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I. Introduction

The first widespread use of *amanasikāra* (‘non-mentation’) as a specific description of Buddhahood occurs within the Indian Siddha movement, although the term is not unknown in the Pali canon. The

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1 ‘Non-mentation’ and ‘non-egocentricity’ are two possible translations of *amanasikāra* (T. *yid la mi byed pa*), a technical term that is as rich in nuances as its counterpart *manasikāra/manaskāra* (T. *yid la byed pa*). In Abhidharma exegesis, *manaskāra* occurs as the last in a sequence of five omnipresent (Skt. *sarvagyā*, Tib. *kun tu ’gro ba*) mental events (*caitta*) that are present, overtly or covertly, in all conscious processes. See, for example, *Abhidharmasamuccaya* p. 6. As the natural culmination of the third omnipresent mental event ‘intentionality’ (*cetanā*) which describes the general object-directedness of mind, *manaskāra* has the function of ‘bringing to mind’ or ‘setting one’s mind upon’ (focusing on) a particular object and remaining involved (conceptually and affectively) with it. When used as verbs, I have translated the terms accordingly. While ‘mentation’ and ‘non-mentation’ are generally adequate as translations of *manasikāra* and *amanasikāra* in their deployment as abstract nouns (and have been adopted throughout this paper for the sake of consistency), ‘ego-centricity’ and ‘non-ego-centricity’ are more precise in contexts where the Sanskrit or Tibetan terms have been interpreted in line with the nuanced Cittamātra conception of *manas* as both an intentional (object-intending) and reflexive (‘I-intending’) operation that structures experience in terms of an ‘I’ (subject) and ‘mine’ (object). See below sections VIII and XII and notes 37 and 41.

2 In *Majjhimanikāya* (I 436) and *Aṅguttaranikāya* (IV 425), the *amanasikāra* of the
term and its Apabhramśa variant amanasiāra are associated in particular with the mystical songs (dohā or vajragīti) of Saraha, the most famous of the early Siddhas, and a cycle of texts attributed to his commentator Maitrīpāda (aka Maitrīpa, b. 1007 or 1010) referred to in Tibet as the Yid la mi byed pa’i chos skor or “The Cycle of Teachings on Non-mentation.” The term also appears in certain songs of Tilopa (988–1069), the Siddha from whom the Tibetan bKa’ brgyud tradition claims descent. We find in the relevant passages of these authors the seeds of an Indo-Tibetan hermeneutical tradition according to which amanasiikāra is understood as a descrip-

count of the multiple (nānattasaññā) is identified as the goal in the ākāsānañcāyatana. On later Mahāyāna sources, see note 37 below.

3 The dates of Saraha remain subject to controversy. The problem is compounded not only by textual references to more than one Saraha but by the numerous appellations used for the different Sarahas, such as Rahūlabhadra, Śabarī, Sarojavajra, Saroruha, and Saroruha (Shahidullah 1928: 29). Moreover, Tibetans refer to the Siddha Saraha by various names such as Sa ra ha, Sa ra ha chen po, Bram ze chen po, mDa’ bsun pa (= Sarahan, “one who has shot the arrow”), Ri krod pa chen po Saraha. This Saraha seems to have lived sometime between the seventh and early eleventh centuries CE. See Kvaerne (1977) and Ruegg (1981) for an examination of the available research on possible dates. Rahul Śāṃkṛtyāyan (1957: 1–39) establishes Saraha’s lineal successors as contemporaries of King Devapāla (810–850), and links him with the beginning of the renaissance of Buddhism during the Pāla Dynasty, particularly at Nālandā university, under the reign of King Dharmapāla (970–810). Shahidullah places Saraha at around 1000, a date supported by the tradition that Saraha conferred initiation on a king named Ratnapāla. This could refer to the Ratnapāla who reigned in Assam from 1000 to 1030. Support for this date is also found in a Tibetan tradition which makes Maitrīpa (eleventh century) a direct disciple of Saraha. See Guenther (1969: 13). In support of this thesis, Guenther mentioned in personal correspondence the existence of a Tibetan ‘Brug pa bKa’ brgyud work he had seen in Ladakh that purports to be a record of a dialogue in the form of question and answer between Maitrīpa and his master Saraha.

4 On Maitrīpāda (alias Advayavajra and Avadhūtipāda), see Deb ther sngon po, da, fol. 2af. (BA 841f.). See also Mathes (2006).

5 This cycle is listed in Bu ston’s gSan yig, fol. 58b1 and Padma dkar po’s gSan yig, fol. 33b2. Its history and general significance are dealt with in Padma dkar po’s Phyag chen gan mdzod, fol. 16a3. For a comparative listing of Bu ston’s and Padma dkar po’s versions supplemented with listings from the Advayavajrasaṅgraha and the Tohoku catalogue to the bsTan ’gyur, see Broido (1987), Appendix B, p. 56f.

6 On Tilopa (alias Tillopa, Tīlīpa, Tailopa, Telopa, and Taillikapada), see Hoffman (1956: 140–45) and Guenther (1963: xiv).
tion of, and often also defended as a theory of, the highest experience of Buddhist Tantrism known as Mahāmudrā (*phyag rgya chen po*).

This paper will inquire into the shifting meanings of *amanasikāra* as it developed in various contexts of Buddhist discourse, Indian and Tibetan. Attention has recently been drawn to its occurrence in certain polemical contexts surrounding the Sino-Indian controversy between Instantaneist (*cig car ba*) and Gradualist (*rim gyis pa*) approaches to the goal of awakening (*byang chub*) as they were represented at the so-called bSam yas debate by the Chinese Ch’an master Hva shang Mahāyāna (Mo ho yen) and the Indian Buddhist monk Kamalaśīla (750–795) respectively.⁷ We will begin by sketching the genealogy of the term in these contexts, touching only briefly on those issues concerned with the debate which have been treated at length by others. Attention will then shift to the main focus of this paper: a preliminary survey of non-mentation teachings in the tradition extending from Saraha and Maitrīpāda down through a long line of Tibetan bKa’ brgyud masters. While these teachings by their nature elude intellectual comprehension and resist easy classification, they have been too influential with Tibetan bKa’ brgyud traditions to simply leave aside. It is therefore hoped that this cursory overview will broaden our limited understanding of this important tradition and shed light on the still poorly understood complex of influences that inspired the non-gradual Mahāmudrā teachings of Tibet.

II. *amanasikāra* and bSam yas polemics

In the *sBa bzhed*,⁸ an early Tibetan chronicle (probably eighth century) on the bSam yas debate, *amanasikāra* is presented as representative of an instantaneist doctrine attributed to Hva shang advocating the suppression of all mental activity. Kamalaśīla criticizes a

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⁸ A succinct account of the bSam yas debate according to the early *sBa bzhed* is given by Faber (1986). Relevant materials on the debate from the later (*Zhabs btags ma*) version are found in Houston (1980). On the probable history of the earlier and later versions, see Ruegg (1989: 67f.).
similar doctrine (although the concepts used, such as āsamjñīnasamāpatti are unmistakably Indian) in his first Bhāvanākrama without identifying its proponent (Hva shang is mentioned nowhere in his three Bhāvanākramas). The gist of his critique is that amanasiṇīra does not imply the suppression or cessation of mental activity but rather its progressive refinement through the gradual elimination of subjective distortions. The relevant passage from the Bhāvanākrama I⁹ reads:

When the Nirvikalpapraveśadhāraṇī (NPD) states that “non-mentation abandons characteristics (mtshan ma = nimitta) such as [material] ‘form’ (gzugs = rūpa),” what it means is that there is no mentation directed toward things that are not perceived when analyzed though discerning insight but it does not [mean] a simple absence of mentation.

It is not an abandonment as in the conceptless absorptions (’du shes med pa’i snyom par ’jug pa = āsamjñīnasamāpatti) and so forth, [i.e. an abandonment] due to simply giving up mentation which has been attached to form and so forth since beginningless time.

Thus, Kamalaśīla singles out mistaking amanasiṇīra for the absolute non-existence of manasiṇīra¹⁰ as the major misinterpretation of this concept, a point he further clarifies in his Nirvikalpapraveśadhāraṇī-ṭīkā.¹¹ But this non-existence insofar as it is no thing whatsoever (dngos po med pa), cannot serve as a cause of anything and thus leaves no possibility of genuine conceptual analysis (yang dag par so sor rtog pa = bhūtapratyaveksā). And without such analysis, Kamalaśīla argues, it is impossible not to mentally engage (yid la mi byed

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⁹ Tucci (1958) 261. In the following passage, I have standardized Tucci’s transliteration: rnam par mi rtog pa la ’jug pa’i gzungs las yid la mi byed pas gzugs la sogs pa’i mtshan ma spong ngo zhes gsungs pa gang yin pa de yang shes rab kyi brtags na mi dmigs pa gang yin pa de der la yid la mi byed par dgongs kyi / yid la byed pa med pa tsam ni ma yin te / ’du shes med pa’i snyoms par ’jug pa la sogs pa ltar / thog ma med pa’i dus las gzugs la sogs pa la mngon par zhen pa’i yid la byed pa spangs pa tsam gyis spong ba ni ma yin no //

¹⁰ In Sanskrit, the negative prefix a- may be taken either as an absolute, non-affirming negation or as a relative, affirming negation whereas in Tibetan, these are generally, though not always, distinguished by the use of med for the former and min or ma yin for the latter.

¹¹ P v. 105 118.5.7f.
pa) in the characteristics of material forms and the other groupings (skandhas) present to cognition. Thus there is no amanasikāra apart from this manasikāra (yid la byed pa de las gzhan yid la mi byed pa yang ma yin) taken in the sense of “genuine conceptual analysis.” Kamalaśīla goes on to show that what is intended by amanasikāra is none other than this genuine analysis, the former being the result (phala) of the latter’s operation as a counter-agent (pratipakṣa) to ordinary mentation (manasikāra). Conceptual meditation, in other words, is a necessary condition for non-conceptual realization:12

The characteristics of genuine conceptual analysis are what is intended in [using the term] “non-mentation.” While it is of the essence of divisive conceptualizing, it is nonetheless burned away by the fire of genuine gnosis arising from itself, just as a fire kindled by rubbing two sticks burns these very pieces.

As recently noted by Klaus-Dieter Mathes,13 Kamalaśīla’s gradualist view of amanasikāra as the non-conceptual outcome (phala) of conceptual analytical meditation reinterprets the NPD’s understanding of amanasikāra as direct, non-conceptual realization to bring it into line with the traditional progressivist Mahāyāna-Madhyamaka paradigm. This revisionist interpretation was not always endorsed by later Tibetan bKa’ brgyud scholars. ’Gos lo tsa ba gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481), for example, contrasts this gradualist interpretation of amanasikāra with the interpretation advanced by Maitrīpa advocating direct, non-conceptual realization and the abandonment of mental constructs through unmediated recognition of their luminous nature. As gZhon nu dpal states in his commentary to the Dharmadhar-matāvibhāga-kārikās (Mathes’ translation):14

As to what has thus been taught in the DhDhV, it is the meaning of entering the non-conceptual that has been established [here]. There are obviously two

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12 The following passage is quoted in Mathes (2005) 32, n. 48. The translation is my own. yang dag par so sor rtog pa’i mtshan ma ni ’dir yid la mi byed par dgongs so // de ni rnam par rtog pa’i ngo bo nyid yin mod kyi / ’on kyang de nyid las byung ba yang dag pa’i ye shes kyi mes de bsregs par ’gyur te / shing snyis drud las byung ba’i mes shing de snyis sreg par byed pa bzhiṅ no //

13 See Mathes (2005) 12f.

traditions [however] of how to comprehend the meaning of this sūtra. Kamalaśīla maintains that the [interpretative] imaginations that must be given up can be only given up on the basis of insight resulting from thorough investigation. It is maintained in the commentary on Maitrīpa’s Tattvadaśāka, by contrast, that they are not given up as a result of thorough investigation, but of a “meditative stabilization which [experiences] reality exactly as it is” (Skt. yathābhūtāsamādhi). The latter knows the own-being of [even] that which must be given up as luminosity. Here it is reasonable to follow Maitrīpa, who re-discovered this treatise.

