

Study and Practice of Meditation

Tibetan Interpretations of the Concentrations
and Formless Absorptions

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An Excellent Vase of Eloquence Presenting the Concentrations and Formless Absorptions

[538]

Namo gurumunīdrāya!

I prostrate myself in homage in the presence of the inseparable ones:

Mañjughoṣha, treasury of the doctrine of ten million Ones Gone
Thus (*de bzhin gshegs pa, tathāgata*);

Tsong-kha-pa, sovereign of the complete teaching;

The one with the name Jam-yang, scholar who increased good explanation without precedent.^a

I bow to the assembly of spiritual guides, skilled proponents
Who satisfy those of small awareness with the essence
Of the nectar of good explanation, [drawn by] the bees
Of individual investigation from the open saffron-flower of great
mercy.

Listen in this way, you who desire knowledge of the principles
Of the yoga of the union of calm abiding and special insight,
That which brings vast joy to the minds of the Subduers
And is the basis of achieving immeasurable qualities worthy of
praise!

The explanation^b here of the presentation of the highway of all yogis of the three times, [539] the basis of all the great meditative stabilizations—the meditative absorptions of the concentrations and formless absorptions—has three [topics]: the explanations of (1) the basis of cultivation; (2) the meditative stabilizations of the concentrations and formless absorptions that are to be cultivated; and (3) enumeration of the meditative stabilizations of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in dependence upon that.

^a Jam-yang is Mañjughoṣha; “the one with the name Jam-yang” is Jam-yang-shay-pa.

^b *De la*, “with respect to that,” has not been translated when it merely serves as a paragraph marker and has no specific referent.

1 THE BASIS OF CULTIVATION

This section has two topics: the explanations of the physical and mental bases.

THE PHYSICAL BASIS

REFUTATION [OF MISTAKEN OPINIONS]

First debate

Incorrect position: In [someone having] a physical basis of the three bad transmigrations or [the northern continent] Unpleasant Sound, there is [retention of] possession of actual meditative absorptions already attained.

Correct position: It follows that that is incorrect because whoever is a person of an upper realm who is about to die and who is definite to be reborn in [a bad transmigration or Unpleasant Sound] in the next birth necessarily degenerates from the actual meditative absorption of that [upper realm]. This is because (1) whoever is [a person of an upper realm who is about to die and who is definite to be reborn in a bad transmigration or Unpleasant Sound] necessarily manifests gross craving, and so forth, which is included within the level of the Desire Realm and (2) a person who simultaneously possesses in his or her continuum manifest afflictions of the Desire Realm and an actual meditative absorption does not occur.

Second debate

Incorrect position: It follows that there exists a new generation of an actual meditative absorption of a concentration in [someone having] the physical basis of [any of] the three bad transmigrations [hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals] [540] because there exists a new generation of the four immeasurables in [someone having] a physical basis of [any of the three bad transmigrations]. This is because a new generation of the two, [great] love and great compassion, exists in [someone having] the physical basis of [any of the bad transmigrations].

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if a new generation of the two,

great love and great compassion, exists in someone having the physical basis of any of the bad transmigrations, a new generation of the four immeasurables in someone having such a physical basis necessarily exists].

The reason [namely, that a new generation of the two, great love and great compassion, exists in someone having the physical basis of any of the bad transmigrations] is established because new generation of the seven cause-and-effect quintessential instructions [for generating the altruistic mind of enlightenment] exists in [someone having such a basis].

Incorrect position with respect to that: New generation of a Mahāyāna altruistic intention to become enlightened does not exist in [someone having] a physical basis of the bad transmigrations because there is no new generation of the four immeasurables in [someone having] a physical basis of [the bad transmigrations].^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if there is no new generation of the four immeasurables in someone having a physical basis of the bad transmigrations, there is necessarily no new generation of a Mahāyāna altruistic intention to become enlightened in someone having a physical basis of the bad transmigrations]. The reason [namely, that there is no new generation of the four immeasurables in someone having a physical basis of the bad transmigrations] is established because (1) according to Asaṅga's *Summary of Manifest Knowledge*, the four immeasurables are necessarily actual meditative absorptions and (2) according to Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, immeasurable joy is explained as existing in the first two concentrations and the other three [immeasurables—love, compassion, and equanimity] are explained as existing in the six—the not-unable preparation, the special first concentration, and the four concentrations.^b It is entailed [that since, according to Asaṅga's *Summary of Manifest Knowledge*, the four immeasurables are necessarily actual meditative absorptions and, according to Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, immeasurable joy is explained as existing in the first two concentrations and the other three immeasurables as existing in the six—the not-unable, the special first concentration, and the four concentrations—there is necessarily no new generation of the four immeasurables in someone having a

^a Great love and great compassion are, respectively, the fourth and fifth of the seven.

^b Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge and Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge,"* 8.31a–b (P5591, vol. 115, 276.1.6–7; Shastri, part 4, pp. 1172–73; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 199; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1267).

physical basis of the bad transmigrations] because, no matter which of those systems one follows, there is no generation of those [immeasurables] in the three bad transmigrations.

Third debate

Incorrect position: Gods who are about to take rebirth^a in the three bad transmigrations exist.

Correct position: This is incorrect because whoever is about to take rebirth in [a bad transmigration] must be an intermediate-state being.

Fourth debate

Incorrect position: When an aeon is destroyed, those in the bad transmigrations are persons who must newly achieve a meditative absorption upon being born in the happy transmigrations.

Correct position: It follows that this is also incorrect because (1) with respect to those in the bad transmigrations, there are also cases of those who are definite to attain liberation before [the destruction of the aeon]; (2) also, before that, there are those whose karmic obstructions are used up, and (3) there are also those who are definite to be reborn in the bad transmigrations of another world-system without their karmic obstructions being used up.

Fifth debate

Incorrect position: Whoever is a being of the bad transmigrations [541] is necessarily someone who possesses strong karmic obstructions in his or her continuum.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, someone in a bad transmigration who, having used up his or her strong karmic obstructions, is about to die and is definite to attain a basis of leisure and fortune in the next life, [possesses strong karmic obstructions in his or her continuum] because of being [someone in the bad transmigrations].

Sixth debate

Incorrect position: In a basis of one's own level, there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of one's own level, but in a basis of a

^a Literally "assume the birth state."

lower level, there is cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of an upper level, and in a basis of an upper level, there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of a lower level because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.19c-d] says [according to the opponent's incorrect translation]:

In a basis of one's own or a lower level in the concentrations and formless absorptions,
There is no need [to cultivate a meditative absorption of] a lower [level].^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that this passage from Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* means that in a basis of one's own level, there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of one's own level, but in a basis of a lower level, there is cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of an upper level, and in a basis of an upper level, there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of a lower level].

It [absurdly] follows that this passage indicates that in a basis of one's own level, there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of one's own level because you have accepted [that in a basis of one's own level, there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of one's own level]. You cannot accept [that that passage from Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* indicates that in a basis of one's own level, there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of one's own level] because this passage indicates that there are cases of actualizing the eight concentrations and formless absorptions in a basis of either one's own or a lower level.

Incorrect position with respect to that: It follows that there is no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of a lower level in a basis of an upper level because Vasubandhu's *Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge"* says:

Question: Why does someone who is born in an upper [level] not actualize a lower level of meditative absorption?

Answer: It is thus that that [person] "has no need [to cultivate] the lower [meditative absorption]." That person has not the least need of the substantial entity of the lower meditative

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.19c-d (P5591, vol. 115, 274.3.6-7; Shastri, part 4, p. 1158; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 175; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1250).

absorption because it is inferior.^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that this passage means that there is necessarily no cultivation of an actual meditative absorption of a lower level in a basis of an upper level]. This is because such is the case in general, but as an exception, it is explained that there is a cultivation of a meditative absorption of [the level of] Nothingness in [that is, by persons having] a basis of the Peak of Cyclic Existence. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.20a–b] says:

A Superior in the Peak of Cyclic Existence exhausts contamination
[542]

Having actualized [a meditative absorption of the level of] Nothingness.^b

It is entailed [that this passage means that there is a cultivation of a meditative absorption of the level of Nothingness in a basis of the Peak of Cyclic Existence] because, although in general there is no need to cultivate a meditative absorption of a lower level in a basis of an upper level, since the mind of the Peak of Cyclic Existence has unclear discrimination, it is not suitable as a [mental] basis of a supramundane path that eliminates cyclic existence for the Hīnayāna, and therefore, it must depend on some lower level,^c and moreover, since the realms and objects of observation are close, there is the exception that there is one that depends on Nothingness.

Seventh debate

Incorrect position in dependence upon the mere literal reading of Asaṅga's "Summary of Manifest Knowledge": Whatever is a meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence is necessarily not a supramundane path.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, a newly attained meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence in the continuum of a Superior, [is not a supramundane path] because of being [a meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence].

You cannot accept [that a newly attained meditative absorption of

^a Vasubandhu, *Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge,"* 8.19c–d (P5591, vol. 115, 274.3.7–8; Shastri, part 4, p. 1158; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 175; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1250).

^b Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge,* 8.20a–b (P5591, vol. 115, 274.3.8; Shastri, part 4, p. 1159; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 175; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1251).

^c 542.2, omitting *phyir* before 'og sa gcig.

the peak of cyclic existence in the continuum of a Superior is not a supramundane path] because it is a supramundane path. It follows [that it is a supramundane path] because of being a Superior path.^a This is because it is among the eight newly attained meditative absorptions in the continuum of a Superior.

Eighth debate

Incorrect position: Whatever is a meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence necessarily does not have the aspect of non-true existence.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, a meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence which serves as the mental basis of an uninterrupted path of the Mahāyāna path of meditation, [does not have the aspect of non-true existence] because of being [a meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence].

Ninth debate

Incorrect position: Whatever is a meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence necessarily has an unclear object of observation and subjective aspect.

Correct position: There is no definiteness [in the entailment that whatever is a meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence necessarily has an unclear object of observation and subjective aspect] because of [the meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence] in the continuum of a Buddha Superior.

OUR OWN SYSTEM

Those who have [committed] the powerful actions of abandoning the doctrine or the [five] heinous crimes, which have been accumulated but not yet purified, can neither newly generate meditative absorptions nor keep what has already been generated because they have very strong karmic obstructions. [543] Neuter persons, eunuchs, androgynes, and so forth, do not have new generation of these [meditative absorptions] because they have very great afflictive obstructions. Those in the three bad transmigrations [hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals], sentient beings without discrimination, and those having a basis

^a That is to say, a path in the continuum of a Superior.

in [the continent] Unpleasant Sound have no new generation of these [meditative absorptions] because they have very strong fruitional obstructions and because those in the bad transmigrations are strongly tormented by suffering and also by reason of [the fact that] those in Unpleasant Sound and without discrimination cannot do much investigation and analysis.

Those having a basis in Unpleasant Sound, neuter persons, eunuchs, androgynes, or [those having a basis in] the bad transmigrations do not have either new generation or continued possession of the preparations for the concentrations on up because (1) in order to attain [new generation of the preparations for the concentrations], one must have concentrative discipline and (2) there is no generation of either concentrative discipline or a vow of individual liberation or a bad vow [for those having such bases]. Demigods also cannot [generate the preparations for the concentrations on up] because they have very strong obstructions of jealousy and of [being that kind of] transmigrator.

Therefore, those with a physical basis of humans of the [other] three continents have new generation [of the concentrations and formless absorptions] because (1) they have new generation of the three—concentrative discipline, [vows of] individual liberation, and uncontaminated discipline and (2) the meditative absorptions of the concentrations and their discipline are equivalent in terms of basis [that is, who can have them]. Those with a basis of [any of the] six [types of] gods of the Desire Realm and with a basis of the Form Realm also have new generation because they have new generation of concentrative discipline.

There is cultivation of a meditative absorption of a lower level by those with a basis of an upper level because there is a final meditative stabilization in the continuum of a Hearer Superior who has a basis of the Fourth Concentration [544] and because there are leapover meditative absorptions (*thod rgyal gyi snyoms 'jug, vyutkrāntakasamāpatti*) in the continuum of a Bodhisattva Superior who has a basis of [the Fourth Concentration], as well as others.

There is cultivation of the eight concentrations and formless absorptions by those who have bases of their own and lower levels because (1) with respect to the meditative absorption of the peak of cyclic existence, for instance, there is actualization of the eight ranging from its own level, the Peak of Cyclic Existence, to a lower level, the Desire Realm, and similarly, with respect to [the actual meditative absorption of] nothingness, there is actualization of the seven ranging from its

own level down to the Desire Realm and (2) it is permissible to extend the reasoning in this way for the remaining [meditative absorptions].

There is new attainment of the actual meditative absorptions in the basis of a Hearer because, although whoever is either a Stream Enterer or a Once Returner has necessarily not attained [the actual meditative absorptions], whoever is either a Non-Returner or a Foe Destroyer has necessarily attained them.

DISPELLING OBJECTIONS

First debate

Incorrect position: It follows that there are humans who are about to be born as gods of the Form Realm because there are humans who are about to be born in the Form Realm.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that since there are humans who are about to be born in the Form Realm, there are necessarily humans who are about to be born as gods of the Form Realm].

Another incorrect position: It follows that there are no humans who are about to be born as gods because there are no humans who are about to be born as gods of the Desire or Form Realms.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that since there are no humans who are about to be born as gods of the Desire or Form Realms, there are necessarily no humans who are about to be born as gods].

You cannot accept [that there are no humans who are about to be born as gods] because there are humans who are about to be born as gods of the Formless Realm. It follows [that there are humans who are about to be born as gods of the Formless Realm] because, to be born as a god of the Formless Realm, one does not have to pass through an intermediate state.

Another incorrect position: It follows that there are humans who are about to be born in the bad transmigrations because there are humans who are about to achieve an intermediate state of the bad transmigrations.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that since there are humans who are about to achieve an intermediate state of the bad transmigrations, there are necessarily humans who are about to be born in the bad transmigrations].

Second debate

Incorrect position: There are those in Unpleasant Sound who, having died, are definite to be born in an upper realm without being interrupted by another birth-state.

Correct position: It follows that this is incorrect because whoever is a being in Unpleasant Sound is necessarily born as any of the six types of gods of the Desire Realm in the next birth. [545]

Third debate

Incorrect position: It follows that there is a common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being an uninterrupted path of the path of meditation because [a meditative absorption of] the peak of cyclic existence is [a common locus of being a mind of the Formless Realm and being an uninterrupted path of the path of meditation]. If you accept [that there is a common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being an uninterrupted path of the path of meditation], it follows that the subject, [the common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being an uninterrupted path of the path of meditation], is a mind of non-equipose because of being a mind that is included within the level of non-equipose.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that a mind included within the level of non-equipose is necessarily a mind of non-equipose].

The reason [namely, that the common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being an uninterrupted path of the path of meditation is a mind that is included within the level of non-equipose] is established because it is a Desire Realm mind.

Another incorrect position: It follows that there is a common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing because you have accepted [that there is a common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being an uninterrupted path of the path of meditation].

Correct position: It is not entailed [that since there is a common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being an uninterrupted path of the path of meditation, there is necessarily a common locus of being a Desire Realm mind and being the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing] because Gyel-tsap's *Explanation of (Maitreya's) "Ornament for Clear Realization," Ornament for the Essence* says:

[Haribhadra] explains in [his] *Great Commentary [on Maitreya's "Ornament for Clear Realization"]* that the path of meditation [can] depend upon a Desire Realm mind and the peak of cyclic existence, but I think that this cannot characterize the path of seeing.^a

MENTAL BASES

REFUTATION [OF MISTAKEN OPINIONS]

First debate

Incorrect position: Whatever is a mental basis of a given consciousness is necessarily of a similar type to that consciousness and acts as its substantial cause.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that whatever is a mental basis of a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation is necessarily a substantial cause of [that altruistic mind generation]^b because [according to you] your thesis [that whatever is a mental basis of a given consciousness is necessarily of a similar type to that consciousness and acts as its substantial cause] is correct.

If you accept [that whatever is a mental basis of a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation is necessarily its substantial cause], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, the faith that serves as the mental basis of Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation, is necessarily its substantial cause because you have accepted [that whatever is a mental basis of a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation is necessarily its substantial cause]. You cannot accept [that the faith that serves as the mental basis of a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation is necessarily its substantial cause] because whatever is a substantial cause of a main consciousness or a [main] mind must be either a [main] mind or the mental constituent.

Moreover, it follows that [the position that the faith which serves as the mental basis of a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation is necessarily its substantial cause] is incorrect because, on the one hand, accompanying mental factors act as mental bases of main minds, and on the other, faith and aspiration, individually, [546] act as mental bases of

^a Gyel-tsap, *Explanation of (Maitreya's) "Ornament for Clear Realization," Ornament for the Essence* (Buxaduor: n.p. 1967?), 164b.3.

^b What is substituted for "a given consciousness" is "a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation."

effort, concentration, and so forth.

The first reason [namely, that accompanying mental factors act as mental bases of main minds] is established because, when one sets [the mind] one-pointedly in meditative equipoise on one's object, the element of qualities [that is, emptiness—that meditative equipoise being] induced by the faith of conviction which is a gaining of ascertaining knowledge with respect to that [object]—that mind has been generated in the entity of that faith, and at that time such faith is the mental basis of that [mind which is in one-pointed meditative equipoise on emptiness]. This is because, although [something] may be simultaneous [with it], if that something has not become of the entity of it and is a different entity, it cannot be posited as the mental basis of that something.

The second reason [namely, that faith and aspiration, individually, act as a mental basis of effort, concentration, and so forth] is established because, when one makes effort for the sake of an object of observation with strong force of faith and aspiration, [the mental factor of effort] becomes of the entity of that [faith and aspiration] without the dissipation of the force of that faith and aspiration, at which time those two such [faith and aspiration] are the mental basis of that effort, and it is the same sort of thing for other [mental factors and consciousnesses].

OUR OWN SYSTEM

Although we use the mere verbal convention “based on” for a [given] consciousness' acting as a substantial cause of a [given] mind, and so forth, this is not posited as the meaning of mental basis in this context because, if it were posited this way, there would be the fault that one would have to assert many [things] that are explained as unsuitable to be mental bases, such as that there are non-virtuous consciousnesses for which virtuous consciousnesses act as the mental basis. Therefore, the meaning of [mental basis] does not at all occur in earlier and later cause and effect.

With respect to the subject, the ninth mental abiding and the meditative absorptions ranging from [those of] the first concentration to the peak of cyclic existence, there is a mode of their acting as the mental bases of paths that depend^a on them because, just as when iron is burned, the iron becomes of the entity of the fire, those [meditative absorptions] act as the mental bases of [paths] by way of paths' becoming of their entities.

^a 546.5, reading *brten pa* instead of *rten pa*, following Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 39.7 and *Collected Works*, vol. 12, 37.5.

