi thur ma*, Collected Works, vol. 7, pp. 187-194; and Go-rams-pa's answers, Collected Works, vol. 14, pp. 268.4.5-269.2.2 (*ta 57a-58a*).

The *thog bab[s]* ("Thunderbolt Strike") specifically is identified by Zhang (Writings, p. 427) as having been one of Maitrīpāda's instructions which Zhang had received from rJe-btsun Yer-pa. A brief instruction by this name is also found in the collected works of sGam-po-pa (vol. 2, pp. 215.7ff), and it contains a formulation of several key principles of the *cig-car-ba* approach. The title there is given as *Chos rje dags po lha rje'i gsung / thog babs kyi rtsa ba*, and it begins with the phrase: *phyag rgya chen po'i gdams ngag thog babs yas thog tu gdab pa 'di la...* "With regard to this instruction of the Mahāmudrā, the Thunderbolt Strike, which is applied on top from above..." To begin with, before the actual practi-

cal instruction, five erroneous notions are refuted:

1) Maintaining the attainment of a later excellent gnosis after one has gotten rid of the evil mind one presently has (because as the root of all *dhar-mas*, the mind is not to be abandoned in this system).

2) Maintaining the purification of the five poisons or *kleśas* (because in this system the poisons are to be assimilated and incorporated into the path).

3) Maintaining that realization (*rtogs pa*) is reached after three long aeons (because in this system realization is maintained to be right now).

4) Maintaining that realization is reached through intelligence (*rig pa*) or discriminative understanding (*shes rab*), (because in this system realization is said to be reached through the direct, practical instruction [*gdams ngag*]).

5) Maintaining there is a qualitative distinction of better or worse between a Buddha and an ordinary sentient being (because in this system, there is no difference between them, beyond the presence or absence of realization [*rtogs pa*]).

The *gCig car ba'i lam gts'o bor bton pa Thog babs* instructions are classified within Padma-dkar-po's *gsan yig* as belonging to the section *gdams ngag nyams len gyi skor*. See Padma-dkar-po, *bKa' brgyud pa*, pp. 376 and 377.2.

The tradition of stressing the role of Maitrīpāda's teachings (especially the *amanasikāra*) as paramount and of tracing the origin of the key Mahāmudrā teachings through him back to Saraha (and to Nāgārjuna) apparently occurred at a stage of the tradition after the time of sGam-po-pa and Zhang, approximately during the life of Sa-paṅ (perhaps as a response to his criticisms or those of others). According to later bKa'-brgyud-pa historians, this was asserted especially by rGod-tshang-pa (1189-1258?) (and his chief disciple). See 'Gos lo-tsā-ba as translated by G. Roerich, p. 841 (Tib. p. 745 = *da* 2a.5): 'dir chos rje rgod tshang pa'i zhal nas / rgyal ba shākya thub pa'i bstan pa 'di la phyag rgya chen po zhes lam phul du byung bar mgo 'don mkhan bram ze chen po sa ra ha pa gda' ba bu [?] / de'i lugs 'dzin pa rgya gar na rje ri khrod zhabs yab sras yin / . Cf. Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje as translated by Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1260; Tib. p. 14 (7b.2): *don 'di la dgongs nas rgyal ba rgod tshang pa chen po yab sras kyis kyang / phyag rgya chen po'i chos 'di mgo 'don mkhan bram ze chen po dang / klu sgrub gnyis yin /*. For a recent study of the life of Maitrīpāda, see M. Tatz (1987).

100. Quoted from Gómez (1983), p. 125, who translates from Pelliot 21.

101. Quoted from Gómez (1983), p. 90, who translates from the *Cheng li chüeh*, p. 134a.

102. Quoted from Gómez (1983), p. 99, who cites five passages in the *Cheng li chüeh*.

103. In his own words (*Lam zab mthar thug*, 20a.4):

gnyis med rtogs pas zin byas la /
'di bya 'di mi bya med par / /
spyod lam gar dgar btang bar bya / /

There is nothing wrong with this statement from the point of view of the doctrines of the *siddhas* and the *anuttarayoga tantras*. But there do remain potential problems in its actual application. Even in the great master bla-ma Zhang's own life this type of *siddha*-like conduct caused certain difficulties, according to

the bKa'-brgyud-pa historians. He is widely acknowledged within the tradition to have reached the highest realization, and he himself professed to that. Therefore he did not have to concern himself with conventional morality and could justifiably conduct himself like a *siddha*. According to the *Blue Annals* of 'Gos lotsā-ba, p. 137b, after he attained realization, he involved himself in a number of religious building projects in which he used force aggressively to achieve his aims. Moreover (Roerich transl., p. 714): "Against those who did not obey his orders, he used to dispatch repeatedly soldiers, and fought them." In other words, though he was an enlightened monk, he forcefully pursued ambitious projects, holding that his detachment and extraordinary realizations made him exempt from the normal consequences of his deeds. As he once said (*ibid.*, p. 715): "I have given up the World in my Mind. The link between me and the World has been completely severed. . . . Many people may doubt me, judging me after my exterior works, except for some stout-hearted disciples." The Tibetan text, p. 624 = *nya* 137b.

dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-ba, vol. 1, p. 808, explains a little of the historical background of this and mentions the beneficial consequences for a number of Zhang's students who participated in these martial exploits: *spyir de'i dus bod rgyal khirms med pa sil bur song ba'i skabs yin pas thams cad la ri rgya klung rgya lam rgya mdzad/ rgya 'og tu mi 'du ba rnams la dmag g.yul ngo sogs drag po'i 'phrin las mdzad pas slob ma rnams la'ang 'khrug gral du phyag rgya chen po'i rtogs pa skyes pa mang du byung zhing dpon dar ma gzhon nus 'khrug gral du bde mchog zhal mthong/*. Zhang is said (dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-ba, vol. 1, p. 810) to have taught Mahāmudrā also to the Ti-shri Ras-pa, a realization having awakened in the latter through his teacher Zhang's words: "However you may do [or act], that is the mahāmudrā" (*zhang rin po ches ji ltar byas kyang phyag chen yin gsungs pas ngo 'phrod pas*). Cf. his *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug*, p. 99.1 (26a.1-3).

Zhang's well-travelled and widely experienced contemporary Grub-thob O-rgyan-pa (see dPa'-bo, *ibid.*) is said to have remarked that Zhang's "violent enlightened activities" (*drag po'i 'phrin las*) had never been exceeded by anyone before him in Tibet, like the unsurpassed activities of Birwapa in India: *spyir ngan song gsum bgral ba'i zhing du bshad kyang drag po'i 'phrin las mngon sum du mdzad pa rgya gar du birwa pa dang bod du zhang rin po che las ma byung zhes grub thob o r[gy]an pas gsungs/*.

This approach of Zhang's, which was similar in certain respects to that of some religious madmen (*chos smyon pa*) or *siddhas* (except for instance that he wielded considerable temporal power), did not go over very well with some of his fellow influential bKa'-brgyud-pa masters. The Karma-pa Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa (1110-1193), for instance, who evidently saw himself as acting in part on behalf of Zhang's master sGom-tshul (sGom-pa Tshul-khirms-snying-po [1116-1169], sGam-po-pa's nephew and successor who was a known peacemaker), is said to have stated once (cf. *Blue Annals*, p. 715, Tibetan text p. 479 = *nya* 34a.3): "The purpose of my coming to dBus is to fulfill sGom-tshul's command, who had told me "Regardless of what situation you find yourself in Khams, return west!" and to establish monasteries . . . , and to offer a hundred volumes written in gold to Dags-lha sGam-po, and to make a request to bla-ma Zhang not to engage in fighting, because people are unhappy with his fighting.

I have come for these purposes.' When he beseeched Zhang not to engage in fighting, Zhang consequently grasped his [Karma-pa's] finger, danced about a lot, and henceforth did not engage in fighting."

Zhang's approach contrasts vividly with the pacific teachings that Mi-la ras-pa is recorded to have given sGam-po-pa. These included the instruction to continue to train oneself in serving the guru and to observe even small meritorious and moral matters even though one has already understood one's mind as the Buddha, even though ultimately there is nothing to be cultivated or purified, and even though one has understood that the connection of moral causation is from the ultimate point of view empty like the sky, respectively (dPa'-bo, vol. 1, p. 797). See also bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal and the latter's quotations of sGom-tshul in Lhalungpa (1986), pp. 107 and 391; Tib. 96b and 362b. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 372 (Tib. p. 345b), where sGam-po-pa is quoted as stating that moral cause and effect cease to function after the realization of the *dharmakāya*. Cf. also gNubs Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, p. 47.2, on no longer needing to observe moral discipline to attain enlightenment once the theory has been realized (*lta ba rtogs nas*). Zhang elsewhere in his *Phyag chen lam zab mthar thug*, p. 88 (20b), taught that the practitioner should completely avoid strife: *skad cig tsam yang 'khrug mi bya /* .

According to one source, the controversies surrounding Zhang had started even before he met sGam-po-pa, and it seems that sGam-po-pa avoided meeting Zhang on the occasion that Phag-mo-gru-pa and Zhang went to sGam-po-pa for the first time specifically to see sGam-po-pa and to ask his help in settling some dispute involving Zhang. Phag-mo-gru-pa, by contrast, was privately summoned, accepted as a student and instructed then by sGam-po-pa. See the *Blue Annals*, p. 558; Tib. *nya* 68a.5.

Bla-ma Zhang is one of the most colorful and intriguing of the 12th-century bKa'-brgyud-pa masters. He founded Tshal Gung-thang in 1187, near the end of his life, though he had assumed an important position in Central Tibet already by the late 1150s when he was entrusted to oversee the Lha-sa temples by his teacher sGom-pa Tshul-khrims-snying-po after the latter had pacified some severe political unrest there and had done extensive restorations (see dPa'-bo, vol. 1, p. 801). For Zhang's biography, see the *Blue Annals*, pp. 711-715 (*nya* 136a-137b), and Dpa'-bo gTsub-lag-phreng-ba, vol. 1, pp. 806-809. His tradition had died out by the 16th century according to *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 811. Many of his writings, including numerous autobiographical reminiscences, are preserved in a modern reproduction: *Writings (bka' thor bu) of Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa brtson-'grus-grags-pa* (Tashijong: 1972). Zhang has mentioned the role he played and his attitude toward the above-mentioned activities for instance in the brief autobiographical poem *sNa tshogs zhi gnas*, *Writings*, pp. 620.7-623.6, which he composed in a bird year at bSam-yas. Some of his songs and poems are classics of ruthless and sardonic self-criticism that is so extreme that the overall effect it produces on the reader becomes ironical and humorous. See for example his pompously and ironically entitled *Bla ma zhang ston gyis / bla ma zhang ston rang nyid la shin tu ngo mtshar ba'i sgo nas bstod pa*, *Writings*, pp. 666.6-673.2.