In Tibet, the association of amanasiṣṭāra with a doctrine of the Chinese Hva shang purportedly encouraging the suppression of all mental activity was introduced in several works by Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan (1182–1251) in order to attack, by way of analogy, a certain non-Tantric “present-day Mahāmudrā system” (da lta’i phyag rgya chen po) which he describes as being for the most part (phal cher) a Chinese doctrine or even as Chinese-style rDzogs chen (rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen). This criticism and the subsequent charges of philosophical incoherence by the dGe lugs pas and

15 Sa skya Paṇḍita’s critique of the “Present-day Mahāmudrā” or “Neo-Mahāmudrā” is found in his sDom gsum rab dbye, Thub pa’i dgongs pa rab tu gsal ba and sKye bu dam pa rnams la spring ba’i yi ge. Sa skya Paṇḍita’s source appears to have been the sBa’ bzhed since he refers to a dPa’ bzhed, dBa’ bzhed, or ‘Ba’ bzhed in his discussions of Hva shang’s doctrines. It is important to note that that Sa skya Paṇḍita never directly criticizes the amanasiṣṭāra tradition of Saraha and Maitrīpāda. This is not surprising given that the Siddha Virūpa, who is regarded as spiritual progenitor of the Sa skya tradition, similarly extols non-mentation in his spiritual songs. See for example his Dohākoṣa, in ‘Phags yul grub dbang rnams kyi zab mo’i doha rnams las khol byung mi tig phreng ba, pp. 158–9. Sa pan’s critique was mainly directed at some of the non-gradual Mahāmudrā teachings associated with sGam po pa emphasizing the direct introduction (ngo sprod) to one’s natural mind. These were repudiated on the grounds that (1) they were being taught independently of the Tantric system of mudrās elaborated by Nāropa and transmitted in Tibet by his disciple Mar pa, that (2) they represented newly introduced doctrinal innovations of questionable (i.e., non-Indian) provenance and that (3) they advocated an erroneous non-conceptual, non-gradual approach to goal-realization. See David Jackson (1994: 72f.) In this connection, it is worth noting that the Mahāmudrā teachings of the Indian Siddhas were decidedly non-gradual, encouraging direct, non-conceptual, spontaneous forms of meditation and instruction, and were frequently taught independently of the Tantric system of four mudrās. Whatever the non-Indian influences on sGam po pa’s varied discourses on Mahāmudrā, it is in the teachings of the Indian Siddhas and their Tibetan successors (such as Mar pa and Mīla ras pa) that we find the major source of inspiration for sGam po pa’s own non-gradual Mahāmudrā teachings.
Sa skya pas (who, by the sixteenth century, had both become political rivals of the bKa’ brgyud pas) led many bKa’ brgyud masters including gZhon nu dpal, Padma dkar po (1527–92), Situ bsTan pa nyin byed (dates unknown), Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–54), Dvags po bKra shis rNam rgyal (1512–87) to respond by (i) refuting allegations that their tradition had any connection with Hva shang (the rNying ma pas were less reluctant to acknowledge his influence or Chinese influence in general); and (ii) defending amanásikāra both

16 The sixteenth century was marked by power struggles between the Karma pas and dGe lugs pas for territory in Khams and gTsang. At this time the Karma pas, Sa skya pas and dGe lugs pas all vied for patronage and assistance at the Mongol court of Genghiz Khan and his successors. The ‘Brug pa sect of the bKa’ brgyud was also drawn into the political turmoil. Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (1594–1691), the recognized incarnation of Padma dkar po (1527–1592), was forced to flee to Bhutan (in 1616) under the enmity of the House of gTsang and Rva lung monastery, the seat of the ‘Brug pa bKa’ brgyud, and its affiliates were seized by the gTsang authorities. See Smith 1970: 6. By the seventeenth century, the dGe lugs pas had gained the upper hand in these political struggles and were to maintain a theocracy up to the time of the Chinese invasions of the last century. See Stein (1962: 80f.), and Snellgrove & Richardson (1968, chapters 7–9).

17 Klong chen rab ’byams pa makes two intriguing references to a “Ha shang Mahā-yāna” in his writings. In discussing the historical genesis of Mantrayāna (gsang snga’gs ji ltar byung ba’i tshul), Klong chen pa (Grub mtha’ mdzod, fol 139b4f.) argues for a much larger number of authentic sūtras and tantras than the gSar ma redactors allowed for. He notes the presence in Tibet of “many sūtras and tantras that were to be found in India, as well as many that were not.” Concerning sūtras, he mentions “many sūtras translated into Chinese before Sūryasiddha destroyed the manuscripts in a fire”. According to Tāra-nātha’s History of Buddhism in India, pp. 141–3, Sūryasiddha (Tibetan Nyi ma dngos grub) was an anti-Buddhist king responsible for a fire at Nālandā university that destroyed a large number of Sanskrit Buddhist texts. Klong chen pa goes on to say that many of the Chinese translations including the Avatamsakasūtra, [Mahā]parinirvāṇa[sūtra], and Vina-yāgama (’dul ba lung) “were translated by Vairocana and ‘Ba’ sang shi based on originals deriving from the mind of the Chinese Pandit Ha shang Mahāyāna” (rgya nag gi pan di t’ha shang ma hā yā na’i blo las). It is not possible, Klong chen pa concludes, for any but the omniscient to assess the measure/scope of a teaching or a teaching. Vairocana (renowned rDzogs chen scholar, translator, and student of Padmasambhava) and ‘Ba’ sang shi (ta) have been clearly identified with the early residents at bSam yas and are counted among the seven original Sangha members (sad mi mi bdun) who were ordained by Sāntarakṣita in the eighth century. (Tucci 1958: 12f.) ‘Ba’ sang shi served as an envoy sent by the Tibetan king Mes ag ishorn to the T’ang court of China on account of the emperor’s interest in Buddhism. Among the supporters of Hva shang in the ensuing rift between Indian and Chinese factions are mentioned mNyai Bi ma or sNa Bye ma (possibly Vimalamitra) and Myang/Nyang Ting nge ’dzin bzang po, both important figures in the early history of rDzogs chen. rDzogs chen works from the early period such
as a valid description of the experience termed Mahāmudrā (“Supreme Seal”) and as an authenticated tradition of Mahāmudrā instructions inspired by Saraha and systematized by his commentator Maitrīpa. The corpus of twenty-five texts known in Tibet as the Yid la mi byed pa’i chos skor nyi shu rtsa lnga, most of which are available in Sanskrit in the Advayavajrasaṅgraha, as the Chos ’byung Me tog snying po of Nyang ral Nyai ma ’od zer (1124–1192) and the bSam gtan mig sgron of gNubs Sangs rgyas ye shes (probably eighth century) give an impartial account of Hva shang’s teachings. The latter interestingly considers both Kamalāśīla’s and Hva shang’s positions to be deviations (gol sa) from the more inclusive rDzogs chen perspective.

One clear instance of Hva shang’s influence on classical rNying ma thought is a passage in Klong chen pa’s gNas lugs mdzod (fol 6b1 and auto-commentary, fol 33b2 f) which begins: “The sun of self-originated pure awareness (rang byung rig pa), the ultimate reality (don dam), / Is equally obscured by the white or black clouds [of] virtue or evil …” See Faber (1986: 47–8) for Hva shang’s virtually identical statement recorded in the sBa bzhed. Klong chen pa’s commentary on this passage is most interesting (33b6): “Although at the time the Mahāpaṇḍita Ha shang made this statement, narrow-minded people could not comprehend it, it in fact holds true. It is kept secret from those on the lower spiritual pursuits; were they to denigrate it because their minds could not comprehend it, they would only plunge, on account of this karma, into the lower destinies.” (slob dpon chen po ha shang gis gsungs pas de dus blo dman pa’i blor ma shong yang don la de bzhiin du gnas so / theg pa ’og ma gsang ba blor mi shong bas skur pa btab dus kho las des ngan song du ltung ba’i phyir ro f)

Later rNying ma pas did not necessarily share Klong chen pa’s high estimation of Hva shang. Mi pam rgya mtsho (1846–1912), for example, distinguishes the correct understanding of yid la mi byed pa – “non-mentation [resulting] from not seeing any characteristics of objective references whatsoever once all attachments to entities have been undermined” (dngos zhen thams cad khegs nas dmigs gtag kyi mtshan ma ci yang ma mthong nas yid la mi byed pa …) – from Hva shang’s annihilationist version which supports the suppression of all thoughts. Concerning the latter, Mi pham cites a passage from the Dhammadharmatāvibhāga (pp. 37–8) which presents amanāsikāra as one of five factors that are to be eliminated. See dBu ma rgyan gyi mam bshad ’jam dbyangs bla ma dgyes pa’i zhal lung, p. 57.1f.

18 See note 5 above and Bibliography under Maitrīpa.
III. Maitrīpa on amanāsikāra

It is of interest to note that Maitrīpa’s views regarding amanāsikāra as set forth in his Amanāsikārādhāra are characterized by a conspicuous concern to defend the concept against possible misinterpretation. This concern, also evident in the Siddha literature we will examine, again indicates that the Gradualist opposition to amanasi-kāra was prevalent in Indian, as well as Tibetan, polemical contexts. Maitrīpa begins his short text by noting that this term amanāsikāra has been widely misunderstood. Maitrīpa takes up first (i) the objection by some people that the term is ungrammatical (apaśabda) because “in compound [the correct form] should be amanaskāra.” Maitrīpa responds by quoting Pāṇini’s Aṣṭādhyāyī (6,3,14) where it is stated that “in the case of taṭpuruṣa and kṛ [the compound] is irregular.” Maitrīpa goes on to show that the term is both found in the sūtras (here he quotes the NPD) and attested in the tantras in order to refute two further objections: (ii) that the term

19 Sanskrit passages are based on the Japanese edition of the Amanāsikārādhāra (hereafter AMĀ; see Bibliography). I have incorporated corrections made by Mathes in his forthcoming paper. Tibetan passages are from D v. 28, p. 276.4f.; P v. 68 p. 286.56f.

20 One must nonetheless be wary of the temptation to derive “historical connections from conceptual correlations.” (See Gomez 1987: 139 n. 14) Gomez argues convincingly that “the sudden-gradual opposition only reflects a very general, sometimes vague, intuition of a tension or polarity between two approaches to knowledge and action” (p. 131).

21 AMĀ 136,3–4: tatra kaścid āha / apaśabdo ‘yam iti / samāse ‘amanaskāra iti bhavitum arhati / Tib: D v. 28, p. 276.5: yid la mi byed pa zhes bya ba ‘di la phal cher log par rtogs pa ste / de la kha cig ’di skyon can gyi tshig tu smra ste / bsdus pas yid [la] mi byed pa zhes rtogs par ’gyur ro / In the last sentence, the Tibetan yid la mi byed pa could be corrected to yid mi byed pa to avoid confusion of amanaskāra, which it translates, with amanāsikāra, which is invoked in the beginning of the passage.

22 “Constructions such as manasi + kṛ are common in Sanskrit. Because a close association developed between manasi and kṛ, a syntactic compound came into being between the locative manasi and the verbal noun kāra derived from kṛ. When, against the general rule, the case suffix of the first member is not dropped, the compound is called aluk (‘non-deletion’).” I thank Dr. Asōk Aklujkar for sharing these grammatical observations (in personal correspondence) and refer the reader to his Sanskrit: An Easy Introduction to an Enchanting Language (Richmond: Svadhyaya Publications 2003), sections 29.11 fn. 7, 33.16, 34.22.
does not belong to Buddhism; (iii) that it belongs only to the sūtra corpus but not to the tantras.²³

The remainder of Maitrīpa’s short text addresses a fourth objection which acknowledges the presence of the term’s meaning in the tantras but absurdly contends (iv) that amanasikārā there constitutes an absolute, non-affirming, negation (prasyayapratisēdha = med par dgag pa) given that manasikārā is the subject of the negative particle (naño viṣayāḥ = med pa’i yul) in a non-affirming negation. To this Maitrīpa replies:²⁴

That is not the case. [A non-affirming negation] is a negation of a different type; it is a prasyayapratisēdha (“prasya negation”) in the sense that it does not negate what is not applicable (aprasya). An illustrative example: the wives of the king do not see the sun. The meaning of this is as follows: the wives of the king are kept hidden so that they do not see even the sun. This does not mean that the sun is non-existent. So what does it mean? What we negate is [only] what is applicable (prasya), viz., that the king’s wives see the sun. In the case of amanasikārā (“non-mentation”) too, what we negate

²³ Maitrīpa responds to the latter objection by saying (Mathes’ translation): “That is not so, for it is stated in the Hevajra[tantra], in the chapter on reality [I.5.1]: ‘Neither mind nor mental factors exist in terms of an own-being.’ Moreover, according to the sense, [HT I.8.42ab may be] understood in terms of amanasikārā [as well]: ‘Therefore the whole world is meditated upon [in such a way], because it should not be produced by the intellect.’” AMĀ 136,10–138, 3: tan na / ukta m hi hevajre tattvapaṭāle / svarupena na cīttam nāpi cetasam / tathā / bhāvyate hi jagat sarvam manasā yasman na bhāvyate / arthād amanastāreṇeti ganyate / Tib. D v. 28, p. 277.3f.: de ni ma yin te / he ba dzra las gsungs pa / ngo bo nyid kys sens med cing / sens ‘byung ba’ang med pa’o / de bzhin / gang phyir yid kys ma bsogs na / ’gro ba thams cad bsog par bya / zhes pa’i don gyis yid la mi byed pa’o zhes rongs par bya’o //

²⁴ AMĀ 138,8–15: tan na / prakārāntaraśaya pratiśedhā / nāprasajyam pratiśidhyata iti prasyayapratisēdhaḥ / yathāśāyapaśyā rājadhārāḥ / ayam arthāḥ / evam nāma tā gupta rājadhārāḥ yat sūryam api na paśyantī / atra na sūryābhāvah krtah / kīn nāma rājā dhārānāṁ yat sūryadharānaṁ prasyayam tan nisiddham / amanasikāre ‘pi nañā manasikāraṇam yad grahyagṛhāhakādi prasaktāṁ tan nisiddham / na manah / ato na doṣah / Tib. D v. 28, p. 277.5: de yi ma yin na / yod pa’i dngos po’i dgag pa ni med par dgag pa’o / yang na thal ba med pa’i thal bar ’gyur ba ’gog pa’o zhes pa ni / med pa dgag pa’o / ji litar rgyal po’i btsun mo nyi ma mthong ba ni ’di’i don to / ’di lta bu mi min zer zhes pa yang rgyal po’i chung ma de shin tu sbas pas nyi ma yang mi mthong ba’o / ’dir bkag pa’i nyi ma med par ma byas ba’o / gang zhe na / rgyal po’i chung ma nrams gang gis nyi ma mthong ba yol na de ’gog pa ste / yid la mi byed pa la yang yid la byed pa gang gzung ba dang ’dzin pa la sogs par yod pa de ’gog pa ste / yang ni ma yin te / ’di la skyon med do //
by means of the negative affix \([a]\) is only that which is applicable, viz. *manasikaraṇa* (“mentation”) consisting in [dichotomies] such as subject and object. The mind itself is not [negated]. Therefore there is no mistake.

