Selections From
The Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path To Enlightenment
By
Đzong-ka-ba Lo-sang-drak-ba

Fulfilling The Prerequisites For Special Insight:
Identifying Scripture Requiring Interpretation and Scriptures of Definitive Meaning,
The History of Commentary on Nāgārjuna’s Thought, and
How to Settle the View of Emptiness

Translated by Elizabeth Napper
## Contents of Great Special Insight

[Introduction] ................................................................................................................................................ 5

[Chapter 1. The Interpretable and the Definitive] ........................................................................................ 12
  [1/4] Fulfilling The Prerequisites For Special Insight............................................................................... 12
  [1/3 First: Identifying Scriptures Requiring Interpretation and Scriptures of Definitive Meaning] .... 14

[Chapter 2. Reliable Sources] ....................................................................................................................... 20
  [2/3] Second: The History of Commentary of Nāgarjuna’s Thought ............................................................ 20

[Chapter 3. The Stages of Entry Into Suchness] ........................................................................................... 25
  [1/2] One: [The Stages of Entry Into Suchness] ...................................................................................... 25

[Chapter 4. Misidentifying the Object of Negation]..................................................................................... 36
  [2/2] Two: Actual Settling of Suchness ................................................................................................... 36
  [1/3] Identifying The Object Of Negation By Reasoning .................................................................. 36
  [1/3 The Reason Why it is Necessary to Identify Well the Object of Negation] ............................ 36
  [2/3] Second, Refuting Other Systems which [engage in] Refutation without having Identified the Object of Negation ................................................................. 38

[Chapter 5. The Uncommon Feature of Mādhyamika] ............................................................................... 42
  [2/2] First, showing that those systems refute the uncommon distinguishing feature of Mādhyamika 42
  [1/3] First, [Identifying the Distinguishing Feature of Mādhyamika] ............................................ 42

[Chapter 6. Dependent-Arising and Emptiness] ........................................................................................... 53
  [2/3] Second, How Those Systems Refute This [Distinguishing Feature of Madhyamika] ............... 63

[Chapter 7. Madhyamika Response] ........................................................................................................ 68
  [3/3] Third, How a Madhyamika responds to those [who refute the distinguishing feature of Madhyamika] .............................................................................. 68

[Chapter 8. Reasoned Analysis] .................................................................................................................... 94
  [2/2] Second, showing that the discredit expressed does not overwhelm [our position]................... 94
  [1/4. Conventional phenomena, forms and so forth] cannot be overcome through a refutation upon investigating whether they can or cannot withstand analysis by reasoning.] ................................. 94

[Chapter 9. Valid Establishment] ............................................................................................................... 108
  [2/4] Second, [conventional phenomena, forms and so forth] cannot be overcome through a negation upon investigating whether they are or are not established by valid cognition........................................ 108

[Chapter 10. Conventional Existence] ...................................................................................................... 134
[Chapter 11. Production Is Not Refuted] ................................................................................................... 148
    Through A Refutation Upon Investigating Whether There Is Or Is Not Production Of The Four
    Alternatives ........................................................................................................................................... 148
  [4/4] Fourth, Indicating That The Refutation Of All Four Alternatives—The Existence, Non-Existence,
    And So Forth Of Things—Is Not Suitable To Overcome [The Conventional Existence Of Production
    And So Forth] ....................................................................................................................................... 156

[Chapter 12. Not Negating Enough] .......................................................................................................... 169
  [2/2] Second, Refuting A Too Limited Identification Of The Object To Be Negated ......................... 169

[Chapter 13. The Actual Object to be Negated] ............................................................................................ 184
  [3/3] Third, Identifying The Object To Be Negated In Our Own System ............................................ 184
  [1/3] First, The Actual Identification Of The Object Of Negation...................................................... 184

[Chapter 14. When Qualification Is Needed] ............................................................................................. 211
  [2/3] Second, How These [Qualifications Such As Inherently] Are Or Are Not Affixed To Other Objects
    To Be Negated ...................................................................................................................................... 211
  [3/3] Third, An Explanation Of Whether Or Not The Qualification “Ultimately” Needs To Be Affixed
    To The Object To Be Negated ............................................................................................................. 215
How to Train in the Entity of Wisdom, Special Insight, through Training in the Bodhisattva Deeds, from among the Stages of the Paths of Beings of Great Capacity

As was explained earlier, you should not be satisfied with a mere calm abiding that possesses the feature of
(1) non-conceptuality, that is, the mind’s staying in accordance with your wish on the single object of
meditation on which it has been set, whereby it stays where it is placed,
(2) clarity which is free from laxity,
(3) benefit, that is, joy and bliss.

Rather having generated the wisdom that ascertains non-errorously the meaning of suchness, you should cultivate special insight.

Otherwise, since such mere meditative stabilization is shared with Forders, no matter how much you cultivate that mere [meditative stabilization], you will not be released from mundane existence in just the same way as the seeds of the afflictions are not abandoned thought the paths of [Forders].

The first of Kamalashila’s [three works on the] Stages of Meditation says:

Having thus made the mind steady with respect to an object of observation, one should analyze with wisdom.
For, though the arising of the illumination of knowledge, the seeds of obscuration are thoroughly abandoned.

If this is not done, then just like the Forders, one cannot abandon the afflictions through mere meditative stabilization.

[The King of Meditative Stabilizations] Sūtra says:

Although worldly persons cultivate meditative stabilization,
They do not destroy the discrimination of self.
For them the afflictions return and disturb [the mind],
Just as Udraka cultivated meditative stabilization here.

[In the scripture cited above] the phrase, “although [worldly persons] cultivate meditative stabilization” means “although [persons] cultivate a meditative stabilization possessing the features of non-conceptuality, clarity, and so forth as explained before.

The phrase, “They do not destroy the discrimination of self,” means that although they cultivate such, they cannot abandon the conception of self.

The fact that the afflictions will still be generated due to not having abandoned the conception of self is indicated by “the afflictions return and disturb [the mind]”.

Page 6 of 230
Through what sort of cultivation is liberation attained? Immediately following [the above passage], the scripture, as was cited earlier, says:

5 If selflessness is analyzed with respect to phenomena
   [And if one meditates in accordance with that individual analysis,
   This is the cause of the fruit, the attainment of nirvāṇa.
   There is no peace through any other cause].

[The first line means], “If having analyzed individually phenomena which are selfless, one generates the wisdom understanding the meaning of selflessness...”.

10 [The second line,] “If one meditates [in accordance with]that individual analysis,” refers to sustaining and meditatively cultivating the view of selflessness that had been gained.

[The third line,] That is the cause of the fruit, the attainment of nirvāṇa” means that such is the cause of attaining the fruit which is nirvāṇa, or liberation.

20 Can liberation be attained through cultivating some other path without that [wisdom realizing selflessness] in the way in which it is attained through cultivating it?

[The fourth line of the above scripture] says, “There is no peace through any other cause”, meaning that although one cultivates a path which is other than that [of the wisdom of selflessness, without that, [wisdom] there is no pacification of suffering and the afflictions.
This scripture teaching very clearly that only the wisdom of selflessness severs the root of mundane existence was quoted in [Kamalashila’s] Madhyamika Stages of Meditation in order to damage [the assertions of the Chinese abbot] Hva-shang.

Therefore, you need to gain ascertainment with respect to this, for although even the Forder sages have many good qualities such as meditative stabilization, the clairvoyances, and so forth, since they do not have the view of selflessness, they cannot cross beyond cyclic existence even a little.

In this way, the Scriptural Collection of Bodhisattvas, which was sited earlier says that:

One who, without knowing the meaning of suchness as explained in the scriptures, is satisfied with mere meditative stabilization might develop manifest pride [mistaking] that for the path cultivating the profound meaning. Through that, such a person is not released from cyclic existence.

I, thinking that, said that one who hears another will be released from aging and death.

The Teacher himself explains clearly [i.e., interprets] his own thought [when he earlier made the statement that one who hears another will be released from aging and death. Buddha explains that] “hear another” means to hear the explanation of selflessness from another.