DISPELLING OBJECTIONS

First debate

Incorrect position: It follows that whatever is a mental basis of [a given] path is necessarily that path [547] because the mode of [the path's] becoming [the mental basis of that path] exists.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if the mode of a path's becoming the mental basis of that path exists, then whatever is a mental basis of a given path is necessarily that path]. This is because, although a [main] mind associated with hatred becomes of the entity of hatred, it is not hatred [which is a mental factor].

Second debate

Incorrect position: It follows that [a given] earlier mind is the mental basis of a later mind because (1) [the earlier mind] is a mind and (2) that earlier mind is the basis of that later mind.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if a given earlier mind is a mind and that earlier mind is the basis of that later mind, the earlier mind is necessarily the mental basis of the later mind].

Incorrect position with respect to that: It follows that it is entailed [that if a given earlier mind is a mind and that earlier mind is the basis of that later mind, the earlier mind is necessarily the mental basis of the later mind] because there is a name for an earlier mind's acting as the basis of a later mind.

Correct position: It is also not entailed [that if there is a name for an earlier mind's acting as the basis of a later mind, then, if the earlier mind is a mind and that earlier mind is the basis of that later mind, the earlier mind is necessarily the mental basis of the later mind] because this is called "the basis which is the similar immediately preceding condition." It follows [that this is called "the basis which is the similar immediately preceding condition"] because the inability of an earlier virtuous mind of the Desire Realm to serve as the basis of a later mind of the Formless Realm is described as its not being able to serve as a basis which is a similar immediately preceding condition of that [mind].

Third debate

Incorrect position: It follows that the subject, the faith that serves as the mental basis of a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation, possesses the aspect of faith because of being faith.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that whatever is faith necessarily possesses the aspect of faith]. You cannot accept [that the faith that serves as the mental basis of a Mahāyāna altruistic mind generation possesses the aspect of faith] because it possesses the aspect of a wish. It follows [that it possesses the aspect of a wish] because of being faith that is a wish [to attain].

2 THE MEDITATIVE STABILIZATIONS OF THE CONCENTRATIONS AND FORMLESS ABSORPTIONS THAT ARE TO BE CULTIVATED

[547.5]

The presentation of the concentrations and formless absorptions that are to be cultivated has two [parts]: explanation of the presentation of the preparations, the means of attainment, and explanation of the actual meditative absorptions that are to be attained.

EXPLANATION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE PREPARATIONS, THE MEANS OF ATTAINMENT

This has two [parts]: explanation of the two, calm abiding and special insight, which include all meditative stabilizations, and explanation of the mode of entering into meditative absorption in the eight concentrations and formless absorptions by way of the seven mental contemplations.

EXPLANATION OF THE TWO, CALM ABIDING AND SPECIAL INSIGHT, WHICH INCLUDE ALL MEDITATIVE STABILIZATIONS

This has two [parts]: explanation of actual calm abiding and special insight and explanation of the mode of training individually in calm abiding and special insight.

Explanation of actual calm abiding and special insight

[Refutation of mistaken opinions]

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: [548] Asaṅga's *Summary of Manifest Knowledge* says: "What is calm abiding? It is as follows:...,^a" and the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* says:

Also, Maitreya, all the mundane and supramundane virtuous

^a Asaṅga, *Summary of Manifest Knowledge*, P5550, vol. 112, 263.2.8–263.3.1; Rahula, trans., *Le Compendium de la super-doctrine*, p. 126. Paṅ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa, "Concentrations," 155b.1–2 cites the complete passage.

phenomena of Hearers, Bodhisattvas, and Ones Gone Thus are to be known^a as fruits of calm abiding and special insight.^b

Whatever is the calm abiding explicitly indicated in those two texts is necessarily calm abiding. Whatever is the special insight explicitly indicated in [those two texts] is necessarily special insight.

Correct position: With respect to the first [wrong opinion, that whatever is the calm abiding explicitly indicated in those two texts is necessarily calm abiding], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, the meditative stabilizations from the meditative stabilization of the first mental abiding through the meditative stabilization of the ninth mental abiding, [is calm abiding] because of [being calm abidings explicitly indicated in those two texts].^c

With respect to the second [wrong opinion, that whatever is the special insight explicitly indicated in those two texts is necessarily special insight], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, wisdom consciousnesses that distinguish phenomena, that thoroughly distinguish [phenomena], and so forth, are special insights because of being special insights explicitly indicated in those two [texts]. It follows [that wisdom consciousnesses that distinguish phenomena, that thoroughly distinguish phenomena, and so forth, are special insights explicitly indicated in those two texts] because, since those wisdom consciousnesses are in the class of special insight, they, having been designated by the name of special insight, are indicated with reference to their effect. [It is stated] thus in Tsong-kha-pa's [great and medium-length] *Exposition of the Stages of the Path*.

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: The non-existence of intensity in the factor of clarity in a non-scattering^d mind is calm abiding, and the existence of that [intensity in the factor of clarity in a non-scattering mind] is special insight.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the meaning of the passage in

^a 548.2, reading *rig par bya'o* instead of *rigs par bya'o*.

^b Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, pp. 111, 227.

^c The subject comes from the Asaṅga citation, which goes on to list the nine mental abidings. Paṅ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa also has a debate on this citation. (*Meditative States*, pp. 170, 236 n.25; Walpola Rahula, trans., *Le Compendium de la super-doctrine (philosophie) (Abhidharmasamuccaya) d'Asaṅga* [Paris: École française d'extrême-orient, 1971], p. 126).

^d 548.5, reading *mi 'phro bar* instead of *mi 'gro bar*.

the *Cloud of Jewels Sūtra* (*ratnameghasūtra*, *dkon mchog sprin gyi mdo*)—“Calm abiding is a one-pointed mind. Special insight is correct individual analysis”—is not established because [according to you] calm abiding is not posited as a one-pointed meditative stabilization and special insight is not posited [549] as a wisdom consciousness that analyzes—that individually investigates phenomena correctly. This is because [according to you] both calm abiding and special insight are posited as solely the clear meditative stabilization of a one-pointed mind. This is because [according to you] the factor of stability in that clear meditative stabilization is calm abiding and the factor of clarity, special insight. You have asserted the reason [namely, that the factor of stability in that clear meditative stabilization is calm abiding and the factor of clarity, special insight].

It is entailed [that if the factor of abiding in that clear meditative stabilization is calm abiding and the factor of clarity, special insight, then both calm abiding and special insight are necessarily to be posited as solely the clear meditative stabilization of a one-pointed mind] because all meditative stabilizations that are free of laxity and excitement necessarily have both abiding in a one-pointed mind and intensity of clarity. This is because all meditative stabilizations that are free of laxity have intensity of clarity and all meditative stabilizations that are free of excitement have the factor of stability.

THIRD DEBATE

Incorrect position: The definition of a calm abiding is:

a steady meditative stabilization in which the prominence^a of laxity and excitement has been broken and the mind is one-pointed.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, the meditative stabilization of the ninth mental abiding, which is a Desire Realm mind, is calm abiding because of being a steady meditative stabilization in which the prominence of laxity and excitement has been broken.

The reason [namely, that the meditative stabilization of the ninth mental abiding, which is a Desire Realm mind, is a steady meditative stabilization in which the prominence of laxity and excitement has been broken and the mind is one-pointed] is established because, at the time of [the ninth mental abiding], the fault of laxity and excitement does not exist and one has already gained a steady meditative

^a 549.3, reading *dbal chag* instead of *dbal chog*.

stabilization in which the prominence or intensity of those [namely, laxity and excitement] has been broken. This is because Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* says:

Although, having attained the ninth mind [of the Desire Realm], one has not purposely made the exertion of entering into equipoise, one's mind goes entirely into meditative stabilization.^a

You cannot accept the root statement [that the meditative stabilization of the ninth mental abiding, which is a Desire Realm mind, is calm abiding] because it is a meditative stabilization before one has attained pliancy. It is entailed [that whatever is a meditative stabilization before one has attained pliancy is necessarily not calm abiding] because, until one has attained pliancy, that meditative stabilization is a similitude of calm abiding, but when one has attained pliancy, it is posited as calm abiding.

Moreover, it [absurdly] follows that the subject, the meditative stabilization of the ninth mind of the Desire Realm, [550] is of a level of equipoise^b because [according to you] it is calm abiding. You have asserted the reason [namely, that the ninth mind of the Desire Realm is calm abiding].

It is entailed [that whatever is calm abiding is necessarily of a level of equipoise] because, in terms of arising from training, the attainment of calm abiding, the attainment^c of a mind included within the level of equipoise, the attainment of a mind included within the levels of an upper realm, the attainment of a preparation for the first concentration, the attainment of the preparation [called] the not-unable, the attainment of a lesser meditative stabilization or one-pointed mind included within the levels of an upper realm, and the attainment of physical and mental pliancy are simultaneous. This is because Asaṅga's *Grounds of Hearers* says:

The signs of having a mental contemplation of a beginner are these: the attainment of a lesser [kind of the] mind involved in the Form Realm in this way, and the attainment of lesser [kinds of] the four—physical pliancy, mental pliancy, and a

^a Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* (Dharamsala: shes rig par khang, no date), 724.4–5.

^b 550.1, reading *mnyam par bzhag pa'i sa'i* instead of *mnyam par bzhag sa'i sa*.

^c 550.1, reading *thob pa* instead of *thab pa*.

lesser one-pointed mind....^a

It is entailed [that this passage from Asaṅga's *Grounds of Hearers* means that, in terms of arising from training, the attainment of calm abiding, the attainment of a mind included within the level of equipoise, the attainment of a mind included within the levels of an upper realm, the attainment of a preparation for the first concentration, the attainment of the preparation called the not-unable, the attainment of a lesser meditative stabilization or one-pointed mind included within the levels of an upper realm, and the attainment of physical and mental pliancy are simultaneous] because "beginner" means one who is new or unfamiliar; "mental contemplation" is posited as calm abiding; "having" (*bcas pa*) is posited as possessing or having (*yod pa*) that; and "the signs of [having the mental contemplation of a beginner]" is to be taken as the signs of having just attained calm abiding.

If you accept the root statement [that the meditative stabilization of the ninth mind of the Desire Realm is of a level of equipoise], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, [the meditative stabilization of the ninth mind of the Desire Realm], is without contrition, is generated by supreme joy and bliss, and is conjoined with pliancy because [according to you] (1) it is a meditative stabilization included within the levels of an upper realm; (2) the meditative stabilizations [included within the levels of the upper realms] must have those features, and (3) there is the correct distinction that, although a Desire Realm mind does not possess those [features], it has a thorough contemplation.

FOURTH DEBATE

Incorrect positions: (1) The nine mental abidings are minds. (2) The nine [mental abidings] are mental contemplations.

Correct position: [551] It follows that both are incorrect because the nine [mental abidings] are meditative stabilizations. This is because the nine [mental abidings] are similitudes of calm abiding.

FIFTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: A wisdom consciousness that is associated with the first mental abiding is the first mental abiding from the point of view of

^a Asaṅga, *Grounds of Hearers*, Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series, vol. 14, p. 433; P5537, vol. 110, 115.1.1-2.

its entity.^a

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, [a wisdom consciousness that is associated with the first mental abiding], is in the class of calm abiding because you have asserted [that a wisdom consciousness that is associated with the first mental abiding is the first mental abiding from the point of view of its entity].

You cannot accept [that a wisdom consciousness that is associated with the first mental abiding is in the class of calm abiding] because it is in the class of special insight. This is because it is a wisdom consciousness that thoroughly analyzes phenomena.

SIXTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: The four mental engagements^b in the context of newly achieving calm abiding are mental contemplations.^c

Correct position: This is incorrect because those four [mental engagements] are similitudes of calm abiding.

Incorrect position: It [absurdly] follows that [the four mental engagements] in the context of newly achieving special insight are also [mental contemplations] because you have asserted [that the four mental engagements in the context of newly achieving calm abiding are mental contemplations].

Another incorrect position: You cannot accept [that the four mental engagements in the context of newly achieving calm abiding are mental contemplations] because they are in the class of special insight. This is because they are in the class of special insight from the point of view of their concomitants.

Correct position: It is not entailed that whatever is in the class of special insight from the point of view of its concomitants is necessarily in the class of special insight.

^a It is the first mental abiding from the point of view of its concomitants, not from the point of view of its entity.

^b *yid byed, manaskāra.*

^c *yid byed, manaskāra.*

SEVENTH DEBATE^a

Incorrect position: When one is meditating on emptiness, ascertainment of emptiness is induced [by reasoning]. Then, within non-degeneration of the mode of apprehension of emptiness, setting [the mind] non-analytically is the mode of sustaining the full form of the view of emptiness or special insight into it.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, such meditation, is the mode of cultivating the wisdom and special insight realizing emptiness because [according to you] it is the mode of cultivating the view and special insight realizing emptiness. You have accepted the reason [namely, that such meditation is the mode of cultivating the view and special insight realizing emptiness].

You cannot accept [that such meditation is the mode of cultivating the wisdom and special insight realizing emptiness] because it is the mode of cultivating the calm abiding and meditative stabilization realizing emptiness. This is because it is stabilizing meditation realizing emptiness.

It is entailed [that whatever is stabilizing meditation realizing emptiness is necessarily the mode of cultivating the calm abiding and meditative stabilization realizing emptiness] because stabilizing meditation realizing emptiness [552] is the cultivation of meditative stabilization on [emptiness] and the cultivation of calm abiding [having emptiness as its object of observation], and analytical meditation realizing emptiness is the cultivation of wisdom [realizing emptiness] and the cultivation of special insight [realizing emptiness].

EIGHTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: There is a wisdom arisen from meditating on emptiness as object of observation in the path of accumulation of one who is definite in the Mahāyāna lineage.

Correct position: It follows that this is incorrect because the attainment of the wisdom arisen from meditating on such, of the special insight on such, and of the heat [stage of the] Mahāyāna path of preparation are simultaneous.

Incorrect position with respect to that: It follows that [someone on the path

^a This debate is given in somewhat different form in Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 557–58, from Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of the Concentrations and Formless Absorptions*, pp. 69–70.

of accumulation who is definite in the Mahāyāna lineage] attains [a wisdom arising from meditating on emptiness as object of observation] because a wisdom consciousness associated with calm abiding [observing emptiness] is such. It follows [that a wisdom consciousness associated with calm abiding observing emptiness is such] because (1) it is a state arisen from meditation [on emptiness as object of observation] and (2) it is a wisdom consciousness.

Correct position: In one aspect, it is not entailed [that whatever arises from meditating on emptiness as object of observation and is a wisdom consciousness is necessarily a wisdom consciousness associated with calm abiding observing emptiness].

NINTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: There is no [mental contemplation of] individual knowledge of the character viewing grossness/peacefulness in which a calm abiding which is a mental contemplation of the level of equipoise acts as the mental basis.^a

Correct position: It follows that that is incorrect because there is the correct distinction that, although there is individual knowledge of the character for which [calm abiding] acts as the mental basis, those two are not fit to be associated. The reason [namely, that there is the correct distinction that, although there is individual knowledge of the character for which calm abiding acts as the mental basis, those two are not fit to be associated] is established because at that time calm abiding, as well as [those consciousnesses] that are associated with it, has become somewhat hidden, and individual knowledge of the character, as well as [those consciousnesses] that are associated with it, has become manifest. This is because, with respect to those two, until the attainment of a union [of calm abiding and special insight], when one is manifest the other becomes hidden, as in the example of scales.

TENTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the explanation of the practice of calm abiding and special insight^b individually is incorrect because there is a simultaneous attainment of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness. It follows [that there is a simultaneous attainment of calm

^a 552.2–3, reading *yid byed kyi zhi gnas kyis* instead of *yid byed kyis zhi gnas kyi*.

^b 552.6. Literally, “of both calm abiding and special insight” (*zhi lhag gnyis ka'i*).

abiding and special insight observing emptiness] because [553] it is permissible to cultivate special insight [observing emptiness] without achieving calm abiding by way of the nine mental abidings observing emptiness.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if it is permissible to cultivate special insight observing emptiness without achieving calm abiding by way of the nine mental abidings observing emptiness, there is necessarily a simultaneous attainment of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness] because there is the correct distinction that, although a calm abiding observing emptiness must precede attainment of special insight observing emptiness, it is not necessary definitely to achieve calm abiding by way of the nine mental abidings observing emptiness. It follows [that there is the correct distinction that, although a calm abiding observing emptiness must precede attainment of special insight observing emptiness, it is not necessary definitely to achieve calm abiding by way of the nine mental abidings observing emptiness] because if one has achieved, by way of the nine mental abidings, a calm abiding observing either the mode or [any of] the varieties before [attaining special insight observing emptiness], it is sufficient [to attain special insight observing emptiness] by way of that [calm abiding]. This is because, after achieving calm abiding [observing any of] the varieties, one comes to achieve calm abiding observing emptiness at the time of individual knowledge of the character realizing emptiness. This is because, when pliancy is induced in doing stabilizing meditation on emptiness at the end of analyzing emptiness at the time of individual knowledge [of the character], one attains calm abiding observing emptiness.

ELEVENTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: There is no definiteness about the order of meditation for newly achieving calm abiding and special insight because Asaṅga's *Summary of Manifest Knowledge* says, "Some achieve special insight but have not achieved calm abiding..."^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that this passage means that there is no definiteness about the order of meditation for newly achieving calm abiding and special insight] because, since there are the two,

^a Asaṅga, *Summary of Manifest Knowledge*, P5550, vol. 112, 263.3.3-4; Rahula, trans., *Le Compendium de la super-doctrine*, p. 126. Paṅ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa, "Concentrations," 155a.3 cites the rest of the sentence.

concordant and fully qualified, with respect to the special insight explicitly indicated in this [passage], (1) in terms of the concordant, the meaning is that, having attained analytical meditation observing the mode or [any of] the varieties, one also again achieves the stabilizing meditation of the nine mental abidings and (2) in terms of the fully qualified, the meaning is that there is effort to attain the calm abiding included within an actual concentration in dependence upon special insight observing selflessness.

The first reason [namely, that in terms of the concordant, the meaning is that, having attained analytical meditation observing the mode or any of the varieties, one also easily achieves the stabilizing meditation of the nine mental abidings] is established because [554] the meaning is that, having attained the four—thorough differentiation, and so forth—observing the mode or any of the varieties, one makes effort in the nine mental abidings. The reason [namely, that the meaning is that, having attained the four—thorough differentiation and so forth—observing the mode or any of the varieties, one makes effort in the nine mental abidings] is established because Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* says, "Moreover, from suffering [through] the path,...right after that, one sets the mind and does not do analysis."^a

It is entailed [that this passage means that the meaning of the previously cited passage is that, having attained the four—thorough differentiation, and so forth—observing the mode or any of the varieties, one makes effort in the nine mental abidings] because "right after that" indicates that at the time of the uninterrupted paths one does analytical meditation and at the time of the paths of release one does stabilizing meditation.

TWELFTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: There is no simultaneous attainment of the two, calm abiding and special insight, because there is none in terms of arising from training.

^a Asaṅga, *Actuality of the Grounds*, P5536, vol. 109, 283.4.2–3. Paṅ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa cites the passage in full (Paṅ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa, "Concentrations," 155a.5–6). Kön-chok-jik-may-wang-po abridges and paraphrases the end of the sentence (*rnam par 'byed par mi byed do*, "does not do analysis," whereas Paṅ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa, "Concentrations," 155a.6 and P5536, vol. 109, 283.4.3 read "*chos rnam par 'byed par mi byed do*, "does not engage in differentiating phenomena." Paṅ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa also gives the next sentence, *de lhag pa'i shes rab de nyid la brten nas lhag ba'i sems la sbyor bar byed do*, "In dependence upon just this special wisdom, that [person] trains in the special mind [namely, an actual first concentration]."

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if there is no simultaneous attainment of the two, calm abiding and special insight, in terms of arising from training, there is necessarily no simultaneous attainment of them].

You cannot accept [that there is no simultaneous attainment of the two, calm abiding and special insight] because (1) there is attainment of the four actual meditative absorptions of the concentrations by the force of nature and (2) at the time of [that attainment] one must simultaneously attain the two, calm abiding and special insight.

The first reason [namely, that there is attainment of the four actual meditative absorptions of the concentrations by the force of nature] is easy.

The second reason [namely that at the time of that attainment, one, must simultaneously attain the two, calm abiding and special insight] is established because whatever person has attained an actual meditative absorption of a concentration is necessarily a person who has attained both calm abiding and special insight. It follows [that whatever person has attained an actual meditative absorption of a concentration is necessarily a person who has attained both calm abiding and special insight] because there are each of the entailments that (1) whatever is a wisdom consciousness that is an actual meditative absorption of a concentration is necessarily a special insight and (2) whatever meditative stabilization is [an actual meditative absorption of a concentration] is necessarily a calm abiding.

THIRTEENTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: After achieving calm abiding, one does only analytical meditation.

Correct position: It follows that that [position] is incorrect because, if one did such, on this occasion of newly achieving special insight, the former calm abiding would become non-existent and because it is the system of both sūtra and mantra that, if one analyzes too much, one comes under the influence of excitement, and if one stabilizes without analysis, laxity and lethargy are generated. [555]

Our own system

There are five parts: (1) the benefits of the cultivation of the two, calm abiding and special insight; (2) how those two include all meditative stabilizations; (3) the reasons for the necessity of cultivating both; (4)

the stages; (5) individual explanations [of each].

(1) The benefits of the cultivation of the two, calm abiding and special insight. Although all the good qualities of the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna are not included in the fruit of mere actual calm abiding and special insight, they are definitely included in the fruit of the practice of those two because, with respect to the good qualities of the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, without depending on the practice of either meditative stabilization or wisdom—[that is,] on [the practice] of either stabilizing meditation or analytical meditation—no attainment whatever appears. The reason [namely that, with respect to the good qualities of the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, without depending on the practice of either meditative stabilization or wisdom—that is, on the practice of either stabilizing meditation or analytical meditation—no attainment whatever appears] is established because those [good qualities] that depend on meditation are attained in dependence upon either analytical or stabilizing meditation, but those that do not depend on [meditation, such] as the good qualities arisen from hearing, arise from the practice of either a one-pointed mind or wisdom—that is, hearing or thinking.

(2) How those two [calm abiding and special insight] include all meditative stabilizations. All meditative stabilizations are included in those two because all non-Buddhist and Buddhist meditative stabilizations are included in those two in terms of their manner of practice.

(3) The reasons for the necessity of cultivating both. One who wishes to abandon the obstructions must cultivate both calm abiding and special insight because one cannot see reality clearly by means of either by itself,^a without cultivating both. The reason [namely, that one cannot see reality clearly by means of either by itself, without cultivating both] is established because, although one has a steady meditative stabilization in which there is no investigation, if there is no wisdom consciousness realizing reality, realization of the mode of being does not occur, and although one realized reality, if one did not have a steady meditative stabilization, clear seeing of the meaning-generality of the mode of being would not occur.

(4) The order [of achieving calm abiding and special insight]. [556] In this context of new achievement, one must initially generate calm abiding and, after that, special insight because, without the generation of

^a 555.5, reading *gang rung re res* instead of *gang rung res*, following Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 102.7.

such, no achieving of special insight would occur.

In the context of Highest Yoga Tantra, there is a generation of special insight realizing selflessness without the previous achievement of calm abiding because, by reason of having overcome all coarse conceptuality through having greatly trained in analysis—that is, the spreading out and collecting back in [of vajras, for instance] at the time of just the eighth or ninth mental abiding, one's meditative stabilization and pliancy are much greater, by way of the empowering blessing of the object of observation and the essence of the object-of-observation condition, than they would have been if one had attained [meditative stabilization and pliancy before doing the spreading out and collecting back in].

The reason [namely that, by reason of having overcome all coarse conceptuality through having greatly trained in analysis that is, the spreading out and collecting back in of vajras, for instance at the time of just the eighth or ninth mental abiding, one's meditative stabilization and pliancy are much greater, by way of the empowering blessing of the object and the essence of the object-of-observation condition, than they would have been if one had attained meditative stabilization and pliancy before doing the spreading out and collecting back in] is established because, in this context of Highest Yoga Tantra in which there is a generation of special insight observing emptiness without one's having first passed through analytical meditation observing emptiness, there is generation simultaneously of the two, calm abiding and special insight.

Also, for understanding the view and realizing selflessness, it is not necessary for calm abiding to precede [understanding the view and realizing selflessness] because, although one has not attained calm abiding, there are many cases of developing experience with respect to [the view] upon analyzing one-pointedly, as in [realizing] impermanence and [generating] the altruistic mind of enlightenment, for example.

On high [Bodhisattva] grounds, even without dependence upon calm abiding, there are cases of developing experience arisen from analytical meditation with respect to selflessness because, on high [Bodhisattva] grounds, there are cases of developing experience arisen from meditation without depending upon pliancy. It is entailed [that if, on high Bodhisattva grounds, there are cases of developing experience arisen from meditation without depending upon pliancy, then on high Bodhisattva grounds, even without dependence upon calm abiding, there are cases of developing experience arisen from analytical meditation with respect to selflessness] because, for common beings, states

arisen from meditation do not develop until the attainment of special pliancy, but on high [Bodhisattva] grounds, there are uninterrupted paths even with Desire Realm minds. This is because, even in the systems of all four schools of tenets, [557] there are no states not arisen from meditation among either uninterrupted paths or paths of release.

Question: Are states arisen from meditation not differentiated according to whether one has attained pliancy?

[Answer:] Although, with respect to beginners, whether [a path consciousness is a state arisen from meditation] is differentiated according to whether one has attained pliancy and a preparation for the first concentration, and so forth, such is not definite with respect to high [Bodhisattva] grounds. Therefore, there is a meaning of “arisen from meditation” because the development of experience through the power of meditation in which [one’s mind] has become singly of the nature only of meditation, having passed beyond states arisen from thinking, is such.

Explanation of the mode of training individually in calm abiding and special insight

This [has three parts]: the explanations of (a) calm abiding, (b) special insight, and (c) the mode of union [of calm abiding and special insight].

Explanation of calm abiding

The definition of a calm abiding is:

a meditative stabilization arisen from meditation which is conjoined with special pliancy.

There is an etymology because, since the mind, having pacified distractions to external objects, abides internally on an object of observation, it is called [calm abiding].

With respect to prerequisites, there are many [presentations] because there are the six explained in Kamalashīla’s *Stages of Meditation* and the thirty-four explained in Asaṅga’s *Grounds of Hearers*.

There are objects of observation because there are the four—pervasive objects of observation, and so forth.^a When the first,

^a The four are: pervasive objects of observation (*khyab pa'i dmigs pa*, *vyāpyāḷambana*), objects of observation for purifying behavior (*spyad pa rnam sbyong gi dmigs pa*,

pervasive objects of observation, is divided, there are the four: the two images from the point of view of the observing [consciousness, observing the] the limits of phenomena (*dnogs po'i mtha' la dmigs pa, vastvantālaṃbana*) from the point of view of the object observed, and thorough achievement of the purpose (*dgos pa yongs su grub pa, kṛtyānuṣṭāna*) from the point of view of the fruit. There is a meaning of the first two [analytical image (*rnam par rtog pa dang bcas pa'i gzugs brnyan, savikalpakapratibimba*) and non-analytical image (*rnam par mi rtog pa'i gzugs brnyan, nirvikalpapakapratibimba*)] because “conceptual” (*rnam par rtog pa, savikalpaka*) and “non-conceptual” (*rnam par mi rtog pa, nirvikalpaka*) refer to analytical and non-analytical, and “image” (*gzugs brnyan, pratibimba*) [or “reflection”] refers to the dawning of the object of observation.

When the second, objects of observation for purifying behavior,^a is divided, [558] there are the five: ugliness as an antidote to desire, love as an antidote to hatred, dependent-arising as an antidote to obscurations, the divisions of the constituents as an antidote to pride, and meditation on exhalation and inhalation as an antidote to excessive discursiveness.

When the third, objects of observation for [developing] skill, is divided, there are the five: skill with respect to the aggregates, the constituents, the sources, dependent-arising, and the appropriate and the inappropriate.

The fourth, objects of observation for purifying afflictions, has two [types] because there are the two, (1) the factor of grossness/peacefulness according to the mundane path and (2) impermanence, and so forth[—that is,] the sixteen [attributes of the four truths] and so forth—according to the supramundane path.^b

caritaviśodanālaṃbana), objects of observation for [developing] skill (*mkhas pa'i dmigs pa, kauśalyālaṃbana*), and objects of observation for purifying afflictive emotions (*nyon mongs rnam sbyong gi dmigs pa, kleśaviśodanālaṃbana*).

^a 557.6, reading *spyad pa* instead of *dpyad pa*.

^b “Impermanence, and so forth—the sixteen,” as the text literally reads, refers in a condensed form to the sixteen aspects of the four truths (See *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 292–96, and *Meditative States*, pp. 134–43). The second “and so forth” refers to the three selflessnesses that are the objects of observation of Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and Bodhisattvas according to the Yogācāra-Svātantrika-Madhyamaka school of tenets, traditionally used in Ge-luk monastic universities for teaching the topic of the Perfection of Wisdom and its subtopics, including the concentrations and formless absorptions. The three selflessnesses are, respectively, non-existence of a self-sufficient person, non-existence of subjects and objects as different entities, and non-existence of truly existent phenomena (See *ibid.*, p. 298, chart 36).

There is meditation on certain objects of observation by certain persons, for although, in general, there is no need to delimit the objects of observation of calm abiding, those with excessive desire, and so forth, should definitely use ugliness, and so forth, because one does not succeed in the generation of a steady meditative stabilization without controlling the prominence of [a predominant] affliction by way of that object of observation. Persons who have behaviors of equal afflictions or who have slight afflictions do not definitely have to observe a specific object of observation [from among these] because, even though they depend on any among the specific objects of observation previously explained, they will easily achieve [calm abiding].

It is better to observe the body of a Buddha than [to observe] all those objects of observation [previously explained] because, in addition to having all the functions which the other objects of observation have, it acts as the two, the generator of meditative stabilization and that which quickly completes the collections even in each session of mindfulness [on a Buddha's body].

HOW TO ACHIEVE CALM ABIDING

[559]

This has two parts: the actual [mode of achievement] and the measure of having achieved [calm abiding].

[ACTUAL MODE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF CALM ABIDING]

This has two parts: explanation of the mode of achieving [calm abiding] by way of the eight applications [that is, antidotes] that abandon the five faults and explanation of the way in which the nine mental abidings, the four mental engagements, and the six powers arise at that time.

EXPLANATION OF THE MODE OF ACHIEVING [CALM ABIDING] BY WAY OF THE EIGHT APPLICATIONS [THAT IS, ANTIDOTES] THAT ABANDON THE FIVE FAULTS

When a beginner newly works at achieving meditative stabilization, it is necessary to achieve^a [meditative stabilization] by way of eight applications which abandon five faults because it is necessary to achieve by way of the eight: the four—faith, aspiration, exertion, and pliancy—as antidotes to laziness; mindfulness as an antidote to forgetting the

^a 559.4, reading *bsgrub* instead of *bsgrab*.

object of observation; introspection as an antidote to non-identification of laxity and excitement; with respect to the antidote when laxity and excitement arise, application as an antidote to non-application; and when the prominence of laxity and excitement has been broken, non-application as an antidote to the exertion of application.

At the time of training (*sbyor*), there is the fault of laziness because one will not connect (*sbyor*) to meditative stabilization. When laziness is divided, there are three [types of] laziness—of neutral activities, attachment to bad activities, and inferiority.

When one exerts oneself for the sake of meditative stabilization, forgetting the instruction, and so forth, is a fault^a because, if one forgets the object of observation at that time, one will not enter into equipoise. When [forgetting the instruction] is divided, there are two in terms of laxity and excitement.

At the time of entering into equipoise, the two, laxity and excitement, are faults because they cause non-serviceability of mind.

When laxity and excitement arise, non-exertion is a fault because, as a result of [non-exertion], those two [laxity and excitement] will not be pacified. When [non-exertion] is divided, there are three [types of] non-exertion in terms of the three [types of] laziness.

When one is free from laxity and excitement, application [of the antidotes] is a fault [560] because, since the mind has been distracted by such application, meditative stabilization cannot increase. When [over-application] is divided, there are two [types of mistaken] exertion in the antidotes—[one] when even subtle laxity does not exist and [the other] when even subtle excitement does not exist. The boundaries are the ninth mental abiding and above.

The definition of laxity is:

an internal distraction which is a mental factor that slackens the intensity of the mind's clarity when one cultivates virtue.

When [laxity] is divided, there are the two, virtuous and neutral. The entities of the two, laxity and lethargy, are dissimilar because lethargy is a factor of obscuration and accompanies all afflictions, [whereas] laxity does not accompany desire, hatred, and so forth, at all. Those two [laxity and lethargy] have dissimilar functions because lethargy makes the mind and body dull, [whereas] laxity does not do so.

The definition of excitement is:

^a 559.5, reading *nyes pa* instead of *tes pa*.

a secondary^a affliction, belonging to the class of desire, which is a non-pacification with respect to a pleasant object and a scattering to the outside, its function being to interrupt [the cultivation of] calm abiding.

When [excitement] is divided, there are the two, afflicted aspiration and [afflicted] wishing, and the five desires with respect to the five sense-objects. With respect to scattering, since there is scattering to various [objects], virtuous and non-virtuous, it is not the same as excitement.

There is a definition of effort, which is an antidote to laziness, because “that intention which observes and is enthusiastic about a virtuous object of observation” is [the definition]. There is that which is exertion but is not effort because exertion toward a neutral object is such. There is that which is effort but is not exertion because that which is enthusiastic about virtue but does not apply itself is such. There is a possibility which is both because exertion which is enthusiastic about virtue is such.

There is aspiration in this [context] because the aspiration that seeks the good qualities of meditative stabilization [561] is such.

There is faith because the faith of conviction in the good qualities of meditative stabilization is such.

There is a fifth antidote because mindfulness which does not forget the object of observation is such.

There is a sixth antidote because introspection which investigates,^b in dependence upon mindfulness, whether or not the mind is cut off from the object of observation by laxity, excitement, and so forth, is such.

There is a seventh antidote because the intention that consists of exertion in applying antidotes when laxity and excitement arise is such.

There is an eighth antidote because, when the prominence of laxity and excitement has been subdued, the compositional factor of equanimity [or, desisting from application] causes the mind to enter into its natural state at the time of the mental engagement of spontaneous engagement and above is such. This does not exist below the eighth mental abiding.

^a 560.4, reading *nye nyon* instead of *nya nyon*.

^b 561.2, reading *rtog* instead of *rtogs*. Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of the Concentrations and Formless Absorptions* (148.4) also reads *rtog*.

EXPLANATION OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE NINE MENTAL ABIDINGS, THE FOUR MENTAL ENGAGEMENTS, AND THE SIX POWERS ARISE AT THAT TIME

This has three parts: explanation of how the four mental engagements arise with the nine mental [abidings]; explanation of the nine mental abidings, and explanation of how [the nine mental abidings] are achieved by way of the six powers.

[Explanation of how the four mental engagements arise with the nine mental abidings]

[The explanation of how the four mental engagements arise with the nine mental abidings] exists because (1) in the first and second mental abidings, the mental engagement of forcible engagement arises; (2) in the third through the seventh [mental abidings], the mental engagement of interrupted engagement arises; (3) in the eighth [mental abiding], the mental engagement of uninterrupted engagement arises; (4) in the ninth [mental abiding], the mental engagement of engagement without exertion arises.^a

[Explanation of the nine mental abidings]

(1) The first of the nine mental abidings that precede calm abiding, setting the mind only inside, exists because the first meditative stabilization, or imputed^b mental contemplation, which, having withdrawn from all external objects of observation [562] and pursuant to the hearing of the instruction, focuses on an object of observation internally, is such.

(2) The entity of the second [mental abiding], continuous setting, exists because the second meditative stabilization, which is able to prolong to some extent the continuum of the mind's [remaining] without distraction on the object of observation, is such.^c

(3) The entity of the third [mental abiding], resetting, exists because the third meditative stabilization, which quickly recognizes distraction and again binds the mind to the object of observation with the mindfulness [of a practitioner] whose mind has become somewhat

^a Engagement without exertion is also known as spontaneous engagement (*lhun grub tu 'jug pa, anābhogavāhana*).

^b 562.1, reading *btags pa ba* instead of *dag pa ba*, following Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Collected Works*, vol. 12, 138.7.

^c "Entity" means definition.

familiar with the object of observation, is such.

(4) The entity of the fourth [mental abiding], close setting, exists because the fourth meditative stabilization, which sets [the mind] better [on the object of observation], having withdrawn the mind from the vast [array of] objects of observation by the influence of mindfulness, is such.^a

(5) The entity of the fifth [mental abiding], disciplining, exists because the fifth meditative stabilization, which takes joy in the good qualities of meditative stabilization in dependence upon powerful introspection, is such.

(6) The entity of the sixth mental abiding, pacifying, exists because the sixth meditative stabilization, which blocks distraction in dependence upon [powerful] introspection, is such.

(7) The entity of the seventh mental abiding, thorough pacifying, exists because the seventh meditative stabilization, which pacifies mental attachment [to attributes of the Desire Realm], mental discomfort, lethargy and sleep, and so forth, is such.

(8) The entity of the eighth mental abiding, making one-pointed, exists because the eighth meditative stabilization, which has the capacity to set continuously in meditative stabilization without the interruption of even subtle laxity or excitement, is such.