The non-affirming negation here applies to the dichotomizing activity of mind, not to mind *per se*. This will enable Maitrīpa to argue that the absence of dichotomic mentation, with its clinging to extremes of existence and non-existence, can allow mind’s true nature, its radiant clarity to show itself. Maitrīpa goes on to consider reifications associated with mentation, particularly constructs concerning eternalism and nihilism and concludes that *amanasikāra* refers to a state in which all such superimpositions or denigrations have been completely left behind (*sarvavikalpanimittasamatikrāmatā*).25

Maitrīpa is now in a position to indicate how *amanasikāra* can also be understood in terms of a relative, affirming negation (*paryudāsa-pratiṣedha = ma yin par dgag pa*). As he states (Mathes’ translation):26

Even [when *amanasikāra* is taken] in the sense of an affirming negation, there is no fault. When [someone] says “Bring a non-Brahmin,” the bringing of somebody similar to a Brahmin, a Kṣatriya or the like [is intended], but not a low-caste person of base origin, such as a wagon maker. Here, too, [where *amanasikāra* is taken as an affirming negation,] an awareness of essencelessness is maintained. Hence the tenet of Māyopamādvyā is established. From what, then, does the [undesired] consequence of the view of annihilation follow?

25 For a full translation of the relevant passage, see Mathes (forthcoming).
26 AMĀ 140,8–11: *paryudāsapakṣe ’pi na dosah / abrāhmaṇaṃ ānayety ukte brāhmaṇasadṛśasya kṣatriyāder ānayaṇam bhavati / na tu vijātyasya katūdeḥ / atrāpi niḥsvabhāvavedānasya samsthitih kṛtā / etena māyopamādvyāvādāsthito bhavet / kuta ucchedavādaprasyāṅga iti / Tib. D v. 28, p. 278.3f.: ma yin par brtags pa’i phyogs kyang skyon med de / bram ze ma yin par khrig la shog ces pas bram ze dang ’dra ba’i rgyal po la sogs pa khrig la shog ces par gsal gyi / rigs mi mthun pa shing shing rta mkhan la sogs pa ni ma yin no / ’di la yang rang bzhin med pa’i rig pa la gnas par byus pa ste / de dag gis ni sgyu ma lta bur gnyis su med par smra bar gnas par ’gyur ro / gang’ las chad par la bar ’gyur /

*Text reads grang but P, v. 68, 287.2.7 correctly has gang.*
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Understood in terms of an affirming negation, *amanasikāra* negates those base dualistic thought-processes that obscure reality while preserving the latter’s essenceless, non-dual, illusion-like nature.

Maitrīpa finally turns his attention to understanding the specific meaning of the negative affix *almi* in *amanasikāra/yid la mi byed pa*. He notes that the negative particle is here taken only in a conventional (*tha snyad pa*) sense, viz. that everything is (i) illusory (*sgyu ma*) and (ii) not truly established (*yang dag par grub pa med pa*). Therefore the *a* neither negates existence nor non-existence and cannot, on the basis of this reasoning, be taken in a nihilistic sense. He further explains that *amanasikāra*

is *manasikāra* with the primary letter *a*. It is a compound in which the middle word is omitted, as in the case of ‘king [fond of] greens.’ In this sense, all and any mental engagement is of the nature of non-origination, i.e., *a*.

Padma dkar po will later (seventeenth century) help to clarify this passage (along with its grammatical example; see below section V), contending that ‘non-mentation’ is the same as ‘proper mentation’ (*tshul bzhin yid la byed pa = yonisomanasikāra*) or *prajñāpāramitā*, a positive application of the mind that reveals its natural condition of non-origination, unimpededness and non-duality.

Maitrīpa concludes his short text with a response to objections that his interpretation of the negative prefix *a* in terms of ‘non-origination,’ ‘emptiness’ and the like do not derive from the Buddha. We can briefly paraphrase the author’s closing arguments in terms of the principal meanings he finds ascribed to this privative prefix in certain *tantras*. (a) Firstly, in defence of understanding *a* in terms of non-origination, Maitrīpa quotes the *Hevajratantra* [I.2.1] which states that “the letter *a* is at the beginning because all phenomena


27 AMĀ 142.1–3 akārapradhāno manasikārah / śākapārthivavat madhyapadalopī sam-āsah / etena yāvān manasikārah sarvam anutpādātmaka<ch / a> ity arthaḥ / Tib. D v. 28, p. 278.5: a yig gtsō bor gyur pa’i yid la byed pa ni yid la mi byed pa ste / lo ma’i rgyal po bzhin tshig dbus ma phyis pa’i bs dus pa’o / de gang gis ni yid la byed pa gang thams cad ni a ste skye ba med pa’i don do / The grammatical example is found in Jayakṛṣṇa’s *Subhodīni* commentary on the *Siddhāhātakaumudi*. See Mathes (forthcoming) n. 60.

28 For a full translation of this section, see Mathes (forthcoming).
have been unoriginated since the very beginning” and the Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti [V.1c-2b] which similarly mentions “non-origination” as one of the senses of this ‘ultimate letter’ (paramākṣara = yi ge dam pa). (b) Secondly, in defence of understanding a in terms of essencelessness, Maitrīpa notes that a is the ‘bijā or seed syllable of Nairātyā,’ a feminine archetype of selflessness (anātman). When the Hevajratantra [II.4.22a] states “The first vowel symbolizes Nairātya,” the a here indicates that “all acts of mentation, being devoid of self, have no abiding essence.” (iii) Thirdly, a can refer to radiant clarity:

Moreover, a is a term for radiant clarity (prabhāsvarapada = ’od gsal ba’i tshig), and manasikāra is a term for self-inspiration (svādhīṣṭhāna = bdag la byin gyis rlabs). Being both a and manasikāra [i.e., amanaskāra is a karma-dhāraya compound], it is called amanaskāra.

IV. Maitrīpa’s legacy

Before considering some key doctrinal developments of amanaskāra by the Siddhas and their Tibetan interpreters, it is worth briefly
assessing the impact that the interpretations of Kamalaśīla and especially Maitrīpa exerted on subsequent bKa’ brgyud authors who continued defending the term against possible misrepresentation. Situ bsTan pa’i nyin byed (seventeenth century), for example, upholds Maitrīpa’s elucidations of amanāsikāra against those who had attempted to realign it with the instantaneist doctrine of Hva shang:\footnote{Nges don phyag rgya chen po smon lam gyi ’grel pa, fol. 34a1: yid byed bral ba ’di ni phyag rgya che / zhes pa ’di’i skabs su dpyod ldan du zhal gyis ’ches pa kha cig yid byed dang bral ba phyag rgya chen por ’chad pa ni ha cang thal ches so snyam du dgongs mod kyi skyon med de / legs sbyar gyi skad du a ma na si ka ra zhes ’byung ba’i a yig gis bdag med dang skye med la sogs pa spros pa thams cad las ’das pa’i stong pa nyid kyi don ston la / yi ge lhaq ma mams kysis stong pa de nyid la’ang zhen pa med par yid byed dang bral ba’i yid la byed pa ston pas mtha’ bral zung ’jug gi phyag rgya chen por grub pa yin te //}

In the context of this statement “Freedom from mentation (yid byed bral ba) is Mahāmudrā” [from stanza 19 of Rang byung rdo rje’s Phyag chen smon lam], some people supposed to be analytical (dpyod ldan) think that explaining absence of mentation as being Mahāmudrā is absurd (ha cang thal ches). But [we reply] there is no fault. [The reason is as follows:] The letter a occurring in the Sanskrit term amanāsikāra conveys the meaning of “selflessness” (bdag med) or “non-origination” (skye med) and the like, i.e., the emptiness (stong pa nyid) that transcends all discursive elaborations. The remaining letters convey the idea of mentation divested of mentation (yid la byed dang bral ba’i yid la byed pa) where there is no attachment (zhen) even to emptiness itself, thus [amanasikāra] is established as the “Mahāmudrā of integration free from the extremes [of eternalism and nihilism]” (mtha’ bral zung ’jug gi phyag rgya chen po).

Stated otherwise, yid la mi byed pa is a non-reifying understanding of emptiness in which even the tendency to identify with emptiness is abandoned. bsTan pa’i nyin byed’s seemingly contradictory definition of the component manasikāra as “mentation divested of mentation” (yid la byed dang bral ba’i yid la byed pa) points to a characteristic ambivalence among the defenders of Maitrīpa’s doctrine. On the one hand, manasikāra refers to a positive application of the mind (akin to such terms as prajñā, dharma-pravicaya and bhūtapratyave-kṣā). On the other hand, it refers to a negative, egocentric operation
of mind that hinders spiritual awakening (akin to the negative application of terms such as vikalpa, mati, and smṛti).

V. Padma dkar po’s defence

A more elaborate defence of the term is offered by Padma dkar po in his *Phyag chen gan mdzod*. There he delineates three conceptions of amanasikāra that represent the authentic interpretation of Maitrīpa’s *Yid la mi byed pa’i chos skor*, a cycle of non-gradual Mahāmudrā teachings considered valid and important by bKa’ brgyud traditions generally. Against this background, we may paraphrase his summary:

(i) First, amanasikāra is considered in terms of the locative case used with reference to mind [indicated by the i of manasī/a of yid la]. Since the locative case refers to a locus or founding basis, the privative a of amanasikāra implies the absence of a locus or founding basis for any intentional object (*gang du dmigs pa’i gnas sam rten gzhis med pa*). This is the view expressed in the *Saṃvarodaya*. Since the sense of having such a locus is refuted by the initial letter a, we speak of amanasikāra. While this firm mental fixation which holds tightly to its intentional object through a mode of apprehension characteristic of the manasikāra included in the five omnipresent mental events is deemed necessary in the context of establishing an ordinary calm abiding (*thun mong gi zhi gnas*), it is refuted here [in Padma dkar po’s tradition].

(ii) Second, when amanasikāra is rendered as a tatpurusa compound, this manaskāra/yid byed pa [in which -i/la is not present] seems to be construed as a genitive form of the tatpurasa and is glossed as *yid kyi las = yid kyi byed* [i.e., activity of the mind], it is the activity of the mind which is here claimed to stand in need of refutation. More precisely, it is the arduous application belonging to the mode of apprehension of a grasping ‘intentionality’ (*sems pa*) among the five mental events that is refuted. The mental event of intentionality refers to mental activity which builds up conditioning factors in mind and has the function of setting the mind on wholesome, unwholesome or indeterminate actions. Such conditioning

33 For the full passage from *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, v. 21, p. 38.5f. (paraphrased above), see Appendix.
34 P v. 52, n. 2230.
factors are refuted. While they may establish a calm abiding, Mahāmudrā is beyond such activities and has nothing to do with karma that is built up. Thus, he concludes, “everything that functions as mental activity, having been established in conjunction with an intentional object – here it is shown definitively that all [such] intentional objects are completely stilled.”