Sa-paṅ probably had first-hand experience with Zhang's tradition and followers, for he visited dBus more than once, and in the 1220s he spent quite a

long time in bSam-yas, where Zhang had stayed and which had been a stronghold of Zhang's support a few decades before—the bSam-yas ruler brTsad-po Khri-seng having been one of bla-ma Zhang's most ardent supporters (dPa'-bo I 810). During the years of Sa-paṅ's visit to Central Tibet, the head of Zhang's main temple was one Sangs-rgyas-'bum, who was expelled from his position (for reasons that are not specified by 'Gos lo-tsā-ba) in 1231 by sGom-pa Yeshe-sldan, and only allowed to return in 1242 to found a meditation center (*sgom sde*). See the *Blue Annals*, p. 716; Tib. *nya* 138b. According to dPa'-bo (I 809) his expulsion was because of a dispute between religious and secular leaders.

104. The statement of Mo-ho-yen as presented by Broido (p. 43) was:

G. When conceptualizations are given up, there is an automatic attainment of all virtues.

The opening verse of this chapter of Zhang (p. 30a) as translated above was:

In the moment of realizing [the true nature of] one's own mind, all white (i.e., excellent, virtuous) qualities without exception are effortlessly completed simultaneously.

L. Gómez (1983), p. 99, cites five places in the *Cheng li chüeh* where Mo-ho-yen "claims that there is an automatic or all-at-once attainment of all virtues when one gives up all conceptualizations." See furthermore *ibid.*, p. 114, Gómez's translation of Stein 709, p. 7b: "A mind that is free from examination accomplishes the six perfections simultaneously in an instant," and further, p. 100, where Gómez expresses reservations about such an "automatic practice," which would have been classified by Mo-ho-yen as the "internal" perfections or practice.

See also Gómez (1983a), p. 424, who seems to come to the conclusion that Kamalaśīla was attempting to refute the claim of soteriological self-sufficiency for a single method, and that this was at the heart of the controversy in the *Bhāvanākramas* and not "subitism," thus according with the general thrust of Sa-paṅ's critique of the *dkar po chig thub* and his assertion of its identity as the main doctrine refuted by Kamalaśīla: "The question is not whether enlightenment is sudden or gradual, but rather whether the different elements of the path should be analyzed, defined and practiced separately." "[If Kamalaśīla is right,] ... it is obvious that *upāya*, the altruistic aspect of Buddhahood, is not merely an automatic fruit of understanding or enlightenment, and that it should be practiced separately."

This accords remarkably well also with the comments of Go-rams-pa on the *dkar po chig thub* controversy in his *dBu ma'i spyi don (rGyal ba thams cad kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa zab mo dbu ma'i de kho na nyid spyi'i ngag gis ston pa nges don rab gsal)* (vol. 5, p. 345.1; ca 173a.1): *dkar po chig thub ces bya ba stong nyid kho nar bsgoms pas thams cad mkhyen pa sgrub par 'dod pa la ni mkhas pa ka ma la shi la dang/ dpal ldan sa skya paṅḍita la sogs pa don ma 'khrul par gzigs pa rnam kyis thabs kyi cha ma tshang bas rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas sgrub par mi nus so / / zhes lung dang rigs pa du ma'i sgo nas sun phyung zin pas 'dir 'bad pa ma byas so / /*

105. See Gómez (1983), pp. 121-123, translating Pelliot 116. Compare this with the seventh through tenth verses of Zhang's *dkar po chig thub tu bstan pa* chapter, Broido's transcription, p. 54 (Tib. text, pp. 30b-31a). Cf. the parallel lines attributed to the early Tibetan Lo-tsā-ba Ka-ba dPal-brtsegs, as quoted

by gNubs Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes in his *bSam gtan mig sgron* in the chapter on the approach of the *ston-min* or *cig-car* (p. 132.2 = 66b):

'jig rten thams cad yongs blang ste / /
rdul tsam 'dzin pa'i sems med pas / /
sbyin pa'i pha rol phyin pa rdzogs / / (1)
nyes pa rdul tsam yang mi 'byung bas / /
tshul khriims pha rol phyin pa rdzogs / / (2)
chos kyi dbyings la bzod pas na / /
bzod pa'i pha rol phyin pa rdzogs / / (3)
de nyid don la mi g.yo bas /
brtson 'grus pha rol phyin pa rdzogs / / (4)
mnyam nyid mi g.yo bdag med pas / /
bsam gtan pha rol phyin pa rdzogs / / (5)
dmigs med don la rang rig pas / /
shes rab pha rol phyin pa rdzogs / / (6)

In the early rDzogs-chen a similar conception was expressed through the term *zin pa*, and gNubs in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (pp. 344-345) lists twenty ways in which the path and its attainments are “already complete” (—*zin*) in rDzogs-chen. On this term and that passage, see S. Karmay (1988), pp. 49f, note 42, and p. 54.