Therefore it is unquestionable that Buddha said “hears another,” in order to stop the conception that [the profound view] is generated naturally without the hearing and thinking involved in listening to the meaning of selflessness from an external holy spiritual guide.
In general, of all the Conqueror’s scriptures, some teach suchness directly and even those that do not directly teach it indirectly only flow to and descend into it.

Since the darkness of obscuration is not overcome until the illumination of the knowledge of suchness arises, but is overcome when that arises, through mere calm abiding which is a one pointedness of mind there is no pure exalted wisdom and the darkness of obscuration is also not overcome.

Therefore, you should unquestionably seek wisdom thinking, “I will seek the wisdom ascertaining the meaning of selflessness-suchness.” Kamalashila’s middle Stages of Meditation says:

Then, having achieved calm abiding you should cultivate special insight, and should think,” All the sayings of the Supramundane Victor were spoken well; they all manifestly illuminate suchness directly or indirectly and flow to suchness.

If one knows suchness, one will be separated from all nets of views, just as darkness is cleared away though the arising of illumination.

Through mere calm abiding there is no pure exalted wisdom, and also the darkness of the obstructions is not cleared

However, if, with wisdom, one meditates on suchness well, there will be very pure exalted wisdom and suchness will be realized.
Only through wisdom are the obstructions thoroughly abandoned.

Therefore, I, abiding in calm abiding, will, by means of wisdom, thoroughly seek suchness.

I will not be satisfied with mere calm abiding.”

What is this suchness? Ultimately all things are just empty of the two selves—of persons and phenomena.

Form among the perfections, suchness is realized by the perfection of wisdom.

Since it cannot be generated by concentration and so forth, you should, without mistaking mere concentration for the perfection of wisdom, generate wisdom.

The Sutra Unraveling the Thought says:

“Supramundane Victor, through what perfection should a Bodhisattva apprehend just the non-entityness of phenomena?”

“Avalokiteshvara, it should be apprehended though the perfection of wisdom.”
Thinking this, the *Sutra of Cultivating Faith in the Mahayana*, quoted earlier, says that:

If they do not abide in wisdom, I do not say that those who have faith in the Bodhisattva Mahayana are delivered, no matter how much they engage in the Mahayana.
[Chapter 1. The Interpretable and the Definitive]

Since this is so, [that is, since it is the case that mere calm abiding is not sufficient and special insight is needed], with respect to the second, how to train in special insight, there are four parts: fulfilling the prerequisites for special insight, the divisions of special insight, how to cultivate special insight in meditation, and the measure of having achieved special insight through meditative cultivation.

[1/4] Fulfilling The Prerequisites For Special Insight

Relying on scholars who know non-erroneously the essentials of the scriptures, you should hear the stainless textual systems.

The generation of the view realizing suchness by means of the wisdoms of hearing and thinking is the indispensable prerequisite for special insight, for, if you do not have a view decisive with respect to the meaning of the mode of being [i.e., emptiness], you cannot generate the special insight realizing the mode [of being of phenomena, emptiness].

Also, such a view must be sought by one who, without relying on [scriptures] whose meaning requires interpretation, relies on those of definitive meaning. Therefore, you must understand the meaning of scriptures of definitive meaning through having come to know the difference between that requiring interpretation and the definitive.
Furthermore, if you do not rely on treatises which are commentaries on [Buddha’s] thought by the great valid openers of the chariot-ways, you are like a blind person without a guide going in the direction of fright. Hence, you must rely on non-erroneous commentaries on [Buddha’s thought].

On what sort of commentator on [Buddha’s] thought should you depend?

Since the superior Nāgārjuna, renowned in the three levels [below, above and on the earth], was very clearly prophesized by Buddha, the Supramundane Victor, himself in many sutras and tantras as commenting on the profound meaning free from all extremes of existence and non-existence, the essence of the teaching, you should seek the view realizing emptiness based on his texts.

With respect to these [prerequisites for special insight], there are three parts:

- Identifying scripture requiring interpretation and scriptures of definitive meaning,
- The history of commentary on Nāgārjuna’s thought, and
- How to settle the view of emptiness.
Those who wish to realize suchness must rely on the Conqueror’s scriptures.

However, due to the various thoughts of trainee’s, the scriptures vary. Hence you might wonder in dependence on what sort [of scripture] you should seek the meaning of the profound.

Suchness should be realized through reliance upon scriptures of definitive meaning.

Should you wonder, “What sort [of scripture] is of definitive meaning and what sort requires interpretation?”

This is posited by way of the subjects discussed.

Those teaching the ultimate are held to be scriptures of definitive meaning and those teaching conventionalities are held to be scriptures whose meaning requires interpretation. In that vein, the Teachings of Akshayamati Sutra says:

What are sutras of definitive meaning? What are sutras whose meaning requires interpretation?

Those which teach [within] establishing conventionalities are called sutras of interpretable meaning.

Those which teach [within] establishing the ultimate are called sutras of definitive meaning.
Those teachings [about various objects by way of] various words and letters are called sutras of interpretable meaning.

Those teaching that which is profound, difficult to view, and difficult to realize are called sutras of definitive meaning.

Question: What is the mode of teaching a conventionality, through the reaching of which [a sutra] comes to be of interpretable meaning, and what is the mode of teaching the ultimate, through the teaching of which a [a sutra] comes to be of definitive meaning?

This is also indicated very clearly in that sutra. It says:

Those which teach things that must be expressed by way of various words [such as] self, sentient being, living being, the nourishes, creature, person, born from Manu, child of Manu, agent feeler, in the manner of [there being and inherently existent] controller, for instance, when there is no [inherently existent] controller are called sutras of interpretable meaning.

Since it is said thus that those which teach selflessness, no [ultimate] production, and so forth in the manner of eliminating elaborations are of definitive meaning and those which teach self and so forth are of interpretable meaning, you should know that selflessness, no [ultimate] production, and so forth are the ultimate, and production and so forth are conventional.

The King of Meditative Stabilizations Sutra also says:

One knows as instances of sutras of definitive meaning [those which teach] In accordance with the emptiness explained by the Sugata. One knows as of interpretable meaning all those [verbal] doctrines [i.e., sutras] In which “sentient being”, person” and “creature” are taught.

Kamalashila’s Illumination of the Middle Way says:

Therefore it should be understood that, “Only those which discuss the ultimate are of definitive meaning and the opposite are of interpretable meaning.”

Also, the Ornament Illuminating the Exalted Wisdom Operating in the Sphere of All Buddhas says, That which is a definite object is the ultimate,”
...and also the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* teaches with respect to no [ultimate] production, and so forth, “[they] are definitive objects.” Therefore, it is definite that only no [ultimate] production and so forth are called “ultimates”.

Therefore, [Nāgārjuna’s] Mādhyamika “Collections of Reasonings” as well as the commentaries on their thought are to be held as teaching the definitive meaning just as it is because they extensively settle the ultimate which is free from all the collections of elaborations such as [inherently existent] production, cessation, and so forth.

Why are those two that teach such called “[sutras] of interpretable meaning “ and “[sutras] of definitive meaning”?

Since [a sutra’s] meaning cannot be interpreted otherwise, it is called that of which the meaning is definite or of definitive meaning, for since that meaning is the meaning of suchness, it is the finality of that which is to be settled.

It cannot be interpreted beyond that and cannot be interpreted as something other than that by some other person because it possesses valid proofs.
Thus Kamalashila’s *Illumination of the Middle Way* says:

What is [a sutra] of definitive meaning? That of which there is valid cognition and which makes an explanation in terms of the ultimate, for it cannot be interpreted by another person as something aside from that.

Through this statement one can implicitly understand [scriptures] of interpretable meaning.

Those of which the meaning is to be interpreted, or which require interpretation, are just those which, their meaning being unsuitable to hold just as it is, must be interpreted as some other meaning though explaining [their] thought.

Or, they are those of which the meaning, although all right to hold as literal, is not the final suchness, and one must still seek that suchness as something other than that [mere appearance].

Qualm: Since sutras of definitive meaning are literal, then if, “production does not exist,” “persons do not exist”, and so forth appear in those sutras, one must hold that production and persons utterly do not exist; otherwise it would absurdly follow that since those [sutras] would not be literal, they would require interpretation.