(iii) Third, the prefix (yar bcad) a in amanasikāra may be understood in the sense of non-origination (anutpāda = skye ba med pa): Manasikāra is explained as yid la byed pa; in this case the meaning of the letter a is that of ‘proper mentation’ (tshul bzhin du yid la byed pa) or ‘taking things as they are’ and may be termed a yid la byed pa, ‘bringing to mind a [non-origination]. “In that case, the intermediary ‘mi’ does not figure just as [in the case of] the “king fond of greens” (lo ma’i rgyal po) whose name is [truncated to] “king greens.” In this case, any mental engagements (manasikāra) are of the nature of non-origination. Thus, Padma dkar po concludes, a refers to the transcending function of discerning insight (shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa = prajñāpāramitā). By way of such expressions as ‘non-origination,’ ‘unimpededness’ and so forth, such insight is able to reveal all the teachings of non-duality. As the commentary on the Mañjuśrīnāmasamgiti indicates, in the Mantrayāna approach, “non-duality” refers to the intrinsic essence of supreme bliss (bde ba chen po’i ngo bo nyid) in which there is no duality between discerning insight (prajñā) and skilfull means (upāya). In the Pāramitāyāna approach, all dualities between subject and object, knowing and the known, “I” and “mine,” which persist so long as there are the vacillations of ego-mind (ji srid yid kyi nman par g.yo ba), become resolved into non-duality. The lack of individuating principle (bdag) in all phenomena devoid of discursive elaborations is the intrinsic nature of non-duality. Since amanasikāra is revealed by meanings such as those [summarized above], we speak of the “Cycle of Teachings on Non-Mentation,” teachings that were composed by the great teacher Maitrīpa, alias Advayavajra.

To summarize, amanasikāra can be understood in any of three ways, depending on how its grammar is construed: (i) no engagement in mind [locative], (ii) no engagement of mind [genetive], or (iii)

35 In Phyag chen gan mdzod (p. 280.1), Padma dkar po quotes a sūtra entitled Sangs rgyas yang dag par sdud pa’i mdo (not included in catalogues to the Peking or Derge editions) in which “appropriate” is given as the meaning of “non-origination” (skye ba med pa ni tshul bzhin no).
proper mental engagement in the sense of prajñāpāramitā. Of particular interest in Padma dkar po’s account is his equation of amanasa-sikāra with proper mentation (tshul bzhin yid la byed pa = yoniśomanasikāra), an equation he returns to frequently in his Phyag chen gan mdzod and other works. In a later passage of the Phyag chen gan mdzod (101.6 f) which glosses two quotations from the Hevajratantra, Padma dkar po describes proper mentation as the ever-present primordial gnosis (elsewhere specified as pure awareness: rig pa or even rig pa chen po, 265.2) that reveals itself through the purifying (dag) of improper mentation (tshul bzhin ma yin pa’i yid la byed pa). This improper mentation is the source of mental agitation or distractedness (yengs pa) that arises owing to the power of beginningless latent tendencies (thog ma med pa’i bag chags kyi mthu las byung). Mentation is a state of ignorance (ma rig pa) which, as mental agitation, constitutes a deviation away from proper mentation (tshul bzhin yid la byed pa las gzhan du phyogs pa). The retrieval of proper mentation involves firmly deciding between pure awareness and ignorance (rig ma rig gnyis su kha tshon ge’od), the roots of nirvana and samsara respectively.

Now the terms yoniśomanasikāra and its counterpart ayoniśomanasikāra have a long history in Buddhist thought, their earliest deployment being found in the Pali canon. Padma dkar po’s spe-

36 For example, Phyag chen gan mdzod, pages 38.2, 102.2, 116.2, 265.3, 271.3, 280.1, 287.6 and Klan ka gzhom pa’i gsum bzhugs, v. 21, p. 559.3.

37 On yoniśomanasikāra (Pāli yonismomanasikāra), see Dīghanikāya III 227, Vibhaṅga 373. On ayoniśomanasikāra (Pāli ayonismomanasikāra), see Dīhanikavāya III 273, Vibhaṅgāṭṭhaṅkatha 148. The two terms are also found in certain works attributed to Asaṅga/Maitreya: yoniśomanasikāra: Mahāyānasūtrālāṅkāra I 16; ayoniśomanasikāra: Mahāyānasūtrālāṅkāra XI 4; Uttaratantra I 55–6, 58–9. Padma dkar po’s understanding of improper mentation as an adventitious distortion of appropriate mentation or pure awareness closely resembles Uttaratantra I 56 where improper mentation, the basis of adventitious karma and kleśas, is said to be itself based entirely on the clarity of Mind (sems kyi dag pa la rab gnas).

Where the term amanastikāra occurs in Asaṅga/Maitreya’s works, it is generally given a negative valuation. In Mahāyānasūtrālāṅkāra XI 3, amanastikāra and ayoniśomanasikāra are both included in a list of sixteen obstacles to the accumulation of merit and knowledge. In Dharmadharmatāvibhāga (p. 37 f), amanastikāra is included in a list of five impediments (pratipakṣa) to non-conceptual primordial gnosis (avikalpajñāna) whereas manasi-
cific (and decidedly Tantric) usage of a standard Buddhist term as a synonym for *amanasikāra* invites comparison with the synonyms invoked by both Kamalaśīla – “genuine conceptual analysis” (*yang dag par so sor rtog pa = bhūtapratyavekṣā*)38 and Maitrīpa – “genuinely valid cognition” (*yang dag par rig pa*). What these terms commonly imply is a mode of cognizing things that is not channelled through the dualistic categories of representational thinking, the crucial difference being whether this cognition is “arrived at” as the fruition (*phala*) of a long drawn-out process of moral refinement and elimination of hypostases through analytical investigation (Kamalaśīla) or “disclosed” in its originary condition through a more radical clearing of dualistic tendencies (Maitrīpa and Padma dkar po).

VI. sGam po pa on *manasikāra* in Madhyamaka and Mantrayāṇa

The attempt made by various Indian and bKa’ brgyud authors to equate *amanasikāra* with a positive appraisal of *manasikāra* may be viewed in the light of their more general concern with legitimizing controversial ideas by showing their continuity with Mahāyāna and Mantrayāṇa modes of discourse. A case in point is an analysis of *manasikāra* by sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (1079–1153) in which he compares Madhyamaka and Mantrayāṇa conceptions in order to show that both lead to goal-realization, albeit in different ways.39 The Madhyamaka involves bringing to mind the general idea (*don spyi yid la byed pa*) of reality such that the negation (*bkag*) of

*kāra* provides access to non-conceptual primordial gnosis. See, however, *Madhyāntavi-bhāga* V 12 and Vṛtti where *manasikāra*, understood as the belief in an “I” or “mine” (*ahamkṛti = ngar ’dzin*), is presented as one of six types of distractedness (*vikṣepa*) and is said to be characteristic of the narrow-mindedness (*chung ngu’i sens*) resulting from the application of *manasikāra* in the Hinayāṇa. In a similar vein, *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* V 28–9 (together with Haribhadra’s *Sphuṭārthā*) specifies not setting one’s mind (*amanasikāra*) on the quintessence of awakening (*bodhigarbha*) as characteristic of the *manasikāra* of the Śrāvaka family (*gotra*) amongst the Hinayāṇa.

38 In *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, p. 116.2, Padma dkar po equates *yid la byed pa* with *so sor rtog pa*.

39 *Zhal gyi bdud brtsi thun mong* (sic!) *ma yin pa*, v. DZA, fol. 7b1f.
the four extremes (mtha’ bzhi) pertaining to the conventional (kun rdzob) reality – namely, existence, nonexistence, both or neither – is claimed to yield, on the ultimate level (don dam par), freedom from discursive elaborations (spros bral) which eludes all positions (khas len pa). Thus the Prajñāpāramitā [i.e., Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya] states that although from the conventional standpoint, form is emptiness and emptiness is form, these being non-dual, from the ultimate perspective, no entities are perceived (mi dmigs par) at all. The Mantrayāna involves bringing to mind the actual reality (don dngos yid la byed pa), as illustrated by Tilopa: “Alas, self-awareness (rang gi rig pa) is primordial gnosis of suchness (de kho na nyid kyi ye shes); it is nothing whatsoever that could be shown by me!” In this case, states sGam po pa, view (lta ba) is devoid of any duality; felt experience (nyams myong) flows unobstructedly (rgyun chad med); cultivation (bsgom pa) does not succumb to bias (phyogs su ma lhung pa); conduct (spyod pa) is free from acceptance or rejection (dgag bsgrub dang bral ba); and the goal is free from hope and fear (re dogs bral ba).

VII. amanasikāra as description and explanation

The various interpretations of amanasikāra formulated in response to criticisms raised at the bSam yas debate or in Indian circles should not allow us to overlook the fact that the idea first gained currency as a description of goal-realization in contexts of a mystical, rather than polemical, nature. Within the Siddha genre of mystical songs, amanasikāra is used to describe certain transformative experiences and modes of being, characterized by ecstasy, radiant clarity and loss of the customary sense of self, rather than to define or defend a particular line of Buddhist thought. This contrast can perhaps be best understood in terms of the distinction between a ‘description’ and an ‘explanation.’ A description is the immediate articulation, verbally and conceptually, of an actual experience one is having. Where the available words and concepts in their possible semantic combinations are inadequate to convey the experience, new words or new nuances of old words are coined. Explanation is any concept or theory that attempts to go behind an experience or description of an experi-
ence, to account for it or legitimize it, in terms of something other than what is experienced, and often for purposes extraneous to experience, be they doctrinal or tactical. It would be wrong to make this distinction a categorical one. Every description, by virtue of its communicative thrust and its participation in the “system of associated commonplaces” (Max Black) surrounding every word, carries with it the sedimentation of explanatory rules. Likewise, every explanation, by virtue of its rootedness in the referential ground of language, reveals something about the world.

While it is true that the descriptive and explanatory uses of amanasikāra have tended to overlap in the history of its usage so that it could come to function simultaneously in soteriological and doctrinal contexts, the tradition of the Siddhas in which the term was first widely used paid curiously little attention to sectarian issues of doctrinal affiliation, even when adopting or reinterpreting standard Buddhist concepts. A matter of greater importance to them was how to actually convey an extraordinary experience by means of a medium that almost invariably falsifies, distorts or conceals what it tries to express. This factor accounts for the Siddhas’ frequent use of unconventional and antinomian uses of standard terms, one obvious example being the recurrent espousal of ‘selfhood’ (ātmya = bdag nyid) in flagrant opposition to the central Buddhist doctrine of ‘selflessness’ (anātman). In this light, it is not hard to see how amanasikāra could constitute a semantic inversion of the notion of manasikāra, an idea which was generally favoured in the Buddhist tradition and endorsed by the Buddha himself who frequently admonished his disciples to apply their minds (Pali: manasi karotha) to his teachings. It will become clear from the Siddha elucidations of amanasikāra examined below (section IX) that the later attempts to legitimize and domesticate the concept by bringing it into line with such standard notions as manasikāra and ayoniśomanasikāra by no means reflect

40 Schmithausen (1981: 200) draws a similar distinction between an “immediate verbalization of an actual experience” and “the secondary transformation of such a primary verbalization effected for logical, doctrinal or even tactical reasons.”
the intentions of those who first popularized the term as an apophatic description of Buddhahood.

VIII. The Siddha conception of *manas*

Central to Tibetan developments of the *amanasikāra* doctrine were the varying conceptions of mind (*manas*) elaborated in the Indian Buddhist philosophical systems. The Yogācāra-Cittamātra conception of ego-mind⁴¹ (*manas*) as a bipartite Janus-faced process of constitution – reflexively constituting itself as a self (‘I’) by looking back upon the horizon from which it emerges while intentionally constituting its world by looking outward in the act of structuring its sensory-ideational information into an intelligible unity – and the possibility of reversing (*parāvṛttī*) this process, had particularly far-reaching consequences for later Tibetan interpretations of *amanasikāra*. One such interpretation will be discussed below in section XII. At this juncture, however, we will briefly consider another conception of *manas* which is of immediate relevance to the Siddha interpretations we will be examining. Padma dkar po draws our attention to a specifically Tantric and Siddha use of *manas*⁴² which diverges from both the Abhidharma conception of the mental faculty

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⁴¹ This conception is traditionally distinguished from the Abhidharma-based Śrāvaka (Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika) interpretation of *manas*, as summarized, for example, by mChims ston Blo bzang grags pa (probably fourteenth century) in his commentary on the Abhidharmakośa (*Chos nging pa gsal byed legs par hshad pa’i rgya mtsho*, fol. 27a2f.):

The two Śrāvaka schools [Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas] maintain a six-fold pattern of conscious operations (*rnam shes tshogs drug*). The two Ācārya brothers [Vasubandhu and Asaṅga], however, maintain an eight-fold pattern [which expands the six to include]: (1) a substratum consciousness (*kun gzhi’i rnam par shes pa*) which by objectifying the totality of external and internal, phenomenal and individual, referents, remains [itself] qualitatively non-distinctive (*rnam pa mi gsal*) and uninterrupted (*ma chad pa*); and (2) an emotionally tainted ego-mind which, by objectifying this [substratum consciousness], has the aspect of believing in an “I” (*ngar ’dzin pa’i rnam pa can*).

