

# Shākya mchog ldan's Contribution to the Study of *pramāṇa*

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## 1 Introduction

In the eighth century, during the reign of the thirty-second king of Tibet, Khri srong lde btsan (d. 797), the translators such as Dharmāloka (8th cent.) and Ska ba dpal brtsegs (9th cent.) began translating important Sanskrit works on *pramāṇa* such as *Hetucakraḍamaru*, *Sambandhaparīkṣāvṛtti*, and *Samtānāntarasiddhi*.<sup>1</sup> In India, the study of *pramāṇa* was already well-established, and formed an integral part of the philosophical basis of India's major religions at the time. Although these early translations established favorable conditions for the study of *pramāṇa*, or *tshad ma*, in Tibet, they did not result in immediate interest.

In Tibet, the study of *pramāṇa* did not begin in earnest until the eleventh century, when Rngog blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109) composed a commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* and promoted teaching of the text in Gsang phu Monastery.<sup>2</sup> In the subsequent century, further progress was made in laying the foundations of *pramāṇa* studies with Sa skya paṇḍita's (1182–1251) revision of Rma dge ba'i blo gros's translation of the *Pramāṇavārttika* as well as his composition of the *Tshad ma rigs gter*, a text consisting of essential points found in the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and the *Pramāṇavārttika*.

Of all the Tibetan scholars who would take up the study of *pramāṇa* in the years to come, Shākya mchog ldan was undoubtedly one of the most important. He was born in 1428, at a time when the education of the *Pramāṇavārttika* and *Pramāṇaviniścaya* had already become widespread in monastic universities in Tibet. During his lifetime, Shākya mchog ldan came to be considered as a master of refutation. His style of refutation exerted a profound influence on the Sa skya pa's scholastic tradition. He composed works on *pramāṇa* that would later become cornerstones within the Sa skya pa's *pramāṇa* tradition. He was also instrumental in establishing formalized *pramāṇa* studies in a number of famous monasteries.

Traditional biographies tell us that Shākya mchog ldan's contribution to the study of *pramāṇa* was enormous. However, his life related to *pramāṇa* study and *pramāṇa* works remain a fairly under-researched topic. Therefore, the present paper aims to clarify Shākya mchog ldan's early life in connection with his *pramāṇa* study, his teachings on the Indo-Tibetan *pramāṇa* works, and his own works on *pramāṇa*.

## 2 Textual Sources

There are several textual sources concerning Shākya mchog ldan's life and his works.

1. Ngor chen kun dga' lhun grub (1497–1557): *Ngor chos 'byung*.

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<sup>1</sup>Dignāga's *Hetucakraḍamaru* was translated by Bodhisattva and Dharmāloka (Tohoku no. 4209). Dharmakīrti's *Sambandhaparīkṣāvṛtti* was translated by Viśuddhasimha and Dpal brtsegs (Tohoku no. 4215), and his *Samtānāntarasiddhi* was translated by Śuddhasimha and Dpal brtsegs (Tohoku no. 4219).

<sup>2</sup>Gsang phu Monastery was founded by Rngog lo tsā ba legs ba'i shes rab in 1073. It is currently located in Stod lung bde chen district of the Tibetan Autonomous region.

2. Shākya rgyal mtshan (15th cent.): *Paṅ chen shākya mchog ldan gyi rnam thar bad ma dkar po'i phreng pa.*
3. Kun dga' grol mchog (1507–1566): *Paṅdita shākya mchog ldan gyi rnam par thar pa zhib mo rnam 'byed.*
4. Mang thos klu sgrub rgya mtsho (1523–1596): *Bstan rtsis chos 'byung gsal ba'i nyin byed.*
5. Si ti paṅ chen chos kyi 'byung gnas (1700–1774): *Bka' brgyud gser phreng.*
6. Shākya rin chen (1710–1759): *Gangs can gyi shing rta chen po dpal shākya mchog ldan gyi rnam par thar pa thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed.*

What is of most importance is Kun dga' grol mchog's work as it offers the most extensive account of Shākya mchog ldan's life. It is known that Kun dga' grol mchog composed this biography on the basis of three earlier biographies written by the direct disciples of Shākya mchog ldan: Blo gros bzang po, Rdo rje rgyal po, and Shākya rgyal mtshan, of which only the one by Shākya rgyal mtshan is extant. It is also known that Kun dga' grol mchog's work was composed on the basis of oral accounts given by some of his teachers who had been students of Shākya mchog ldan.

Furthermore, short sketches taken from these traditional sources are written by contemporary scholars:

1. Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1933–2015): *Paṅ chen shākya mchog ldan gyi gsungs rab par du bskrun pa'i tshul las brtsam pa'i gleng ba.*
2. Shākya bstan 'phel [ed.] (b. 1983): *Dpal thub bstan gser mdog can gyi gnas yig.*

So far, Shākya mchog ldan's life has been studied by Komarovski 2011 and Caumanns 2017, both of which seem to be based exclusively on the biographies written by Kun dga' grol mchog and Shākya rin chen.

### 3 Early Life and Study

Shākya mchog ldan is one of the most important figures in the Sa skya pa's lineage, known as one of the “renowned nine ornaments of Tibet” (*gangs can mdzes ba'i rgyan dgu*).<sup>3</sup> He was born in 1428 at Gsang mda' bang rim, in the vicinity of Gsang phu ne'u thog Monastery. His mother had been formerly been a nun at Spang kha chos sdings, a monastery founded by Dge bshes spyang lung pa in the 12th century, currently located in the Lhun 'grub district of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. In his biography of Shākya mchog ldan, Kun dga' grol mchog states:

“According to the monks at Skyor mo lung Monastery,<sup>4</sup> [his mother] was named Shākya bu 'dren before entering the gate of Dharma, and named Shākya mdzes after her initiation into religious life at Dga' ldan phug pa.<sup>5</sup> Later, after she became fully ordained as a nun at the Zhi byed school (*zhes*

<sup>3</sup>The nine ornaments of Tibet include three experts on sūtra: *g-yag gzhon rong gsum* (G-yag ston sangs rgyas dpal [1350–1414], Red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros [1349–1412], and Rong ston shes bya kun rig [1367–1449]), three experts on tantra: *ngor rdzong tshar gsum* (Ngor chen kun dga' bzang po [1382–1456], Rdzong ba kun dga' rgyal mtshan [1382–1446], and Tshar chen blo bzang rgya mtsho [1495–1566]), and three experts on both sūtra and tantra: *go shag stag gsum* (Go rams pa bsod nams seng ge [1429–1489], Shākya mchog ldan [1428–1507], and Stag tshang lo tsā ba shes rab rin chen [1405–?]).

<sup>4</sup>A monastery founded by Khu ston brtson 'grus dbang phyug in the 11th century, currently located in the Stod lung bde chen district of the Tibetan Autonomous region.

<sup>5</sup>A name of a meditation-cave near the Gsang phu Monastery.