106. The occurrence of the notion of a single, self-sufficient medicine or panacea among the teachings of Mo-ho-yen (in the *Cheng-li chüeh*) has been known since the classic study of Demiéville (1952), who translated and discussed it on pp. 122f. Here Mo-ho-yen responds to the question of whether more than one “medicine” are or are not necessary to remove separately the three distinct “poisons”, i.e., *klesās*. The translation of the question concludes:

S'il en est ainsi, comment donc voulez-vous extirper les passions en cultivant l'abstention des notions de l'esprit? Les rendre temporairement invisibles, ce n'est pas un moyen de les extirper radicalement.

[Mo-ho-yen's reply begins:]

D'après le *Nirvāṇa-sūtra*, il y a médicament, nommé *agada*, qui guérit de toute maladie les êtres auxquelles il est administré. Il en est de [p. 123] même du sans-réflexion et du sans-examen. Toutes les fausses notions dues au triple poison des passions sont des produits nés, par transformation, de l'imagination particularisante associée à la réflexion.

See also the translation of Gómez (1983), p. 92. An obscure passage occurs later, summarized by Demiéville, note 8:

Le sens général est qu'il ne s'agit pas d'opérer la délivrance par une série purgatifs graduels, mais de l'assurer d'un seul coup par l'expurgation totalitaire des “fausses notions”.

Mo-ho-yen concludes as follows:

Veuillez donc, nous vous en prions, vous débarrasser des fausses notions, et, par là même, étant absolument sans réflexion, vous pourrez vous délivrer, en une seule fois et de façon totale, de toutes les imprégnations de fausses notions dues au triple poison des passions.

Demiéville (1952), discusses the *agada* notion at more length in note 8, commenting at one point (p. 122): “On comprend cependant que l'image de l'*agada*

ait pu venir à l'esprit des avocats du subitisme: une panacée est, en effet, essentiellement totalitaire, unitaire, 'subite'." See also Gómez (1983), who characterized the Mo-ho-yen's doctrine with such words as (p. 90): "The sole effective method of spiritual cultivation is an allopathic prescription, an antidote . . ." and (p. 92): "Mo-ho-yen leaves no room for doubt regarding the superiority of his method of liberation—it is the only effective method, and the only one that is required, a true panacea."

Broido, pp. 51f, minimizes this similarity: "Agada means simply 'medicine' or 'medical treatment,' and this metaphor no doubt applies both to the Hwa-shang's doctrine and to the later bKa'-brgyud-pa one. Nevertheless there seems to be no reason to think that the two doctrines have more in common than this general typological similarity."

Cf. the occurrence of a mention of a "great medicine" of the instantaneous method becoming a great poison for the gradualist, and vice versa the medicine of the gradualist for the simultaneist, as quoted twice from a work entitled *Ka dpe gsar rnying* by bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, pp. 112b and 132b (cf. also Lhalungpa transl. [1986], pp. 123 and 144):

cig car pa yi sman chen de / /
rim gyis pa yi dug tu 'gyur / /

107. Zhang Tshal-pa, p. 104.1 (28b):

phyag rgya chen po chig chod ma / /
pa na se yi 'bras bu bzhin / /
rgyu dang 'bras bu dus mtshungs shing / /
mtshan ma rang sar grol ba yin / /

spre'u rnams mas 'dzegs shing thog len / /
khra rnams thog babs kho nas len / /
kh[r]a rnams yal ga ma mthong ste / /
shing thog len la smrar ci yod / /

de bzhin gcig char gang zag gis / /
sa lam drod rtags ma mthong yang / /
chos sku mthong ba smrar ci yod / /

108. Mo-ho-yen uses a special bird simile for simultaneous realization, though not that of the hawk or *khyung* or *garuḍa*. As translated by Gómez (1983), p. 116, Mo-ho-yen compares his method to: "... the young of the kalaviṅka bird who upon leaving their eggs are able to fly like their mother." As I have described above in note 28, here Mo-ho-yen (Stein 709, second fragment, f. 9a) also uses the image of a lion's cub. In rDzogs-chen sources too the images of the *khyung*, *kalaviṅka*, and lion's cub appear singly or together as symbols for the "innateist" awakening.

The account of the alternative *sBa bzhed* tradition was rejected as a later addition by dPa'-bo g'Tsug-lag-phreng-ba, who said that the criticism attributed to Kamalaśīla of the *garuḍa* simile was unworthy of a great Indian paṇḍita and was unfounded because *garuḍas* are taught in scripture to be miraculously born (*rdzus te skyes pa*) and not born from eggs. By contrast, Padma-dkar-po in the course of presenting an objection in his *Klan ka gzhom pa'i gtam*, p. 558.2 (*zha nga* 3b.2) portrays the Hwa-shang's views similarly as part

of a *pūrvapakṣa* and does not reject this characterization itself as false: *hwa shang gis bya byed kyi chos kyis 'tshang mi rgya bas/ rnam par mi rlog pa bsgoms nas sems rtogs pa [g]nyis kyis 'tshang rgya ste/ khyung nam mkha' las shing rtser 'bab pa ltar yas babs kyi chos yin pas dkar po chig thub yin no/ / zer ba . . .* Cf. also the mention of the *khyung-chen* image of the rDzogs-chen by 'Bri-gung rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa, p. 272.3.