Whatever its philosophical limitations as an idealist construct, the Cittamātra eightfold model of mind provided a fruitful and highly influential conceptual scheme for elucidating the genesis, and possible transcendence, of dualistic experience.

⁴² Phyag chen gan mdzod, 270.3f.
(yid dbang shes) that becomes apparent when the six modes of perception cease and the Yogācāra-Cittamātra conception of an ‘I’ and ‘mine’ intending process (nga dang ngar sens pa). These latter, Padma dkar po argues, fail to describe the mind of yogis (rnal ’byor pa’i yid) who have gone to the heart of meditative composure (mnyam bzhag gi ngo bor song ba). For such individuals, mental activity (yid kyi las), by which we can understand thinking, feeling and conceptualization in general, continues in various forms on the level of subjective mind, but is now fed, so to say, from a higher source. The Siddhas therefore use certain terms such as genuine mind (gnyug ma’i yid) or mind devoid of objective reference (dmigs pa med pa’i yid) to describe this transformed or ex-centric subjectivity. As Padma dkar po goes on to elaborate:43

Next, if one has to purify the whole complex of mind involving active dichotomic cognition (rnam shes bya ba dang bcas pa’i yid) at the time of settling in the realization of genuine mind (gnyug ma’i yid), then it [is mind (manas) which] serves to demarcate realization from non-realization. Here in this context of calm abiding (zhi gnas), the type of mental engagement that is to be abandoned (yid byed spang rgyu) consists in the improper forms of mental engagement.

Mind thus emerges within the field of consciousness as the pivotal factor from which the dual inclinations toward realization [direct self-recognition] or non-realization [non-recognition] proceed.

IX. Siddha interpretations of amanasikāra

The idea of non-mentation as it is developed in certain mystical songs attributed to Saraha and Tilopa, serves as one among many negative descriptors of an experience considered so rich and profound as to defy expression in thought and language. It is akin to, and frequently occurs alongside, a variety of other negative descriptors such as ‘transcending intellect’ (blo las ’das pa), ‘devoid of

43 Phyag chen gan mdzod, 271.2f.: de las gnyug ma’i yid bsgrub pa la bzhag pa’i tshe rnam shes bya ba dang bcas pa’i yid de thams cad dag pa dgos pa na rtogs ma rto gs kyi mtshams ’byed pa la yin no / zhi gnas kyi skabs ’dir yid byed spang rgyu ni tshul bzhin ma yin pa’i yid la byed pa de dag go //
representational thinking’ (bsam med, bsam du med pa), ‘devoid of subjective grasping (’dzin med), ‘free from discursive elaborations’ (spros bral) ‘devoid of meditation’ (sgom med, bsgom du med pa), terms which commonly refer to a depth dimension of experience that eludes the appropriations of dualistic mentation. It is of interest to note that Saraha elaborates on the term in a relatively small number of his many Dohās. The term scarcely occurs in his famous and much commented upon Dohā Trilogy (Doha skor gsum), for example, or in his Kakhasyadohā (for which we have his Tippana), or in the songs attributed to him that are included in Munidatta’s Čaryāgītiviniścaya. It is a central theme, however, in his Vajraṅī Quartet comprising the Kāyakośāmrta vajraṅī, Vākkośarucirasvarajagītī, Cittakośājava vajraṅī, and Kāyavācchātmanaskārānāma, as well as in his Mahāmudrapadeśā. It is unfortunate that the term is given detailed attention in works for which we have no Indian or Tibetan commentaries. In the case of Tilopa, the term occurs in several of his mystical songs on Mahāmudrā including the Dohākośa, Acintyama-hāmudrā, and Mahāmudrapadeśā.

At the outset, we must note a certain ambivalence in Saraha’s use of amanaskāra and its variants. When regarded as a polemical position, Saraha is as quick to criticize its (anti-intellectualist) supporters as its (intellectualist) detractors. Early in the Kāyakośa we find Saraha critically assessing various Buddhist and non-Buddhist ap-
proaches to realization, among which he includes the tendency to find fault with either yid la mi bya ba or its opposite yid la bya ba.\footnote{P v. 69, p. 103.4.3; D v. 28, p. 196, 213.3. mos pa'i shes pas riogs pa tha dad kyang /
  dran med 'di la brdzun pa yod re skan /
  lam gyi rtisol bas 'bras bu so so yang /
  dran pa 'di la bden pa yod re skan /
  btang snyoms dbang gis re 'jog tha dad kyang /}

    Though true understanding varies with knowledge interests, 
    In non-reflection (dран med),\footnote{On the four symbol (brda' bzhi) terms dran pa, dran med, skye med, and blo' das see Guenther (1969) 11f. and 14. I have somewhat loosely rendered dran pa (smṛti) as ‘reflection’ to cover the two basic cognitive operations it describes, namely, ‘memory’ (mnemonic reflection) and ‘attention’ (thematic reflection), both involving reflexivity, a reflecting on experience. See Padma dkar po’s cogent analysis of the concept as it relates to Mahāmudrā teachings in his Phyag chen gan mdzod, 271.4f.} there has never been anything false. 
    Though the goal varies according to efforts on the path, 
    In reflection (dран pa), there has never been anything true. 
    Though each one’s meditative fixation varies with his state of indifference, 
    In non-origination (skyе med), there has never been any duality. 
    Though people ascribe fault to either ‘mentation’ or ‘non-mentation,’ 
    In transcending intellect (blo’ das), there has never been anything to search for.

Saraha’s critique of the opposing positions regarding \textit{amanasikāra} provide further evidence that the type of contentious issues staged at bSam yas during the Sino-Indian controversy were prevalent in India (though dates are less certain). What is of particular interest, however, is Saraha’s exposé of the vain purposiveness common to both intellectualist and anti-intellectualist positions, the former disparaging non-mentation, the latter disparaging mentation. Both fail to go beyond intellectual deliberation.

    Tilopa begins a song entitled \textit{Dohākośa} by admonishing his listeners not to reduce \textit{amanasikāra} to popular prejudices or to subjective demands:\footnote{P v. 69, 131.2.3; D v. 28, p. 204, 271.6: yid la ma byed gnyug ma'i rang bzhin la /
  brdzun pa rnams kyis skur ba ma 'debs shig /
  rang dbang yod pas rang nyid 'ching ma byed /}
Non-mention, [one’s] genuine nature –
Do not disparage it by way of lies!
Since it is present by its own power, do not hold it as one’s own ‘self’!

A recurrent paradox in Siddha descriptions of goal-realization is that what is most natural comes most naturally precisely when egocentered identifications subside. Herein lies the basis for the Tantric distinction between the sense of self (bdag) which, as a subjective construct, is amenable to deconstruction, as in the Buddhist no self doctrine (anātman = bdag med), and authentic selfhood voiced in the first person (bdag nyid) which is precisely what the Siddhas mean by non-mention. As Tilopa states it (Dohākoṣa):\(^{53}\)

The natural expression of stainless mind
Should be known by anyone [in] self-awareness (rang rig).
I myself am ‘living being,’ I myself am ‘Buddha.’
I myself am non-mention (bdag nyid yid la mi byed pa).

The term self-awareness (rang rig or rang gi[s] rig pa), as elaborated by Saraha, describes the experience of recognizing spontaneous ever-present gnosis as it is, stripped of all subjectivizing and objectifying tendencies. When fully recognized, it is open awareness (rig pa). When not recognized, it is ignorance or un-awareness (ma rig pa), a process-product term which at once describes the non-recognition of one’s natural condition (not understanding it as it is) and the ensuing mis-apprehension (taking it for something it is not, viz. a ‘self’). Saraha begins his Cittakoṣa with the following passage:\(^{54}\)

\(^{53}\) P v. 69, 131.3.4; D v. 28, p. 204, 272.7:
  
  \begin{verbatim}
  dri med sms ky rang bzhin la /
gang zhig rang rig shes par bya /
bdag nyid ’gro ba bdag nyid sangs rgyas te /
bdag nyid dri ma med cing bdag nyid la mi byed pa //
  \end{verbatim}

\(^{54}\) P v. 69, p. 107.3.3; D v. 28, p. 198, 230.5:
  
  \begin{verbatim}
  skye bo lhan cig skyes pa’i ye shes ni /
rang gi nyams su myong ba de kho na /
rig dang ma rig rang rig gsal ba de kho na /
mar me mun gsal rang gi rang gsal rang la sad /
’dam gyi padma ’dam la ma zhen kha dog legs /
gzung ’dzin dri ma ma spangs snying po gsal /
  \end{verbatim}
Spontaneous gnosis [in each] person –
\textit{That alone} is felt and experienced individually.
\textit{That alone} is the radiance of self-awareness in awareness and un-awareness,
A darkness-illuminating light, intrinsically self-luminous, aroused in oneself.
A lotus in a swamp resplendent in colours, unconditioned by the swamp,
One’s vital quintessence shines without removing the grime of subject and object.
As a deer living in an alpine forest wanders alone,
\textit{That alone} is goal-realization, unconditioned by causality.

Like the \textit{lumen naturale} (natural light) of the medieval scholastics,
self-awareness comes to light naturally for the very reason that self-illumination and self-disclosure are intrinsic to being human.\textsuperscript{55} That our vital quintessence (\textit{snying po}) can shine forth without having to remove the accretions of subject and object is only possible because humans are always already pervaded by spontaneous gnosis (\textit{lhan cig skyes pa’i ye shes}).\textsuperscript{56}

The possibility of existential recovery would be of little relevance if the tendency to glide away or go astray (’\textit{khrul pa}) from authentic possibilities into a world of appropriated objects (\textit{yul}) were not like-

\begin{verbatim}
nags khrod gnas pa’i ri rags gcig pur rgyu /
rgyu la ma zhen ‘bras bu de kho na //
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{55} See Heidegger’s discussion of \textit{lumen naturale} in \textit{Being and Time}, pp. 133 and 170
and in several essays such as “Moira,” in \textit{Early Greek Thinking} (1975: 97),
In “Moira” (p. 97), Heidegger writes: “The essence of \textit{aletheia} [i.e., truth as ‘unconcealedness’] remains
veiled. The visibility it bestows allows the presencing of what is present to arise as outer appearance \textit{(Aussehen)} (\textit{eidos})
and aspect \textit{(Gesicht)} (\textit{idea}). Consequently, the perceptual relation to the presencing of what is present is
defined as ‘seeing’ (\textit{eidenai}). Stamped with this character of vision, knowledge and the evidence of knowledge
cannot renounce their essential derivation from luminous disclosure, even where truth has been transformed into
the certainty of self-consciousness. \textit{Lumen naturale}, natural light, i.e., the illumination of reason, already presupposes
the disclosure of the duality [i.e., of the presencing of what is present]. The same holds true of the Augustinian and
medieval views of light – not to mention their Platonic origins – which could only develop under the tutelage of an
\textit{Aletheia} already reigning in the destiny of the duality.”

\textsuperscript{56} According to s\textit{Gam po pa bsod nams rin chen}, “‘spontaneous primordial gnosis’
(\textit{lhan cig skyes pa’i ye shes}) refers to one’s natural awareness in the present moment (\textit{da ltar gyi thal ma l gyi shes pa}) as it is primordially present (\textit{ye nas yod pa}).” In \textit{Zhal gyi bdud rtsi thun mong}s (sic!) \textit{ma yin pa}, v. dza, fol. 7a2.
wise constitutive of the kinds of being (’gro drug) we are. According
to a beautiful passage from Saraha’s Kāyakośa quoted below, ‘going
astray’ is engendered by mnemic and thematic reflection (dran pa,
see n. 51) which mentally and subjectively schematizes its content
into particular appearances (snang ba). By this is meant not that
these reflected-on appearances (dran pa’i snang ba) conceal an origin-
al something of which they are a mere copy or distortion but that
perception is normally reduced to certain aspects of what is per-
ceived as dictated by subjective demands (things appear as this or
that in accordance with this or that purpose). Just as the true enjoy-
ment of what life has to offer is only possible when one stops look-
ing for it, so authentic subjectivity, as a process of individuation,
57 can only blossom in the absence of subjective deliberations. The
Kāyakośa states:58

57 The term ‘individuation’ was coined by Carl Jung to describe the process of becom-
ing a complete individual who is aware of his or her unique individuality. It refers specifi-
cally to the gradual opening of an individual’s consciousness to the complete range of
possible elements that are already inherent in the individual at a preconscious level. The
Siddhas seemed well aware that the opening of ego-mind (manas) to non-egocentricity
(amanasikāra), not unlike the conscious ego’s integration of unconscious elements in
Jungian psychology, does not lead to the annihilation of the subject (bdag med) but rather
to its fulfillment in authentic selfhood (bdag nyid).