(9) The entity of the ninth mental abiding, setting in equipoise, exists because the ninth meditative stabilization, which is the self-flowing dawning of meditative stabilization without reliance on striving and exertion, is such.

[Explanation of how the nine mental abidings are achieved by way of the six powers]

[563] The first mental abiding is achieved by the power of hearing; the second mental abiding, by the power of thinking; the third and fourth [mental abidings], by the power of mindfulness; the fifth and sixth, by the power of introspection; the seventh and eighth, by the power of effort; and the ninth mental abiding, by the power of familiarity.

[MEASURE OF HAVING ACHIEVED CALM ABIDING]

There is a measure of having achieved calm abiding because [calm abiding] is achieved when the ninth mental abiding is conjoined with

^a This is the point at which the practitioner's mind stops scattering to other objects of observation.

special pliancy. There is an order of generating pliancies and achieving calm abiding because a slight pliancy is generated at the beginning of the ninth mental abiding; after that, mental pliancy is generated; after that, physical pliancy is generated; in dependence upon that, a great sense of physical bliss is generated; by the force of that, the bliss of mental pliancy is generated; and calm abiding is achieved simultaneously with the attainment of an unfluctuating pliancy in which the mind abides vividly on the object of observation, the feverish joy immediately after the generation of physical pliancy having diminished a little.

Pliancy is a factor of serviceability that is included within either the form aggregate or the aggregate of compositional factors. The two, the assumption of bad physical states and physical pliancy, are form aggregates and tangible objects; the two, the assumption of bad mental states and mental pliancy, are mental-factor compositional factors.

Explanation of special insight

The definition of a special insight is:

a wisdom consciousness that thoroughly differentiates phenomena and is conjoined with special pliancy that is induced by the power of analysis. [564]

There are prerequisites of special insight because there are the three, reliance on an excellent being, and so forth.^a

When special insight is divided into four, there are the four: (a) the two, thorough differentiation observing the varieties and very thorough differentiation observing the mode; and also (b) with respect to each of those two, investigation, which is differentiation of coarse meaning, and analysis, which is differentiation of subtle meaning.

When [special insight] is divided into three, there are the three special insights of the three approaches; there are the three—special insight that arises from signs, special insight that arises from thorough examination, and special insight that arises from individual analysis.

When it is divided into six, when one has thoroughly examined and investigated meaning, things, character, class, time, and reasoning,

^a These three are: reliance on an excellent being, to have thoroughly sought much hearing of the doctrine, and proper contemplation of the meaning heard. (Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 162.2–3. See Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 92. Hopkins notes in conversation that Jam-yang-shay-pa's source, which he does not cite, is Tsong-kha-pa's *Middling Exposition of the Stages of the Path*.)

there are the six [types of] special insight of individual analysis. Therefore, the approaches of the four special insights—thorough differentiation, and so forth—are the three [approaches—special insight that arises from signs, and so forth], and with respect to the examinations, they are posited as six.

There is an etymology because, since it sees beyond or more specially than calm abiding, it is explained as special insight.

There is a mode of cultivating special insight in this context of a beginner's newly achieving special insight because it is cultivated through [a beginner's] having alternated analytical and stabilizing meditations.

There is a measure of having achieved special insight because, by the power of analysis which analyzes in this way, one attains special pliancy and, simultaneously, one attains special insight, a union of calm abiding and special insight, the mental contemplation of belief, and a mental contemplation that is a purifier of afflictions. [565]

Mode of union of calm abiding and special insight

There is a mode of union of calm abiding and special insight because an operation having in association the two—special insight, which thoroughly differentiates phenomena, and one-pointed calm abiding—at one time in equal power, is such.

Dispelling objections

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that all the good qualities of the three vehicles are included in the fruits of cultivating in meditation the two, calm abiding and special insight, because they are included in the fruits of practicing those two.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if all the good qualities of the three vehicles are included in the fruits of practicing the two, calm abiding and special insight, they are necessarily included in the fruits of cultivating those two in meditation].

The reason [namely, that all the good qualities of the three vehicles are included in the fruits of practicing the two, calm abiding and special insight] is established because there are the three—hearing, thinking, and meditating—in the practice of both of those.

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the two, calm abiding and special insight, do not arise simultaneously because Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* says, "Moreover, they are not simultaneous, but...they are experienced in a continuum."^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that this citation from Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* means that the two, calm abiding and special insight, do not arise simultaneously] because the meaning of that [passage] is that the two, special insight which analyzes and the stabilizing meditation that abides at the end of analysis, do not come simultaneously [when one is cultivating special insight].

THIRD DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that it is incorrect to say that at that time [of the union of calm abiding and special insight] the powers of the two [calm abiding and special insight] are equal in strength because, when one analyzes, there is a greater power of special insight and, when one stabilizes, there is a greater power of calm abiding. It follows [that when one analyzes, there is a greater power of special insight and, when one stabilizes, a greater power of calm abiding] because, at that time, [the power of analysis] induces a powerful calm abiding.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if, at that time, the power of analysis induces a powerful calm abiding, then, when one analyzes, there is necessarily a greater power of special insight and, when one stabilizes, a greater power of calm abiding].

The reason [namely, that at that time, the power of analysis induces a powerful calm abiding] is established because, at that time, as great as the power of analysis is, so great is the power of calm abiding, and as great as the power of calm abiding is, so great is the power of analysis.

Incorrect position with respect to that: It follows that, at that time, there is no analysis with respect to [the object of observation] because, at that time, [the practitioner] abides one-pointedly on [the object of observation].

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if the practitioner abides one-pointedly on the object of observation at that time, there is necessarily

^a Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* (Dharamsala: shes rig par khang, no date), 1061.5.

no analysis with respect to the object of observation at that time].

FOURTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that, at that time [of the union of calm abiding and special insight], one observes a single object of observation^a [566] because observing only a single object of observation is the meaning of one-pointedness. This is because observing only one's own object of observation is the meaning of [one-pointedness].

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if observing only one's own object of observation is the meaning of one-pointedness, observing only a single object of observation is necessarily the meaning of one-pointedness] because the term "observing only one's own object of observation" eliminates that which is not [one's own object of observation] but does not eliminate that one's own object of observation may be manifold.

FIFTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that whatever is special insight in this context must be analytical meditation because stabilizing meditation is the cultivation of calm abiding.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if stabilizing meditation is the cultivation of calm abiding, then whatever is special insight in this context must be analytical meditation].

The reason [namely, that stabilizing meditation is the cultivation of calm abiding] is established because the three—the cultivation of calm abiding, stabilizing meditation, and the cultivation of meditative stabilization—are mutually inclusive, and the three—the cultivation of wisdom, analytical meditation, and the cultivation of special insight—are mutually inclusive.

You cannot accept [that whatever is special insight in this context must be analytical meditation] because there is also a stabilizing meditation with respect to [special insight in this context]. This is because special insight that arises from signs is stabilizing meditation.

^a 565.6, reading *gcig la dmigs par thal* instead of *gcig la ma dmigs par thal*.

*MODE OF ENTERING INTO MEDITATIVE ABSORPTION IN THE EIGHT
CONCENTRATIONS AND FORMLESS ABSORPTIONS BY WAY OF THE
SEVEN MENTAL CONTEMPLATIONS*

[566.4]

Refutation [of mistaken opinions]

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: The calm abiding in the continuum of a person who has just attained calm abiding is both a beginner at mental contemplation and the mental contemplation of a beginner.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, [the calm abiding in the continuum of a person who has just attained calm abiding], is the ninth mental abiding because [according to you] it is a beginner at mental contemplation. It is entailed [that whatever is a beginner at mental contemplation is necessarily the ninth mental abiding] because the mental contemplation [of a beginner] is calm abiding and a beginner at [mental contemplation—that is, calm abiding] must be posited as a person who possesses in his mental continuum a meditative stabilization that is a precursor to [mental contemplation—that is, calm abiding] and because the boundaries also are posited as ranging from someone who has the ninth mental abiding to someone who has not yet attained calm abiding. [567]

If you accept the root statement [that the calm abiding in the continuum of a person who has just attained calm abiding is the ninth mental abiding] it absurdly follows that the subject, [the calm abiding in the continuum of a person who has just attained calm abiding], is both a person who has not yet achieved calm abiding and a mental contemplation because you have accepted [that the calm abiding in the continuum of a person who has just attained calm abiding is the ninth mental abiding].

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: The mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character is^a a mental contemplation that purifies afflictive emotions.

^a 567.1, reading *yid byed yin zer ba* instead of *yid byed min zer ba*.

Correct position: It follows that this statement is incorrect because [the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character] is the mental contemplation of a beginner at purifying afflictive emotions. The reason [namely, that the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character is the mental contemplation of a beginner at purifying afflictive emotions] is established because, with respect to “mental contemplation of a beginner” in this context, there are those two types [namely, calm abiding and the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character]. It follows [that with respect to “mental contemplation of a beginner” in this context, there are those two types—namely, calm abiding and the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character] because, with respect to [the term] “beginner” in this context, there are two types: a beginner at mental contemplation and a beginner at purifying afflictive emotions.

Moreover, it follows that [the statement that the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character is a mental contemplation that purifies afflictive emotions] is incorrect because “purifying afflictive emotions” must refer to the mental contemplation of belief and above. It follows [that “purifying afflictive emotions” must refer to the mental contemplation of belief and above] because a yogi is posited as a beginner from the point of having just attained the ninth mental abiding up to, but not including, the mental contemplation of belief; a yogi is posited as one who purifies afflictive emotions from the mental contemplation of belief through the mental contemplation of final training, and the mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training is posited as having passed beyond the mental contemplations that purify afflictive emotions.

THIRD DEBATE

Incorrect position: That which is among the six—the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character, and so forth—necessarily has the aspect of grossness/peacefulness.

Correct position: It follows that this statement is incorrect because, except for the mental contemplation of analysis, the five preparations each have the two, the aspect of the truths and the aspect of grossness/peacefulness.

FOURTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: For each of the nine cycles, the mundane

uninterrupted paths that are preparations have the aspect of grossness and peacefulness [that is, both the aspect of grossness and the aspect of peacefulness].

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, [for each of the nine cycles, the mundane uninterrupted paths that are preparations], have the aspect of peacefulness [568] because you have accepted [that for each of the nine cycles, the mundane uninterrupted paths that are preparations have the aspect of grossness and peacefulness]. You cannot accept [that for each of the nine cycles, the mundane uninterrupted paths that are preparations have the aspect of peacefulness] because, of those two [grossness and peacefulness], they have the aspect of grossness. It follows [that of the two, grossness and peacefulness, they have the aspect of grossness] because they are mundane uninterrupted paths. It is entailed [that whatever is a mundane uninterrupted path necessarily has the aspect of grossness] because the mundane uninterrupted paths have the scope of only the lower level and of the two [grossness and peacefulness] have only the aspect of grossness, whereas the mundane paths of release have the scope of only the upper level and of the two [grossness and peacefulness] have only the aspect of peacefulness.

FIFTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: The mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character having the aspect of grossness/peacefulness that is a preparation for the first concentration is included within the level of meditative equipoise.

Correct position: It follows that this statement is incorrect because [the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character having the aspect of grossness/peacefulness that is a preparation for the first concentration] is included within the level of the Desire Realm. It follows [that it is included within the level of the Desire Realm] because it is an awareness of either hearing or thinking included in the continuum of a being having a Desire Realm basis.

Another [incorrect position]: It follows that the subject, [the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character having the aspect of grossness/peacefulness that is a preparation for the first concentration], is not conjoined with the pliancy of an upper realm because it is an awareness included within the level of the Desire Realm.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that whatever is an awareness

included within the level of the Desire Realm is necessarily not conjoined with the pliancy of an upper realm].

Another [incorrect position]: Whatever is a mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character is necessarily included within [the level of] non-equipoise.

Correct position: It follows that this is incorrect because (1) the mental contemplations of individual knowledge of the character for the second concentration and above are each included within the level of meditative equipoise and (2) according to Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary*, they are also each included within the level of non-equipoise.

The first reason [namely, that the mental contemplations of individual knowledge of the character for the second concentration and above are each included within the level of meditative equipoise] is established because, in the upper realms, there are those who achieve a causal meditative absorption for birth in the next higher level. It is entailed [that if, in the upper realms, there are those who achieve a causal meditative absorption for birth in the next higher level, then the mental contemplations of individual knowledge of the character for the second concentration and above are each necessarily included within the level of meditative equipoise] because, at that time, even from the point of view of their basis, object of observation, and so forth, they do not belong to the Desire Realm.^a

The second reason [namely, that according to Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary*, they are also each included within the level of non-equipoise] is established because Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary* says: [569]

Because of this reasoning, if one cultivates the remaining [concentrations and formless absorptions] within a basis of a lower level, it is to be asserted that the first mental contemplation [that is, the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character] is also of a lower level.^b

^a "And so forth" refers to the rest of the five associations (*mtshungs par ldan pa, samprayukta*). According to the system of Asaṅga's *Summary of Manifest Knowledge*, followed by Jam-yang-shay-pa and Kōn-chok-jik-may-wang-po, the five are basis, object of observation and subjective aspect, time, substantial entity, and realm and level. (See Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 236, which also sets forth the slightly different system of Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*.)

^b Tsong-kha-pa, *Golden Rosary, Collected Works*, vol. 17 (New Delhi: Guru Deva, 1979), 480.4.

SIXTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: If one cultivates the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character within a Form Realm basis, there are no states arisen from hearing, and if one cultivates it in a Formless Realm basis, there are no [states arisen from] either hearing or thinking.

Correct position: It follows that this is incorrect because (1) these two exist in the Form Realm and (2) both of these also exist in the Formless Realm.

The first reason [namely, that the two, states arisen from hearing and states arisen from thinking, exist in the Form Realm] is established because, since one has clairvoyance in [the Form and Formless Realms], one can easily achieve [states arisen from] hearing and thinking.

The second reason [namely, that both states arisen from hearing and states arisen from thinking exist in the Formless Realm] is established because, in the [Formless Realm], there are both states arisen from hearing that think about the meaning of that concerning which, although one had heard it in a former lifetime, one did not gain ascertainment and also states arisen from thinking about that concerning which one gained ascertainment.

SEVENTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: Each of the eight [sets of] preparations—the preparations for the first concentration, and so forth—has two [types]: pure and uncontaminated.

Correct position: It follows that that is incorrect because, although the preparations for the first concentration have [both types, pure and uncontaminated], the preparations for the second concentration and above are necessarily pure.

EIGHTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: Whatever is among the eight meditative absorptions is necessarily a mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, each of the seven meditative absorptions of the second concentration and above in the continuum of a simultaneous Foe Destroyer,^a is [a mental

^a See Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 104–108, for the eight levels of approaching and abiding in the fruits of a Stream Enterer, Once Returner, Non-Returner, and Foe

contemplation that is the fruit of final training] because of being [among the eight meditative absorptions]. If you accept [that each of the seven meditative absorptions of the second concentration and above in the continuum of a simultaneous Foe Destroyer is a mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training], it [absurdly] follows with respect to the subject, [each of the seven meditative absorptions of the second concentration and above in the continuum of a simultaneous Foe Destroyer], that there exists for each its mental contemplation of final training which is its cause because you have accepted [that each of the seven meditative absorptions of the second concentration and above in the continuum of a simultaneous Foe Destroyer is a mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training].

If you accept [that, with respect to each of the seven meditative absorptions of the second concentration and above in the continuum of a simultaneous Foe Destroyer, there exists for each its mental contemplation of final training which is its cause], it [absurdly] follows that they are actual meditative absorptions attained by the power of cultivating the preparations for their level!

You cannot accept [that they are actual meditative absorptions attained by the power of cultivating the preparations for their level] because [570] they are attained by the power of having separated from the coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the lower level without having cultivated [the preparations] for one's own level. It follows [that they are attained by the power of having separated from the coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the lower level without having cultivated the preparations for one's own level] because they are actual meditative absorptions of the second concentration and above in the continuum of a simultaneous [Foe Destroyer].

Our own system

This has two parts: mode of entering into meditative absorption in the first concentration by way of the seven mental contemplations and indication similarly [of the mode of entering into meditative absorption] in the remaining levels by way of [the seven mental contemplations].

Mode of entering into meditative absorption in the first concentration by way of the seven mental contemplations

[This section has] two parts: the mode of entering into meditative absorption in the first concentration by way of mundane mental contemplations having the aspect of grossness/peacefulness and the explanation of the mode of entering [into meditative absorption in the first concentration] by way of supramundane mental contemplations having the aspect of the truths.

MODE OF ENTERING INTO MEDITATIVE ABSORPTION IN THE FIRST CONCENTRATION BY WAY OF MUNDANE MENTAL CONTEMPLATIONS HAVING THE ASPECT OF GROSSNESS/PEACEFULNESS

This has three parts: definition, divisions, and explanation of the ascertainment of the number.

DEFINITION

The definition of a preparation for a concentration is:

a mental contemplation that is a training for entering into an actual meditative absorption of a concentration.

DIVISIONS

When [preparations for the concentrations] are divided, there are the four [sets of] preparations for the four concentrations.

When preparations for the first concentration are divided, there are two types: preparations for the first concentration having the aspect of grossness/peacefulness and [preparations] for the first concentration having the aspect of the truths.

[PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIRST CONCENTRATION HAVING THE ASPECT OF GROSSNESS/PEACEFULNESS]

The definition of a mental contemplation of a beginner is:

a mental contemplation included within either the precursors for the attainment of calm abiding or the precursors for the attainment of special insight.

When [mental contemplations of a beginner] are divided, there are

three types: the mental contemplation of a beginner at mental contemplation, the mental contemplation of a mere beginner, and the mental contemplation of a beginner at purifying afflictive emotions. The ninth mental abiding, the calm abiding of one who has just attained [calm abiding], and the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character are posited, respectively, as illustrations of the three. [571]

The definition of a preparation for the first concentration in terms of the mundane is:

a mental contemplation included in the class of preparations for the first concentrations having the aspect of grossness/peacefulness.

When these are divided, there are seven: the mental contemplation of a mere beginner, and so forth.

The definition of a mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character which is a mundane preparation for the first concentration is:

a taking to mind by a beginner at purifying afflictive emotions which is mainly analysis having individually distinguished the Desire Realm as faulty and the First Concentration as having good qualities, and so forth, in dependence upon calm abiding.^a

The two, [mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character which is a mundane preparation for the first concentration] and mental contemplation of a beginner at purifying afflictive emotions which is a mundane [preparation] for the first concentration, are mutually inclusive.