Broido, p. 64, n. 24, in this connection erroneously links the terms *yas 'bab* ("descent from above") and *mas 'dzeg* ("ascent from below") which occur in this historical account with the internal heat practices.

109. When Broido says that Sa-pan's "attacks" "stand convicted of polemic," he apparently implies that polemical controversy is some sort of blameworthy deed. Nevertheless, he also seems to acknowledge that there can be both malignant and relatively benign or even salutary forms of controversy, for he mentions (p. 42) that Padma-dkar-po too indulges in "attacks" on Sa-pan and has written at least one "polemical" work of his own.

110. One of the statements attributed to sGam-po-pa about his *mahāmudrā* method was that it was distinct from and superior to the "three great [traditions]" (*chen po gsum*): i.e. the Madhyamaka, the tantric Mahāmudrā, and the rDzogs-pa-chen-po. This statement is discussed by Karmay (1988), p. 197, based on its occurrence in the *dGongs cig* commentary of rDo-rje-shes-rab (pp. 403-404) [which Karmay attributes to Shes-rab-'byung-gnas]. The same quotation appears in Shākya-mchog-ldan, *Legs bshad gser thur*, Collected Works, vol. 7, p. 84, and elsewhere.

bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, quoting sGam-po-pa, likewise views the Mahāmudrā as belonging to a third vehicle or path distinct from both *sūtra* and *tantra*, and wants to deny specifically that it is based on tantric mysticism. In his view, the integration of the teachings into the *sūtra* and *tantra* systems was a development introduced later by followers of the tradition. See Lhalungpa (1986), pp. 110-112; bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, pp. 99a-101a. For the threefold classifications in sGam-po-pa, see also his *Dus gsum*, Works, vol. 1, pp. 418 and 438. In the first he gives two alternatives, as described above, note 57. See also his *Tshogs chos yon tan phun tshogs*, pp. 268.6 and 283.5.

Cf. the traditional characterization of the rDzogs-chen as "the doctrine that transcends all those of Sūtrayāna and Vajrayāna" quoted by S. Karmay (1988), p. 19.

Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje took exception to the view expressed by certain others that the Mahāmudrā linked to tantric mysticism was inferior to non-Tantric Mahāmudrā. See Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1261, and Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, p. 15.5 (7b.5): *mdo sngags so so'i dgongs par byas nas/ phyag chen phyi ma las snga ma bzang ba bka' bryud rin po che'i bzhed pa yin ces bris gda' ba ni ches mi 'thad pas gzhan du bkag zin to/ /*.

111. Zhang holds, incidentally, (11b.1) that even for the gradualist practitioner, *abhiṣeka* is sometimes received without its having been conferred. Cf. Sa-pan, *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 307.3.6 (na 22b.6): *la la dbang bzhi mu bzhi 'dod/ / dbang bskur byas kyang ma thob dang/ / ma byas kyang ni thob pa dang/ /*, etc. This presentation of the four possibilities (*mu bzhi*) is said by Go-rams-pa, *sDom gsum rnam bshad*, p. 166b, to have been maintained by such masters as 'Ti-phu-pa and

Ras-chung-pa. By contrast, Sa-pan himself maintains that for it to be Mantrayāna there must be the conferment of *abhiseka*, and that without receiving the fourth empowerment, such things as *mahāmudrā* should not be cultivated. See the *sDom gsum rab dbye*, p. 310.2.6 (na 27b.6): *dbang bskur bzhi pa ma thob par / / phyag rgya chen po sogs bsgom dang / /*.

112. Zhang Tshal-pa, p. 70.3 (11b):

cig char ba yi gang zag gis / /
lus srog dngos po ci yod kyis / /
[b]rgyud ldan bla ma mnyes par bya / /
dbang ngam byin brlabs ldan pa yis / /
byang chub sems kyis rab 'phang la / /
lha yi rnal 'byor dang ldan pas / /
thog ma nyid nas nges pa'i don / /
phyag rgya chen po bsgom par bya / /
rtogs pa'i bcud ldan bla ma yis / /
rang la yod pa'i ye shes de / /
lag mthil gter bzhin ngo sprod la / /
bsgom bya bsgom byed med mod kyi / /
bsgom med ngang las g.yengs mi bya / /

113. Zhang Tshal-pa, p. 116.5 (34b), warns at the end of his work that it will entail demerit if someone from outside the tradition is shown this treatise: *phyi mir [b]stan na sdig pa sog / /*. A similar warning occurs at the end of one of his autobiographies. See his Writings, p. 57.5: *gzhan la bstan na sdig pa sog*.