*byed > zhi byed*), she was given the name Shākya bzang mo, taken from her teacher's name, Sangs rgyas bzang bo."<sup>6</sup>

The identity of Shākya mchog ldan's father is unclear, but there are three theories transmitted by an oral tradition. The first theory posits that his father was a local ruler (*sa gnas dpon po*) named Nam mkha' dpal 'bar. The second theory says that his father was a spiritual master named Dbal ldan bzang from Gsang phu Monastery. The third theory holds that his father was Bsod nams blo gros, a legendary scholar of linguistics (*tha snyad rig gnas*). At any rate, Kun dga' grol mchog says:

"His mother entrusted [Shākya mchog ldan] to a nun named Bsam 'grub bu 'dren ma, who was her relative and her spiritual companion, from Spang kha chos sding Monastery, and ended her own life when he was three years old."<sup>7</sup>

Because Shākya mchog ldan's mother had been a nun, and because he was later adopted by a relative who was also a nun, his exposure to the monastic education, which he would continue throughout his life, started quite early. He is reported to have received a Hayagrīva blessing and the name Rta mgrin mgon po from a local practitioner of Mantra (*sngags pa*) named Rta mgrin yang dag grub pa. In 1437, he was ordained by the highly influential Sa skya scholar Rong ston shes bya kun rig (1367–1449) at Shel drung Monastery, where he was given the name for which he is known today, Shākya mchog ldan.

According to his biographies, Shākya mchog ldan studied under more than forty spiritual masters. In 1435, he began learning to read while living with his uncle, Don grub dpal, who belonged to Khams pa College (*grwa tshang*) at Spang kha chos sding Monastery. It was during this time that another teacher from the same monastery began instructing him in *pramāṇa*. Shākya rin chen states thus:

"Because his teacher Don grub dpal<sup>8</sup> was a disciple of Rong ston shes bya kun rig, [Shākya mchog ldan] prostrated himself before the spiritual master and head of the 'Ga' khang College, Bsod nams tshul khriims, and received instructions on the memorandum on academic debate (*grwa skor gyi zin thun*) studied by novice disciples."<sup>9</sup>

This account shows that Bsod nams tshul khriims was Shākya mchog ldan's first teacher of *pramāṇa*. It is also reported that, before reaching the age of ten, Shākya mchog ldan appealed to the great abbot Chos rgyal bzang po to join the debate examination in Skyor mo lung, but was not accepted owing to the fact that he was a member of a different college at the time. This highlights Shākya mchog ldan's early fascination with philosophy and debate prior to becoming a fully ordained monk.

In the summer of 1437, Rong ston shes bya kun rig entrusted Shākya mchog ldan's studies to his student, Don yod dpal ba, at Gsang phu ne'u thog. Shākya mchog ldan then entered Gnas sgo College, which was temporarily under the direction of the great abbot Nyi ma. There he learned primary

<sup>6</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 9a7ff.: *skyor mo lung tshor zhib tu dris gtugs byas pas | yum chos sgor ma zhugs skabs kyi mtshan Shākya bu 'dren dang | dga' ldan phug par bstan ba'i sgor byon pa'i mtshan la Shākya mdzes bya | phyis sgo yab lugs kyi zhes byed dge slong ma mdzad dus Shākya bzang mo ste | Mkhan po sangs rgyas bzang bo'i mtshan nas gras gnang ba yin zhes gleng la [...]* |

<sup>7</sup>*Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed* 5b3ff.: *spang kha chos sding kyi btsun ma yum rang gi gnyen 'brel du gyur cing | chos dnag dam tshig gis 'brel ba'i a ne bsam grub bu 'dren ma bya ba zhig la yongs su gtad* |

<sup>8</sup>Don yod dpal (1398–1484) was a student of Rong ston shes bya kun rig. He was a preceptor of Gnas sgo college at Gsang phu monastery prior to Shākya mchog ldan.

<sup>9</sup>*Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed* 8a1ff.: *rje de nyid kyi slob dpon dge ba'i bshes gnyen pa de ni | rje rong ston chen bo'i zhal slob tu 'dug pa'i mos zhen gyis 'Ga' khang grwa tshang ba'i slob dpon bsod nams tshul khriims zhes bya ba'i drung nyid du phyag stob pa dang | blo gsar grwa skor gyi zin thun zhal slob len pa sogs rgyun ldan du gnang zhig skad do ||*

subjects such as the synoptic memorandum (*sdom gyis ston pa zin thun*), argumentation (*rtags sbyor*), and consequences (*thal 'gyur*) from the collected topics (*bsdus grwa*). He memorized many of Don yod dpal ba's oral teachings on *pramāṇa* and Rong ston shes bya kun rig's commentaries on *prajñāpāramitā* literature (*phar phyin*). In 1438, Shākya mchog ldan accompanied his master Don yod dpal ba to Na len dra Monastery,<sup>10</sup> where he continued his study of *pramāṇa* under Rong ston shes bya kun rig. Kun dga' grol mchog says:

“[Shākya mchog ldan] received the immaculate current of explanations (*bshad rgyun dri ma med pa dag*), as if filling a vase to the brim, which the master [Rong ston shes bya kun rig] learned directly from the great abbot G-yag pa [who learned] from the uninterrupted oral tradition, which is cherished by Sa skya paṇḍita with elegant teachings (*legs bshad*) of Indian scholars, such as Dignāga's sūtra [namely, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*] and the commentarial works revealing its intention like the seven treatises on epistemology (*tshad ma sde bdun*) authored by Dharmakīrti, [the doctrine of which] is originated by Dignāga—or, alternatively, [transmitted by] Dignāga who directly learned from Mañjuśrī—who got an instruction from the master Vasubandhu, who studied under the Arhat Dharmapāla (*dgra bcom pa chos skyobs*), [who again studied under] the Arhat Me wañ gha [*sic.*] (*dgra bcom pa me wañ gha*), [who got an instruction] from Śākyamuni.”<sup>11</sup>

Shākya mchog ldan used to partake in debates on *prajñāpāramitā* and *pramāṇa* in Gsang phu at the age of twenty. During the summer retreat of 1439, he passed an examination on such topics as *prajñāpāramitā*, *pramāṇa*, and so forth. It is said thus:

“The abbot was so excited by [what was going on in the lower part of the monastery] that, after the novices finished their demonstrations, he held a feast of tea and cane sugar for [Shākya mchog ldan] and his preceptor. [During the festivities] he jokingly said: ‘You [i.e., Shākya mchog ldan] are intelligent and boastful’.”<sup>12</sup>

The abbot's comment provides an insight into Shākya mchog ldan's confidence and prowess in debate at the mere age of twenty. Shākya mchog ldan was also a student of Sangs rgyas chos skyong, the successor to Rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab's monastic seat, under whom he studied Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, Rong ston shes bya kun rig's commentary on *prajñāpāramitā*, Phywa pa chos kyi seng ge's *Tshad ma yid kyi min sel*, and such topics as typology of inferential signs (*rtags rigs*), typology of awareness (*blo rigs*), and consequences (*thal 'gyur*). According to Kun dga' grol mchog, at that time when he was studying at Gsang phu, Shākya mchog ldan requested the master Grags pa bkra shis to instruct him on Phywa pa chos kyi seng ge's *Tshad ma yid kyi min sel* in particular. Shākya rin chen also gives a similar report in his version of Shākya mchog dan's biography. It is thus evident that Shākya

<sup>10</sup>A monastery founded by Rong ston shes bya kun rig in 1435, currently located in the Lhun grub district of the Tibet Autonomous region.