The definition of a mental contemplation of belief which is a mundane preparation for the first concentration is:

the first taking to mind purifying afflictive emotions, which,

^a The term translated as “mental contemplation” (*yid la byed pa*, *manaskāra*) literally means a doing or making in the mind, or a taking to mind, and “taking to mind,” in this definition and the others in this series, is literally “mental contemplation” (*yid la sems pa*). The English term “mental contemplation” reflects the meaning given in this series of definitions. Since “mental contemplation” and “taking to mind” are synonyms and since the general term, in English, needs to be a noun, the two terms have been transposed; the general term *yid la byed pa* has been translated throughout as “mental contemplation,” as though it were *yid la sems pa*, and *yid la sems pa*, in this series of definitions, has been translated as “taking to mind,” as though it were *yid la byed pa*. The term “taking to mind” makes it clear that the “contemplation” of “mental contemplation” does not mean mere gazing at the object, as “contemplation” often does in English.

having passed beyond hearing and thinking with respect to the grossness/peacefulness of [the Desire Realm and the First Concentration, respectively], is mainly special insight—ranging from the attainment of special pliancy by way of analytical meditation up to, but not including, the generation of an actual antidote to the great coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm.

The definition of a mental contemplation of thorough isolation which is a mundane preparation for the first concentration is:

the second taking to mind purifying afflictive emotions, which abides in the type of causing the mere suppression of any of the three cycles of the corresponding great coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm in terms of viewing the lower or upper level as either faulty or having good qualities, [respectively].^a

When [mental contemplations of thorough isolation which are mundane preparations for the first concentration] are divided, there are three mundane uninterrupted paths, three [mundane] paths of release, and [572] three mundane [mental contemplations] of thorough isolation that are neither [uninterrupted paths nor paths of release].

The boundaries range from the mundane uninterrupted path that causes the suppression of the great of the great coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm up to, but not including, generation of the mental contemplation of joy-withdrawal.

The definition of a mental contemplation of either withdrawal or joy that is a mundane preparation for the first concentration is:

the third taking to mind purifying afflictive emotions, which abides in the type of causing the mere suppression of any of the three cycles of the corresponding middling coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm in dependence upon a union of calm abiding and special insight, having such aspects of grossness/peacefulness.

When [mental contemplations of either withdrawal or joy that are mundane preparations for the first concentration] are divided, there

^a “Which abides in the type” means that there are exceptions. The type that is neither an uninterrupted path nor a path of release is an obvious exception, since it does not suppress afflictive emotions. There is also some question whether the path of release fulfills the definition, since it is a state of having suppressed afflictive emotions.

are a) the two: mental contemplations of joy and of withdrawal; and b) mundane uninterrupted paths, [mundane] paths of release, and mental contemplations of joy-withdrawal that are neither of the two [mundane uninterrupted paths or paths of release], and so forth.

The boundaries range from the uninterrupted path that is the antidote to the great of the middling [coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm] up to, but not including, generation of the mental contemplation of final training.

The definition of a mental contemplation of analysis that is a mundane preparation for the first concentration is:

the fourth taking to mind purifying mundane afflictive emotions which analyzes, after separation from attachment to the three cycles of middling coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm, whether one has separated from the small [coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm].

When [mental contemplations of analysis that are mundane preparations for the first concentration] are divided, there are the three mental contemplations that analyze whether one has separated from attachment to the three cycles of small coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm.

The boundaries range from the subsequent attainment of the third path of release of the mental contemplation of joy-withdrawal until before connection to the third mundane uninterrupted path of the mental contemplation of final training [573] because, when one has separated from attachment to the three [cycles of] middling [coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm], there is one [period of] analysis wondering whether one has separated from attachment to all the afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm; there is a similar [period of] analysis when one has separated from attachment to the great of the small [coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm]; and when one has separated from attachment to the middling of the small [coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm], there is [a period of] analysis in detail, since it seems that one has completely abandoned [the coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm].

The definition of a mental contemplation of final training that is a mundane preparation for the first concentration is:

the fifth taking to mind purifying afflictive emotions, which abides in the type of causing the mere suppression of any of the three cycles of the corresponding small coarse afflictive

emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm in dependence upon a union of calm abiding and special insight having such aspects of grossness/peacefulness.

When [mental contemplations of final training that are mundane preparations for the first concentration] are divided, there are three mundane uninterrupted paths, two paths of release, and [a type] that is neither. The path of release induced by the third uninterrupted path is an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration.

The definition of a mundane mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training for the first concentration is:

an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration which abides in the type of the path of release induced by the ninth mundane uninterrupted path.

When [mundane mental contemplations that are the fruit of final training for the first concentration] are divided, there are the five—investigation, analysis, joy, bliss, and meditative stabilization.^a

[PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIRST CONCENTRATION HAVING THE ASPECT OF THE TRUTHS]

In terms of the supramundane path: The definition of a supramundane preparation for the first concentration is:

a preparation for the first concentration included within that which has the aspect of any of the selflessnesses or the attributes of the four truths.

When [supramundane preparations for the first concentration] are divided, there are the six—the mental contemplation of a beginner, and so forth—having the aspect of [any of] the three selflessnesses, and so forth, [574] because the first three preparations, up to the mental contemplation of belief, have only a conceptual [type] having the aspect of selflessness [or the sixteen attributes of the four truths], and the three—thorough isolation, and so forth—each have two [types]: conceptual and non-conceptual.

^a Since these five—investigation, analysis, joy, bliss, and meditative stabilization—are the branches of the first concentration, this division supports the definition: the mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training for the first concentration is an actual absorption of the first concentration because it has all the branches of the first concentration.

The definition of a supramundane [mental contemplation] of a mere beginner that is a preparation for the first concentration is:

a mere beginner's preparation having the aspect of any of the three selflessnesses.

One can extend the reasoning similarly for the remaining ones.

Although someone who has just attained simultaneous Foe Destroyerhood has attained an actual first concentration, he has not attained the actual meditative absorptions of the seven remaining [concentrations and formless absorptions] because (1) when the eight actual meditative absorptions are newly attained, they must be manifestly generated,^a and (2) since the first exists manifestly in his continuum, the remaining ones cannot become manifest. Nevertheless, a [simultaneous] Foe Destroyer need not achieve [the remaining concentrations and formless absorptions] by way of the preparations possessing [the usual] objects of observation and aspects because the preparations conquer the afflictive emotions of the lower [level], but [a simultaneous Foe Destroyer] has already conquered those [afflictive emotions]. This is because, although he does not achieve [the remaining concentrations and formless absorptions] in that way, he can enter into any meditative absorption he wishes.

ASCERTAINMENT OF THE NUMBER

For the achievement of the actual meditative absorptions by way of the preparations, the number is definite as seven mental contemplations because those seven are sufficient.^b (1) Someone who has not generated the preparations that abandon the afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm [needs] the two, the mental contemplations of individual knowledge of the character and belief, in order to generate them; (2) the mental contemplation of analysis is needed for enhancing what has already been done; (3) with respect to the entities of the paths that abandon the afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm, there are the three—thorough isolation, which abandons the three cycles of great [afflictive emotions]; joy-withdrawal, which abandons the three cycles of middling [afflictive emotions, and] final training, which abandons the three cycles of small afflictive emotions; (4) in terms of effect,

^a Someone who has just attained simultaneous Foe Destroyerhood has the capacity to attain the seven remaining concentrations and formless absorptions but has not yet done so.

^b "By way of the preparations" eliminates the simultaneous Foe Destroyer.

there is [575] the mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training. This is because, with respect to even the order of those mental contemplations, although, according to the mundane path, [the mental contemplation of] analysis is generated only after [that of] joy-withdrawal, at the time of the supramundane path, the generation of [the mental contemplation of] analysis occurs before joy-withdrawal.

There are many ways of setting forth conventions of paths concerning these preparations because the conventions of the four paths, of the mundane and supramundane paths, and so forth, are used.^a

The first reason [namely, that the convention of the four paths is used for the preparations] is established because the convention “path of training”^b is used for the two, [the mental contemplations of] individual knowledge of the character and belief; the convention “uninterrupted path” is used for the two, thorough isolation and final training; the convention “path of enhancement” is used for [the mental contemplation of] analysis; and the convention of the four paths is used for joy-withdrawal.^c

The second reason [namely, that the conventions of the mundane and supramundane paths, and so forth, are used] is established because the convention of the mundane path is used for the preparations having the aspects of grossness/peacefulness, and the convention of the supramundane path is used for those having the aspect of the truths.

Although the proponents of Vasubandhu’s *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* assert that the feeling of the preparations is necessarily equanimity, such is not asserted on this occasion because [on this occasion] they have the feeling of bliss.^d

^a According to Jam-yang-shay-pa, the four paths referred to here are the path of training (*sbyor ba'i lam*), the uninterrupted path (*bar chad med pa'i lam*), the path of release (*rnam par grol ba'i lam*), and the path of enhancement (*khyad par gyi lam*) (Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 240.6–241.1). “And so forth” refers to the nine cycles of a path of meditation, which Jam-yang-shay-pa explains in relation to mundane and supramundane paths of meditation.

^b *sbyor lam* is translated as “path of training” here because Jam-yang-shay-pa explains that this is not “the path of preparation” in the context of the five paths (Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 241.2–3) and because the translation “preparation,” in that context, is based on an oral explanation specific to that context.

^c Jam-yang-shay-pa does not explicitly assign “path of release” to specific preparations. He explains in detail the convention of the four paths in relation to joy-withdrawal (Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 242.6–243.1).

^d Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.22a–b (P5591, vol. 115, 274.5.2; Shastri, part 4, p. 1161; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 178; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1253). “This occasion” refers to the Mahāyāna presentations. Jam-yang-shay-pa cites Asaṅga’s *Grounds of*

MODE OF ENTERING INTO MEDITATIVE ABSORPTION IN THE FIRST CONCENTRATION BY WAY OF SUPRAMUNDANE MENTAL CONTEMPLATIONS HAVING THE ASPECT OF THE TRUTHS

There is a way of entering into meditative absorption in the first concentration by way of the seven supramundane mental contemplations having the aspect of the truths because, for Hearers who proceed simultaneously, (1) there is cultivation of the two having the aspect of the truths—calm abiding and the mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character—at the time of the path of accumulation; (2) a state arisen from meditation which analyzes the object, selflessness; the mental contemplation of belief; the heat stage of the Hearer path of preparation; and the small forbearance of non-fear with respect to selflessness are attained simultaneously; (3) the middling forbearance of non-fear with respect to selflessness and the peak [stage of the Hearer path of preparation] are attained simultaneously; [576] (4) the great forbearance of non-fear with respect to [selflessness] and the forbearance stage [of the Hearer path of preparation] are attained simultaneously; (5) the path that is a facsimile of direct realization—the appearance of duality with respect to selflessness having vanished—and the supreme [mundane] quality [of the Hearer path of preparation] are attained simultaneously; (6) all four of those are the occasion of [the mental contemplation of] belief having the aspect of the truths; (7) the path of seeing and [the mental contemplation of] thorough isolation are simultaneous; (8) after that, when one has abandoned the nine cycles of afflictive emotions to be abandoned by meditation by way of the remaining preparations—[the mental contemplation of] analysis, and so forth—the attainment of the ninth path of release, the attainment of an actual first concentration, and the attainment of Foe Destroyerhood are simultaneous.

Indication similarly [of the mode of entering into meditative absorption] in the remaining [concentrations and formless absorptions] by way of [the seven mental contemplations]

According to the mundane path, [everything] ranging from entering into actual meditative absorption, when one has achieved the first concentration by way of the seven mental contemplations, up to the peak

of cyclic existence, is similar. This is because, when an actual first concentration is newly achieved in terms of being arisen from training, no matter whether it is mundane or supramundane, the preparations are definitely needed. However, with respect to the remaining [levels], there is attainment of the actual meditative absorptions in terms of being arisen from training without their being preceded by [their respective] preparations.^a

Dispelling objections

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that it is not correct to posit the ninth path of release as an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration because [the ninth path of release] has two [types]: an actual meditative absorption and a preparation. It follows [that it has two types: an actual meditative absorption and a preparation] because it has such in the Vaibhāṣhika system.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if the ninth path of release has two types—an actual meditative absorption and a preparation—in the Vaibhāṣhika system, it necessarily has two types]. The reason [namely, that the ninth path of release has two types—an actual meditative absorption and a preparation—in the Vaibhāṣhika system] is established because, in [the Vaibhāṣhika] system, the ninth mundane path of release for the first three concentrations has two [types]—a preparation and an actual meditative absorption—and the ninth mundane path of release for the fourth concentration and above necessarily has only an actual meditative absorption. [577] This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [6.48a–c] says:

That concentration which has conquered over the three levels
Or [is] the path of release at the end among the preparations
Is not among the preparations for the higher [concentrations and
formless absorptions].^b

^a There is such attainment because a simultaneous Foe Destroyer who has attained an actual first concentration does not have to do the preparations for the remaining seven levels to attain the actual absorptions.

^b Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 6.48a–c (P5591, vol. 115, 253.2.4, 6; Shastri, part 3, p. 976; La Vallée Poussin 16:3, pp. 237–38; Pruden, vol. 3, pp. 988–89). This debate refutes Pañ-chen Sö-nam-drak-pa's interpretation of this verse (*Meditative States*, pp. 153–54).

The ninth path of release is a mental contemplation that is the fruit of final training. According to Jam-yang-shay-pa's and Kön-chok-jik-may-wang-po's interpretation of

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the third concentration and those above it have the feeling of joy because [the third concentration and those above it] have mental contemplations of joy.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if the third concentration and those above it have mental contemplations of joy they necessarily have the feeling of joy] because, although [the third concentration and those above it] do not have the joy of [the branches] joy and bliss, the convention “joy” is used for the clarifying of the mind [in the paths of release of the mental contemplation of joy-withdrawal].

THIRD DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the subject, the mental contemplation of analysis that is a preparation for the first concentration, is included in an upper realm because it is included in the six levels of concentration.^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that whatever is included in the six levels of concentration is necessarily included in an upper realm]. You cannot accept [that the mental contemplation of analysis that is a preparation for the first concentration is included in an upper realm].

Moreover, it [absurdly] follows that the subject, [the mental contemplation of analysis that is a preparation for the first concentration],

the Vaibhāṣhika position, it can be a preparation for the first, second, and third concentrations because, according to the Vaibhāṣhikas, the preparations have the feeling of equanimity, whereas the first three concentrations have the feeling of bliss. A meditator of dull faculties would find it difficult to change from equanimity to bliss, whereas a meditator of sharp faculties would find it easy. Therefore, for a meditator of dull faculties, the ninth path of release would be a preparation, whereas, for a meditator of sharp faculties, it would be an actual absorption. However, the ninth path of release would not be among the preparations for the fourth concentration or for the formless absorptions—the “higher [concentrations and formless absorptions]” mentioned in the verse—because the fourth concentration and the formless absorptions have the feeling of equanimity, not the feeling of bliss. Therefore, according to Jam-yang-shay-pa’s and Kön-chok-jik-may-wang-po’s interpretation of the Vaibhāṣhika system, no change of feeling would be necessary at that point.

Jam-yang-shay-pa holds that “the positing of the feeling of equanimity as a branch [of the preparations] is concordant with Vasubandhu’s *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*. It is not concordant with Asaṅga’s *Grounds of Hearers*” (Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 257.5–6).

^a The six levels of concentration are the preparations, the mere first concentration, the special first concentration, and the second, third, and fourth concentrations.

is a causal meditative absorption of the first concentration because of being a preparation for the first concentration.^a

It is not entailed [that whatever is a preparation for the first concentration is necessarily a causal meditative absorption of the first concentration].

If you accept [that the mental contemplation of analysis that is a preparation for the first concentration is a causal meditative absorption of the first concentration], it [absurdly] follows that [the mental contemplation of analysis that is a preparation for the first concentration] is a meditative absorption because you have accepted [that the mental contemplation of analysis that is a preparation for the first concentration is a causal meditative absorption of the first concentration].

You cannot accept [that the mental concentration of analysis that is a preparation for the first concentration is a meditative absorption] because it is an awareness that analyzes in that way in a subsequent attainment.

FOURTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that a newly attained mundane path of meditation in the continuum of a Superior is necessarily a path of meditation because [a newly attained mundane path of meditation in the continuum of a Superior] is necessarily a path of a Superior.^b

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if a newly attained mundane path of meditation in the continuum of a Superior is necessarily a path of a Superior, it is necessarily also a path of meditation].

You cannot accept [that a newly attained mundane path of meditation in the continuum of a Superior is necessarily a path of meditation] because [a newly attained mundane path of meditation in the continuum of a Superior can also be] the two, a path of seeing and a Hearer path of no more learning.^c

FIFTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the subject, a mundane mental

^a The preparations for the first concentration are absorptions included within the level of the first concentration, but they are not actual absorptions.

^b The reason establishes that *'phags lam*, literally "Superior path," means "path of a Superior" (*'phags pa'i lam*).

^c This is really a question of entailment. It is not *necessarily* a path of meditation because there are two other possibilities.

contemplation of analysis, has the aspect of either grossness or peacefulness because it is mundane preparation.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that whatever is a mundane preparation necessarily has the aspect of either grossness or peacefulness].

You cannot accept [that a mundane mental contemplation of analysis has the aspect of either grossness or peacefulness] because [a mundane mental contemplation of analysis] necessarily analyzes only whether one has separated from the three cycles of small coarse afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm. [578]

SIXTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the subject, a simultaneous Foe Destroyer, is a Foe Destroyer who is released from the factors of both [the afflictive obstructions and obstructions to meditative absorption] because, among [simultaneous Foe Destroyers], there are cases of those who are [released from the factors of both the afflictive obstructions and obstructions to meditative absorption].^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if, among simultaneous Foe Destroyers, there are cases of those who are released from the factors of both the afflictive obstructions and obstructions to meditative absorption, a simultaneous Foe Destroyer is necessarily a Foe Destroyer who is released from the factors of both the afflictive obstructions and obstructions to meditative absorption].

SEVENTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the subject, the obstructions to meditative absorption, are obstructions to omniscience because (1) they are obstructions and (2) they [can] exist in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that whatever is an obstruction and

^a In other words, if a simultaneous Foe Destroyer generates all eight concentrations and formless absorptions, he or she is released from obstructions to absorption. Moreover, such a person does not need to generate the second concentration and the levels above it by means of the preparations for them; it seems that all he or she has to do is to think of the branches or object of observation of the concentration or formless absorption in question. There are many Foe Destroyer who do this and who, therefore, do not have obstructions to absorption. However, the statement would not apply to all simultaneous Foe Destroyers because it would not apply to someone who has just attained simultaneous Foe Destroyerhood.

can exist in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer is necessarily an obstruction to omniscience] because there are [also] the two—Non-Returners and Hearer Foe Destroyers—who abandon them.^a

EXPLANATION OF THE ACTUAL MEDITATIVE ABSORPTIONS THAT ARE TO BE ATTAINED

This has three parts: the explanations of (1) the entities of the concentrations and formless absorptions; (2) the features of the branches, objects of observation, and subjective aspects; and (3) the effects attained.