58 P v. 69, p. 104.3.8; D v. 28, p. 196, 217.5:
gang la mi gnas chags pa med par spyod /
me tog sbrang rtsi sbrang mas ’thung dang ’dra /
so sor rtog pa’i ye shes thabs yin te /
ro dang phrad na ro la zhen pa med /
de ltar kun gyis shes par ’gyur ma yin /
snying po’i don gyi ’gro drug khyab mod kyang /
’gro ba dran pas bcings te pad tra’i srin /
sems las dran pa byung phyir ’khrul pa’i rgyu /
yid la mi byed shes na sangs rgyas nyid /
’khrul pa de la thabs dang shes rab med /
kye ho dbyer med shes na thabs mchog de kho na /
sangs rgyas sems can chos rnams thams cad kun /
rang gi sms nyid dag dang lhan cig skyes /
yid la mi byed yid la skyes tsam na /
dran pa’i snang ba nub ste bden brdzun med /
de phyir de nyid kho na’i yul ma yin /
dper na mig gi yul du sgra mi snang /
 rnam par mi rtog rtog pa’i yul ma yin /
Like a honey bee sipping honey from flowers,
Not staying anywhere [but] enjoying [each] without attachment,
So individually-conceiving gnosis is the skillful means

It is not known by all in this way.
Though life’s vital quintessence pervades the six kinds of beings,
Beings become imprisoned by reflections [like] insects by a flower’s petals.
Because mind-based reflections arise, they become the cause of errancy.

If one recognizes non-mentation, this is Buddhahood.
[But] in this errancy, there is neither skillful means nor insight.
Alas! If one knows their indivisibility, that alone is the highest means!

Buddhas, sentient beings, the whole phenomenal [world],
Arise together with one’s own pure Mind itself.
At the time when non-mentation emerges in mind,
Reflection’s appearances vanish so nothing of ‘true’ or ‘false’ remains.

Therefore [non-mentation] is not an object for itself,
Just as sound does not appear as an object for seeing.
Non-conceptuality is not a conceptual object.
But when reflections become illumined by the condition of emptiness,
Reflection’s appearances vanish and there is no more looking.

This lengthy passage helps us to understand how amanasikāra is able
to function in the Siddha mystical songs as a negative description of
a positive experience. The apophatic description serves as a counter-
tendency to any assertive claims about the experience, be they
epistemological (the attempt to reduce it to an object of knowledge),
ethical-axiological (to evaluate it as good as opposed to evil) or
ontological (to assert it as real as opposed to unreal). According to
the Kāyakośa: 59

Where there is no egocentric deliberation, [that] is Mahāmudrā.

59 P v. 69, p. 105.2.6; D v. 28, p. 221.1: 
  stong pa’i rkyen gyis dran pa gsal tsam na /
  dran pa’i snang ba nub nas mthong ba med //
  gang la yid la byar med phyag rgya che /
  mshan ma’i dran rig sna tshogs ji snyed pa /
  de nyid phyag rgya che la dbye ba med /
  rtags dang mi rtags gnyi ga so so min //
However varied awareness’s reflections on its [self-imputed] characteristics, these are indivisible with Mahāmudrā. Conceptualization and non-conceptualization are not two separate things.

If apophatic descriptions point to what is ineffable in experience, they are nonetheless frequently used alongside more positive (cataphatic) descriptions such as ‘radiant clarity’ (ʼod gsal) or ‘ultimate reality’ (chos nyid), expressions that emphasize the positive, fecund character of mystical experience. A clear example of the mixing of the apophatic and cataphatic orders of discourse is found in the opening verse of Tilopa’s Acintyamahāmudrā:60

Radiant clarity, ultimate reality unborn and unceasing is
The way of Mahāmudrā, inexpressible in thought and language.
It is non-mention, beyond what can be identified.
Homage to the unconditioned, profound and calm!

The peculiarities of negative description have enabled us to see how amanasikāra could paradoxically serve as a primary description, and later as a key hermeneutical definition, of the utterly positive experience known as “Mahāmudrā.” But given that amanasikāra is precisely that which eludes positive assertions, how then is it to be cultivated (sgom)? Saraha’s answer is, as we could expect, negative: The best cultivation (sgom mchog) is that which comes of its own accord in the absence of any willful cultivation. As Saraha states in his Dohākośanāmamahāmudropadeśa:61

In Mahāmudrā which is non-mention,
Since there is not the slightest reason to meditate, there’s no meditation.
Without meditating or being divorced from what it is about is the best meditation!

60 P v. 82, n. 4635, p. 38.5.4 f; D v. 28, 490.4:
skee ‘gag med pa’i chos nys ‘od gsal ni /
snra bsam brjod med phyag rgya chen po’i lam /
gnos gzung dang bral yid la mi byed pa’o /
zab zhi ‘dus ma byas la phyag ‘tshal lo //

61 P 69, 110.5.3; D v. 28, p. 246.3:
yid la mi byed phyag rgya chen po la /
sgom rgyu rdul tsam med pas mi bsgom ste /
sgom med don pa ’bral med sgom pa’i mchog //
The theme is elaborated in another passage from the author’s *Dohā-kośanāmamahāmudrapadeśa*:62

Mind cut off at its root is like the open sky.
There being nothing to meditate on, there’s no mental engagement because
Ordinary awareness, perfectly natural in its own way of being,
Is not deceived by artificial thought objects.
There is no need to fake this naturally pure mind.
So, without holding or dismissing it, leave it where it is most happy!

As ‘Ba’ ra ba rGyal mtshan dpal bzang (1310–1391) notes in connection with these two preceding passages,63 the term “meditation” (*sgom*) is to be understood in the sense of “preserving the Mahā-mudrā experience” (*phyag rgya chen po skyong ba*) or “non-mentation” (*yid la mi byed pa*), terms which similarly indicate that “there has not for a moment been any cause to interfere with it” (*de nyid la yengs rgyu skad cig kyang med pa*). The term “ordinary awareness” (*tha mal [gyi] shes pa*) also requires explication. According to Padma dkar po (*mDzub tshugs & Phyag chen gan mdzod*),64 it is synonymous with “natural awareness” (*rang bzhin gyi shes pa*), *tha mal* and *rang bzhin* both being translations of the Sanskrit *prakṛta*. In

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62 P v. 69, p. 110.4.7; D v. 28, p. 245.7:
*rtsa ba chod pa’i sens nyid nam mkha’*’dra /
*sgom du med pas yid la mi bya ste /
*tha mal shes pa rang lugs gnyug ma la /
*bcos ma’i dmigs pa dag gis mi bslad de /
*rang bzhin dag pa’i sens la bcos mi dgos /
*ma bzang ma bchang rang dga’ nyid du zhog //

63 Ngo spro d bdun ma’i ’grel pa Man ngag rin po che’i sgron me, v. 11, p. 234.1f. Yang dgon pa’s *Ngo spro d bdun ma* is found in the Pha jo ldings edition of the author’s *bKa’*’*bum* (*mGur*’*bum* collection, v. 3, p. 274.1). The song is not contained in the *rTa* ngs collection which has a much shorter *mGur*’*bum* but is otherwise identical in contents.

‘Ba’ ra ba was regarded as a re-embodiment of Yang dgon pa and was heir to his lineage, the sTod ’*Brug*, through his own root teacher Zur phug pa Rin chen dpal bzang, a student of Yang dgon pa’s leading disciple Spyan snga rin chen ldan (1202–1329). See Smith (1970: 9f.) and *Deb ther sgon po*, ja, fol. 127af. (BA 692f.). As Smith (p. 7) notes, “The sTod ’Brug … gave rise to a host of important schools: the Ne-rings bKa’ brgyud pa, the Mdo bo che ba, and the Yang dgon bka’ brgyud pa among others. The Yang dgon school produced ultimately the ’Ba’ ra bKa’ brgyud pa, a sect that had maintained its identity up to 1959.”

64 *rNal*’*byor bzhin mdzub tshugs*, p. 484.3f. See also *Phyag chen gan mdzod*, p. 103.5f.
Padma dkar po’s ‘language of experience’ (myong ba’i skad), it refers to that free-rising cognition (thol skyes kyi rig pa) which is arising continuously (shar shar ba) but only becomes fully manifest once the net of concepts (rtog pa) that obscures it has cleared.65

The unwilled cultivation of non-mentation is described in the Siddha texts as a process of “spiritual attunement” (rnal ’byor = yoga). This process, according to Saraha’s own definition (Kāyavāccittamanasikāra),66 is a matter of remaining attuned to one’s natural condition (rnal ma’i don la gnas pa’i rnal ’byor). Since this occurs only in the absence of subjective interference – either accepting or rejecting – of a grasping subject, it is known as the true concentration (bsam gtan nyid) as distinct from ordinary fixation involving dualistic object apprehension. When all representational and objectifying thinking has dissolved into the single flavour of non-mentation, gnosis is present as one’s vital quintessence. As stated in Saraha’s Kāyavāc-cittamanasikāra:67

Without accepting or rejecting, it is naturally free in every respect.
The attunement without grasping or egocentricity is the true concentration.
Since that which cannot be cultivated as anything or sought anywhere is
Inconceivable, Alas! it is the same flavour as non-mentation.
Gnosis, inconceivable and uncontrived like the sky, one’s vital quintessence:
Alas! It is nothing that can be intellectually thought about or verbalized!

Mahāmudrā as an absolutely positive experience is characterized negatively during the path of recovery where its self-disclosure is made possible by a via negativa which gradually strips away the egoic projections and appropriations that attempt to make of it something other than it is. From the perspective of self-disclosure, how-

65 rNal ’byor bzhi mdzub tshugs, p. 485.1f.
66 P 69, 108.4.7.
67 P v. 69, p. 108.5.6; D v. 28, p. 199, 237.3:
btang gzhag med cing rang bzhin rnam par grol /’dzin med yid la bya med rnal ’byor bsam gtan nyid / gang la mi bsgom gang du’ang bsal ba med pa de /bsam du med pas yid la mi byed ro snyoms kye / ye shes mkha’ dra bsam bral ma bcos snying po don /’di la blos yis bsam zhung brjod du med do kye /
ever, where the positive stands completely in the open and is no longer cognized as ‘other,’ propositions about mentation and non-mentation no longer apply. The Kāyakośa states:68

Settled in what is neither mentation nor non-mentation,
Since self-awareness emerges as Mahāmudrā itself,
Mahāmudrā reveals itself to itself by itself.

X. The Siddha impact on bKa’ brgyud pa views of amanasi-kāra

What can we conclude in this final section of the paper about the Siddha interpretation of amanasi-kāra and its impact on later developments? First, it must be recognized that the idea at this formative stage in its development had not yet been codified into a unified, systematic doctrine, even if contemporary opponents of the term already identified it with the Siddha teachings. Perhaps the polyvalent significations of the term in Siddha contexts and its resistance to any univocal or unequivocal definition reflects the general tenor of the Siddha movement: its spirited disavowal of intellectual systems of any variety and of ideological identification in general. This aspect of the movement should be borne in mind when examining later attempts by Tibetan authors to retrospectively identify the concept with particular schools of Buddhist thought. For example, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554), the eighth Karmapa, discusses amanasi-kāra in his commentary on Candrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra and Bhāṣya69 as if it were a Madhyamaka doctrine (yid la mi byed pa’i dbu ma) of Maitrīpa in which he had synthesized the Madhyamaka teachings of Saraha (younger and elder), Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti. Although the influence of Madhyamaka on Maitrīpa’s doctrine is unmistakable, one is hard pressed to identify Saraha’s teachings with the Madhyamaka (apart from certain conceptual

68 P v. 69, 105.3.2; D v. 28, p. 197, 221.4:
yid la bya dang mi bya med par gzhag /
rang rig phya gya chen po nyid la byung /
phyag gya chen po nyid la nyid kyis bstan //
69 dBu ma la ’jug pa’i rnam bshad, fol. 5a4f. See also Ruegg (1988) 125.
correlations) given his own frequent critiques of all the Buddhist philosophical systems, Madhyamaka notwithstanding. In fact, Saraha’s Kāyakośa, the work in which he gives the fullest elaboration of amanasikāra, begins with such a critique.70

The Vaibhāṣikas, the Sautrāntikas,
The Yogācāras, the Madhyamakas and the rest,
Find fault with one another and engage in [endless] disputes.
Oblivious to That itself, the sky[-like] sameness of appearance and emptiness,
They turn their backs on spontaneity.

Despite the multiplicity of connotations in the Siddha treatment of amanasikāra, we can extract from the passages we have examined two overlapping deployments which strongly influenced later Tibetan interpretations: (i) Firstly, its use in didactic and rhetorical contexts as a critique of subject-centered rationality in intellectual and ethical pursuits. This is evident in the two passages of Saraha and Tilopa that were cited at the beginning of the previous section. (ii) Secondly, its use in descriptive contexts to provide a phenomenological-psychological account of the transcendence of subject-centered mind and the recovery of non-dual gnosis. This is apparent in the apophatic descriptions of amanasikāra examined throughout the previous section. Some examples of these influences will now be examined.