<sup>11</sup>*Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed* 15a5ff.: *thub pa'i dbang pos dgra bcom pa me wañ gha | dgra bcom pa chos skyobs | de las slob dpon dbyig gnyen gyis gsan nas dpal phyogs kyi glang po gnang ba'am | gzhan du na rje btsun 'jam pa'i dbyangs las phyogs kyi glang pos dngos su gsan par grags ba'i tshad ma sde bdun mdo dang de'i dngongs 'grel | dpal chos kyi grags pas mdzad pa'i tshad ma sde bdun | rgya gar gyi mkhas pa du ma'i legs bshad sa skya paṇḍitas rtsal du bton pa'i ngag rgyun ma nyams pas mkhan chen g-yag pa las rje nyid kiyis dngos su gsan ba'i bshad rgyun dri ma med pa dag bum pa gang byor nod cing [...]* |

<sup>12</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 22b2ff.: *gling smad nas mkhan po'i drung thugs lhag par mnyes te | bshad gsar gyi gral grol rjes nyid slob dpon dang bcas pa la ja dang bu ram gyi ston mo rgya cher gzabs nas gnang zhing | rje de nyid la zhal dkar du khyed shes rab yangs shing kha bo che ba snang ngo ||*

mchog ldan received instruction in both Sa skya paṇḍita's *pramāṇa* doctrine and Rngog lo tsā ba's in his youth.

In 1440, Shākya mchog ldan was ordained as a novice monk and was given a second name, Dri med legs pa'i blo gros, at Na len dra Monastery. From 1440 to 1443, at the age of thirteen to fifteen, he studied different topics during his journeys to monastic universities such as Na len dra, Glang thang<sup>13</sup> Gsang phu Ne'u thog, and Tshal chos 'khor; but the details of his study of *pramāṇa* at this period remain unclear. In the spring of 1443, he received teachings on the *Abhidharmakośa* at Skyor mo lung Monastery under the abbot 'Ga' khang ba. It is reported thus:

“At the age of seventeen, he returned to Gsang phu College and received Don yod dpal ba's teachings on the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*. At that time, every evening he questioned the meaning of every word of the text, and [Don yod dpal ba] had to respond that. This became irritating for Don yod dpal ba, who said: ‘No one used to inquire so particularly. What I received from Rong ston is only this’.”<sup>14</sup>

During the summer retreat of 1446, Shākya mchog ldan studied the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* again, this time under Bzod pa blo gros rgya mtsho. In the summer of 1450, at the age of twenty-three, he traveled to Na len dra where he continued to study such topics as *prajñāpāramitā*, *pramāṇa*, *vinaya*, and *abhidharma*, under the guidance of Rong ston. In 1452, the occasion of his *dge slong* (*upasampadā*) ordination was obtained at Ngor Monastery.<sup>15</sup> Shākya rin chen states as follows:

“On the new year's day, when the Great Being [Shākya mchog ldan] arrived at the age of twenty-five, he thought in mind that it would be nice if he could obtain the *dge slong* (*upasampadā*) ordination. He humbly requested it to the Great Being [Ngor pa kun dga' bzang po], who happily accepted it.”<sup>16</sup>

In 1453, after the winter session of teachings at Gsang phu Monastery, Shākya mchog ldan traveled to Grwa thang Monastery<sup>17</sup> and requested teachings from the master Dge ba rgyal mtshan pa on both the autocommentary on the *Rig gter* and 'U yug pa rig pa'i seng ge's (d. 1253) commentary on the *Pramāṇavārttika*. His request was approved, and until the age of twenty-seven, he obtained a series of teachings on *pramāṇa*. In 1458, a number of his students accompanied him to Sa skya Monastery to take a debate examination. As is clear from his biographies, Shākya mchog ldan successfully passed the debate examination. As is typical in the Tibetan scholastic tradition, Shākya mchog ldan did not terminate his studies even at an advanced age, and pursued life-long study with various teachers until his death in 1507.

<sup>13</sup>A monastery founded by Glang thang pa rdo rje seng ge in 1093, located in Lhun grub district of the Tibetan Autonomous region.

<sup>14</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 16b3f.: *dgung lo bcu bdun du pebs tshe | slar gsang ne'u thog gi bshad grwa nyid du byon te | rje don yod dpal ba las | mngon pa kun btus kyi bshad pa gsan zhing | de skabs dgongs re bzhin gzhung tshig re re nas dri ba zhus pa'i lan gnang dgos byung bas snyan gtse | rje don yod dpal pa'i bka' lung la | nyid de ba 'di 'dra'i zhib dpyod ni sngon chad ni 'dri mi ma byung | rang res rong ston chen po'i spyang sngar yang | gzhung tshig la 'bri gnyer ba'i bshad pa de tsam las ma thos |*

<sup>15</sup>A monastery founded by Ngor ba kun dga' bzang po in 1429, located in Gzhis ka rtse of the Tibetan Autonomous region. The full name of the monastery is Ngor e wañ chos ldan.

<sup>16</sup>*Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed* 47a3f.: *der rje bdag nyid chen po dgung lo nyer lngar pebs pa'i gnam lo gсар tshes kyi skabs thugs dgongs la | da ni snyen par rdzogs pa dge slong gi dngos po yang myur du thob na ci ma rung snyam | chos rje rdo rje 'chang chen po la gsol ba btap pas | dgyes pa'i zhal 'dzum zla ba ltar dkar bas zhal kyi bzhes |*

<sup>17</sup>A monastery founded by Grwa pa mngon shes in 1081. It is currently located in Lho kha state of the Tibet Autonomous region.

#### 4 Contributions to the Spread of *pramāṇa*

According to Shākya mchog ldan's biographies and other relevant histories, his activities of teaching began at the age of eight. Shākya rin chen says as follows:

“At the age of fourteen, [Shākya mchog ldan] taught the *Tshad ma rig gter* and *Abhidharmakośa* to Nam mkha' seng ge from Mnga' ris and a one-eyed scholar (*dge bshes bspyan gcig pa*) from the east Rgyal mo rong, making [Shākya mchog ldan] a master to whom other scholars asked the meanings of texts.”<sup>18</sup>

Volker Caumanns also states as follows:

“A recurring fact of Shākya mchog ldan's life is simply that he was a teacher of some of these schools, thus taking responsibility not only for the education of the monks but also for the continuity of the institution as a whole.” (Caumanns 2013: 66)

Shākya mchog ldan is reported to have been called “Infant Master” (*slob dpon bu chung*)<sup>19</sup> and to have been carried on the shoulders of his students and peers to the throne at Gsang phu ne'u thog.