[Answer:] This does not appear to be correct, for when the teacher [Buddha] who is the speaker refutes production and so forth in that way, there are seen to be many sutras of definitive meaning in which the qualification “ultimately “is affixed; and,
if there occurs one affixing of the qualification, then since it is a common attribute it must be affixed even at points where it does not occur.

Further, since [no production ultimately] is the suchness of those phenomena, how could that which teaches such not be of definitive meaning?

Otherwise, through refuting the generality “production”, instances [of production such as] words would also have to be refuted whereby there could also be no presentation of sutras of definitive meaning which teach such.

Therefore, you should know that the fact that it is not suitable to hold as literal what is taught in a few isolated words, out of context, not connecting it with what is said before or after in the general run of a sutra or treatise, does not destroy [that text’s] being a scripture of definitive meaning.

You should also know that even though what is taught on the level of the words is suitable to be held as literal, it is not that it [necessarily] is not of interpretable meaning [that is, literal texts can still require interpretation].
What is the chronology of the stages of commenting on the thought of Nāgārjuna, who commented non-
erroneously on the scriptures—The Perfection of Wisdom Sutras and so forth—which teach in this way that all phenomena are without any inherent existent production, cessation, and so forth?

Even the great Mādhyamikas such as the master Buddhapalita, Bhāvaviveka, Chandrakīrti, and Shantarakshita took Āryadeva to be valid like the master [Nāgārjuna].

Therefore since both the father [Nāgārjuna] and his [spiritual] son [Āryadeva] are sources for other Mādhyamikas, earlier [Tibetan Scholars] used the verbal convention “Madhyamikas of the model texts” for those two and used the verbal convention “partisan Mādhyamikas” for the others.

Certain earlier spiritual guides said that when the names are designated by way of how they posit conventionalities, Mādhyamikas are of two types: Sautrantika-Mādhyamikas who assert that external objects exist conventionally and Yogachara-Mādhyamikas who assert that external object do not exist conventionally.
They are also of two types when names are designated by way of how they assert the ultimate: Reason-Established Illusionists, who assert that a composite of the two, appearance and emptiness, is an ultimate truth and Proponents of Thorough-Non Abiding who assert that the mere elimination of elaborations with respect to appearances is an ultimate truth.

They assert that the former of these two are the masters Shantarakhita, Kamalashila, and so forth.

The verbal conventions “illusion-like” and “thoroughly non-abiding” are asserted also by some Indian masters.

Indeed, in general, some Indian and Tibetan masters who claimed to be Mādhyamikans did make such assertions, but what is to be settled here are just the systems of the great Mādhyamikans who are followers of the master Nāgārjuna.

Who could explain [all] the subtle [distinctions]?

Moreover, the statement by the great translator Lo-den-shay-rap that positing Mādhyamikas as twofold by way of their mode of asserting the ultimate is a presentation generating delight in the obscured is very good.
For, their assertion appears to be an assertion that [for the Reason-Established Illusionists] the mere object that is comprehended by an inferential reasoning consciousness is an ultimate truth whereas it is said in both Shantarakshita’s *Ornament for the Middle Way* and Kamalashila’s *Illumination of the Middle Way* that the object comprehended by a reasoning consciousness is designated “ultimate” due to being concordant with an ultimate truth.

Also, since the other great Mādhyamikas do not assert that the mere object which is an elimination through reasoning of elaborations is an ultimate truth [these earlier scholars’ explanation of Thoroughly Non-Abiding Mādhyamikas] is not good.

With respect to this [chronology of the commentaries on Nāgārjunas thought] the master Ye-shay-day explains that the masters, the Superior [Nāgārjuna] and his [spiritual] son [Arayadeva] did not make clear in their Mādhyamika treatises whether external objects do or do not exist and...

...after them the master Bhāvaviveka, refuting the system of Consciousness-only, presented a system in which external objects exist conventionally.

Then the master Shatarakshita set forth a different Mādhyamika system which teaches, in dependence on Yogachara texts, that external objects do not exist conventionally and also teaches that the mind is without inherent existence ultimately.
Thereby, two forms of Mādhyamika arose, and the former is designated Sautrantika-Mādhyamika and the later Yogachara-Mādhyamika. The chronology is evident as [Ye-shay-day says].

However although the master Chandrakīrti asserts that external objects exist conventionally, he does not do so in accordance with other proponents of tenets and thus it is unsuitable to call him a “Sautrantika [Mādhyamika]”.

Similarly, the assertion that he accords with the Vaibashikas is also very unreasonable.

The usage by scholars of the later dissemination [of the Buddhist doctrine] to the land of snowy mountains [Tibet] of the two verbal conventions, Prasangika and Svatantrya, for Mādhyamikas accords with Chandrakīrti’s Clear Words. Hence, you should not think that it is their own fabrication.

Therefore, [Mādhyamikas] are limited to the two, those who do and do not assert external objects conventionally, and also, if names are designated by way of how the view ascertaining emptiness, the ultimate, is generated in the continuum, they are limited the two Prasangika and Svatantryas.

Following which of those masters should one seek the thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna] and his [spiritual] son [Āradeva]? 

The great elder [Atisha] took the master Chandrakīrti’s system as chief, and seeing this, the great earlier lamas of these precepts [of the stages of the path to enlightenment] who followed him also held that system to be chief.
The master Chandrakirti [himself] saw the master Buddhapalita from among the commentators on Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way* as elucidating completely the thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna].

Thereupon, he took that system as his basis, and also taking many good explanations from the master Bhāvaviveka and refuting those that appeared to be a little incorrect, he commented on the thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna].

Seeing the commentaries of those two masters [Buddhapalita and Chandrakirti] to be most excellent with regard to explaining the texts of the Superior [Nāgārjuna] and his [spiritual] son [Araydeva], ...

...here the thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna] will be settled following the master Buddhapalita and the glorious Chandrakirti.
[Chapter 3. The Stages of Entry Into Suchness]

This has two parts: the stages of entry into suchness and the actual settling of suchness.

[1/2] One: [The Stages of Entry Into Suchness]

With respect to the first, what is the nirvāṇa [i.e., the passing from sorrow], the suchness that is here the object of attainment, and by way of what sort of entry into suchness, that is, methods for attaining it, does one enter?

The extinguishment in all forms of the conceptions of [inherently existent] I and mine, by means of pacifying all appearance of the varieties of internal and external phenomena as [their own] suchness whereas they are not [their own] suchness, along with their predispositions, is the suchness that is here the object of attainment, the Truth Body.

The stages of how you enter into that suchness are as follows: First, having contemplated the faults and disadvantages of cyclic existence and turned the mind [from it], you should generate a wish to cast that [cyclic existence] aside.

Then, seeing that it will not be overcome if its cause is not overcome, you research its root, thinking about what the root of cyclic existence is.
Thereby, upon inducing ascertainment from the depths with respect to the way in which the view of the transitory, or ignorance serves as the root of cyclic existence, you need to generate a non-artificial wish to abandon it.

Next, seeing that overcoming the view of the transitory depends upon generating the wisdom realizing the non-existence of the self conceived by that [view], you see that it is necessary to refute that self.

Gaining ascertainment in dependence on scriptures and reasonings which damage the existence and prove the non-existence of that self is the indispensable method for one who is intent upon liberation.

Having gained the view ascertaining in this way that the self and mine do not in the least have inherent existence, through familiarizing with that meaning the Truth Body will be attained. Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words* says:

If all these afflictions, actions, bodies, agents, and effects are not [their own] suchness, but nonetheless—like a city of scent eaters and so forth—while not being [their own] suchness appear to childish [common persons] in the aspect of [being their own] suchness, ...
Answer: Here suchness is the extinguishment in all forms of the apprehension of [inherently existent] I and the apprehension of the [inherently existent] mine with respect to the internal and external on account of the non-apprehension of internal and external things.

With respect to entry into suchness [my own] Supplement to Nāgārjuna’s “Treatise on the Middle Way” says (VI 120):

Yogis see with their minds that all afflictions
And faults arise from the view of the transitory
And having realized that the self is the object of
That [view] refute self.

Thus, [a description of how to enter suchness] should be sought from such statements there.