XI. amanasikāra and the critique of purposive rationality: sGam po pa and Rang byung rdo rje

What the use of amanasikāra as a counter-measure to the subjectivizing and objectifying tendencies of dualistic mind principally seeks to undermine is the purposiveness or instrumentality that surrepti-

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70 P v. 69, p. 103.3.5; D v. 28, p. 212.5:
bye brag pa dang mdo sde sngags pa dang /
rla ’byor pa dang dbu ma la sogs te /
geg la geg skyon ’gel zhung rtsod par byed /
snang stong mkha’ mnyam de nyid mi shes pa /
lhan cig skyes la rgyab kyis phyog par ’gyur //
tiously controls all rational-calculative thinking. We have seen that non-mentation (yid la mi bya) becomes no less an impediment to the free flow of experience than mentation (yid la bya) so long as willful deliberation is involved. For several bKa’ brgyud pa authors including sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (1079–1153) and the third Karmapa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339), Mahāmudrā is precisely what comes to the fore in the absence of instrumental rational or moral deliberation. sGam po pa, for example, defines Mahāmudrā as follows:

Here, “Mahāmudrā” means not reducing anything to ego-mind (yid la ci yang mi byed pa): one neither cultivates any qualities such as “non-dividedness” or “emptiness” nor eliminates any defects such as conceptualizing. That which is naturally free (rang grol ba) from the intellect with its dualistic beliefs is what is [meant by] “Mahāmudrā.”

The third Karmapa Rang byung rdo rje similarly disclaims the validity of a moralism which belies subjectivistic deliberations in his commentary on Tilopa’s Mahāmudropadeśa (stanza 10):

In the context of worldly appearances, it is commonly declared that awakening to Buddhahood is attained solely on the basis of accumulating stores of merits. But when life’s vital quintessence is no longer reduced to ego-mind (yid la ma byed pa), then ‘good’ does not yield the slightest benefit and ‘evil’ does not bring the slightest harm. If one goes to the core of radiant clarity, beyond all attachments and desires, and deeply understands it, then all phenomena belonging to samsara and nirvana [in their] multiplicity assume the single flavour of basic equality and all the masses of notions that arise in one’s ego-mind (rang gi yid), apart from becoming friends with the Dharma-kāya in its basic equality, do not become harmful.

71 Phyaṅ rgya chen po rtsa ba la ngo spro d pa, v. YA, fol. 2b5f.
72 Phyaṅ rgya chen po Gang pa ma’i ’gre l pa, p. 42.1f. The arrangement of lines in this version of the Dohākośa are quite different from the bsTan ’gyur version. … ’jig rten pa’i snang ngo la bsod nams kyi tshogs gsog pa’i rten ’ba’ zhig bsgrub cing ’di yisangs rgya bar byed zer yang / snying po’i don yid la ma byed pa / dge bas phan spu tsam ma byas / sṅig pas gnod pa spu tsam yang ma bskyeł zhing / zhen pa dang ’dod pa kun dang bral ba’i ’od gsal ba de nyid khong du chud cing rtogs na ni / ’khor ba dang mya ngan las ’das pa’i chos thams caddy nnyam pa nyid du ma ro gcig par ’gyur zhiṅg rang gi yid la byung ba’i rtog pa’i tshogs thams caddy / nnyam pa nyid chos kyi sku’i grols su ’gyur pa ma gtogs pa gnod par mi ’gyur ba yin te / …
XII. *amanasikāra* and transformed subjectivity: Yang dgon pa’s *Cittamātra-Mantrayāna* synthesis

The Siddha conception of *amanasikāra* in terms of a goal-sustained transformation of subject-centered consciousness was to be given its most lucid expression in the Cittamātra-based interpretations of *amanasikāra*, such as we find, for example, in the writings of the sTod ’brug mystic rGyal ba Yang dgon pa (1213–1258). It is of interest to note that Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje, who has traced three distinct Madhyamaka lines of interpretation of the *amanasikāra* doctrine in Tibet, specifies the Cittamātra-based interpretation (more specifically the *sems tsam rnam rdzun gyi dbu ma*) as the one which follows the sense of the Dohās. This tradition, represented by Yang dgon pa, who evidently received it from rGod tshang pa (1189–1258?), is distinguished from the Mantra-Madhyamaka (*sngags kyi dbu ma*) and Sūtra-Madhyamaka (*mdo’i dbu ma*) interpretations which are said to derive in their entirety from Marpa and Mila ras pa. The Sūtra-Madhyamaka tradition was chiefly represented and widely propagated by sGam po pa. The Cittamātra-Madhyamaka interpretation, like the Dohās, emphasizes an awareness devoid of the subject and object (*gzung ’dzin gyis stong pa’i shes pa*) characterized as self-radiant self-awareness (*rang rig rang gsal*).

The interweaving of Cittamātra and Siddha views regarding the transformation of ego-mind is conspicuous in Yang dgon pa’s interpretations of *yid la mi byed pa* as presented in certain of his “Mountain Teachings” (*Ri chos*) texts. His most extensive account is

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73 On Yang dgon pa, see above note 63.

74 *dBu ma la ’jug pa’i rnam bshad*, fol. 6a2f. This line is said to have been widely represented in India and Tibet by Phyang na (Vajrapāni) of India, a direct disciple of Maitrīpa. Yang dgon pa claims to have received a cycle of Mahāmudrā teachings from his root teacher rGod tshang pa called the *Phyang rgya chen po skor tsho* that passed through Maitrīpa (Me tri pa) and Vajrapāni (rgya gar Phyah na). See *Ri chos kyi phyag len gsal ba’i sgron me*, v. 1, fol. 2b5f. On the importance of rGod tshang pa in the transmission of Maitrīpa’s Mahāmudrā teachings, as later noted by ’ Gos lo tsa ba and Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje, see David Jackson (1994) 82ff.
given in first part of his *Ri chos kyi rnal ’byor bzhi pa* within the context of a lengthy elucidation of Mahāmudrā.\(^\text{75}\)

The meaning of the term *yid la mi byed pa* [derives from] the term *amanasi-kāra* in the Sanskrit language. As derived from this term used in the locative case, *manas* is rendered as *yid*, *sikara* is rendered as *[la]*byed *pa* and these are negated by the *a*. One thus speaks of an absence of mentation (*yid la byed pa med pa*) in the sense of not dwelling in ego-mind (*yid la mi gnas pa*), being free from ego-mind (*yid las grol ba*) or transcending ego-mind (*yid las ’das pa*). If we translate it as “not dwelling in ego-mind,” the meaning of the term is easy to understand.

However [the translation] *yid la mi byed pa* (non-mentation; literally, “the ego-mind not focusing upon”) [means that] divisive concepts (*rnam rtog*) and hypostases (*kun rtog*) [i.e., the ego-mind] arisen from sources of error are taken as the subject, and then [*yid la mi byed pa*] is “these agents (de byed pa) not doing.” Given that understanding [of the term], then even when there is non-mentation [in this sense], there will nonetheless be activity in one’s mind. The point is that however the all-pervasive substratum (*kun gzhi*) and its five sensory operations arise, they are but the self-effulgence of the conceptless and this is the intrinsic dynamics of “Mahāmudrā.” Thus, when the emotionally-tainted ego-mind (*nyon yid*) gazes inwardly upon the all-pervasive substratum, it holds it to be its ‘self.’ And when the egoic con-

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\(^{75}\) *Ri chos kyi rnal ’byor bzhi pa* Phyag rgya chen po snying po ’i don gyi gter mdzod, in rGyal ba Yang dgon pa bKa’ ’bum (rTa mgo edition), v. 1, p. 247.5f.: *yid la mi byed pa zhes bya ba’i sgra don ni / sam tri [sic!] ta’i skad du / a ma na si ka ra la zhes bya ste / yi ge bdun po de’i sgra las drangs na / a ma na yid / si ka na [sic!] byed pa yin la de as bka’ pas / de ltar na yid la byed pa med pa zhes bya ste / yid la mi gnas pa’am / yid las grol ba’am / yid las ’das pa zhes pa la ’jug la / de yid la mi gnas par ’gyur na sgra don go bde ba la / yid la mi byed pa la ’khrul gzhi byung nas / rnam rtog dang kun rtog gis yul can byas nas / de byed pa la mi byed par go nas yid la mi byed par rang yid la byed par yong ba yang ’dag / de’i don ni kun gzhi dang so lnga ji ltar shar yang rtog med du rang gsal ba phyag rgya chen po’i rang gshis yin / [248] de la nyon yid kyis kun gzhi la kha nang du bitas nas bdag tu bzung / yid shed [sic!] kyis sgo snga la phyir bitas nas rigs su bcas [sic!] / de ltar yid gnyis kyi bzung ’dzin ni ’khor ba’i chos dang / bzang ngan gyi ’dzin pa thams cad yid yin la / de las ’das shing mi gnas pa phyag rgya chen po yin no / Unfortunately, both the available editions of Yang dgon pa’s bKa’ ’bum are rife with spelling errors. Many of the works in this collection were committed to writing by Yang dgon pa’s leading disciple, sPyan snga rin chen Idan. The passages pertinent to this essay are particularly problematic because of the transliterations from Sanskrit, a language with which the author, scribe and copyist were probably not too conversant.
Consciousness (*yid shes*)\(^{76}\) looks outward through the five sensory gates, it divides it into the categories [of the life-world] (*rigs su bcad*).\(^{77}\) Hence, all that presents itself as samsara, as the subject object [duality] of the two-fold ego-mind (*yid gnyis*), and all our beliefs in good and evil are what is meant by “ego-mind” (*yid*). To go beyond this and not remain in it is “Mahāmudrā.”

Through a masterful synthesis of the Cittamātra model of consciousness and the Siddha interpretation of *amanasikāra*, Yang dgon pa is able to account for both the genesis and transformation of subject-centered consciousness. The emergence of ego-mind, the sense of ‘self’ through which experience is structured in terms of subject (‘I’) and object (‘mine’) is elaborated according to the Cittamātra notion of an all-pervasive substratum (*kun gzhi*) and its concomitant intentional and reflexive conscious operations. On this account, it would be incorrect to characterize the transcendence of dualistic consciousness in terms of the type of suppression or cessation of mental activity associated with Hva shang. *Yid la mi byed pa* does not imply the suspension of all mental activity but only of those subjectivizing and objectifying operations which concurrently give rise to our hypostatized sense of self and objects.

How then is non-egocentric, selfless experience possible and how is its possibility actualized? Yang dgon pa articulates the Cittamātra eightfold ensemble of consciousness (*rnam shes tshogs brgyad*) as a process of co-constitution, simultaneously constitutive of objects (intentionality) and the subject to whom they belong (reflexivity). We gather from his account that this process of co-constitution actually prescinds from what is non-constitutive, the pre-reflective non-thematized flow of experience. In other words, when the incipient phase of constitution is attended to closely, what is disclosed is not a transcendental subject or foundational presence of any sort, but rather a sheer absence, a non-constitutive, non-subjectivizing experience which makes possible the self-manifesting of dualistic experience. Thus Yang dgon pa can speak of the emergence of the pervasive substratum and its conscious operations as self-effulgence of the

\(^{76}\) The text incorrectly has *yid shed*.

\(^{77}\) The text incorrectly has *rigs su bcas*. 
conceptless and this latter as the intrinsic dynamics (*rang gshis*) of Mahāmudrā. Going beyond subjectivizing experience really means going back before it, but this “going back” is more properly “not dwelling” (*mi gnas*) in it in the first place. What is actually meant by this latter expression is clarified by the author when he returns to the theme of *amanasikāra* in his *Ri chos Yon tan kun ’byung gi lhan thabs chen mo:*78

_Yid la byed pa is amanasikāra in the Sanskrit language. Its meaning may be rendered as ‘not dwelling in ego-mind (*yid la mi gnas pa*)’ ‘the ego-mind not focusing upon [various objects] (*yid la mi byed pa*),’ or ‘free from ego-mind (*yid las grol*).’_

If it had been translated as ‘not dwelling in ego-mind,’ this would have been straightforward. But as it was translated as *yid la mi byed pa,* certain people went somewhat astray. When they said ‘the ego-mind does not focus upon the past, the future or the present,’ ‘the ego-mind’ served as the subject (*yid kyis yul can byas*) and those [three times] served as the object (*de dag gis yul byas*), and then they said that not focusing on them (*de la mi byed pa*) was the ego-mind not focusing upon [objects]. But here, the past, the future, the present, existence, non-existence, samsara and nirvana are all superimpositions of ego-mind (*yid kyi sgro btags pa*), and the point of the above [renderings of _amanasikāra_] is that Mahāmudrā [whether understood as] ‘the ego-mind not focusing upon’ or ‘[one’s] not dwelling in ego-mind’ (*yid la mi byed pa’am mi gnas pa*), is, to put it concisely, not dwelling in existence, non-existence, past, future, samsara or nirvana. Thus the terms "transcending the intellect" (*blo ‘das*), "free from discursive elaborations" (*spros bral*), ‘integration’ (*zung ’jug*), and ‘Mahāmudrā’ (*phyag rgya chen po*) are all synonymous.