In 1445, at the age of eighteen, Shākya mchog ldan became a tutor at Gsang phu Monastery and gave lectures to many scholars including Gur na rams 'byams pa phyogs las rnam rgyal. In the spring of 1446, he travelled to 'Phreng phur Monastery in Lha sa, and on that occasion, he gave a lecture on Sa skya paṇḍita's *Rigs gter* and Phywa pa chos kyi seng ge's *Tshad ma yid kyi min sel* as well. Gdong thog pa bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan reports the following things:

“At age of nineteen, in the male fire tiger year, he was appointed as a spiritual master at Gnas sgo College, Don yod dpal ba's monastic seat, and conducted a class.”<sup>20</sup>

During the summer retreat of 1447, Shākya mchog ldan joined his students in debate at Gsang phu Monastery. At that time, he promised that, whether he were to take the position of a proponent (*snga rgol*) or opponent (*phyi rgol*), there would be no one who could defeat him among all the learned scholars of *pramāṇa* and *madhyamaka*. From 1447 to 1458, Shākya mchog ldan determined not to remain at Gnas sgo College of Gsang phu Monastery, and journeyed with his followers to monasteries across central Tibet, receiving teachings and instructing others when requested. During these eleven years, his recorded travels are as follows:

Year	Age	Dharma Session	Place
1448	21	Summer retreat	?
1448	21	Winter session	?
1449	22	Summer retreat	Snye thang
1449	22	Winter session	?
1450	23	Summer retreat	Nalendra monastery

<sup>18</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 26b4ff.: *dgung lo bcu bzhir phebs pa'i skabs de dag gi tshe | mag' ris pa nam mkh' seng ge bya ba dang | shar rgyal mo rung ba'i dge bshes spyang gcig pa bya ba knyis la tshad ma rigs gter dang | mngon pa mdzod kyi gzhung bshad dpyis phyin pa mdzud khrid du legs par gnang zhing | dge bshes gzhan dag gi tshad ma sogs gzhung chos ma 'khyor ba kun gyi 'dri sa yang byed pas slob dpon gyi gnas su gyur |*

<sup>19</sup>Komarovski translates *slob dpon bu chung* as “master kid” (Komarovski 2011: 28).

<sup>20</sup>*Gsung rab par du bskrun pa'i tshul* 7.8f.: *dgung lo bcu dgu ba me pho rtag lo rje don yod dpal ba'i gdan sa gnas sgo grwa tshang gi slob dpon du mnga' gsol nas 'dzin bdag gnang |*

1450	23	Winter session	?
1451	24	Summer retreat	?
1451	24	Winter session	?
1452	25	Summer retreat	Gsang phu Monastery
1452	25	Winter session	Gsang phu Monastery
1453	26	Summer retreat	Gsang phu Monastery
1453	26	Winter session	?
1454	27	Summer retreat	Gsang phu Monastery
1454	27	Winter session	On the road to Gtsang
1455	28	Summer retreat	Sa skya Monastery
1455	28	Winter session	On the way back to Gsang phu
1456	29	Summer retreat	Gsang phu Monastery
1456	29	Winter session	?
1457	30	Summer retreat	Gsang phu Monastery
1457	30	Winter session	Gsang phu Monastery
1458	31	Summer retreat	?
1458	31	Winter session	?

It can be seen from the table above that, after becoming a spiritual master at Gnas sgo College at the age of nineteen, Shākya mchog ldan participated in a great number of summer and winter retreats at Gsang phu Monastery with his students. In particular, for six years from 1459 to 1464, he took part in all the summer and winter retreats at Gsang phu Monastery, as is attested by the following statement by Shākya rin chen:

“At the age of thirty-two, [Shākya mchog ldan] came to Glang thang Monastery. From that time on, he uninterruptedly joined the summer retreats and winter retreats at Gsang phu Monastery until the age of thirty-seven.”<sup>21</sup>

It is also clear from the biography written by Shākya rgyal mtshan that Shākya mchog ldan joined the summer and winter retreats at Gsang phu Monastery in 1465, although his participation in the retreat in the subsequent years is unknown.

In 1467, at the age of forty, Shākya mchog ldan placed his crown on the head of his student, a logician named Khra phu ba sangs rgyas bzang po, during a coronation in which he entrusted Khra pu ba with his remaining students. Having passed a great bulk of his duties at Gsang phu to the successor, Shākya mchog ldan was free to make two trips to Gtsang area, but it remains unknown where he taught and in which retreats he partook from 1468 to 1470. In the first Hor month (*hor zla dang po*) of 1471, he arrived to Don yod dpal ba's monastic school at Zi lung and transformed it into a full-fledged monastery in compliance with the *vinaya* standards, bestowing it with the name Thub bstan gser mdog can.

In 1472, Shākya mchog ldan travelled to Rnam rgyal chos sde, in Mnga' ris glo bo area, where he stayed for three years teaching three hundred of his followers and five hundred native monks. The topics he taught during that time is found in the following statement:

“In accordance with what is clearly prescribed in the code (*bca' yig*) of Rnam rgyal chos sde, [he gave lectures on] *prajñāpāramitā*, *pramāṇa*, and the *Abhidharmakośa* on the basis of Rong ston's commentaries; and [he also taught] the *Tshad ma rig gter* on the basis of G-yag ston's commentary (*sbyor ſīk*).”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed 81b2f.: *dgung lo so gnyis bzhes pa'i dus der glang thang du phebs* | [...] *dus skabs de nas brsams dgung lo so bdun gyi bar du phu'i dbyar chos dgung chos gnyis la chag med phebs* |

<sup>22</sup>Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed 8b3f.: *rnam rgyal chos sde'i bca' yig tu bkod pa snang ba ltar* | *phar phyin*

In 1475, the last year spent in Glo bo, native monks and Shākya mchog ldan's followers assembled in Rnam rgyal chos sde to take a debate-examination on the scriptures they had learned for three years. Beginners showed much improvement and many obtained the higher Geshe degree (*dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen po*). In the years to come, Shākya mchog ldan would remain highly involved with Gser mdog can Monastery. In 1476, Shākya mchog ldan returned to Gser mdog can Monastery to restore the summer retreat, which had waned in his absence. On the return journey, he met the great abbot Sbo ra 'jigs med grags pa at Ngam ring Monastic College.<sup>23</sup>

“Since it was the occasion of summer retreat, intelligent scholars dedicated the offering of discussions by reasoning and scriptures, which made [Shākya mchog ldan] delighted. The great abbot [Sbo ra 'jigs med grags ba] also held various discussions on many approaches of questions of the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* and *Rigs gter*.”<sup>24</sup>

In 1478, Shākya mchog ldan travelled to central Tibet at the request of Spyan snga blo gros rgyal mtshan. Then he and his disciples (*dpon slob*) went to Rgya ma Monastic College.<sup>25</sup> During that time, assemblages of great scholar-monks held a series of debates, resulting in the establishment of a debate school (*rtsod grwa*). The following summer was spent in Glang thang. When Shākya mchog ldan finally returned to Gser mdog can later that year, he created regulations for education for three terms, namely, winter term, spring term, and summer term. Shākya rgyal mtshan says as follows:

“Furthermore, the regulations for the study of Dharma (*chos kyi sgrigs*) in the monastic university [of Gser mdog can] were as follows: In winter, from the *smal zla* month (the eleventh month of Hor month) to the *rta* month (the first Hor month), the *prajñāpāramitā* and either of the higher or lower Abhidharma [namely, the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* or *Abhidharmakośa*] were to be taught. During the spring term in the *dbo* month (from the sixteenth day of the first Hor month to the fifteenth day of the second Hor month) and *nag pa* month (from the sixteenth day of the second Hor month to the fifteenth day of the third Hor month), the *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* and *Madhyamakāvātāra* were to be taught. Poṣadha (*gso sbyong*) and preparation for summer retreat were on the fifteenth day of *snron* month (the sixteenth day of the fourth Hor month to the fifteenth day of fifth Hor month); and the summer retreat was proposed on the sixteenth day of the *snron* month (*mar ngo'i dga' ba dang po*), during which he used to instruct *vinaya* and *pramāṇa* thoroughly.”<sup>26</sup>

This structure remained in the Gser mdog can Monastery throughout Shākya mchog ldan's life and after his death. Shākya rin chen states:

*dang tshad ma mngon pa mdzod rnams rong ston thams cad mkhyen pa'i ṭika'i thog nas dang | tshad ma rigs gter g-yag mi pham chos kyi bla mas mdzad pa'i sbyor ṭik dang |*

<sup>23</sup>The full name of this monastery is Ngam ring chos dga' ldan bshad sgrub 'phel rgyas gling. The monastery was founded by Shākya seng ge in 1225. It is currently located in the Gzhis ka rtse district of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

<sup>24</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 60b2f.: *de skabs dbyar chos kyi sgang du snang bas bshes gnyen blo gsal ba mang pos rigs lung 'bel gtam gyi mchod pas mnyes par byas shing | mkhan chen pa nas sdom gsum gyi dang rigs gter gyi dri ba las brtsams pa'i 'bel gtam yang sgo du ma nas mdzad do ||*

<sup>25</sup>Rgya ma rin chen sgang Monastery was founded by Dbyer sgom pa gzhon nu grags pa in 1119, currently located in Mal gro gung dkar district of the Tibetan Autonomous region.

<sup>26</sup>*Pad ma dkar po'i phreng ba* 46a1ff.: *de'ang chos kyi grwa chen po 'di nyid kyi chos kyi sgrigs ni | dgun smal po'i zla ba nas rta zla'i bar | phar phyin dang | mngon pa gong 'og gang yang rung ba tshar re rdzogs par gsung | dbo dang nag pa zla ba la dpyid chos ring | dbu ma rtsa 'jug rdzogs pa re gsungs zhing | snron gyi zla ba'i yar ngo'i bcu lnga la gso sbyon dang | dbyar gnas kyi sbyor ba mdzad | mar ngo'i dga' ba dang po la | dbyar gnas par zhal gyi bzhes nas 'dul ba dang tshad ma rdzogs par gsungs ba yin no ||*

“Thus, he determined the regulations for the study of Dharma (*chos kyi sgrigs srol*). In particular, according to each [student's] aptitude, he tirelessly gave lectures on general outlines (*spyi ṭīk*) and detailed commentaries (*yan lag rgyas bshad*) on *prajñāpāramitā* and *pramāṇa* commentaries, [and he also gave lectures on] the seventy topics (*don bdun cu*), typology of reasons (*rtags rigs*), typology of awareness (*blo rigs*), the secondary topics (*thal phreng*) related to *prajñāpāramitā* and *pramāṇa*, as well as the ordinary memorandum (*thun mong zin thun*) that contains the enumeration of practices [in the *Abhisamayālamkāra*] (*sbyor ba brtsi ba*).”<sup>27</sup>

During their trip to central Tibet, Shākya mchog ldan and his followers were invited to Rgya ma to hold a summer retreat. Meanwhile, Dharma assemblies (*chos grwa*) were also held until the end of that summer retreat. When Shākya mchog ldan returned to Gser mdog can in winter, he proceeded to hold winter retreat. While working on expanding the monastery, he continued lecturing and studying texts for the next four years. In 1488 at the age of sixty-one, he composed a commentary on the *Pramāṇavārttika*, entitled *Rnam 'grel 'grel ba kun bzang rol mtsho*, and gave daily teachings on this text.

“Then, [the Lord Shākya mchog ldan] said: ‘To this day, I have given oral teachings on Rong ston's commentary on the *prajñāpāramitā* and Don yod dpal ba's commentary on the *Pramāṇa[-vārttika]* more than fifty times’. But from that time, he taught [the *Pramāṇavārttika*] only on the basis of his extensive commentary, *Kun bzang rol mtsho*.”<sup>28</sup>

In 1490, Shākya mchog ldan stayed at Rgya ma Monastery for two months, increasing the monastery's overall level of scholastic education, especially focusing on Dharma assemblies. Then, during the winter retreat of the same year, he journeyed to Na len dra Monastery, where his monk-followers established a class for debate (*rigs lung*). Upon his return to Gser mdog can at the age of sixty-four, he renovated the monastery's exterior and continued to give teachings.

In 1494, a monk official (*las sne*) of Gser mdog can Monastery notified every monk to attend Shākya mchog ldan's teaching. Approximately 8,800 monks attended his teaching from the first to the twentieth of the first Hor month of the year 1495, when Shākya mchog ldan was sixty-eight. According to Kun dga' grol mchog and Shākya rgyal mtshan, the program of the first nine days of his teaching was as follows:

Day	Subject
First day	<i>Pramāṇasamuccaya</i> and <i>Pramāṇavārttika</i>
Second day	<i>Rigs gter</i>
Third day	<i>Vinayasūtra</i>
Fourth day	<i>Vinayasūtra</i>
Fifth day	<i>Abhidharmakośa</i>
Sixth day	<i>Abhidharmasamuccaya</i>
Seventh day	<i>Mūlamadhyamakakārikā</i>
Eighth day	Five Treatises of Maitreya
Ninth day	<i>Hevajratāntra</i>

<sup>27</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 134b5ff.: *de ltar spyir chos kyi sgrigs srol nges pa can du mdzad cing | sgos su yang rang rang gi blo tshod dang bstun pa'i phar phyin dang tshad ma'i spyi ṭīk yan lag rgyas bshad | don bdun cu | rtags rigs | blo rigs | phar tshad so so'i thal 'phreng | thun mong zin thun sbyor ba brtsi ba'i bar thugs sun pa med pa zhal slob gnang |*

<sup>28</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 157a7ff.: *der bka' las | phar phyin rong ṭīk dang | rje don yod dpal ba'i tshad ma'i ṭī ka gnyis rang res de snga yan la tshar lnga bcu lhag re lce thog nas song yod do zhes gsungs nas | de phyin tshad ma'i 'grel chen kun bzang rol mtsho nyid kyi steng nas gnang bar mdzad |*

From the tenth day to the fifteenth days of the teaching, congregations of monks discussed appropriate subjects (*skabs babs sbyong bya*) of their own choice. From the sixteenth to the twentieth days, Shākya mchog ldan gave teachings on *pramāṇa* and *madhyamaka* to masters from across the Tibetan plateau. Days were spent for lectures, and nights were spent for debating.

At the age of seventy, Shākya mchog ldan traveled to Glang thang Monastery to participate in the summer retreat. Then, in 1502, Shākya mchog ldan visited central Tibet at the behest of Karma chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506), who requested Shākya mchog ldan, the great master of Gnas sgo, to write a history of the development of *pramāṇa* and *madhyamaka* in Tibet. They met again in Rin spung after the summer retreat of the following year.