114. The same ideas are expressed in various other parts of the treatise, such as on p. 104.6 (28b):

gnyug ma rtogs pa'i skad cig nas / /
mya ngan 'das pa'i rgyal srid 'thob / /
thob med sems nyid dag pa [29a] 'di / /
'bras bu yin par da gdod shes / /

115. As mentioned above, many of his writings, including numerous detailed autobiographical reminiscences and biographical works, are preserved in a modern reproduction of his incomplete oeuvre: *Writings (bka' thor bu) of Zhang g.Yu-brag-pa brtson-'grus-grags-pa* (Tashijong: 1972). In a brief poem written at Bral-dro'i Mon-pa-gdong, he lists his main writings and where he wrote them, concluding on a regretful note. See his Writings, pp. 600.1-601.1. The works he lists there are:

- (1) *rNal 'byor lam ring*
- (2) *Phyag rgya chen po 'tshang 'bru* (both at Bhe-brag?)
- (3) *Bum pa'i 'phreng ba*, at Gong-dkar-mo
- (4) *Cal cal ring mo*, at 'Bro-g-bu lkug-pa
- (5) *gNyen po yig chung*, at Bya mKhar-rtse
- (6) *Mas 'dzeg go rim*, at Yud-bu'i gad-pa
- (7) *gSang sngags lag len*, at s'Tod-lung m'Ishur
- (8) *Kha 'thor sna tshogs*, at Byang Byi-'brong
- (9) *Lam mchog mthar thug*, at Thul-gyi-brag
- (10) *Kha na 'thon tshad*, at Mon-pa-gdong

A more complete listing is given by Padma-dkar-po in his record of teachings received, *bKa' brgyud kyi bka' 'bum...*, Works, vol. 4, pp. 453-456 (*nga na* 73a-74b).

116. Extracted from Broido, pp. 50-51, who quotes the corresponding passage approvingly from R. Jackson (1982), pp. 95-96.

117. Bla-ma Zhang studied under a total of thirty-six masters, from among whom he considered these four as especially important:

- (1) rGwa lo-tsā-ba
- (2) Mal Yer-pa-ba
- (3) dNgul-chu Be-ro-ba
- (4) rJe sGom-tshul

In addition, two more teachers were added to these to make up those he considered his six *rtsa ba'i bla ma*:

- (5) 'Ol-kha-ba
- (6) gShen-pa rDo-rje-seng-ge

See dPa'-bo gTsug-lag-phreng-ba, vol. 1, p. 807. See also Zhang's own composition, *rTsa ba'i bla ma drug gi gsol 'debs*, Writings, pp. 445-447. The full list of his teachers is given by Zhang in his [b]rGyud pa sna tshogs kyi tho byang, Writings, pp. 426-433.

118. Zhang received a number of important bKa'-brgyud-pa instructions also from Mal Yer-pa, who was not a disciple of sGam-po-pa, but rather of Gling-ka-ba 'Bri-sgom ras-chen who had studied directly under Mi-las ras-pa and was one of the "Eight Cotton-clad Brothers" (*ras pa mched brgyad*). Zhang has written a fairly extensive biography of Yer-pa. See his Writings, pp. 393-426. For the teachings Zhang received from him, and their lineages, see pp. 427 and 436. Another bKa'-brgyud-pa master who influenced him was 'Ol-kha-ba.

119. The original lines of 'Jig-rten mgon-po can be found contained in Shes-rab-'byung-gnas, dBon-po (1187-1241), *Dam chos dgongs pa gcig pa'i rtsa tshig rdo rje'i gsung brgya lnga bcu pa*, vol. 1, pp. 158.2: 13 *mshar nyid pha rol tu phyin pa'i theg pa'i lam ni sa bcus bgrod la gcig char 'jug pa rnam la de ltar ma yin par 'dod pa yin mod kyi/ 'dir ni lam thams cad sa bcus bgrod par bzhed do/ 14 rims kyi 'jug pa dang gcig char 'jug pa gnyis su 'dod pa yin mod kyi/ 'dir ni lam thams cad rims kyi 'jug par bzhed do/ /*.

120. 'Bri-gung rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa, *Dam pa'i chos dgongs pa gcig pa'i mnam bshad lung don gsal byed nyi ma'i snang ba*, p. 23a.4: *'on te phyag rdzogs pa rnam kyang rtogs pa skad cig mas sangs rgyas thob par 'dod pa yang sngar gyi dpe ltar myur bul las gzhan pa'i mdo sngags gnyis las tha dad pa'i lam zhig yod na rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi ma gsungs pa'i lam du thal bas de 'dra ba'i lam gyi mdo ni blos gzhal bar dka'o/ / des na rdzogs byang thob pa ni rgyu dang 'bras bu'i tshogs gnyis rdzogs pa'i mthus grub pa'o/ /*. See also the same source, p. 25a.5: *zhib tu brtags na myur ba la skad cig ma'i brjod bya btags pa tsam las cung zad rim gyis ldang ba kho nar nges la/*. Though the phrase *blos gzhal bar dka'o* in the first quote would thus seem to indicate the author's intellectual rejection of that doctrine, it should also be kept in mind that the "simultaneist" doctrine of Mahāmudrā is never taught as being something accessible to conceptual understanding. Cf. rDo-rje-shes-rab, vol. 1, p. 397.3 (*nga* 25b), for the parallel explanation of this passage.

bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal represents sGam-po-pa as having held precisely that the Mahāmudrā was a doctrine independent of the *sūtras* and *tantras*. See his *Nges don*, p. 101a; L. Lhalungpa transl., p. 112.