78 rGyal ba Yang dgon pa bka’ ’bum (rTa mgo edition), v. 2, 76.4f.: *yid la mi byed ces pa ni / sang kri ta’i skad du na / a ma na sri [sic!] ka ra / de’i don yid la mi gnas pa’am / mi byed pa’am / yid las grol zhes bya ba la ‘jug ste / yid la mi gnas par bsgyur na bde ba la / yid la mi byed pa zhes bsgyur nas / ‘ga’ zhig cung zad nor nas / ’das pa yid la mi byed / ma ’ongs yid la mi byed / da lta ba yid la mi byed ces / yid kyi[s?] yul can byas / de dag gis yul byas / de la mi byed pa la yid la mi byed zer / ’dir ’das pa’am / ma ’ongs pa’am da lta ba’am / yod pa’am / med pa’am / ’khor ba’am / ’das pa’am / de thams cad yid kyi sgro btags pa yin cing / de la phyag rgya chen po yid la mi byed pa’am / mi gnas pa de / mdor na yod med du mi gnas / ’das ma ’ongs la mi gnas / ’khor ’das la mi gnas te / gong ma rnam kyi don no / blo ’das zhes bya / yid la mi byed pa zhes bya / spros bral zhes bya / zung ’jug zhes bya / phyag rgya chen po zhes bya / de thams cad don gcig pa yin //
Not dwelling in ego-mind means *not remaining stuck in constructs of what is itself already a construct*. It is not enough to go about suppressing the subjectivizing or objectifying tendencies of thought while leaving intact the insidious habit of labeling experience and identifying with these labels. It is in and through language that humans constitute themselves as subjects. This is not to say that language causes subjectivity, but only that it determines the sense the experiencer has of being a psychic unity that transcends actual experiences.

Yang dgon pa’s elucidation of *amanasikāra* here brings the deconstructive strategies of Madhyamaka philosophy to bear upon the Cittamātra phenomenology of constitutive experience. This move is not arbitrary, for any attempt to examine the constitutive activity of experience must eventually grapple with the role of language in this activity.79 The emphasis here shifts from what we experience to how we experience what we experience by means of the sedimented cultural-

79 Language plays a central role in self-representation, the construction of an ‘I who’ experiences which lies at the heart of subjectivizing-objectifying awareness. One contribution of recent neurophysiological research has been to elucidate some of the neurological processes at work in the construction of a sense of self. In the words of one neurophysiologist, Sam Harris:

_The sense of self seems to be the product of the brain’s representing its own acts of representation; its seeing of the world begets an image of a one who sees._ It is important to realize that this feeling – the sense that each of us has of appropriating, rather than merely being, a sphere of experience – is not a necessary feature of consciousness. It is, after all, conceivable that a creature could form a representation of the world without forming a representation of itself in the world. And, indeed, many spiritual practitioners claim to experience the world in just this way, perfectly shorn of self.

A basic finding of neurophysiology lends credence to such claims. It is not so much what they *are* but what they *do* that makes neurons see, hear, smell, taste, touch, think, and feel. Like any other function that emerges from the activity of the brain, the feeling of self is best thought of as a process. It is not very surprising, therefore, that we can lose this feeling, because processes, by their very nature, can be interrupted. While the experience of selflessness does not indicate anything about the relationship between consciousness and the physical world (and is thus mute on the question of what happens after death), it has broad implications for the sciences of mind, for our approach to spirituality, and for our conception of human happiness.

linguistic patterns at our disposal. The subject can never be present to himself as a pure prelinguistic subjectivity but only as an emergent centre of operations who is inexorably caught up in the flux of experience and linguistic self-implication. The point of not dwelling in ego-mind is to catch oneself in the act, so to speak, of linguistically implicating oneself as the proprietor of this or that situation as it unfolds. It is in this moment of losing one’s self that the dominative and instrumental deliberations of dualistic thought lose their hold. An account of the contemplative practices for experiencing non-mentation or loss of self obviously falls outside the scope of this preliminary survey. A wide range of Buddhist practices may be said to have amanastikāra as their aim. Thus Yang dgon pa can mention several synonyms of amanastikāra\textsuperscript{80} (see above quotation) deriving from a variety of Buddhist teachings: “Dissociation from discursive elaborations” (spros bral) is a term used in Madhyamaka thought but also constitutes the second of sGam po pa’s four yogas (rnal byor bzhi)\textsuperscript{81} “Transcending the intellect” (blo [las] ’das) constitutes the fourth of Saraha’s four symbol terms (brda bzhi)\textsuperscript{82} and is met with frequently in teachings on Mahāmudrā. “Integration” (zung ’jug) is a term well known in Buddhist Tantrism which refers, in particular, to the indivisibility of insight (prajñā) and action (upāya). “Mahāmudrā” is of course the sine qua non of Tantric and Siddha praxis. Suffice it for the present to close this essay with a passage from Yang dgon pa that indicates how the four yogas facilitate the transformation of egoic mind through the clearing of the eightfold consciousness as anticipated in his account of amanastikāra.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{80} A much longer list of synonyms is given in the Ri chos kyi rnal ’byor bzhi pa Phyag rgya chen po snying po don gyi gter mdzod, 4b2 f.

\textsuperscript{81} Namely, rtse gcig, spros bral, ro gcig, and sgom med. Yang dgon pa diverges from the majority of Tibetan authors on the rNal ’byor bzhi who take pains to establish Indian sources for this doctrine, in the sūtras as well as the tantras. According to Yang dgon pa, “… these teachings on the rNal ’byor bzhi are not actually expressed in the tantra corpus because their content corresponds to things as they are (don ji lta ba). They are therefore special teachings that cannot be compared to the tantra corpus but which represent the doctrine of Dvags po rin po che (i.e., sGam po pa)” (ibid., fol. 2b1 f.).

\textsuperscript{82} See above note 51.

\textsuperscript{83} rGyal ba Yang dgon pa bka’ ‘bum (rTa mgo edition), fol. 8b3f.
The manner in which the presencing of the eight-fold pattern of consciousness (tshogs bskyed) is cleared away (‘dag) in the post-composure awareness (rjes shes) through a deep understanding (rtogs) which is free from the five constituents [that make up an individual] in the composure state (mnyam bzhag) is as follows: During time of single-pointed focusing (rtse gcig), one is free from the constituent of form (gzugs) and the five sensory operations are cleared away. During the time of freedom from discursive elaborations (spros bral), one becomes free from the constituents of feeling (gzhi'i rnam par shes pa) and subjective consciousness (yid shes) is cleared away. During the time of one-flavouredness (ro gcig), one is free from the constituent of motivational tendencies (‘du byed) and the emotionally-tainted subjectivity (nyon mongs pa can gyi yid) is cleared away. During the time of non-meditation (bsgom med), one is free from the constituent of consciousness (rnam par shes pa) and the all-pervasive substratum awareness (kun gzhi'i rnam par shes pa) is cleared away.

**Appendix**

*Phyag chen gan mdzod*, v. 21, p. 38.5f. (cf. n. 33 above)

de yang yid la mi byed pa zhes pa'i don la rnam pa gsum gsungs pa'i dang po /
(1) a ma na si kā ra zhes pa'i si'i ū yig ni / yid la zhes pa'i la yig bdun pa'i don yin / bdun pa 'di la gnas gzhi'i rkyen zhes bya bar sgra'i mdor /

  gang kun nas 'dzin pa de gnas gzhi'o zhes 'byung //

de ltar gnas gzhi can gyi don de thog ma'i a [39] yig gis bkag pas / a ma na si ka ra zhes pa / gang du dmigs pa'i gnas sam rten gzh'i med pa la bya dgos par shes te / sdom 'byung las

  dngos med dngos po la rten nas / brten pa med pa'i bsgom pa bya /

  yid med yid kyi byas nas su / cung zad tsam yang mi bsam mo //

zhes gsungs so / de bas sens byung yid la byed pa'i 'dzin stangs kyi's / dmigs pa la bsgrims nas sens 'dzin dam por byed pa thun mong gi zhi gnas bsgrub pa'i skabs la dgos kyang 'dir de bkag pa yin no / de yang thogs med kyi's / de la 'jog par byed pa dang / yang dag par 'jog par byed pa la mi bsgrims te 'jug pa'i yid la byed pa yod do zhes pa'o //

(2) gnyis pa a ma na si kā ra zhes pa'i bdun pa'i ū de'i skyes bu'i bsdu ba byas nas yid mi byed pa zhes pa / la yig mi mgon par byas pa'i bshad pa gnyis pa mdzod do / de'i don ltar na'ang / yid mi byed pa zhes pa yid kyi las 'dir dgag
byar bzhed pa ste / mgon par /
   yid kyi las gang zhe na / sms pa yid kyi las yin no /
zhes sms byung sms pa’i ’dzin pa’i ’dzin stangs la nan tan du byed pa de [40]
dgag pa’o / sms byung sms pa’ang sms mgon par ’du byed pa’i yid kyi las
te / de nyid du /
dge ba dang mi dge ba lung du ma bstan pa rnam la sms ’jug par byed pa’i
   las can no zhes ba’o / don mgon par ’du byed pa dgag pa’o / nyas pa lnga
   spong ba’i ’du byed brgyad lta bu zhi gnas bsgrub pa la yin gyi / phyag rgya
   chen po la ni byas pa rnam dang bral zhing bsags pa las min
zhes dang /
   nga ni ’gro’ong mi len mi ’dor ro
dang / dgyes rdor las /
   gang phyir yid kyis mi bsgom par /
zhes pas so // des na /
yis kyis de nyid dmigs pa bcas //
zhes yid kyi las su bya ba gang yin thams cad ’dir dmigs pa dang bcas par gzlag
   nas dmigs pa thams cad nye bar zhi ba cig nges par bstan no / des bas na /
   kun tu rtog pas ma btags pa / rab tu mi gnas pa yi yid /
dran pa med cing yid byed min / dmigs pa med la phyag ’tshal ’dud //
ces ston pas gsungs pa de legs par bshad do / dran pa med pa sogs rgyas pa ’og
   tu ’byung ngo /
(3) gsum pa / a ma na si kā ra zhes pa’i a yar bcad nas / a yig skye ba med pa’i
don du [41] byas te / ma na si kā ra yid la byed par bshad do / de ltar na a yig gi
don tshul bzhin du yid la byed pa ni / a yid la byed pa zhes byar te / de yang / bar
   gyi tshig mi mgon par byas pa lo ma la dga’i rgyal po la lo ma’i rgyal po zhes
   pa bzhin no / ’dir a ni shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa’o / a nu tpa ma / a ni ro
dha zhes pa lta bu’i sgo nas / skyed med ’gag med sogs gnyis su med pa’i rnam
   grangs thams cad mtshon nus so / mtshan brjod las /
   a ni yig ’bru kun gyi mchog / don chen yi ge dam pa yin /
kong nas ’byung ba skye ba med //
sogs kyis so / mtshan brjod kyi ’grel chen las /
sngags kyi tshul gyas ni shes rab dang thabs ni gnyis so / de gcig tu gyur pa ni
gnyis su med pa ste / shes rab dang thabs gnyis su med pa bde ba chen po’i
   ngo bo nyid ni gnyis su med pa yin par ’dod de / de las byung ba’o / pha rol
   tu phyin pa’i tshul gyas ni / gzung ba dang ’dzin pa’am / bdag dang bdag
gi’am / shes pa dang shes bya ste / ji srid yid kyi rnam par g.yo ba de srid du gnyis so / g.yo ba de srid du gnyis so / g.yo ba thams cad dang bral zhung / spros pa med pa chos thams cad bdag med pa ni gnyis su [42] med pa’i ngo bo nyid chos nyid kyi bdag nyid can gyi sku ’byung ste / de bas na gnyis su med par ’byung ba’o / gnyis su med par ’byung ba yang mi skye ba’i rnam pas khyad par du dbye ba’i phyir / mi skye’i chos can zhes bya ba smos te zhes gsungs pa’o // de lta bu’i don gyis yid la mi byed pa ston pas yid la mi byed pa’i chos skor zhes bya’o / de thams cad slob dpon nges par sbyangs pa gnyis su med pa’i rdo rje zhes sam / grub pa’i slob dpon chen po mnga’ bdag Mai tri pas mdzad pa’o //

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