“The great being [Shākya mchog ldan] served as a referee of the debate of the monks skilled in expounding scripture and logic [coming] from various monasteries, gathered like an ocean. The victorious lord [Karma pa chos grags rgya mtsho] bestowed [to him and his students] a book of the treatise, *Tshad ma'i rigs gzhung rgya mtsho*, written by the lord himself, and they spent several days only discussing the topics taken from the *Rigs gzhung rgya mtsho*.”<sup>29</sup>

During this time, Shākya mchog ldan's histories of *pramāṇa* and *madhyamaka* were also discussed. Shortly before his death in 1507, Shākya mchog ldan gave instructions on the *Pramāṇavārttika* together with his own commentary on the first chapter, *Kun bzang rol mtsho*,<sup>30</sup> to his students as requested by the Lord Kun dga' rgyal mtshan in Gser mdog can. This was the last teaching of Shākya mchog ldan, given at the monastic seat where he had enacted more than thirty years of religious regulations. Biographers stresses that, during Shākya mchog ldan's teachings at Gser mdog can, two thousand monks increased to eight thousand. This implies that Shākya mchog ldan's teachings at Gser mdog contributed to establishing the monastery as a center for studying *pramāṇa* at that period.

## 5 Works on *pramāṇa*

Shākya mchog ldan's collected works (*gsung 'bum*) comprises twenty-four volumes, which are included within the eighteen renowned scriptures (*grags chen bco brgyad*) of the Sa skya pa school. Amongst these scriptures, there are nine major works on *pramāṇa*, which are mentioned in the catalogue (*dkar chag*) of the collected works as well as in the biographies. During the summer retreat of 1473 in Mnga' ris area, Shākya mchog ldan composed a commentary on the *Pramāṇavārttika*:

- *Rnam 'grel dka' 'grel rigs pa'i snang ba lugs ngan pham byed.*  
*Commentary on Difficult Points of the Pramāṇavārttika: Illumination of Reasoning Defeating Wrong Systems.*<sup>31</sup>

This work is Shākya mchog ldan's first treatise on *pramāṇa*. It primarily discusses difficult points in the last three chapters of *Pramāṇavārttika* concerning the establishment of valid cognition (*tshad ma*

<sup>29</sup>*Zhib mo rnam 'byed* 102a3ff.: *chos sde ji snyed nas 'dus ba'i dge 'dun lung dang rigs smra ba rgya mtsho ltar tshogs pa thams cad kyi rtsod ba'i dpang po rje bdag nyid chen po bzhugs pa gnang zhing | rgyal ba'i dbang po nyid kyi mdzad ba'i tshad ma'i rigs gzhung rgya mtsho zhes bya ba'i bstan bcos kyi dpe stsal nas | zhag 'ga'i bar du rigs gzhung rgya mtsho las brtsams pa'i bshad pa kho nas dus 'da' bar mdzad cing |*

<sup>30</sup>*Rgyas pa'i bstan bcos tshad ma rnam 'grel las rang don rjes su dpag ba'i le'u'i rnam bshad kun bzang rol mtsho*, composed in 1488. See § 5 of this paper.

<sup>31</sup>Komarovski translates the title of the text as *Appearance of Reasoning Defeating Bad Systems: Commentary on Difficult Points of the Extensive Treatise 'Commentary on Valid Cognition'* (Komarovski 2011: 53).

*grub pa*), direct perception (*mngon sum*), and inference for others (*gzhan don rjes dpag*). Shākya mchog ldan also composed both a detailed and a brief analytical treatise on *pramāṇa*:

- *Tshad ma rigs gter gyi dgongs rgyan lung dang rigs pa'i 'khor los lugs ngan pham byed. Ornament of Intent of the Tshad ma rigs gter Vanquishing Errors.*<sup>32</sup>
- *Tshad ma mdo dang gzhung lugs sde bdun gyi de kho na nyid bsdus pa rtog ge'i snying po. Compendium of the Truth of the Pramāṇasūtra and the Seven Treatise of Valid Cognition: Essence of Logic.*<sup>33</sup>

Of these two, the former, which is also called *Rtog ge'i 'khrul 'joms* (*Vanquishing Errors in Logic*), is a commentary on the *Tshad ma rigs gter* of Sa skya paṇḍita. The colophon of the *Lugs ngan pham byed* or *Rtog ge'i 'khrul 'joms* reads as follows:

“This great treatise *Rtog ge'i 'khrul pa 'joms pa* (*Vanquishing Errors in Logic*) [...] was written by Shākya mchog dri med legs ba'i blos rgyal ba [namely, Shākya mchog ldan] in the male wood horse year (1474) at the large temple of Thub bstan dar rgyas gling in Mnga' ris. The scribe is the master Bsam gtan dga' ba'i dpal bzang po form G-yas su bzang ldan.”<sup>34</sup>

From this colophon, we can determine that Shākya mchog ldan completed the *Lugs ngan pham byed* in 1474. The composition is divided into two chapters. The first chapter discusses the means of caring for others (*gzhan rjes su 'dzin pa*), namely, argumentation and refutation, and has ten sections. The second chapter describes the means of cognizing three types of objects of cognition (*gzhal bya'i gnas gsum rtogs pa'i thabs*) and has twelve sections. Throughout this work, Shākya mchog ldan expresses his view of *pramāṇa* basing himself on the doctrine of the *Rigs gter*. He refutes the views of other schools in Tibet to establish his own understanding of *pramāṇa* system.

The latter work, *Rtog ge'i snying po*, is a brief yet exhaustive analysis of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and *Pramāṇavārttika*. The work is divided in two parts. The first part discusses the essential thoughts of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and *Pramāṇavārttika* and contains refutation of others' systems; the second part presents the author's own position and also contains response to criticism. Both Kun dga' grol mchog and Shākya rin chen both state that Shākya mchog ldan “composed” (*brtsams*) this work in 1475, at the age of forty-eight, when he was staying in Mnga' ris. However, its colophon says as follows:

“It was completed at the temple [of Gser mdog can] located at Khyung tshang shar in Phan district in the center of Gtsang area, on the full moon day of Āṣāḍha (*chu stod*) month in the female wood sheep year (1475). The scribe is the master Kun dga' bkra shis.”<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Komarovski translates the title of the text as *Ornament of Intent of the 'Treasure of the Science of Valid Cognition' (Called) 'Defeater of Bad Systems with the Wheel of Scriptural Statements and Reasoning'* (Komarovski 2011: 53).

<sup>33</sup>Komarovski translates the title of the text as *Essence of Logic: Condensed Thatness of [Dignāga's] 'Sūtra on Valid Cognition' and [Dharmakīrti's] Textual System of 'Seven Works'* (Komarovski 2011: 54).