ENTITIES OF THE MEDITATIVE ABSORPTIONS OF THE CONCENTRATIONS AND FORMLESS ABSORPTIONS

This has three parts: refutation [of mistaken opinions], presentation [of our own system], and dispelling objections.

Refutation [of mistaken opinions]

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: The definition of a meditative absorption is:

a consciousness that is either a main [mind—that is,] meditative stabilization—or a mental factor in its “retinue.”

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that there are mental factors in the “retinue” of meditative stabilization because [according to you] the definition [of “meditative absorption” as a consciousness that is either a main mind—that is, meditative stabilization—or a mental factor in its “retinue”] is correct. You cannot accept [that there are mental factors in the “retinue” of meditative stabilization] because meditative stabilization is a mental factor. This is because, with respect to the positing of minds and mental factors as main and in the “retinue” [respectively], that which exists independently with respect to the basis, and so forth,

^a A Non-Returner has the first concentration because Non-Returners overcome all nine cycles of afflictive emotions pertaining to the Desire Realm; that is what makes them Non-Returners. However, the correct position implies that a Non-Returner could have all eight absorptions, including that of the peak of cyclic existence. It is this type of person—someone who has generated all eight absorptions—who does not have obstructions to absorption.

Hearer Foe Destroyer are probably specified because Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers are necessarily simultaneous.

is presented as the main [mind], and that which does not exist [independently with respect to the basis, and so forth] is presented as in the “retinue.”

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the subject, a meditative absorption of the first concentration having the aspects of grossness/peacefulness, views the upper realm as peaceful because, between having the aspect of grossness or [that of] peacefulness, it is a viewing as peaceful.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that whatever, between having the aspect of grossness or that of peacefulness, is a viewing as peaceful necessarily views the upper realm as peaceful].

If you accept [that a meditative absorption of the first concentration having the aspects of grossness/peacefulness views the upper realm as peaceful], it [absurdly] follows that it is a viewing [of the upper realm] as a true cessation!

You cannot accept [that a meditative absorption of the first concentration having the aspects of grossness/peacefulness views the upper realm as a true cessation] [579] because it must be posited relatively in terms of positing that is relative to a place of relation.

THIRD DEBATE

Incorrect position: Whatever is an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration has necessarily separated from attachment to the level below.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, a mere actual meditative absorption of the first concentration in the continuum of a [non-Buddhist] Outsider who has attained the eight concentrations and formless absorptions, [has separated from attachment from the level below] because of being [an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration].^a

You cannot accept [that a mere actual meditative absorption of the first concentration in the continuum of a [non-Buddhist] Outsider who has attained the eight concentrations and formless absorptions has separated from attachment to the level below] because he is a person

^a A mere actual meditative absorption of the first concentration has both investigation and analysis and has the feeling of bliss, whereas a special actual meditative absorption of the first concentration has only analysis and has the feeling of equanimity.

who has in his continuum attachment included within the level of the Desire Realm.

Moreover, it [absurdly] follows that whatever is an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration has necessarily separated from the investigation and analysis of the first concentration because [according to you] your thesis [that whatever is an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration has necessarily separated from attachment to the level below] is correct.

You cannot accept [that whatever is an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration has necessarily separated from the investigation and analysis of the first concentration] because there are investigation and analysis in the continuum of a being of the Second Concentration who possesses in his continuum an actual second concentration. It follows [that there are investigation and analysis in the continuum of a being of the Second Concentration who possesses in his continuum an actual second concentration] because the eye and ear consciousnesses exist in the continuum [of a being of the Second Concentration].

It is entailed [that if the eye and ear consciousnesses exist in a being of the Second Concentration, there are necessarily investigation and analysis in the continuum of a being of the Second Concentration who possesses in his continuum an actual second concentration] because any [main] consciousness which is a sense consciousness necessarily has investigation and analysis in its “retinue.”

At the time of challenge to the entailment [that if the eye and ear consciousnesses exist in a being of the Second Concentration, there are necessarily investigation and analysis in the continuum of a being of the Second Concentration], the reason [namely, that the eye and ear consciousnesses exist in the continuum of a being of the Second Concentration] is established because the distinction is correct that [in the Second Concentration] the three—eye, ear, and body [main] consciousnesses—and, for each, the investigation and analysis that are in the “retinue” of these three, exist but that they are included in the level of the First Concentration.

FOURTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: Whatever is an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration necessarily possesses five branches—investigation, analysis, and so forth.^a

^a The five branches are investigation, analysis, joy, bliss, and meditative stabilization.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, a special actual meditative absorption of the first concentration, [possesses five branches—investigation, analysis, and so forth] because [of being an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration].

You cannot accept [that a special actual meditative absorption of the first concentration possesses five branches—investigation, analysis, and so forth] because a special actual meditative absorption of the first concentration necessarily does not have the investigation that is a changeable mental factor [580] and [necessarily] has as its feeling the feeling of equanimity.

FIFTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: If something is the investigation, analysis, and so forth, that is a branch of a lower concentration, it is necessarily an obstruction with respect to a higher concentration or in [the higher concentration's] dissimilar class.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, the investigation and analysis that are branches of the first concentration in the continuum of a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation who is of definite lineage from the beginning and who has attained the five powers, [are obstructions with respect to the second concentration or in its dissimilar class] because they are the investigation and analysis that are branches of a lower concentration].^a

You cannot accept [that the investigation and analysis that are branches of the first concentration in the continuum of a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation who is of definite lineage from the beginning and who has attained the five powers are obstructions with respect to the second concentration or in its dissimilar class] because they do not obstruct [the second concentration]. This is because, although the contextual etymology is propounded in many [texts], they do not obstruct the first concentration. This is because, similarly, the second concentration is not obstructed by investigation and analysis; the third, by joy; or the fourth, by endeavor in the apprehension of phenomena. It follows [that the second concentration is not obstructed

^a The subject rules out someone who had attained concentrations as a Hearer before entering the Bodhisattva path.

The five powers are included in the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment. They are: faith, effort, mindfulness, meditative stabilization, and wisdom, and they are attained on the heat and peak levels of the path of preparation (Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 206).

by investigation and analysis; the third, by joy; or the fourth, by endeavor in the apprehension of phenomena] because this person has attained a power of meditative stabilization such that these are not obstructed.

Moreover, fling [such consequences] with regard to [these] in the continuum of a Buddha Superior or a Bodhisattva Superior.

SIXTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: When pure meditative absorptions are divided, there are the four: concordant with degeneration, concordant with abiding, concordant with enhancement, and concordant with definite differentiation. The respective definitions of the four—concordant with degeneration, and so forth—are posited as:

- (1) a meditative absorption concordant with the generation of its dissimilar class immediately after itself;
- (2) [a meditative absorption concordant with] the generation of a meditative absorption of its own level immediately after itself;
- (3) [a meditative absorption concordant with] the generation of a meditative absorption of a higher level immediately after itself;
- (4) a meditative absorption concordant with the generation of the uncontaminated immediately after itself.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration that alternates with a Desire Realm mind in the descending [order] in the continuum of a Bodhisattva Superior, [581] is concordant with degeneration because of fulfilling the first definition [namely, a meditative absorption concordant with the generation of its dissimilar class immediately after itself].^a

The reason [namely, that an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration that alternates with a Desire Realm mind in the descending order in the continuum of a Bodhisattva Superior is a meditative absorption concordant with the generation of its dissimilar class immediately after itself] is established because it is a meditative

^a The subject refers to a Bodhisattva Superior's generation of the actual meditative absorptions of the concentrations and formless absorptions in ascending order, from the first concentration to the peak of cyclic existence; then in descending order, from the peak of cyclic existence to the first concentration; and then back to the fourth concentration. Each of these actual meditative absorptions is alternated with a Desire Realm mind.

absorption that generates a consciousness of the Desire Realm immediately after itself.

It is entailed [that whatever is a meditative absorption that generates a consciousness of the Desire Realm immediately after itself is necessarily a meditative absorption concordant with the generation of its dissimilar class immediately after itself] because the two—a Desire Realm mind in the continuum of a learner and the discursiveness of the Desire Realm—are its dissimilar class. This is because it is an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration in the continuum of a learner.

It is entailed [that if it is an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration in the continuum of a learner, the two—a Desire Realm mind in the continuum of a learner and the discursiveness of the Desire Realm—are necessarily its dissimilar class] because an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration has five types in its dissimilar class. It follows [that an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration has five types in its dissimilar class] because there are the five:

- 1 the two, attachment to the Desire Realm and a harmful mind;
- 2 the two, harmfulness and discursiveness;
- 3 the two, suffering and mental discomfort;
- 4 deviant ethics; and
- 5 distraction.

This is because, similarly, there are five in the dissimilar class of the second concentration, four in the dissimilar class of the third concentration, and eight in the dissimilar class of the fourth concentration.

The first reason [namely, that there are five in the dissimilar class of the second concentration] is established because there are the five:

- 1 attachment to the First Concentration;
- 2 investigation and analysis;
- 3 suffering;
- 4 excitement; and
- 5 incomplete meditative stabilization.^a

The second reason [namely, that there are four in the dissimilar class of the third concentration] is established because there are the

^a Excitement in this context seems to go with investigation and analysis, which prevent the completion of meditative stabilization. It is not the excitement that is a fault in the cultivation of calm abiding.

four:

- 1 attachment to the Second Concentration;
- 2 joy;
- 3 bliss; and
- 4 incomplete meditative stabilization.

The third reason [namely, that there are eight in the dissimilar class of the fourth concentration] is established because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.11] says:

Because of being released from the eight faults,
The fourth concentration is unfluctuating.
They are: investigation, analysis, the two breaths,
And the four—[feeling of] pleasure, and so forth.^a

You cannot accept the root statement [namely, that an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration that alternates with a Desire Realm mind in the descending order in the continuum of a Bodhisattva Superior is concordant with degeneration] because there is no concordance with degeneration in the continuum of a Bodhisattva Superior. [582]

Moreover, it follows that those definitions are not correct because there is also generation of that concordant with degeneration and that concordant with abiding immediately after that concordant with degeneration; except for that concordant with definite differentiation, there is generation of the [other] three immediately after that concordant with abiding; except for that concordant with degeneration, there is generation of the [other] three immediately after the third concordance [that concordant with enhancement]; and there is generation of itself immediately after the fourth concordance [that concordant with definite differentiation]. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.18a–b] says:

Immediately after that concordant with degeneration, and so forth,
There are two, three, three, and one.^b

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.11 (P5591, vol. 115, 273.1.5–6; Shastri, part 4, p. 1150; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 161; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1239).

^b *Ibid.*, 8.18a–b (P5591, vol. 115, 274.1.8; Shastri, part 4, p. 1157; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 172; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1248).

Our own system

This section has two parts: explanation of the concentrations and formless absorptions and explanation of the distinctions of entering into and rising from [the meditative absorptions of the concentrations and formless absorptions], and so forth.

Explanation of the concentrations and formless absorptions

This section has two parts: the explanation of the four concentrations by way of^a the branches and the explanation of the four formless absorptions by way of the objects of observation and subjective aspects.

EXPLANATION OF THE FOUR CONCENTRATIONS BY WAY OF THE BRANCHES

This section has four parts: definition, etymologies, divisions, and the individual meanings of the divisions.

DEFINITION

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of a concentration is:

a consciousness that is either a meditative stabilization posited from the point of view of possessing antidotal, benefit, and basis branches or that possessing association with it.

ETYMOLOGIES

Because of doing contemplation (*sems par byed pa*), it is called a concentration (*bsam gtan*), and because it engages the mind and mental factors equally (*cha mnyam du 'jug pa*) on the object of observation, it is called a meditative absorption (*snyoms 'jug*).

DIVISIONS

When [concentrations] are divided by way of^b what branches are attained and what branches are set aside, there are four [types of division—namely, the four concentrations]. [583] When they are divided in terms of the basis, there are two types: those in the continua of

^a 582.4, reading *yan lag gi sgo nas* instead of *yan lag gi sgos*.

^b 582.6, reading *thob gtong gis* instead of *thob gtong gi*.

common beings and of Superiors. In terms of cause and effect, there are the two, causal concentrative meditative absorptions and concentrations that are resultant births. In terms of substantial entity, there are the three: afflicted, pure, and uncontaminated. In terms of objects of observation and subjective aspects, there are the two: pure mundane virtues and uncontaminated [concentrations] having the aspect of the truths.

THE INDIVIDUAL MEANINGS OF THE DIVISIONS

There are four [concentrations] in terms of the branches because (1) the [meditative absorption] of the first concentration is posited in terms of possessing branches antidotal to the level below—namely, investigation and analysis; (2) the [meditative absorption] of the second concentration is posited in terms of possessing, as its antidotal branch, internal clarity, which separates from attachment to the two, investigation and analysis; (3) the [meditative absorption] of the third concentration is posited in terms of having as its antidotal branches mindfulness, introspection, and equanimity, which separate from attachment to the joy of the second concentration; (4) the meditative absorption of the fourth concentration is posited in terms of possessing as its antidotal branches mindfulness and equanimity, which separate from the bliss of the third concentration. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.2a–b] says:

...which has abandoned the former branches
Possessing analysis, joy, and bliss...^a

There is a way of passing [from one level to the next higher one] by way of the branches because, although the higher [meditative absorptions] have not abandoned the branches of the lower, they, having separated from those as their branches, abide by way of other branches.^b

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of the first concentration is:

a meditative absorption of an upper level which is posited in terms of possessing analysis as an antidotal branch, joy and

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.2a–b (P5591, vol. 115, 270.4.6–7; Shastri, part 4, p. 1129; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 132; Pruden, vol. 4, pp. 1218–19).

^b In other words, the higher absorptions do not abandon the branches of the lower, but they get rid of them, or separate from them. Kön-chok-jik-may-wang-po does not want to use the word *spangs* (“abandon”) here.

bliss as benefit branches, and meditative stabilization as the basis branch. [584]

When [actual meditative absorptions of the first concentration] are divided, there are the two, mere and special. The definition of a mere actual meditative absorption of the first concentration is:

a meditative absorption of an upper level that possesses investigation as the antidotal branch.

This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.7a–b] says:

The first [concentration] has five [branches]:
Investigation, analysis, joy, bliss, and meditative stabilization.^a

The definition of a special actual meditative absorption of the first concentration is:

a meditative absorption of an upper level which, having separated from [possessing] investigation as its branch by way of its antidotal [branch] analysis, possesses meditative stabilization as its basis branch and the feeling of equanimity as its benefit branch.

This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.22d–8.23b].says: “The special concentration, [having separated] also from investigation,” and, “Three aspects, without pleasure and without suffering.”^b

There is a reason why the first concentration has the two types, mere and special, and the remaining three concentrations do not have [such a division] because, in the first concentration, it is possible to separate from attachment to some [that is, a certain one] of its branches even though one does not separate from attachment to that level, whereas in the second concentration, and so forth, that is not possible.

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration is:

an actual meditative absorption of an upper level possessing internal clarity as the antidotal branch, joy and bliss as the

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.7a–b (P5591, vol. 115, 271.5.6–272.1.5; Shastri, part 4, p. 1140; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 147; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1229).

^b *Ibid.*, 8.22d–8.23b (P5591, vol. 115, 274.5.8, 275.1.1–2, 275.1.4; Shastri, part 5, p. 1162; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 180–82; Pruden, vol. 4, pp. 1254–55).

benefit branches, and meditative stabilization as the basis branch.

This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.7c] says:

The second has four branches:
Internal clarity, joy, and so forth.^a

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of the third concentrations is:

an actual meditative absorption of an upper level possessing the three—mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity—as the antidotal branches, bliss that is free of joy as the benefit branch, and meditative stabilization as the basis branch. [585]

This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.8a–b] says:

The third has five [branches]: equanimity,
Mindfulness, introspection, bliss, and the basis.^b

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of the fourth concentration is:

an actual meditative absorption possessing [entirely pure] mindfulness and the entirely pure compositional factor of equanimity as the antidotal branches, neutral feeling as the benefit branch, and meditative stabilization as the basis branch.

This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.8c–d] says:

The final [concentration] has four [branches]: mindfulness, equanimity,
That [feeling] without bliss and without pain, and meditative stabilization.^c

The definition of a causal meditative absorption of a concentration

^a Ibid., 8.7c (P5591, vol. 115, 271.5.6–272.1.5; Shastri, part 4, p. 1140; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 147; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1229).

^b Ibid., 8.8a–b (P5591, vol. 115, 271.5.6–272.1.5; Shastri, part 4, p. 1140; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 147; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1229).

^c Ibid., 8.8c–d (P5591, vol. 115, 271.5.6–272.1.5; Shastri, part 4, p. 1140; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 147; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1229).

is:

a consciousness that either is a one-pointed mind that possesses antidotal, benefit, and basis branches and passes beyond the level below it by way of generation [of the branches] or possesses association with that.

When these meditative absorptions possess following, in this context they possess the four non-physical aggregates because there is no form following the mind. This is because even the concentrative disciplines and the uncontaminated disciplines are posited in relation to either contemplation or seed.^a

The definition of a resultant-birth concentration is:

a contaminated [phenomenon] included within either a fruitional effect, a causally concordant effect, or a possessional effect of cultivating, in another birth, a concentration that is a causal meditative absorption.

When [resultant-birth concentrations] are divided, there are fruitional effects—that is, the appropriative aggregates in the continuum of a Form Realm being; possessional effects—that is, an inestimable mansion, and so forth; and causally concordant effects—that is, the actual meditative absorptions, and so forth, [586] of the four concentrations attained by birth, in the continuum of [a Form Realm being].

When actual meditative absorptions of the concentrations are divided from the point of view of substantial entity, there are the three: afflicted, pure, and uncontaminated.

The *afflicted* has three parts: definition, divisions, and that basis which is afflicted.

Definition. The definition of an afflicted actual meditative absorption of a concentration is:

(1) that which is the continuation of the substantial entity of a pure actual meditative absorption of a concentration that is its substantial cause and (2) that which has come to be associated with any of [the four]—attachment, [bad] view, pride, or ignorance—which are neutral.

Divisions. When [afflicted actual meditative absorptions of the concentrations] are divided, fundamentally there are the four afflicted

^a These disciplines are not posited in relation to form—even non-revelatory form. (The meaning of “following” is not clear.)

[meditative absorptions] of the four concentrations, and secondarily each of the four [concentrations] has the four [meditative absorptions] possessing any of the four afflictive emotions—attachment, and so forth.

The definition of an afflicted meditative absorption of the first concentration is:

the substantial entity of a meditative absorption of the first concentration which is a continuation of the type of a former pure actual meditative absorption of a concentration and has come to be associated with any of the four [afflictive emotions]—attachment, and so forth—of its own level.

The definition of a meditative absorption of the first concentration possessing attachment is:

the type of the substantial entity of a meditative absorption of the first concentration associated with attachment of its own level.

Extend this to the others in that way.