[Chandrakirti’s Clear Words] also says:

Yogis who wish to enter into suchness and wish thoroughly to abandon all afflictions and faults investigate, “What does this cyclic existence have as its root?”
When they thoroughly investigate in this manner, they see that cyclic existence has as its root the view of the transitory collection, and they see that the self is the object of observation of that view of the transitory collection.

They see that the view of the transitory collection is abandoned through non-observation of self and that through abandoning that [view], all afflictions and faults are overcome.

Hence, at the very beginning they investigate with respect to just the self —“What is the self’, the object of the conception of self?”

Although many reasonings refuting inherent existence were set forth with respect to immeasurable individual subjects, when yogis [initially] engage [in practice], they meditate in an abridged way within settling the lack of inherent existence in terms of I and mine.

The master Buddhapalita says that this is the meaning of the eighteenth chapter of Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way*, and in dependence on his statement, the master Chandrakīrti presents [the stages of entry into suchness thus in his *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”*]; ...
Qualm: Is this not [an occasion of] teaching the mode of entry into suchness of the Mahayana?

In that case, the mere extinguishment of the conception of [inherently existent] I and mine is unsuitable to be the suchness that is to be attained.

Also, since within the mere settling of the absence of inherent existence of I and mine, there is no settling of the selflessness of phenomena, it is not suitable to posit [just the former] as the path for entering in to suchness.

Response: There is no fault. For, with respect to the extinguishment, in all ways, of the conception of I and mine, there are two types of which [the first], the utter abandonment of the afflictions in the manner of their not being posited again, does indeed exist among Hinayanaists; ... 

...however [the second,] the abandonment by way of utter non-apprehension of all signs which are elaborations [even of the appearance of inherent existence] with respect to external and internal phenomena, is the Truth Body.

Furthermore, when you realize that the self does not exist inherently, the conception also that the aggregates which are branches of that [self] exist inherently is overcome.

It is like the way in which when a chariot is burned, the wheels and so forth which are its parts are also burned.
Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words* says:

Those wishing liberation analyze whether [the self] which is imputed dependently, which serves as a basis for the strong adherence to self by those possessing the error of ignorance, and of which the five aggregates are seen to be appropriated, has the character of the aggregates or does not have the character of the aggregates.

When it is analyzed in all ways, those wishing liberation do not observe [a self having the character of the aggregates] and therefore, in those [aggregates, as Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise* (XVIII.2ab) says:]

> If the self itself does not exist
> How could the mine exist?

Because the self is not observed, also the mine, the basis of designation as the self, will very much not be observed.

When a chariot is burned, its parts also are burned and thus are not observed; similarly, when yogis realize the self is not [inherently] existent, they will realize the selflessness also of the mine, the things that are the aggregates.

Thus [Chandrakirti] says that when you realize the lack of inherent existence with respect to the self, you realize the lack of self, that is, inherent existence, also with respect to the mine, the aggregates.
Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says:

Because of error due to apprehending an intrinsic entity in forms and so forth, [Hearers and Solitary Realizers following Hinayana tenets] do not realize even the selflessness of persons.

This is because they are apprehending [as inherently existent] the aggregates which are the basis of designation as self. [Nāgārjuna’s Precious Garland 35ab] says:

As long as one conceives the aggregates [to be inherently existent] so long does one conceive an [inherently existent] I with respect to them.

Thus it is said that if you do not realize the aggregates to be without inherent existence, you do not realize the selflessness of the person.

Qualm: If just that awareness realizing the absence of inherent existence with respect to the person realizes that the aggregates are without inherent existence, there would be the fault that the two awarenesses realizing the two selflessnesses would be one.

[However] since the two, phenomena and persons, are separate, the two awarenesses realizing the lack of inherent existence of those two are also separate, like, for example, the awareness realizing the impermanence of a pot and of a pillar.
[On the other hand] if just that awareness realizing the person to be without inherent existence does not realize the aggregates to be without inherent existence, then how can you posit [the meaning of Chandrakirti’s statement] that when one realizes the selflessness of the person, one realizes the lack of inherent existence of the aggregates?

[Answer:] Since we do not assert the first of these questions [that just that awareness realizing the lack of inherent existence with respect to the person realizes the aggregates as without inherent existence], I will explain the later question.

Although just that awareness realizing the person as without inherent existence does not engage in the thought, “the aggregates do not inherently exist,” that awareness is able, without relying on another [reasoning or consciousness], to induce an ascertaining consciousness which ascertains that the aggregates lack inherent existence, whereby it is able to eliminate the superimpositions that superimpose inherent existence on the aggregates.

Therefore, [Chandrakirti] says that when the person is realized to lack inherent existence, the aggregates also are realized to lack inherent existence.

This should be known in accordance with the statement in the Buddhapala Commentary on (Nagarjuna’s) Treatise on the Middle Way":

Those which the so called “self” possesses are called the “mine”. That self does not [inherently] exist, and if it does not [inherently] exist, how would these [mine which are the objects of use] of that [self] be correct?
For example, when you ascertain that a son of a barren woman does not occur, that awareness does not engage in the thought, “The ears of that [son of a barren woman] and so forth do not exist,” but it is able to eliminate superimpositions conceiving the ears of that [son of a barren woman] to exist.

Similarly, when you ascertain that the self does not exist as [its own] suchness, the conception that the eyes and so forth of that [self] exist as [their own] suchness is overcome.

Qualm: Even the Proponents of True Existence of our own Buddhist schools who assert that the person is imputedly existent do not assert that the person is ultimately established. Therefore, even they would realize that eyes and so forth are without inherent existence.

Response: In that case, since they assert gross objects such as eyes, sprouts, and so forth to be imputedly existent, they would realize them as without inherent existence.

[Objector:] That is so.

Response: If you accept such, it would contradict your own assertion [that Proponents of True Existence do not realize the lack of inherent existence of phenomena].

Also, it would not be necessary [for Madhyamikas] to prove [to Proponents of True Existence] that sprouts and so forth do not truly exist.

Further, complete paths of virtuous and non-virtuous actions are posited as continuums, and...
...and if [the Proponents of True Existence] asserted continuums to lack inherent existence, then there would be no purpose in [the proponents of True Existence] disputing the Madhyamikas’ propounding that these, like dreams, lack true existence as is set forth in Haribhadra’s Clear Meaning Commentary:

[The Proponents of True Existence say to us Madhyamikas:] If [all phenomena] are like dreams, then the ten non-virtues, giving and so forth would not exist whereby would not even the waking state become like the state of sleep?

Thus there is a great disparity between ultimate and conventional establishment or non-establishment in the Madhyamika system.

Hence it is not at all contradictory that these things are asserted by [Proponents of True Existence] as conventionalities would, from the Madhyamika perspective [have to be said to] be ultimately established and those things asserted by [the Proponents of True Existence] as ultimately established would, for the Madhyamikas, come to be conventionally established.

Therefore, these should be differentiated.

Furthermore, although the imputedly existent person of these [Proponents of True Existence] and the imputedly existent person of this master [Chandrakirti] are similar in name, the meaning is not the same.

For, this master asserts that these [Proponents of True Existence] do not have the view realizing the selflessness of the person.
This is because he asserts that if one has not realized the selflessness of phenomena, one has not realized the selflessness of the person.

Therefore, since this master asserts that as long as one has not forsaken the tenet that the aggregates are substantially existent, one conceives the person also to be substantially existent, [he says that] these [Proponents of True Existence] do not realize that the person does not ultimately exist.
[Chapter 4. Misidentifying the Object of Negation]

The actual settling of suchness has three parts: identifying the object of negation by reasoning, whether that negation is done by means of consequence or autonomous syllogism, and how, in dependence on doing that, to generate the view in your continuum.

[1/3] Identifying The Object Of Negation By Reasoning
This has three parts: the reason why it is necessary to identify well the object of negation, refuting other systems which [engage in]refutation without having identified the object of negation, and how the object of negation is identified in our own systems.

Just as, for example, in order to ascertain that a certain person is not here, you must know the person who is not here.

In order to ascertain the meaning of “selflessness” or non-inherent existence, you must also identify well that self, or inherent existence which does not exist.

For, if the [meaning] generality of the object of negation does not appear well [to the mind], you will also not unerringly ascertain the negative of it.