<sup>34</sup>*Lugs ngan pham byed* 322b1ff.: *rtog ge'i 'khrul pa 'joms pa zhes bya ba'i bstan bcos chen mo 'di | [...] shākya mchog dri med legs ba'i blos rgyal ba zhes bya ba shing pho rta lo | [...] mnga' ris sa'i thig le thub bstan dar rgyas gling gi gtsug lag khang chen por nye bar sbyar ba'i yi ge pa ni g-yas su bzang ldan gyi bshes gnyen bsam gtan dga' ba'i dpal bzang po ||*

<sup>35</sup>*Rtog ge'i snying po* 93b1ff.: *shing mo lug gi chu stod kyi nya yongs su gang ba'i 'grub sbyor bzang po la | g-yas ri gtsang sa'i thig le phan gyi khyung tshang shar dpal mnyan du yod pa'i gtsug lag khang du legs par grub pa'i yi ge pa ni bshes gnyen kun dga' bkra shis so ||*

It is therefore probable that he began composing the text while he was staying in Mnga' ris and completed it when he moved to Gser mdog can Monastery in 1475.

At the age of sixty-one, Shākya mchog ldan composed another commentary on the first chapter of the *Pramāṇavārttika*.

- *Rgyas pa'i bstan bcos tshad ma rnam 'grel las rang don rjes su dpag ba'i le'u'i rnam bshad kun bzang rol mtsho.*  
*Commentary on the [First] Chapter 'Inference for Oneself' of the Extensive Treatise Pramāṇavārttika: The Ocean of Samantabhadra.*<sup>36</sup>

In this work, the first chapter of the *Pramāṇavārttika* is discussed and analyzed in full detail, while the other three chapters are explained briefly. In 1492, having received the encouragement from the master Kun dga' dpal bzang from Gsang phu ne'u thog, Shākya mchog ldan wrote a structured commentary on the *Rigs gter*.

- *Tshad ma rig gter gyi rnam par bshad pa sde bdun ngag gi rol mtsho.*  
*Commentary on the Rigs gter: Ocean of Speech of the Seven Treatises.*

In 1501, at the persuasion of Karma chos grags rgya mtsho, Shākya mchog ldan wrote a history of *pramāṇa* in Tibet.

- *Tshad ma'i bstan bcos kyi shing rta'i srol rnams ci ltar byung ba'i tshul gtam du bya ba nyin mor byed pa'i snang bas dpyod ldan mtha' dag dga' bar byed pa.*  
*The History of the Tradition of Pramāṇa Doctrine Gladdening All Intelligent Scholars by the Light of the Sun.*

This work traces the progression of *pramāṇa* in Tibetan tradition. Specifically, it delineates the two major lineages of *pramāṇa* doctrine in Tibet: the lineage coming from Rngog lo tsā ba and the one coming from Sa skya Paṇḍita.

Furthermore, there are two other works on *pramāṇa*.

- *Tshad ma spyi'i rnam bar bzhag pa sde bdun gyi bang mdzod chen po'i sgo 'byed par byed pa'i rdo rje'i 'phrul 'khor gyi lde mig.*  
*General Presentation of pramāṇa for Opening Treasure of the Seven Treatises: The Key to Adamantine Device.*
- *Tshad ma'i nges pa 'dren ba'i tshul nyung ngur bsdus pa yid kyi mun sel.*  
*Abridgment of the Modes of Inducing Ascertainment by Valid Cognition: Dispelling Mental Darkness.*

Although it is not clear when these works were composed, they were likely written during the time he was at Gser mdog can monastery because the colophons make it clear that they were written at G-yas ru gtsang gi thig le, the place where Gser mdog can Monastery is located. The topics included in these two works are the questions of direct perception (*mngon sum*) and inference (*rjes dpag*). The latter of the two provides a more detailed examination of these topics than the former. A final remark should be made on the following work as it relates to *pramāṇa*.

<sup>36</sup>Komarovski translates the title of the text as *Enjoyment Ocean of the Entirely Good Dharma: Explanation of the Extensive Treatise 'Commentary on Valid Cognition'* (Komarovski 2011: 57).

- *Rang lugs kyi dgag gzhi ma'i rnam bzhag khyab 'jug gi mdung thung.*  
*Presentation of the Basis of Negation in Our Own System: Viṣṇu's Short Spear.*

It is also unclear where and when it was composed. The main topics discussed in it are “affirming negative” (*ma yin dgag*), “non-affirming negative” (*med dgag*), “incompatibility by mutual exclusion” (*phan tshun spangs 'gal*), and “incompatibility in the sense of not abiding together” (*lhan cig mi gnas 'gal*). It is clear that the latter three works listed above were composed on the basis of Shākya mchog ldan's lectures to students and not at the request of any particular individuals. It can be inferred that these three works were completed in or before the year 1502, as Shākya rin chen reports as follows:

“By the spring of the female iron bird year (1501), at the age of seventy-four, [Shākya mchog ldan] had completed most of his sūtric compositions with the only exception of the history of *pramāṇa* and *madhyamaka*.”<sup>37</sup>

The nine major works mentioned here are all listed in the catalogue of Shākya mchog ldan's collected works. There also exist minor short works on *pramāṇa* as listed below:

- *Tshad ma rnam 'grel nges kyi brgyud ba'i gsol 'debs.*  
*Prayer for the Lineage of the Pramāṇavārttika and Pramāṇaviniścaya.*
- *Rnam 'grel gyi gzhung par du bsgrubs pa'i dkar chag.*  
*Catalogue of Printed Treatises on the Pramāṇavārttika.*<sup>38</sup>
- *Rigs gter gyi gzhung par du bsgrubs pa'i dkar chag.*  
*Catalogue of Printed Treatises on the Rigs gter.*<sup>39</sup>

The first one is included in the twenty-third volume of his collected works; and the latter two are included in the seventeenth volume. Moreover, there are two other short works, the titles of which are not given. One is included in twenty-third volume and gives a summary of the history of *pramāṇa* doctrine. The other is included in seventeenth volume and devoted to the rule of victory and defeat in debate. The following table shows a list of the fourteen works mentioned above.

Title	Topic	Year	Place	Scribe	N.B.
<i>Rnam 'grel dka' 'grel rig pa'i snang ba</i>	Analysis of the latter three chapters of the <i>Pramāṇavārttika</i>	1473	Mnga' ris	Rkong ston mgon po rgyal mtshan	Composed for interested parties
<i>Tshad ma rigs gter gyi dgongs rgyan lugs ngan pham byed</i>	Analysis of the <i>Rig gter</i>	1474	Mnga' ris	Bsam gtan dga' ba'i dpal bzang po	
<i>Rnam 'grel gyi gzhung par du bsgrubs pa'i dkar chag</i>	Benefits of printing the <i>Pramāṇavārttika</i> and utterance of auspiciousness	1474	Mnga' ris	Dol po pa shes rab grags pa; engraved by Dge legs seng ge	
<i>Tshad ma mdo dang gzhung lugs sde bdun gyi de kho na nyid bs-dus pa rtog ge'i snying po</i>	Analysis of the <i>Pramāṇa-samuccaya</i> and <i>Pramāṇavārttika</i>	1475	Phan khyung tshang	Kun dga' bkra shis	Requested by masters

<sup>37</sup>*Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed* 96a3f.: *dgung lo don bzhir phebs pa lcags mo bya lo'i dpyid chos yan la | mdo phyogs kyi dbu tshad chos 'byung tsam ma gtogs gghan bstan bcos kyi gsung rtsom phal cher legs par grub cing |*

<sup>38</sup>Komarovski translates the title of the text as *Register of Printing [Dharmakīrti's] 'Commentry on Valid Cognition' Text* (Komarovski 2011: 54).