That basis which is afflicted. There is a meditative absorption that is the basis which is afflicted because a pure actual meditative absorption of any of the four concentrations is posited as such. Uncontaminated meditative absorptions are not posited as such because there is no way in which the later continuation of the substantial entity of uncontaminated [meditative absorptions] can arise [587] even associated with any of those afflictive emotions.

The western Vaibhāṣhikas assert afflicted meditative absorptions as [having] four [types] because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [5.21] says:

The western Vaibhāṣhikas say these are four:
Attachment, view, pride, and obscuration.^a

The Kashmīri Vaibhāṣhikas assert that afflicted meditative absorptions necessarily are in association only with attachment as their concomitant because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* says, "Possessing attachment, which is associated with relishing (*ro myang tshungs ldan*, *āsvādanasamprayukta*)."^b

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 5.21 (P5591, vol. 115, 227.1.1–2; Shastri, part 3, pp. 795–96; La Vallée Poussin, 16:4, p. 43; Pruden, vol. 3, p. 799).

^b Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge and Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge"*, 8.6b–c (P5591, vol. 115, 271.5.1–4; Shastri, part 4, p. 1169; La Vallée

[Afflicted meditative absorptions] are also similar in the formless absorptions.

When *pure* actual meditative absorptions of concentrations are divided, there are four types: concordant with degeneration, concordant with abiding, concordant with enhancement, and concordant with definite differentiation.

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of a concentration concordant with degeneration is:

a pure actual meditative absorption of a concentration concordant with the generation of an afflictive emotion of its own or a lower level immediately after itself.

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of a concentration concordant with abiding is:

a pure actual meditative absorption of a concentration that induces another pure [actual meditative absorption] of the same level as itself immediately after itself.

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of a concentration concordant with enhancement is:

an actual meditative absorption of a concentration that induces a pure actual meditative absorption of a higher level than itself immediately after itself.

The peak of cyclic existence does not have a type concordant with enhancement.

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of a concentration concordant with definite differentiation is:

a pure actual meditative absorption of a concentration immediately after which an uncontaminated path is manifestly generated. [588]

When uncontaminated meditative absorptions are divided, there are two types: a contaminated, conceptual type and an uncontaminated type free from conceptuality.

EXPLANATION OF THE FOUR FORMLESS ABSORPTIONS BY WAY OF THE OBJECTS OF OBSERVATION AND SUBJECTIVE ASPECTS

This section has four parts: definition, etymology, explanations of the

meanings of the divisions, and the explanation of the distinction of the existence or non-existence of branches.

Definition. The definition of an actual meditative absorption of a formless absorption is:

an actual meditative absorption of an upper [level], having the type of being posited from the point of view of its object of observation and subjective aspect without having branches, which arises from having familiarized oneself again and again, mainly by way of calm abiding, with any of the discriminations of space, and so forth, upon having viewed as coarse any of the discriminations of form, space, consciousness, and nothingness for one's awareness at the time of training.

Etymology. With respect to the subject, [a formless absorption,] there is a reason for its being called a meditative absorption of a formless absorption because it is called formless since the discrimination of form has been destroyed or because there is not the least form, and it is called [a meditative absorption] since it causes the mind and mental factors to engage equally in the object of observation.

Explanations of the meanings of the divisions. When [formless absorptions] are divided, there are the four, limitless space, and so forth. The definition of an actual meditative absorption of limitless space is:

an actual meditative absorption of an upper level which enters into equipoise by way of calm abiding with respect to space as limitless, upon the destruction of the discrimination of form, and which is posited in terms of its object of observation and subjective aspect without possessing branches. [589]

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of limitless consciousness is:

[an actual meditative absorption of an upper level] which enters into equipoise by way of calm abiding with respect to consciousness as limitless, upon the destruction of the discrimination of space [and which is posited in terms of its object of observation and subjective aspect without possessing branches].

The definition of an actual meditative absorption of nothingness is:

[an actual meditative absorption of an upper level] which enters into equipoise by way of calm abiding with respect to the factor of there being nothing to be apprehended, upon the

destruction, moreover, of the discrimination of consciousness [and which is posited in terms of its object of observation and subjective aspect without possessing branches].

The definition of an actual meditative absorption without discrimination and without non-discrimination is:

[an actual meditative absorption of an upper level] which enters into equipoise by way of calm abiding with respect to the factor of coarse discrimination's being non-existent but subtle discrimination's not being non-existent, and upon the destruction, moreover, of the discrimination of nothingness [and which is posited in terms of its object of observation and subjective aspect without possessing branches].

By the statement of qualification [that is, "which is posited in terms of"], the [formless absorptions] having the aspect of the truths are included.

Each [of the formless absorptions] has the two types—contaminated and uncontaminated—and the two types—causal meditative absorptions and resultant-birth absorptions—and so forth.

The distinction of the existence or non-existence of branches. None of the upper and lower [schools of tenets] asserts branches of the actual meditative absorptions of the formless absorptions because the convention of branches of [the formless absorptions] is not stated in any sūtra or [commentarial] treatise (*bstan bcos, śāstra*). Another reason is that, when the meditative absorptions of the formless absorptions are newly achieved, one enters [into meditative absorption] by way of the later object of observation and subjective aspect upon leaving the discrimination of the previous object of observation, and, therefore, the formless absorptions are posited as passing [to the next higher level] by way of their objects of observation and subjective aspects. [590]

The distinctions of entering into and rising from [the meditative absorptions of the concentrations and formless absorptions], and so forth

This section has three parts: (1) the distinctions of entering into and rising; (2) the distinctions of the mode of abandoning the dissimilar class; (3) the distinctions between complete and incomplete meditative stabilization.

The distinctions of entering into and rising. According to the tenets

held in common with the lower [schools], when one enters into or rises from a meditative absorption of a given level, although there are sentient beings who can enter into and rise from pure and uncontaminated meditative absorptions computed, for instance, from the first concentration through the third concentration, there is none who can do so having crossed four levels because of being distant by way of the four distances—that is, basis, object of observation, subjective aspect, and level of meditative absorption. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* says:

Immediately after an uncontaminated [meditative absorption],
Pure [meditative absorptions] are generated ranging over three
[levels], upward or downward.
After the pure [meditative absorptions], it is the same.^a

According to the higher schools of tenets, there is generation of each of seventeen meditative absorptions immediately after each of the eight concentrations and formless absorptions because there is generation, for each, of each of the pure and uncontaminated eight concentrations and formless absorptions—that is, sixteen—and the meditative absorption of cessation—that is, seventeen.

The distinctions of the mode of abandoning the dissimilar class. Although Bodhisattvas deliberately abandon utterly the afflictive emotions included within ignorance and view, together with their dormancies, it is not the case that they do not engage in manifestly generating desire and attachment for the Desire Realm and the upper realms on certain occasions because there is engagement in generating them for the sake of others.

The distinctions between complete and incomplete meditative stabilization. [There are distinctions of completeness and incompleteness in the concentrations] because, although the two, the first and second concentrations, are similar in terms of being mere firm meditative stabilization, and so forth, they differ in the completeness of the strength of meditative stabilization; although the two, the second and third concentrations, are similar in just the completeness of meditative stabilization, [591] they differ in the completeness of the strength of help; although the two, the third and fourth concentrations, are similar in just the completeness of meditative stabilization and help, they differ in the completeness of purification of the faults of fluctuation.

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.15 (P5591, vol. 115, 273.4.8–273.5.4; Shastri, part 4, pp. 1154–55; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, pp. 168–69; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1245).

The first reason [namely, that although the two, the first and second concentrations, are similar in being mere firm of meditative stabilization, and so forth, they differ in the completeness of the strength of meditative stabilization] is established because, at the time of the first concentration, since investigation and analysis cause the mind to fluctuate and not be peaceful and fluctuation again and again interrupts the continuum of peacefulness in one-pointedness of mind, the strength of meditative stabilization is incomplete, [whereas], at the time of the second concentration, the strength of [meditative stabilization], which has separated from [investigation and analysis], is complete.

The second reason [namely, that although the two, the second and third concentrations, are similar in just the completeness of meditative stabilization, they differ in the completeness of the strength of help] is established because at the time of the second concentration, since it is polluted by the fault of joy, the strength of help is incomplete, [whereas], at the time of the third concentration, since one has separated from the three entanglements of investigation, analysis, and joy, the strength of the three—the compositional factor of equanimity, mindfulness, and introspection—is complete.

The third reason [namely, that although the two, the third and fourth concentrations, are similar in just the completeness of meditative stabilization and help, they differ in the completeness of purification of the faults of fluctuation] is established because there is the correct distinction that in the fourth concentration, since one has become purified of the eight faults, there is completion of entirely pure equanimity and mindfulness, [whereas], in the three lower concentrations, there is no [completion of entirely pure equanimity and mindfulness].

Dispelling objections

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that whatever is an actual meditative absorption of a concentration necessarily possesses its branches because [according to you] your definition [of an actual meditative absorption of a concentration as “a consciousness that is either a meditative stabilization posited from the point of view of possessing antidotal, benefit, and basis branches or that possessing association with it”] is correct.

If you accept [that whatever is an actual meditative absorption of a concentration necessarily possess its branches], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, an actual meditative absorption of the second

concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment, [592] [possesses the branches of the second concentration] because of being [an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration]. You have accepted the entailment [that whatever is an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration necessarily possesses the branches of the second concentration].

If you accept [that an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment possesses the branches of the second concentration], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, [an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment], possesses the antidotal branches [of the second concentration] because you have accepted [that an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment possesses the branches of the second concentration].

If you accept [that an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment possesses the antidotal branches of the second concentration], it [absurdly] follows that it is a direct continuation of the antidotes that conquered over the level below at the time of the preparations for [the second concentration] because you have accepted [that an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment possesses the antidotal branches of the second concentration].

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment possesses the antidotal branches of the second concentration, it is necessarily a direct continuation of the antidotes that conquered over the level below at the time of the preparations for the second concentration].

You cannot accept [that an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment is a direct continuation of the antidotes that conquered over the level below at the time of the preparations] because [an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment] is not preceded by its preparations.

Incorrect position: With respect to the challenge to the entailment [that if an actual meditative absorption of the second concentration in the

continuum of a Foe Destroyer of simultaneous abandonment possesses the antidotal branches of the second concentration, it is necessarily a direct continuation of the antidotes that conquered over the level below at the time of the preparations for the second concentration], such is entailed because whatever is an antidotal branch of [a concentration] must be a continuation of that which conquered over the level below at the time of its preparations. It follows [that whatever is an antidotal branch of a concentration must be a continuation of that which conquered over the level below at the time of its preparations] because Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary of Eloquence* says:

Moreover, [the antidotal branches] are a continuation of the antidotes of the time of the preparations; at the time of the actual meditative absorption, they merely lengthen the distance from the level below but are not actual antidotes that abandon it.^a

Correct position: It is not entailed [that this citation from Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary of Eloquence* means that whatever is an antidotal branch of a concentration must be a continuation of that which conquered over the level below at the time of the preparations] because, in terms of that which is preceded by its preparations, it is a continuation of them; however, whether it is preceded by [its preparations] or not, in the actual meditative absorption the so-called antidotal branches are not [antidotes] that abandon that which has not been abandoned; rather, the meaning is that they merely lengthen the distance from the afflictive emotions, and so forth, of the level below.

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that whatever is a pure actual meditative absorption is necessarily among the four—that which is concordant with degeneration, abiding, enhancement, or definite differentiation—because those four [types] are explained with respect to [pure actual meditative absorptions].

Correct position: It is not entailed [that since those four types—concordant with degeneration, abiding, enhancement, and definite differentiation—are explained with respect to pure actual meditative absorptions, whatever is a pure actual meditative absorption is

^a Tsong-kha-pa, *Golden Rosary, Collected Works*, vol. 17 (New Delhi: Guru Deva, 1979), 492.3.

necessarily among those four].

If you accept [that whatever is a pure actual meditative absorption is necessarily among the four—concordant with degeneration, abiding, enhancement, and definite differentiation], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, each of the eight pure meditative absorptions at the time of becoming absorbed in the eight pure meditative absorptions in the descending order, [is among the four—concordant with degeneration, abiding, enhancement, and definite differentiation] because of being [a pure meditative absorption.]

[THE FEATURES OF] THE BRANCHES AND OF THE OBJECTS OF
OBSERVATION AND SUBJECTIVE ASPECTS

Refutation [of mistaken opinions] [593]

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: Whatever is either investigation or analysis is necessarily not a wrong consciousness.

Correct position: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, analysis which is a changeable [mental factor] that accompanies a sense consciousness perceiving a snow mountain as blue, is not a wrong consciousness because of being either investigation or analysis.

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: The definition of investigation which is a changeable [mental factor] is:

a mental factor that examines merely gross aspects of names together with their meanings.

The definition of analysis which is a changeable [mental factor] is:

a mental factor that analyzes finely.

Correct position: With respect to the first [definition], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, the investigation that is a branch of a first concentration [and] that has become an uninterrupted path of the path of seeing, is [a mental factor that examines merely gross aspects of names together with their meanings] because of being [investigation which is a changeable mental factor].

If you accept [that the investigation that is a branch of a first concentration which has become an uninterrupted path of the path of seeing is a mental factor that examines merely gross aspects of names

together with their meanings], it [absurdly] follows that it apprehends term and meaning as suitable to be mixed!

With respect to the second [definition], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, the special insight which finely analyzes its object and which is an actual fourth concentration, is [analysis which is a changeable mental factor] because of being [a mental factor that analyzes finely]. The reason [namely, that the special insight which finely analyzes its object and which is an actual fourth concentration is a mental factor which analyzes finely] is established because it is a special insight which finely analyzes its object. This is because it is that subject [namely, the special insight which finely analyzes its object and which is an actual fourth concentration]. It follows [that it is the special insight which finely analyzes its object and which is an actual fourth concentration] because there is [a special insight which finely analyzes its object and which is an actual fourth concentration].

[You cannot accept that the special insight which finely analyzes its object and which is an actual fourth concentration is analysis which is a changeable mental factor] because, since there is steady meditative stabilization in the second concentration and above, although one analyzes finely, it is explained that both investigation and analysis do not exist from the point of view that [such analysis] does not generate stress in the mind.

THIRD DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the subject, the analysis which is a branch of the first concentration in the continuum of a common being, is a fault of concentration in the continuum of that [being] because of being a fault of the fourth concentration in the continuum of that [being].

Correct position: It is not entailed [that whatever is a fault of the fourth concentration in the continuum of a certain being is necessarily a fault of concentration in the continuum of that being].

You cannot accept [that the analysis which is a branch of the first concentration in the continuum of a common being is a fault of concentration in the continuum of that being] [594] because it is a branch of a concentration in the continuum of that [being]. This is because it is among the eighteen branches of the concentrations in the continuum of [a common being].

FOURTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: There are no differences in how investigation and analysis are asserted in the four schools of tenets.

Correct position: It follows that that is incorrect because (1) The Vaibhāṣhikas treat the entities of those two [investigation and analysis] as [investigation's] being a mental factor that acts coarsely and [analysis,] a mental factor that acts finely, whereupon they assert that [investigation and analysis] occur as concomitants of a single mind; (2) the Sautrāntikas treat those two [investigation and analysis] as coarse and fine awarenesses that motivate speech expressing[, respectively,] the entity and features of an object, whereupon they assert that these do not arise as concomitants of a single mind; (3) the Cittamātrins and those above posit those two [investigation and analysis] from the point of view of coarse and fine engagement in their objects and coarse and fine functioning.

The first reason [namely, that the Vaibhāṣhikas treat the entities of those two, investigation and analysis, as investigation's being a mental factor that acts coarsely and analysis, a mental factor that acts finely, whereupon they assert that investigation and analysis occur as concomitants of a single mind] is established because they assert that, although the two [investigation and analysis] arise as concomitants of a single mind, investigation does not act very coarsely and analysis does not act very finely. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [2.33] says: "Investigation and analysis are coarse and fine."^a

The second reason [namely, that the Sautrāntikas treat those two [investigation and analysis] as coarse and fine awarenesses that motivate speech expressing, respectively, the entity and features of an object whereupon they assert that these do not arise as concomitants of a single mind] is established because they assert that the explanation that there are five branches of an actual first concentration means that [the five branches] are included in [that] level, but those two [investigation and analysis] are not possessed as concomitants of a single mind. This is because Vasubandhu's *Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge"* [2.33] says, "They are explained as the five branches from [the point of view of] level, but they are not from [the same] moment."^b

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 2.33 (P5591, vol. 115, 147.3.3; Shastri, part 1, pp. 204–207; La Vallée Poussin, 16:1, p. 173; Pruden, vol. 1, pp. 202–204).

^b Vasubandhu, *Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge,"* 2.33 (P5591, vol. 115, 147.3.5; Shastri, part 1, pp. 204–207; La Vallée Poussin, 16:1, pp. 175–76; Pruden, vol. 1, pp. 202–204).

The third reason [namely, that the Cittamātrins and those above posit those two, investigation and analysis, from the point of view of coarse and fine engagement in their objects and coarse and fine functioning] is established because investigation is posited as engaging coarsely in its object in dependence upon either intention or wisdom, and analysis is posited as engaging finely in its object in dependence upon [either intention or wisdom]. [595]

FIFTH DEBATE

Vaibhāṣhika position with respect to the distinction between joy and bliss: The two blisses of the first and second concentrations and of the third concentration have the same name but different meanings because, in the first two concentrations, pliancy is posited as bliss, but in the third concentration, a mental feeling—intention—is posited as bliss.

The first reason [namely, that in the first two concentrations, pliancy is posited as bliss] is established because (1) joy is mental bliss and (2) if two blissful feelings arose as the concomitants of a single mental consciousness, the similarity of substantial entity would be lost. The first reason [namely, that joy is mental bliss] is established because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.9c–d] says: "Because of two scriptural passages, joy is mental bliss."^a The second reason [namely, that if two blissful feelings arose as the concomitants of a single mental consciousness, the similarity of substantial entity would be lost] is easy.

The second root reason [namely, that in the third concentration, a mental feeling—intention—is posited as bliss] is established because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* says: "With respect to the third concentration, the mental [feeling] is the faculty of bliss."^b

Sautrāntika position with respect to the distinction between joy and bliss: It follows that that is incorrect because "bliss" in "the joy and bliss that are branches of concentrations" must refer only to physical feeling. This is because Vasubandhu's *Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge"* says: "Others say, '...Also, in the [first] three concentrations, only physical bliss is presented as a branch.'"^c

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.9c–d (P5591, vol. 115, 272.2.2, 272.5.6; Shastri, part 4, pp. 1151–58; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, pp. 150, 158–60; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1237).

^b *Ibid.*, 2.7c–d (P5591, vol. 115, 140.4.5; Shastri, part 1, p. 146; La Vallée Poussin, 16:1, p. 114; Pruden, vol. 1, p. 160).