1 Only “identifying the object of negation” is included in this dual language edition.
For, Shantideva’s *Engaging the Bodhisattva Deeds* [9.140a] says:

Without contacting the entity which is imputed  
One will not apprehend the absence of that entity

With respect to this, although the different features of the objects of negation are limitless, if they are negated from their root, which brings together [all of] the objects of negation, all the objects of negation will also be refuted.

Moreover, if not doing the refutation in terms of the final subtle essential of the object of negation, there is some remainder left over. You will fall to an extreme of existence and will generate a manifest conception of the [true existence of] things whereby you cannot be released from cyclic existence.

If you engage in negation going much too far, without holding to the measure of the object of negation, you will loose belief in the stages of the dependant arising of cause and effect whereby you will fall to an extreme of annihilation and due to just that view will be led to a bad transmigration.

Therefore, it is important to identify well the object of negation, for if it is not identified, you will unquestionably generate either a view of permanence or a view of annihilation.
[2/3] SECOND, REFUTING OTHER SYSTEMS WHICH [ENGAGE IN] REFUTATION WITHOUT HAVING IDENTIFIED THE OBJECT OF NEGATION

[1/2] First, refuting an overly broad identification of the object of negation

This has two parts: stating [others’] assertions and showing their incorrectness.

[1/2] First, Stating Others Assertions

Nowadays, most who claim to propound the meaning of the middle way say that all phenomena ranging from forms though to exalted-knowers-of-all-aspects are refuted by the reasoning analyzing whether production and so forth are or are not established as [their own] suchness...

because when reasoning analyzes any [phenomena] which is asserted, there does not exist even a particle that is able bear analysis and also

because all four alternatives—existence, non-existence, and so forth—are refuted and there does not exist any phenomena not included in those.

Moreover, [they assert that] a Superior’s exalted wisdom perceiving suchness perceives production, cessation, bondage, release, and so forth as not existing in the least, and since those must be just as they are comprehended by that [exalted wisdom], production and so forth do not exist.

[They say that] if one asserts production and so forth, are these or are these not able to bear analysis by a reasoning analyzing suchness with respect to them?
If these are able to bear analysis, then there would exist things able to bear analysis by reasoning, whereby there would be truly existent things.

If they are unable to bear analysis, how is it feasible that objects which have been negated by reasoning exist?

Similarly, [these misinterpreters of Mādhyamika say that] if production and so forth are asserted to exist, are these or are these not established by valid cognition?

In the former case, since an exhausted wisdom perceiving suchness perceives production as non-existent, it is not feasible that [production] be established by it.

Further, if one asserts that [production] is established by conventional eye consciousnesses and so forth, because it is refuted [in sūtra and by Chandrakīrti as cited below] that those are valid cognizers, it is not feasible that objects which have been negated by reasoning exist?

The King of Meditative Stabilizations Sūtra (IX.23) says:

The eye, ear, and nose [consciousnesses] are not valid cognizers.
The tongue, body, and mental [consciousness] are also not valid cognizers;
If these sense [consciousnesses] were valid cognizers,
Of what use to anyone would the Superiors path be?
Also, Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) Treatise on the Middle Way* says: “In all respects worldly [consciousnesses] are not valid cognizers.”

An assertion that [production and so forth] exist even though they are not established by valid cognition is not feasible, for one oneself does not assert such and it is also not reasonable.

[Those proponents also say] that if one were to assert production, since it is not asserted ultimately, it would have to be asserted conventionally, but that is unreasonable, for Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) Treatise on the Middle Way* says:

Through that reasoning through which [it is seen] on the occasion of analyzing suchness
That production from self and other are not reasonable,
[It is seen] that [production] is not reasonable even conventionally.
If so, through what [reasoning] would your production be [established]?

Thus [they feel that Chandrakīrti] says that the reasoning refuting ultimate production also refutes conventional [production].

Furthermore, [they say that] if one asserts production even though there is no production from any of the four—self other and so forth—then, in the refutation of ultimate production, it would not be refuted through refutation upon investigating the four alternatives because there would exist a production which was not any of those [four].
Also they say that if production were from one from among the four alternatives, then it must be from other since one does not assert the other three [production from self, both self and other, or causelessly]. However, that is not reasonable, for Chandrakīrti’s Supplement to Nāgārjuna’s Treatise on the Middle Way says: “Production from other does not exist even in the world.”

Because of that [they say that] one should not, in the refutation of production, affix even the qualification “ultimate” for Chandrakīrti’s Clear Words refutes the affixing of the qualification “ultimate”.

Among those [who assert such] some say that they do not assert production and so forth even conventionally...

...whereas some do assert [those] as existing conventionally.

However, all of them stretch our their necks and [boldly] explain:
A refutation by reasoning of an inherent existence, that is to say an establishment by way of their own entities, in phenomena is undeniably the system of this master [Chandrakīrti], for inherent establishment is refuted in terms of both truths; if there is thus no inherent existence, then what does exist?

Therefore affixing the qualification ‘ultimate’ to the object of negation is the system of only the Svātantrika Madyamikas.
[Chapter 5. The Uncommon Feature of Mādhyamika]

Second: Showing That Those [Assertions] Are Incorrect

This section has two parts, showing that those systems refute the uncommon distinguishing feature of Mādhyamika and showing that the damages expressed do not overwhelm [our position].

First, showing that those systems refute the uncommon distinguishing feature of Mādhyamika

This has three parts: identifying the distinguishing feature of Mādhyamika, how those systems refute this [distinguishing feature], and how a Mādhyamika responds to them.

With respect to this Nāgārjuna’s Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning says:

Through this virtue may all beings,
Upon accumulating the collection of merit and exalted wisdom,
Attain the two excellences
That arise from merit and exalted wisdom.

---

2 Chapters 5-7.
3 Chapters 8-11.
4 Chapter 6.
5 Chapter 7.
In accordance with this statement, the attainment—by trainees who progress by way of the supreme vehicle, [the Mahayana], on the occasion of the fruit—of the two, the excellent Truth body and the excellent Form body, depends upon accumulating on the occasion of the path, as explained earlier, the immeasurable collections of merit and exalted wisdom, that is, on inseparable method and wisdom.

This in turn, definitely relies upon attaining ascertainment with respect to the varieties, an ascertainment induced from the depths with respect to the relationship of cause and effect, [an understanding] that such and such beneficial and harmful effects arise from such and such causes, these being conventional causes and effects.

It also definitely relies on attaining ascertainment with respect to the mode [of existence], an ascertainment gained from the depth that all phenomena are without even a particle of inherent existence, that is to say, establishment by way of their own entities.

For, without both of these, a training from the depths of the heart in the complete factors of the path of both method and wisdom will not occur.

Not mistaking the essentials of the path causing attainment of the two bodies in that way at the time of the effect depends upon settling the view of the bases; the mode of settling the view upon which this depends is the gaining of ascertainment with respect to the two truths as has just been explained.

---

6 [in the discussion of Bodhisattvas' training, not included in this translation].
With respect to this, except for Mādhyamikas, other persons do not know how to explain these [two truths as interpreted by Mādhyamikas] as non-contradictory, seeing them as only a collection of contradictions.

However, those skillful persons possessing subtle wise and very vast intelligence, called “Mādhyamikas” through skill in the techniques for realizing the two truths, have settled [them] as without even a scent of contradiction, [thereby] finding the finality of the Conqueror’s thought.

In dependence on that, they generate wonderful and very great respect for our teacher and his teaching and with pure speech and words induced by that respect proclaim again and again with great voice,

Knowledgeable Ones, the meaning of emptiness, that is to say, the emptiness of inherent existence, is the meaning of dependent arising; it does not mean the non-existence of things, that is to say, and emptiness of capacity to perform functions.

Scholars of our own [i.e., Buddhist] schools. Proponents of True Existence, even though they have great training in many topics of learning do not accept this Mādhyamika view, and their dispute with the Mādhyamikas is just this thought:

If all phenomena are empty, without any inherent existence, that is to say, establishment by way of their own entities, then there is no way to posit all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa—bondage, release, and so forth.
For, Nagarjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way* (XXIV.1) [citing an objection by the Proponents of True Existence], says:

If all there are empty,
There would be no arising and no disintegration;
It would follow that for you [Mādhyamikas]
The four noble truths would not exist.

