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Abstract:

This paper examines the discussion on the distinction between correct and mistaken conventionals involving early Tibetan Madhyamaka thinkers in the teaching lineage stemming from Ngok Loden shérab (rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, 1059–1109). It draws on the treatise by Gyamarwa (rGya dmar ba Byang chub grags), the *Dbu ma de kho na nyid rnam par dpyod pa*, which offers a fascinating panorama of the debates of that period, predating the full bloom of Patsab Nyima Drak's (Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, b. 1055) influence and the spread of Candrakīrti's views in Tibet. The paper focuses on the criticism of Khyung (Khyung Rin chen grags)'s view that Mādhyamikas should just “follow the world” to establish this distinction, whereas his peers (and, before them, of Ngok) make this distinction in the framework of a specific tenet system (*grub mtha'*). In addition to examining the arguments put forward by these thinkers and their respective conceptions of what “the world” is, this paper discusses whether Khyung's view—an early example of what would come to be called “Madhyamaka following the world” (*jig rten grags sde dbu ma*)—reveals an influence from Candrakīrti or is instead based on Khyung's interpretation of Jñānagarbha's *Satyadvayavibhaṅga*.

Project:

TibSchol – The Dawn of Tibetan Buddhist Scholasticism (11th-13th c.)

The ERC-funded project TibSchol – The dawn of Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism (11th-13th c.) – will be the first wide-ranging exploration of the formative phase of the Tibetan Buddhist scholastic tradition. Its ground-breaking study of an exceptionally active period of Tibetan scholarly creativity will integrate Tibetan thinkers into world intellectual history and the global history of philosophy.

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