121. Zhang, like 'Bri-gung rig-'dzin Chos-kyi-grags-pa, was aware of certain basic doctrinal parallels between the Mahāmudrā and the rDzogs-pa chen-po. I have not been able to trace any record of formal studies of the rDzogs-chen by Zhang, but there is no doubt that he was familiar with it, and saw it as having a fundamental similarity with Mahāmudrā, the two occupying in his opinion the parallel ultimate positions within the New and Old Tantric teachings. He discusses this at some length in his *Mal dbu dkar la gdams pa*, where in contrast to the bKa'-gdams-pa teachings and the Madhyamaka reasoning and meditations which are *don spyi'i rnam pa tsam las mos pa yul du byed pa*, the Mahāmudrā and rDzogs-chen are tantric paths of the guru's sustaining spiritual power: *phyag rgya chen po dang / rdzogs pa chen po la sogs pa sngags gсар rnying mthar thug rnam kyang / gsang sngags byin brlabs kyi* (655) *lam yin pa la /* (see his Writings, p. 654.7). In this Zhang agreed with certain statements of sGam-po-pa, who as cited above sometimes portrayed the Mahāmudrā and rDzogs-chen as occupying a similar doctrinal position and indeed as being from some points of view identical. See the latter's *Tshogs bshad legs mdzes ma*, p. 220.2, and his *Tshogs chos yon tan phun tshogs*, p. 269.1. See also the characterization of the rDzogs-chen as "[a doctrine authoritatively] maintained to be the ultimate of Mantra teachings, the 'Atiyoga'" (*rdzogs chen ni a ti yo ya zhes pa gsang sngags kyi mthar thug tu bzhed pa*) by bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, p. 93b.6; Lhalungpa transl., p. 105.

122. dPa'-ho gTsug-lag-phreng-ba, vol. 1, p. 799f, places this development in sGam-po-pa's teaching in the latter part of sGam-po-pa's life: *sku tshе smad la sems* [800] *kyi ngo bo ston pa phyag rgya chen po chig chod kho na gtso bor mdzad de /*. Zhang (Writings, p. 550.2) mentions the important role of the *ngo sprod* in sGam-po-pa's method by characterizing the Dags-po system briefly as: *dags po ba'i lugs kyi phyag rgya chen po ngo sprod*, contrasting it with the other lineages of *phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag*. A little later (p. 557.4) he characterizes it as: *gnyug ma'i ngo sprod dags pos gcer mthong byed*. Speaking of how sGom-pa transmitted these teachings to him, he says: *spyir skyes bu dam pa 'dis / tshig la ma rten pa'i byin brlabs 'ba' zhig gis / kho bo'i rgyud la lhan cig skyes pa lhag gis shar bas . . .*

On the subject of sGam-po-pa's innovations, Broido writes (p. 30): "For example, if anything in Buddhism is ever invented by anyone, sGam-po-pa was the inventor of the *lhan-cig skyes-sbyor* (*sahajayoga*) system of *mahāmudrā*. (While the idea of a goal common to both *sūtras* and *tantras* goes back to Nāropa, sGam-po-pa was the first person to teach them both on a parallel basis.)" Cf. Roerich transl. (1975), pp. 461f.

Cf. Dorje Loppon Lodro Dorje Holm in Lhalungpa, transl. (1986), p. xlvii: "Gampopa unified the mahāmudrā and tantric teaching he received with his background in the Kadam tradition, and founded many monasteries. Prior to his time, mahāmudrā seems to have been presented primarily in a fruition-teaching, oral-instruction style. From Gampopa's time onward, this perspective was integrated, at least in his writings, with a gradual, 'stages of meditation style' . . ."

123. Thu'u-bkwan, p. 168.4 (kha 24b.4): *mnyam med dwags po rin po ches phar phyin theg pa'i lugs la stong nyid la phyag rgya chen por gsungs pa yod tshul mdo lung mang po drangs nas bsgrubs pa'i bstan bcos mdzad pa la / 'ga' zhig gis / mdo tshig de 'dra bka' 'gyur na mi snang zhes zer mod / rgya nag tu 'gyur ba'i bka' 'gyur khrod na mdo de dag snang la / tshig ris ji lta ba bzhin min kyang don gcig pa da ltar gyi sangs rgyas mngon sum du bzhugs pa'i mdo sogs bod du 'gyur ba'i mdo gzhan 'ga' zhig na'ang snang ngo / /*

Cf. the question of apocryphal Chinese *sūtras* in Tibetan translation or their use by Chinese debaters in Tibet. On this, see the article of H. Obata, mentioned by Ueyama (1983), p. 333; Gómez (1983a), p. 395; and Broughton (1983), pp. 48f, n. 6 and p. 57, n. 36.

124. bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal, p. 216 (108b): *'on kyang rje btsun chen po yan gyi sgrub bryud la gsang sngags kyi man ngag rnam gslo bor sgom zhing / gtum mo dang 'od gsal la sogs pa'i skabs ci rigs su phyag rgya chen po'i gdams pa ston par mdzad pa las / rje sgam po pa de tshad med pa'i thugs rjes kun nas bslang ste / gdul bya mchog dman thams cad kyi rtags sla ba'i ched du / snying po don gyi gdams pa phyag rgya chen po 'di nyid rtsal du phyung ste bstan pas shin tu 'phel zhing rgyas pa dang / skal pa can thams cad kyi bgrod pa gcig pa'i lam du gyur pa yin no / /* Cf. Lhalungpa transl., p. 119.