Thus they say that is [phenomena] are empty of inherent existence, the production, disintegration, and the four truths would not be feasible.

Also, Nagarjuna’s *Refutation of Objections*, stanza 1) [sets forth as objection by the Proponents of True Existence]:

If an inherent existence of all things
Does not exist in anything,
Then your words are also without inherent existence
And cannot refute inherent existence.

Saying that if words are without inherent existence, they cannot refute inherent existence nor prove a lack of inherent existence, [the Proponents of True Existence] debate [with the Mādhyamikas] within the thought that if there is no inherent existence, then objects produced, producers, as well as activities of refutation and proof would not be feasible.
With this [mode of debate], they debate within understanding that the reasonings refuting inherent existence refute all activities.

Therefore, when Proponents of True Existence and Mādhyamikas debate with respect to their uncommon tents, they debate only about the suitability or unsuitability of positing all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa within an emptiness of inherent existence.

Hence, the allowability of asserting all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa — objects produced, producers, refutation, proof, and so forth — within the non-existence of even a particle of inherent existence, that is to say, establishment by way of [objects] own entities, is a distinguishing feature of Mādhyamika. The twenty fourth chapter of Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way* (XXIV.13–14) says:

The consequence [expressing] the fallacy [that actions, agents, and so forth are unpositable] is not correct with respect to [the Mādhyamika] emptiness;

Thus your abandonment of emptiness is not correct with respect to me.

In that [system] in which emptiness is suitable, all is suitable;

In that [system] in which emptiness is not suitable, all is not suitable.
[Nāgārjuna] says that not only does the fallacy [expressed above by the Proponents of True Existence, XXIV.1], “If all these are empty, [there would be no arising and no disintegration]...” and so forth, not arise for those who propound an absence of inherent existence, but also production, disintegration, and so forth are suitable within a position of emptiness of inherent existence, whereas they are not suitable within a position of non-emptiness of inherent existence.

Thus, Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* [making the transition between XXIV.13 and 14] also says:

Not only does the consequence [expressing] fallacy set forth [by Proponents of True Existence] just not apply to our position, but also [in our position] all presentations of the truths and so forth are very correct. In order to indicate this, [Nāgārjuna] said [in XXIV.14],

In that [system] in which emptiness is suitable...

This, Chandrakīrti makes an explanation citing the passage [from Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise*].

The twenty-sixth chapter of Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way* teaches the stages of the production in the forward process of the twelve [links] of dependent-arising and the stages of their cessation in the reverse process.

Twenty-five chapters mainly refute inherent existence.

The twenty-fourth chapter, that analyzing the four noble truths, extensively settles how all presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, arising, disintegration, and so forth, are unsuitable within a non-emptiness of inherent existence and how all those are suitable within the emptiness of inherent existence.
Hence, one needs to know to carry this [twenty-fourth] chapter over to the other chapters.

Therefore the present-day proposition by those who claim to propound the meaning of the middle way that causes and effects — produced, producers and so forth — are necessarily not suitable within an absence of inherent existence is the system of the Proponents of True Existence.

Hence, it is the assertion of the protector Nāgārjuna that one must seek the emptiness of inherent existence and the middle path in dependence on just the presentation of cause and effect — the production and cessation of such and such effects in dependence on such and such causes and conditions.

The twenty-fourth chapter of [Nāgārjuna’s Treatise on the Middle Way, XXIV.18-19] says:

That which arises dependently
We explain as emptiness.
That [emptiness] is dependent designation;
Just it is the middle path.

Because there is no phenomenon
That is not a dependent-arising,
There is no phenomenon
That is not empty.
Do not turn around this statement [of Nāgārjuna’s] that dependent-arisings are necessarily empty of inherent existence and propound that those things produced in dependence on causes and conditions are necessarily inherently established.

Nāgārjuna’s *Refutation of Objections* similarly says (stanza 70 and concluding homage):

For whom emptiness is possible
All objects are possible;
For whom emptiness in not possible
Nothing is possible.

I bow down to the Buddha,
Unequalled, supreme of speakers,
[who taught] emptiness, dependent arising,
And the middle path as of one meaning.
Also, Nāgārjuna’s, Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness (stanza 68) says:

The unequalled Tathagata thoroughly taught
That because all things
Are empty of inherent existence
Things are dependent arisings.

Also, Nāgārjuna’s Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning (stanzas 43–45) says;

Those who adhere to the self
Or the world as not dependent
Are, alas, captivated by views
Of permanence and impermanence.

How could those faults of permanence
And so forth not accrue also
To those who assert dependently [arisen]
Things to be established as [their own] suchness?
Those who assert dependently
[Arisen] things as not real but
Not unreal, like a moon in water,
Are not captivated by [such wrong] views.

Also Nāgārjuna’s *Praise of the Supermundane* [Buddha] (21-2) says:

Suffering is asserted
By bad logicians to be produced
From itself, other, both, or causelessly;
You [Buddha] said it arises dependently.

You asserted that whatever arises
Dependently is empty;
That there is no self-powered things
Is your unequalled lion’s roar.
Thus [Nāgārjuna] says that by reason of being dependent-arisings [phenomena] are just empty of inherent existence. This dawning of the meaning of dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness, that is to say, no inherent existence, is the uncommon system of the protector Nāgārjuna.

Therefore, taking this emptiness which is a lack of inherent existence from the Mādhyamika’s own side, but, uncomfortable with making in one’s own system a presentation of dependently arisen cause and effect, relying [for that] on others, and so forth, is not the meaning of dependent-arising.

For [Nāgārjuna’s statement in the Treatise on the Middle Way,]

In that [system] in which emptiness is suitable ...

says that all the dependent-arisings of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are feasible in the system which is a system of an absence of inherent existence.
What is the system of the suitability of all cyclic existence and nirvāṇa within a position asserting emptiness?

Those who propound that all things are just empty of inherent existence propound such by reason of [things’] arising in dependence on causes and conditions. This will be explained later.

This being the case, dependent-arising is feasible within that [emptiness of inherent existence], and when that [i.e., dependent-arising] is feasible, suffering is also feasible, for sufferings must be posited to that which arises in dependence on causes and conditions, and suffering is not suitable in that which does not arise dependently.

When true sufferings exist, then the sources from which they arise, the cessation that are the stopping of those sufferings, and the paths proceeding to those [cessations] are feasible; thereby, [all] four truths exist.

When the four truths exist, then [respectively] knowledge of them, abandonment of them, actualization of them, and cultivation of the paths of them are suitable; when those exist, then all, the Three Jewels and so forth, are suitable.
In that way, Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* says:

For that [system] in which the emptiness of inherent existence of all things is suitable, all the [above]-mentioned are suitable.

How? Because we call dependent-arising “emptiness”; therefore, for that [system] in which this emptiness is suitable, dependent-arising is suitable, and for that [system] in which dependent-arising is suitable, the four noble truths are reasonable.

How? Because just those which arise dependently are sufferings, not those which do not arise dependently. Since those [which arise dependently] are without inherent existence, they are empty.

When sufferings exist, the sources of suffering, the cessations of suffering, and the paths progressing to the cessation of suffering are suitable.

Therefore, thorough knowledge of suffering, abandonment of sources, actualization of cessation, and cultivation of paths are also suitable.

When thorough knowledge and so forth of the truths, sufferings and so forth, exist, the fruits are suitable.
When the fruits exist, abiders in those fruits are suitable;

when abiders in those fruits exist, approachers to [those fruits] are suitable.

When approachers to and abiders in the fruit exist, the spiritual community is suitable.

When the noble truths exist, the excellent doctrine is also suitable, and

when the excellent doctrine and spiritual community exist, then Buddhas are suitable.

Therefore, the Three Jewels are also suitable.

All special realizations of all mundane and supramundane topics are also suitable as well as the proper and improper, the effects of those, and all worldly conventions.

Therefore, in that way, [Nāgārjuna says, XXIV.14ab],

For that [system] in which emptiness is suitable, all is suitable.

For that [system] in which emptiness is not suitable, dependent-arising would not exist, whereby all is unsuitable.
Therefore, [here the meaning of] “suitable” and “unsuitable” is to be understood as those things’ existing and not existing.