^c Vasubandhu, *Autocommentary on the "Treasury of Manifest Knowledge,"* 8.9b (P5591, vol.

SIXTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that the internal clarity that is a branch of the second concentration is faith because the Vaibhāṣhikas assert such.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if the Vaibhāṣhikas assert such, the internal clarity that is a branch of the second concentration is necessarily faith].

The reason [namely, that the Vaibhāṣhikas assert such] is established because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.9c] says: "Internal clarity is faith."^a

You cannot accept [that the internal clarity that is a branch of the second concentration is faith] because [the internal clarity that is a branch of the second concentration] is threefold: mindfulness, introspection, and equanimity.

Our own system

[596] This section has three parts: the entities, enumeration, and mode of possession of the branches.

The entities of the branches

The definition of the investigation that is a changeable [mental factor] is:

a changeable mental factor that is posited in terms of motivating internal expression [or] speech and which engages its object coarsely and engages it with an aspect of examination in dependence upon either intention or wisdom.

Stating "intention or wisdom" indicates the substantial entity. Stating "coarsely and [...] examination" indicates the features of the mode of engagement. Stating "motivating internal expression [or] speech" indicates the features of the entity. Stating "posited in terms of" includes some which do not have all of those features. There is a purpose for stating variously, "either intention or wisdom" because the distinction is known that, when the object has not been settled, one relies mainly on intention, and when it has been settled, one relies mainly on wis-

115, 272.2.5–6; Shastri, part 4, p. 1143; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 150; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1232).

^a Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.9c (P5591, vol. 115, 272.2.2, 272.5.6; Shastri, part 4, pp. 1151–58; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, pp. 150, 158–60; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1236).

dom. This is because Yashomitra's *Commentary on (Asaṅga's) "Summary of Manifest Knowledge"* says, "The reference of 'dependence upon intention or wisdom' is to the states of non-realization and realization, respectively."^a

The definition of the investigation that is a branch of the first concentration is:

(1) [a changeable mental factor that is posited in terms of motivating internal expression or speech and which engages its object coarsely and engages it with an aspect of examination in dependence upon either intention or wisdom]; (2) that which possesses association with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual first concentration.

When [the investigation that is a branch of the first concentration] is divided, there are two types: conceptual and non-conceptual. Whatever is [the investigation that is a branch of the first concentration] is necessarily only a mental consciousness and virtuous. If one eliminates the general substantial entity, a prime cognizer that is [the investigation that is a branch of the first concentration] is necessarily either a mental direct perceiver or a yogic perceiver.

The definition of the analysis that is a changeable [mental factor] is: a changeable mental factor that is posited in terms of individual analysis [597] from the point of view of finely engaging in the features, and so forth, of its object in dependence upon either intention or wisdom.

The fineness of the [engagement] is posited as fine analysis of the features, parts, and so forth, whether the object is coarse or subtle. Whatever analyzes in that way is not necessarily the analysis that is this [type of branch of a concentration] because it must be a changeable [mental factor] analyzing in that way.

The definition of the analysis that is a branch of the first concentration is:

(1) [a changeable mental factor that is posited in terms of motivating internal expression or speech and which engages its ob-

^a Yashomitra, *Commentary on (Asaṅga's) "Summary of Manifest Knowledge,"* P5554, vol. 113, 88.1.6. Kōn-chok-jik-may-wang-po's citation reads...*mngon par mi rtogs pa dang mngon par rtogs pa'i gnas skabs...* whereas P5554 (and Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 390.7) read...*mngon par mi rtog pa dang mngon par rtog pa'i gnas skabs...*—apparently a textual error.

ject coarsely and engages it with an aspect of examination in dependence upon either intention or wisdom]; (2) that which possesses association with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual first concentration.

The divisions of [the analysis that is a branch of the first concentration] are similar to those of [the investigation that is a branch of the first concentration].

In general, with respect to joy, there are four possibilities between joy (*dga' ba, prīti*) and faith (*dad pa, śraddhā*) because afflicted joy must be taken as craving and non-afflicted [joy] as faith. The joy that is a branch in this context is posited as the joy that is a feeling possessing joy that makes the mind joyful because positing a mental feeling as such is the thought of Asaṅga's *Grounds of Hearers*, and so forth.

The bliss [that is a branch in this context] is also posited as a mental feeling—that is, a contemplation—because it is posited as something that, in dependence upon mental pliancy, satisfies the mind and is concordant with generating a bliss of physical serviceability. For that reason, with respect to “body” in the phrase in a sūtra, “Bliss is experienced by the body,” the two, a physical body and a mental body, are asserted, and there is the distinction that the Vaibhāṣhikas assert that it is only a mental body and the Sautrāntikas assert that it is only a physical body. This is because Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary of Eloquence* says:

The explanation [of bliss] as the experience of pliancy by a physical body and the experience of bliss by a mental feeling [598] does not accord with the assertion [of the experiencer of bliss as referring] to only the physical body just explained and the mental body as asserted by the Vaibhāṣhikas.^a

There is a reason why the bliss of pliancy is generated in the first three concentrations and is not generated in the fourth because of the fact that, in the first three [concentrations], bliss is not viewed as a fault and one attains its cause, serviceability of body and mind that is concordant with the generation of bliss, whereas the fourth concentration has separated from attachment to bliss.

There is a reason why joy is generated in the first two concentrations [but] is not generated in the third because the first two concentrations do not stop joy upon viewing it as a fault, whereas the third

^a Tsong-kha-pa, *Golden Rosary, Collected Works*, vol. 17 (New Delhi: Guru Deva, 1979), 488.5–6.

concentration, viewing joy as a fault of fluctuation, and so forth, does not allow it to be generated.

The definition of the joy that is a branch of the first concentration is:

(1) that which possesses association with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual first concentration; (2) a refreshing mental feeling that generates great joy in the mind.

The definition of the bliss that is a branch of the first concentration is:

(1) [that which possesses association with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual first concentration]; (2) a refreshing mental feeling that generates bliss in the mind by way of serviceability of body.

This is because joy and bliss are posited individually in terms of isolating the way in which a single mental feeling helps the body and mind. This is because Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary of Eloquence* says:

Therefore, the explanation in Yashomitra's *Commentary on (Asaṅga's) "Summary of Manifest Knowledge"* agrees with that in Asaṅga's *Grounds of Hearers*; [Yashomitra explains that] the two—(1) the feeling experiencing refreshment that accompanies the mental consciousness and that helps the body by making the body, which is the basis of the sense powers, serviceable and (2) the aspect of joy, which refreshes the mental consciousness associated with it, together with its concomitants, and thereby helps the mind [599] —are posited, respectively, as bliss and joy.^a

The definition of the meditative stabilization that is a branch of the first concentration is:

a mental factor that is an actual first concentration that causes the mind and mental factors associated with it to gather in a single object of observation and that ascertains its object.

The definition of the internal clarity that is a branch of the second concentration is:

that which (1) is associated with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual second concentration and (2)

^a *Ibid.*, 488.6–489.2.

is any of [the three]—mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity that have separated from the entanglements of investigation and analysis.

The definition of the joy that is a branch of the second concentration is:

that which (1) is associated [with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual second concentration] and (2) is the mental feeling that possesses the joy generated from a meditative stabilization isolated from investigation and analysis.

The definition of the bliss that is a branch of the second concentration is:

that which (1) is associated [with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual second concentration] and (2) is the refreshing mental feeling induced by the physical serviceability generated from a meditative stabilization isolated from investigation and analysis.

The definition of the meditative stabilization that is a branch of the second concentration is:

that which (1) is associated with its concomitants, the branches—joy, and so forth—of the second concentration and (2) is a one-pointedness of mind that has separated from the entanglements of investigation and analysis.

The definition of the equanimity that is a branch of the third concentration is:

that which (1) is associated with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual third concentration and (2) is a compositional factor that acts as the mental factor of equanimity which has separated from attachment to investigation, analysis, and joy [and thus is] undisturbed by them. [600]

The definition of the mindfulness that is a branch of the third concentration is:

that which (1) is associated [with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual third concentration] and (2) is that mindfulness which apprehends either the object of observation or subjective aspect of stopping the entanglement of joy.

The definition of the introspection that is a branch of the third concentration is:

that which (1) is associated [with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual third concentration] and (2) is a wisdom consciousness that inspects whether one abides in that mindfulness which apprehends either the object of observation or the subjective aspect of stopping the entanglement of joy.

The definition of the bliss that is a branch of the third concentration is:

that which (1) is associated [with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual third concentration], and (2) is that bliss which causes the two—the physical and mental bodies—to be refreshed [and is] a mental feeling that has separated from the entanglement of joy.

The definition of the meditative stabilization that is a branch of the third concentration is:

a one-pointedness of mind which does not have joy and which is associated with its concomitants, the branches [equanimity, mindfulness, introspection and bliss].

The definition of the completely pure equanimity that is a branch of the fourth concentration is:

that which (1) is associated with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual fourth concentration and (2) is the compositional factor of equanimity which has separated from the fluctuation of the eight faults.

The definition of the completely pure mindfulness that is a branch of the fourth concentrations is:

that which (1) is associated [with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual fourth concentration] and (2) is that mindfulness which is without the fluctuation of the eight faults.

The definition of the neutral feeling that is a branch of the fourth concentration is:

that which (1) is associated [with its concomitant, the meditative stabilization of an actual fourth concentration and (2) is that mental feeling which experiences satisfaction and pain as equal.

The definition of the meditative stabilization that is a branch of the fourth concentration is:

that which (1) is associated with its concomitants, the branches—mindfulness, and so forth—of an actual fourth concentration and (2) is a one-pointedness of mind which does not fluctuate by way of the eight faults.

In general, these [branches], investigation and analysis [and so forth] are not necessarily faults of concentration [601] because they also exist in a Buddha. Although investigation, analysis, and so forth, that are branches of the respective lower concentrations in the continuum of a sentient being are faults in relation to the higher concentrations, they are not faults of concentration because they are the branches of [the lower concentrations].

There is a reason why, although the three—mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity—are present at the time of the first concentration, they are not mentioned as branches because it is by reason of [the fact that], at that time, there is strong fluctuation due to investigation and analysis and [those three] are not predominant like other branches. This is because Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary of Eloquence* says:

Although these three—mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity—are present in the first concentration, they are polluted by investigation and analysis.^a

There is a reason why, although those three [mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity] are posited as mere branches at the time of the second concentration, they are not mentioned individually by name, for (1) although, at that time, one has done the task of stopping the faults of investigation and analysis of those three [mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity], one comes under the influence of fluctuation due to joy, and (2) they are posited as an antidotal branch for the sake of knowing that “the ‘investigation’ of ‘investigation and analysis’ is merely pacified” and are indicated by the name of internal clarity. This is because Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary of Eloquence* says:

Also, in the second concentration, since they are obstructed by the fault of joy, [mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity] are not mentioned by their own names but are designated by the name of internal clarity.^b

^a Ibid., 490.4.

^b Ibid., 490.4–5.

There is a reason why [mindfulness, introspection, and the compositional factor of equanimity] are mentioned individually by name at the time of the third concentration and are posited as branches, for, since they do their respective work individually at that time without the faults of investigation, analysis, and joy, they are mentioned individually as branches by their own names. This is because Tsong-kha-pa's *Golden Rosary of Eloquence* says: "Here, since they have separated from those faults, [602] they are mentioned by their own names."^a

There is a reason why, in the fourth concentration, the two, mindfulness and equanimity, are not only mentioned as branches by their own names but also mentioned in terms of complete purity, whereas introspection is not posited, for, since one has separated from all faults of fluctuation at that time, the two [mindfulness and equanimity] are not only mentioned by their own names but are indicated by the term "completely pure," and since, here, there is no need for watchfulness out of qualms of distraction due to those faults, introspection is not posited as a branch. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* [8.11b] says: "The fourth is unfluctuating."^b

The enumeration [of the branches]

With respect to the branches of those concentrations, there is a reason for their enumeration as five and four because, although there are many consciousnesses that are also concomitants and helpers for each of the actual concentrations, they are posited as such in terms of three causes. This is because they are posited as five and four in terms of the three—the antidotal branches which are the causes of abandoning harm, the benefit branches which are the causes of achieving help, and the branch that is the basis of those two.

The mode of possession [of the branches]

There is a way in which one possesses or does not possess investigation and analysis and a way in which one possesses or does not possess joy and bliss, for it is not just whether these exist in a person's continuum but whether they are possessed in association with that meditative absorption without being stopped, upon viewing whether or not they are faults in that [person's continuum].

^a Ibid., 490.5.

^b Vasubandhu, *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, 8.11b (P5591, vol. 115, 273.15–6; Shastri, part 4, p. 1150; La Vallée Poussin, 16:5, p. 161; Pruden, vol. 4, p. 1239).

Dispelling objections

FIRST DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that whatever is an actual concentration is necessarily equally calm abiding and special insight because, owing to the equality of such, a path is necessarily easier. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* says: [603] "...of the concentrations,..."^a

Correct position: [That Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* says this] does not entail [that, owing to the equality of calm abiding and special insight, a path is necessarily easier].

You cannot accept [that, owing to the equality of calm abiding and special insight, a path is necessarily easier] because special insight predominates in a special actual first concentration, but it is not an easy path to generate.

SECOND DEBATE

Incorrect position: Whatever is a preparation is necessarily predominantly a consciousness of special insight because, since such is necessarily so, those are necessarily paths which are difficult to generate. This is because Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* says: "...other grounds..."^b

Correct position: [That Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge* says this] does not entail [that since whatever is a preparation is necessarily predominantly a consciousness of special insight, those are necessarily paths which are difficult to generate].

It [absurdly] follows that the subject, the preparation of one who has just attained calm abiding [that is, calm abiding itself] is predominantly a consciousness of special insight because of being a preparation].

You cannot accept [that the preparation of one who has just attained calm abiding is predominantly a consciousness of special insight] because, aside from mere calm abiding, special insight has not been achieved and because [one's] meditation is still mainly stabilizing meditation.

^a This citation is too fragmentary to permit identification.

^b This citation is too fragmentary to permit identification.

THIRD DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that among the branches of the third concentration there is subtle mental bliss because Asaṅga's *Grounds of Hearers* says: "When one enters into a meditative absorption of the third concentration, mental bliss vanishes."^a

Correct position: [That Asaṅga's *Grounds of Hearers* says this] does not entail [that among the branches of the third concentration there is subtle mental bliss]. This is because in that [statement] he is thinking of coarse mental bliss.

You cannot accept [that among the branches of the third concentration there is subtle mental bliss] because the first concentration is posited in terms of separation from attachment to the coarse feeling of pain; the second, in terms of separation from attachment to the assumption of bad states of [feeling], which are subtle; the third, in terms of separation from attachment to the mental bliss of the second concentration and below, which is the coarse feeling of bliss; and the fourth, in terms of separation from attachment to the faculty of bliss of the third concentration, which is subtle.

FOURTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It [absurdly] follows that each of the two, investigation and analysis, has different substantial entities at one time because [according to you] each of these also has the two substantial entities of intention and wisdom. [604]

Correct position: In one aspect, it is not entailed [that if each of the two, investigation and analysis, has the two substantial entities of both intention and wisdom, each necessarily has different substantial entities at one time] because, although each of these does not occur for those two [investigation and analysis] at one time, in general each has intention and wisdom.

FIFTH DEBATE

Incorrect position: It follows that whatever is investigation that is a changeable mental factor is necessarily either intention or wisdom because whatever is [investigation that is a changeable mental factor] is necessarily the substantial entity of either intention or wisdom.

^a Asaṅga, *Grounds of Hearers*, Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series, vol. 14, p. 453; P5537, vol. 110, 118.5.8.

Correct position: It is not entailed [that if whatever is investigation that is a changeable mental factor is necessarily the substantial entity of either intention or wisdom, then whatever is investigation that is a changeable mental factor is necessarily either intention or wisdom].

THE EFFECTS ATTAINED

Asaṅga's *Summary of Manifest Knowledge* says:

Because of cultivation of the first concentration to a small, middling, and great [degree], there are the three rebirths of the First Concentration. As in the First Concentration, so also, in the remaining ones, there are similarly three rebirths of concentration.^a

^a Asaṅga, *Summary of Manifest Knowledge*, P5550, vol. 112, 261.2.5–6; Rahula, trans., *Le Compendium de la super-doctrine*, p. 112. In Kōn-chok-jik-may-wang-po, *Condensed Statement*, 604.3, the final *pa'i phyir* is grammatically unnecessary; the corresponding section of Jam-yang-shay-pa's text (Jam-yang-shay-pa, *Concentrations*, 415.6) also has an unnecessary *phyir*.

3 ENUMERATION OF THE MEDITATIVE STABILIZATIONS [OF BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS] IN DEPENDENCE UPON THAT

[604.3]

With respect to the subject, that which is to be known here, there are limitless meditative stabilizations of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas which depend even on each of the meditative absorptions of the concentrations and formless absorptions because, like the limitless enumeration of meditative stabilizations that depend on the first concentration, those of the remaining [concentrations and formless absorptions] are similar[ly limitless].

* * * * *

[I] say:

It is suitable to praise those scholarly rulers of the nāgas
Who play in the ocean of the Omniscient One's speech
Having depths of scripture and reasoning which are not manifest
And thousands of series of waves of pure refutation and proof.
Having condensed the essence of the vast great texts
For the sake of beings who take intense fright at them,
I give this excellent vase of the ambrosia of good explanation.
May unbiased aspirants have a feast! [605]
May whatever actuality of virtue is attained from striving here
Put an end to the darkness of the mistaken conception of true existence
In the sky of the minds of the nine [levels] of limitless beings
Through the union of the sun and moon of calm abiding and special insight!

With respect to this *Condensed Presentation of the Concentrations and Formless Absorptions, An Excellent Vase of the Ambrosia of Eloquence*, I thought that, although the *Great Analysis of the Scope of the Concentrations and Formless Absorptions* by the sovereign of the complete teachings, the great, omniscient lord of scholars and adepts Jam-yang-shay-pay-dor-jay is a jewel-like, unprecedented good explanation providing limitless analytical approaches for scholars, since, because of the times, it is difficult for those of weak intelligence and exertion to assimilate it, it would help me and those of similar lot if there were a condensation of it. The monk of much hearing, a proponent of reasoning, Kön-chok-jik-

may-wang-po, abridging words of [Jam-yang-shay-pa's] *Great Exposition of the Concentrations and Formless Absorptions*, has stated [the topics] in condensation without contradicting the meaning of the thought [of Jam-yang-shay-pa]. Since, when debating, there are also distinctions to be drawn throughout [the text], if^a those of unrestricted intelligence analyze [these topics] finely without bifurcation of understanding and reasoning, in not much [time], the lotus of discrimination will open.

^a 605.5, reading *mdzad na* instead of *mdzad ni*.