<sup>39</sup>Komarovski translates the title of the text as *Register of Printing [Sakya Pendita's] 'Treasure of the Science of Valid Cognition' Text* (Komarovski 2011: 54).

<i>Rgyas pa'i bstan bcos tshad ma rnam 'grel las rang don rjes su dpag pa'i le'u'i rnam bshad kun bzang rol mtsho</i>	Analysis of the first chapter	1488	Gser mdog can	Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan	Requested by Dbon rnam rgyal dpal bzang
<i>Tshad ma rigs gter gyi rnam par bshad pa sde bdun ngag gi rol mtsho</i>	Analysis of the <i>Rigs gter</i>	1492	Gser mdog can	Chos kyi rgyal mtshan of lower Mgna' ris	Requested by Chos kyi rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po from Gsang phu ne'u thog
<i>Tshad ma'i bstan bcos kyi shing rta'i srol rnams ci ltar byung ba'i tshul gtam du bya ba nyin mor byed pa'i snang bas dpyod ldan mtha' dag dga' bar byed pa</i>	History of <i>pramāṇa</i> in Tibet	1502	Gser mdog can	Kong ston chos kyi rgyal mtshan	Requested by Karma chos grags rgya mtsho
<i>Tshad ma spyi'i rnam bar bzhang ba sde bdun gyi bang mdzod chen po'i sgo 'byed par byed rdo rje'i 'phrul 'khor gyi lde mig</i>	Meaning and categories of <i>pramāṇa</i>	Unknown	Center of G-yas ri in Gt-sang	Unknown	
<i>Tshad ma'i nges pa 'dren pa'i tshul nyung ngur bsdu pa yid kyi mun sel</i>	Meaning and categories of <i>pramāṇa</i>	Unknown	Center of G-yas ri in Gt-sang	Unknown	Requested by Stan gcig pa blo gros brtan pa
<i>Rang lugs kyi dgag gzhi ma'i rnam bzhang khyab 'jug gi mdung thung</i>	Affirming and non-affirming negatives etc.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	
No title	Summary of the history of <i>pramāṇa</i>	Unknown	Gser mdog can	Unknown	
<i>Tshad ma rnam 'grel nges kyi brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs</i>	Prayers for the lineages of the <i>Pramāṇavārttika</i> and <i>Pramāṇaviniścaya</i>	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	
No title	Victory and defeat in debate	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	
<i>Rigs gter gyi gzhung par du bsgrubs pa'i dkar chag</i>	Benefits of printing the <i>Rigs gter</i> and utterance of auspiciousness	Unknown	Mnga' ris	Unknown	

## 6 Conclusion

During Shākya mchog ldan's lifetime, the education of *pramāṇa* became extensive in Tibet. Therefore, it is natural to think that he had many marvelous opportunities to study the subject in monastic settings. From the age of eighteen to twenty-seven, he himself worked as a teacher; and from the age of nineteen to forty, he held the position of the spiritual master at Gnas sgo College in Gsang phu Monastery, participating in most summer and winter retreats as a mentor. From the age of forty-four to eighty, he worked on establishing religious regulations and conducted teaching activities at the monastic seat of Gser mdog can. Between terms, he traveled to many places such as Sa skya, Mnga' ris, Rin spungs, Ngam ring, and Glang thang, to give teachings on *pramāṇa*.

As stated in the biographies, Shākya mchog ldan studied not only the *pramāṇa* doctrine of the Sa skya pa school but also that of Rngog lo tsā ba's tradition, the latter of which is regarded as the predecessor of the Dge lugs pa's. This is probably the reason that he pursued his own theory of *pramāṇa* basing himself on the *Rigs gter* of Sa skya paṇḍita, but occasionally criticizing the views of later Sa skya pa scholars, not to mention those of the Dge lugs pa. A further direction of this study will be to provide evidence for this hypothesis by examining his theory of valid cognition and argumentation as presented in his works on *pramāṇa*.

## Abbreviation and References

### (1) Works in Tibetan

- Rtog ge'i snying po** *Tshad ma mdo gzhung lugs sde bdun gyi de kho na nyid bsdus pa rtog ge'i snying po* (Shākya mchog ldan). In *Collected Writings of Gser-mdog Pan-chen Shākya-mchog-ldan*, vol. 18. Delhi: Jayyed Press. 1988.
- Thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed** *Gangs can gyi shing rta chen po dpal shākya mchog ldan gyi rnam par thar pa thub bstan gsal ba'i nyin byed* (Shākya rin chen dri med legs ba'i blo gros). In *Collected Works (gsun 'bum) of Sakya-rinchen, the Ninth Rje Mkhan-po of Bhutan*, vol. 4. Thimphu: Kunzang Tobgey Publisher for Buddhist Literature. 1976.
- Pad ma dkar po'i phreng ba** *Pan chen shākya mchog ldan gyi rnam thar bad ma dkar po'i phreng pa* (Shākya rgyal mtshan). In *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs*, vol. 57. Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang. 2011.
- Zhib mo rnam 'byed** *Paṇḍita shākya mchog ldan gyi rnam par thar pa zhib mo rnam 'byed* (Kun dga' grol mchog). In *Collected Writings of Gser-mdog Pan-chen Shākya-mchog-ldan*, vol. 16. Delhi: Jayyed Press. 1988.
- Lugs ngan pham byed** *Tshad ma rigs gter gyi dgongs rgyan lung dang rigs pas 'khor los lugs ngan pham byed* (Shākya mchog ldan). In *Collected Writings of Gser-mdog Pan-chen Shākya-mchog-ldan*, vol. 9. Delhi: Jayyed Press. 1988.
- Gsungs rab par du bskrun pa'i tshul** *Pan chen shākya mchog ldan gyi gsungs rab par du bskrun pa'i tshul las brtsam pa'i gleng ba* (Bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan). Thimphu: Kunzang Tobgey Publisher for Buddhist Literature. 1989.

### (2) Works in English

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## Shākya mchog ldan's Contribution to the Study of *pramāṇa*

MA JIU JIE

The present paper examines Shākya mchog ldan's contribution to the study of *pramāṇa* (*tshad ma*) in Tibet. Specifically, it focuses on Shākya mchog ldan's early life, his study of *pramāṇa*, dissemination of *pramāṇa*, and his works on *pramāṇa*.

At the age of eight to twenty-eight, Shākya mchog ldan learned *pramāṇa* texts from many masters belonging to the Sa skya pa, such as Rong ston shes bya kun rig. During that period, he also studied with Sangs rgyas chos skyong, who is considered as a successor (*rgyun 'dzin pa*) of Rngog lo tsā ba's lineage. From the age of eighteen to eighty, he continuously gave teachings on both Indian and Tibetan *pramāṇa* treatises at Gsang phu, Gser mdog can, and Rnam rgyal chos sde, and so forth. There are fourteen works on *pramāṇa* included in his collected works. He was also instrumental in establishing *pramāṇa* studies in a number of famous monasteries in Tibet.