As cited earlier, an objection [by the Proponents of True Existence, to the Madhyamika position] was set forth in Nāgārjuna’s *Refutation of Objections*:

> [If an inherent existence of all things
> Does not exist in anything,
> Then your words are also without inherent existence
> And cannot refute inherent existence (stanza 1)]

In answer to that, the master [Nāgārjuna] clearly gives the answer that activities are feasible within an absence of inherent existence. The *Refutation of Objections* (stanza 22) says:

> We propound that which is the dependent-arising
> Of things as “emptiness”;
> For, that which is a dependent-arising
> Is just without inherent existence.

Also, his [Nāgārjuna’s] own commentary to this [the Commentary on the “Refutation of Objections”] says:

> You [Proponents of True Existence], not understanding the meaning of the emptiness of things and seeking a point of censure, propound, “Because your words [that is, the words of you Madhyamikas] are without inherent existence, refutation of the inherent existence of things is not feasible.”

> Here [in the Madhyamika] that which is the dependent-arising of things is emptiness.
Why? Because of being just without inherent existence.

Those things which arise dependently do not have inherent existence because of being without inherent existence.

Why? Because of having reliance on causes and conditions.

If things had inherent existence, they would exist even without causes and conditions; since such is not the case, they are without inherent existence.

Therefore, we speak of them as “empty”.

Similarly, my words also are dependent-arisings and therefore are without inherent existence.

Because they are just without inherent existence, that they are said to be “empty” is correct.

Because pots, woolen cloth, and so forth are dependent-arisings, they are empty of inherent existence but are able [respectively] to hold and receive honey, water, and milk soup and to thoroughly protect from cold, wind, and sun.

Just so, my words also, because of being dependent-arisings are without inherent existence but can thoroughly establish that things are without inherent existence.
Therefore, that which is propounded [by you] with respect to this, saying, “because your words are just without inherent existence, it is not feasible that they refute the inherent existence of all things,” is not suitable.

Thus [Nāgārjuna] speaks very clearly about the counter-pervasion that whatever is inherently established does not rely on causes and conditions and the pervasion that whatever relies on causes and conditions is without inherent existence and says very clearly that non-inherent existent words can perform the activities of refutation and proof.

What need to speak of the two āśraya-dependent-arising, the production and cessation of thoroughly afflicted and very pure phenomena in dependence on causes and conditions, and non-inherent existence āśraya coming together in a common locus.

This [system] in which just such dependent-arising serves as the unsurpassed reason for realizing non-inherent existence should be known as the distinguishing feature of only the wise Madhyamikas.

And, if, holding that dependent production and dependent cessation are necessarily established by way of their own entities, you refute the depending-arising of production and cessation with the reasoning refuting inherent existence, then [that reasoning], like a god who has turned into a demon, will become a great obstacle to finding the meaning of the middle way as it actually is.
Thus, if it is the case that 1) when you induce ascertainment that phenomena do not have even a particle of inherent existence, that is to say, establishment by way of their own entities, you have no way to induce ascertainment in your own system with respect to the relationship of cause and effect and must rely on others and so forth [as do the Tibetans who negate too much] or...

2) when you induce ascertainment well in your own system with respect to cause and effect, you have no way to induce ascertainment through your own system with respect to non-inherent existence and claim that one must interpret [in another way] the thought [of Buddha] with respect to [his speaking of] the absence of inherent existence [as do the Proponents of True Existence], ...

As causes for gaining the view, you should take as a basis the pure maintenance of the ethics you have promised [to maintain], and thereupon strive by way of many approaches to accumulate the collections and purify obstructions, and, relying on the wise, make effort at hearing and thinking.

Since this composite of the two, inducing ascertainment with respect to such appearance and emptiness, almost does not occur, the view of the middle way is very difficult to gain. Thinking of this, Nāgārjuna says in the twenty-fourth chapter of the Treatise on the Middle Way (XXIV.12)
Therefore, knowing that for those of weak mind
The depths of this doctrine are difficult to realize,
The mind of the Subduer turned away
From teaching this doctrine.

Nāgārjuna’s *Precious Garland* (116-18) says: 7

When the body, which is unclean,
Coarse, and an object of the senses,
Does not stay in the mind [as unclean],
Although it is all the time in view,

Then how could this doctrine
Which is most subtle, profound,
Baseless, and not manifest,
Easily appear to the mind?

---

7 This is Hopkin’s translation from *Buddhist Advice For Living & Liberation*. 
5 Realizing that because of its profundity this doctrine is difficult for beings to understand, The Buddha, the Subduer, [at first] turned away from teaching doctrine.

10 Thus it is said in treatises and scripture that [the view of the middle way] is very difficult to realize.

Unlike that, some mistake the meaning of statements in certain texts that settle the lack of inherent existence through the reasoning analyzing whether pots and so forth are one or different from their parts;

15 when, upon analyzing whether pots and so forth are any of their parts—lip, neck, and so forth—they do not find them as any of those, they induce the ascertainment, “There are no pots.”

Then, analyzing similarly also the analyzer, they ascertain, “There is not analyzer.”

At that time, thinking, “If an analyzer is not to be found, who is there that knows, ‘Pots and so forth no not exist?’”, they say, “[Things] do not exist and also do not not exist.” Were one to posit the inducing of such erroneous ascertainment by way of certain counterfeit reasonings as having gained the [Madhyamika] view, then this [gaining of the view] would appear to be the easiest of things.
Therefore, those with intelligence should induce ascertainment, undivertable by others, with respect to the statements in the scriptures of definitive meaning and in pure Madhyamika texts — treatises commenting on the thought of those [scriptures] — that the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, this distinguishing feature of the wise Madhyamikas, the subtle topic that is the thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna] and his [spiritual] son [Āryadeva] and was commented on in complete form in particular by the master Buddhmapalita and the glorious Chandrakīrti, this mode of bestowing ascertainment of the absence of inherent existence in dependence on depending-arising, and this way in which things empty of inherent existence dawn as cause and effect.
[2/3] Second, How Those Systems Refute This [Distinguishing Feature of Madhyamika]

Thus, this system of the protector Nāgārjuna is that:

Phenomena do not have even a particle of inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of their own entities.

Also, if there were inherent establishment, one could not make all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, and it is not suitable not to make these presentations. Hence, all presentations of bondage, release, and so forth are to be posited, whereby one must definitely assert no inherent existence.

However, [it seems that] you [misinterpreters of Madhyamika] say:

When things have no inherent existence, that is establishment by way of their own entities, then what else is there?

Therefore, without it being necessary to affix a qualification such as “ultimately” in the refutation of bondage, release, production, cessation, and so forth, [just those] are refuted by the reasoning refuting inherent existence.

If you say this, think about how you could not be refuting [Nāgārjuna’s system in which] within no inherent existence it is allowable to posit bondage, release, arising, disintegration, and so forth.

8 This isn’t a quote; its indented for typographical emphasis, as is the contrasting statement below.
You might think: “The assertion of the master [Chandrakīrti] is that the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa is bond, release, and so forth are [made] conventionally, and we also assert these conventionally. Hence, there is no fault.”

This is not reasonable, and the reason is as follows.

Even you accept that the master Chandrakīrti’s assertion is that phenomena do not have inherent existence, that is establishment by way of their own entities, even conventionally.

In that case, because the reasoning which refutes inherent existence must refute that inherent existence even conventionally and because you assert that the reasoning which refutes inherent existence also refutes bondage, release, and so forth, and it is very clear that [in your system] bondage, release, and so forth are refuted even conventionally.

In brief, if you assert that an absence of inherent existence [on the one hand] and bondage, release, production, cessation, and so forth [on the other hand] are contradictory, then since the feasibility of all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa with the emptiness which is an emptiness of inherent existence is unsuitable [to be posited] within either of the two truths, you have refuted the unique distinguishing feature of Madhyamika.

If you do not assert those two as contradictory, then you have no correct reason whatsoever for asserting that the reasoning refuting inherent existence refutes production, cessation, bondage, release, and so forth within [claiming] that it is not necessary to affix any qualification at all [such as “ultimately”] to the object of negation.
Therefore, if the reasoning refuting inherent existence refutes cause and effect, then you are asserting that production, disintegration, and so forth, are not suitable within an absence of inherent existence.