125. Sa-pan in his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* (p. 25.3.4 = *tha* 50a) states that the writings of the defeated Chinese tradition were gathered and cached away at bSam-yas after the debate (*rgya nag gi dpe rnam bsdus nas bsam yas su gter du sbas so / /*). In his *sDom gsum rab dbye* (p. 309.3.4 = *na* 26a) he states that later after the decline of the Tibetan polity, based merely on the texts of the Chinese master's basic works, these doctrines were secretly reintroduced:

*phyi nas rgyal khirims nub pa dang / /
rgya nag mkhan po'i gzhung lugs kyi / /
yi ge tsam la brten nas kyang / /
de yi ming 'dogs gsang nas ni / /
phyag rgya chen por ming bsgyur nas / /*

The survival of texts for two or three centuries in hidden caches was not at all unknown in the dry climate of Tibet. But it should also be noted that the earlier Chinese-influenced traditions may not have been as thoroughly suppressed as the traditional accounts followed by Sa-pan, and upon which he based this hypothesis, would have us believe.

126. Karmay (1988) has revealed the complexity of such studies and has demonstrated the need to isolate early states of the tradition and to trace the discrete lineages and doctrines that later all came to be lumped together under single school names such as "rNying-ma-pa." As the study of the history of Tibetan Buddhism in these centuries proceeds, modern scholars with their access to the Tun Huang texts may not be convinced by Sa-pan's simple thesis of direct doctrinal descent via the unacknowledged influence of texts that had been suppressed and then later recovered from caches. The influence of Ch'an on early Tibetan Buddhism was more complex, and it persisted after the time of Mo-ho-yen, as shown for instance by Kimura (1981); cf. Ueyama (1983), p. 349, n. 30. Nevertheless, the existence of important and striking doctrinal parallels between the Phyag-chen and similarly oriented earlier Tibetan traditions makes the question of possible cross-fertilization (in one or both directions) between the rDzogs-chen for instance and the Mahāmudrā definitely

worth investigating further. According to Broido too (p. 47), Padma-dkar-po is also “not unsympathetic to the possibility of some parallelism or mutual influence between Chinese ideas and those of the bKa’-brgyud-pas.” Broido also asserts there that “the non-vajrayāna parts of the rNying-ma doctrine do seem to have undergone Chinese influence, recorded, for instance, in the *bSam glan mig sgron*.”

Another line of possible inquiry would be into the Zhi-byed tradition, whose founder Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas (who was in Western gTsang from 1097 until his death in 1117) is said to have taught seemingly parallel doctrines such as those suitable for the *byin brlabs kyi lam pa*, *gang zag rim gyis pa*, and *gang zag cig char ba*, etc. For rDzong-pa, who was of the latter type, he taught the *Phyag rgya chen mo* [sic] as *dbang chig mo*. See ’Gos lo-tsā-ba, p. 812 (*na* 22b), Roerich transl., p. 914. Some of his other instructions included (*ibid.*): *blo bral sems kyi me long la bten nas phyag rgya chen po’i don la ngo sprod / / zha ma leam sring la do ha’i gzhung la bten nas rim cig char gnyis su ngo sprod /*. See also Seyfort Ruegg (1988), p. 1261 (quoting Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, p. 8a.1), and the *Blue Annals*, p. 976 (*na* 49a), in which the “later” Zhi-byed (especially the *Phyag chen dri med thigs pa* practices) is identified with Maitrīpāda’s Mahāmudrā.

To put Sa-paṅ’s own position in broader terms, what he believed he had detected was an influx of certain previously absent doctrines into the Mar-pa bKa’-brgyud-pa after Mi-la ras-pa, some of which were radically “simultaneist” in content and bore significant resemblances to doctrines associated with the rDzogs-chen and to teachings which had already been identified by previous Tibetan historians as the doctrine of the Hwa-shang. He believed this doctrinal influence had occurred through the reading and unacknowledged influence of previously concealed early texts. (It should be remembered that in the traditional context, similar doctrines, terminology and doctrinal formulations normally indicated a common origin.)

What is needed at this stage is a carefully framed study of the early Mahāmudrā, based on a critical evaluation and historical ordering of sources. At present one cannot accept for example even all that one finds in sGam-po-pa’s “Collected Works” as coming from his hand for much of it has obviously been transmitted through subsequent oral retelling or later editing (cf. ICang-skyā Rol-pa’i-rdo-rje’s comments on such textual problems, translated by Lopez [1988], p. 266). Until such a study had been made, one should give due consideration to the opinions of all the traditional historical authorities such as ’Gos lo-tsā-ba, dPa’-bo gTsong-lag-phreng-ba, sGam-po-pa bKra-shis-rnam-rgyal and Padma-dkar-po (and even Sa-paṅ, as broadly understood) on the origins of the Mahāmudrā teachings and their doctrinal development, but final judgment should be reserved.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge with thanks the comments of Prof. D. Seyfort Ruegg and Mr. Burkhard Quessel, who read the first draft of this paper. I am likewise obliged to Mr. Jonathan Silk for his suggestions at a later stage. I would also like to acknowledge gratefully the support received from the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung which made possible the writing of this paper at Hamburg University in 1988-89.

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