In that case, it is very clear that [your position] does not differ in the slightest from the objection by a Proponent of True Existence set forth in the twenty-fourth chapter [of Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way*, (XXIV.1)]:

If all these are empty,
There would be no arising and no disintegration;
It would follow that for you [Madhyamikas] The noble truths would not exist.

Or from the objection by a Proponent of True Existence set forth in Nāgārjuna’s *Refutation of Objections* (stanza 1):

If an inherent existence of all things
Does not exist in anything,
Then your words also are without inherent existence
And cannot refute inherent existence.

---

9 *does not differ in the slightest* is at the end of the next passage.
You might think: “Production, disintegration, and so forth are not suitable within either an emptiness of inherent existence or a non-emptiness of inherent existence; since we do not assert either emptiness of inherent existence or non-emptiness of inherent existence, we have no fault.

This is not in the least suitable to be the meaning of the [Madhyamika] texts. For Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words* establishes:

Not only do we not have the fault that arising, disintegration, and so forth are not feasible, but also the four truths and so forth are feasible.

Also, Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way* speaks within differentiating well the suitability of those within a position of an emptiness of inherent existence and their unsuitability within a position of non-emptiness.

Further, Chandrakirti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”* (VI.37-38ab) says:

It is not that empty things such as reflections that depend On a collection [of causes] are not renowned [to the world as falsities].
Just as here, from those empty reflections and so forth,
There are produced consciousnesses having their aspects [i.e., an eye consciousness seeing the reflection],
Similarly, even though all things are empty,
From those empty [things, effects] are thoroughly produced.

Moreover, if reasoning refutes bondage, release, and so forth, then, since [according to your assertion] it is not suitable to refute [those] ultimately [i.e., affixing the qualification “ultimately” to the refutation], they must be asserted conventionally, and at that time, all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa would be refuted even conventionally.

Such a Madhyamika is unprecedented.
Third, How a Madhyamika responds to those [who refute the distinguishing feature of Madhyamika]

To the objection, “If things were empty of inherent existence, the causes and effects of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa would not be possible,”

...the protector Nāgārjuna says that since the fault which was flung [to others] by the Madhyamikas has been flung at them, he, turning it around, will fling [back to the opponent] the fault [of the unsuitability of positing the causes and effects of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa].

The twenty-fourth chapter of the Treatise on the Middle Way [XXIV.15-16] says:

You turn your own faults
To us as faults
Like someone who, while riding a horse,
Forgets that very horse.

If you view things
As existing inherently,
In that case you view / All things as without causes and conditions.
Also [XXIV.20]:

If all this is not empty,  
There would be no arising and no disintegration;  
It would follow that for you [Proponents of True Existence]  
The four noble truths would not exist.

Therefore, it is clear that you who propound, “if there is no inherent existence, that is to say, establishment by way of [object’s] own entities, then what else is there?” have unquestionably not differentiated the two, the absence of the inherent existence of a sprout and the non-existence of a sprout.

And, because of that, you have also not differentiated the two, the existence of a sprout and the establishment of a sprout by way of its own entity, ...

whereby it is clear you assert that whatever exists, exists by way of its own entity, and if something is not established by way of its own entity, it does not exist.

Otherwise, why would you propound that the reasoning refuting establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity refutes mere existence, mere production and cessation, and so forth?
When you propound in this way that as long as sprouts and so forth are asserted to exist, they exist in the sense of being established by way of their own entities and propound that if [sprouts] are utterly without establishment by way of their own entities, they are utterly non-existent, you unquestionably fall to the two extremes.

Therefore, your mode of understanding is no different from that of the Proponents of True Existence. For, Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on Aryadeva’s “Four Hundred*” says clearly:

According to the Proponents of True Existence, as long as there is an existence of things, there is also an intrinsic entity [of those things].

When devoid of an intrinsic entity, then, for them, these things would be non-existent in all ways, like the horns of a donkey, whereby [these Proponents of True Existence] do not pass beyond propounding the two [extremes].

Therefore, all of their manifest [i.e., explicit] assertions are difficult to fit together.

As long as you do not realize this differentiation by the glorious Chandrakīrti between the four ōn inherent existence and existence [on the one hand] and absence of inherent existence and non-existence [on the other hand], you will unquestionably fall to the two extremes, whereby you will not realize the meaning of the middle free from the two extremes.
A clear differentiation between the absence of inherent existence and non-existence also is set forth in Chandrakirti’s Clear Words:

[A Proponent of True Existence] says: “if you posit in this way that things do not exist inherently, then through this you eliminate all those things stated by the Supramundane Victor [Buddha, such as], ‘The fruition of actions done by oneself are experienced by oneself,’ and you deprecate actions and [their] effects. Therefore you are the chief of Nihilists.”
Answer: “We are not Nihilists; having refuted the propounding of the two [extremes] of existence and non-existence, we illuminate the path free from those two that leads to the city of nirvāṇa.

We also do not propound, ‘Actions, agents, effects, and so forth do not exist.’

What do we propound? We posit, ‘These do not inherently exist.’

If you think, ‘There is fault because performance of activity is not feasible within an absence of inherent existence,’

that [fault] also is not existent because activities are not seen among just those which have inherent existence and because activities are seen among just those without inherent existence.

The proposition by Proponents of True Existence is that there is no inherent existence, that refutation of inherent existence eliminates the arising of fruitions from actions does not differ in assertion from the assertion [by Tibetans claiming to be Madhyamikas] that the reasoning refuting inherent existence refutes cause and effect.

Both the Madhyamikas and the Proponents of True Existence are alike in asserting that if cause and effect are refuted, one becomes the chief of those having a view of annihilation.
However, the Madhyamikans do not assert that cause and effect are refuted. Nevertheless, the Proponents of True Existence, thinking that if one refutes inherent existence, one must also definitely refute cause and effect, call the Madhyamikas “Nihilists”, or “Annihilationists”.

Most of the Tibetans claiming to be Madhyamikas appear to accord with the Proponents of True Existence in asserting that if one refuses inherent existence, the reasoning must also refute cause and effect;...

...however, [those Tibetans,] taking this reasoned refutation of cause and effect to be the Madhyamika system, appear to admire it.

In answer to the objection [raised by the Proponents of True Existence in the above passage, Chandrakirti responds, in paraphrase]: “We [Madhyamikas] are not Nihilists; avoiding the two [extremes] of existence and non-existence, we illuminate the path to liberation.” The remainder [of the passage] indicates how [Madhyamikas] avoid propounding [the extremes] of existence and non-existence.

About that, through saying, “We do not propound that actions, effects, and so forth are non-existent,” propounding [the extreme of] non-existence is avoided whereas we would be Nihilists if we asserted cause, effect, and so forth to be non-existent, we do not assert such.

To the question, “Well then what do you propound?”, [Chandrakirti says, “We posit, or assert, that these actions, effects, and so forth are without inherent existence. Through this he avoids propounding [an extreme of] existence.
Since performance of activity is not feasible within an absence of inherent existence, the fault remains as before,” indicates the objection by the Proponents of True Existence “Even though you [Madhyamikas] say, ‘We do not propound non-existence; we propound an absence of inherent existence,’ you still cannot abandon the fault stated earlier that if there is no inherent existence, cause and effect are not feasible.”

They object thus since in their system there is no difference between the two an absence of inherent existence and non-existence.

In answer to that, [Chandrakīrti] says that activities such as causes’ producing effects and so forth are unsuitable within inherent existence and those are suitable within only an absence of inherent existence.

Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says:

We do not propound things as non-existent because we propound dependent-arising.

If you ask, “Are you a Proponent of Things [that is, of truly existent things]?” we are not because of just being proponents of dependent-arising.

If you ask, “What do you propound?”, we propound dependent-arising.
If you ask, “What is the meaning of dependent-arising?” it has the meaning of non-inherent production, it has the meaning of arising effects whose nature is similar to a magician’s illusion, mirages, reflections, cities of scent-eaters, emanations, and dreams, and it has a meaning of emptiness and selflessness.

Thus [Chandrakirti] indicates how, through asserting [things] as dependent-arisings, the propounding of the two extremes of the existence and non-existence of things is avoided.

Moreover, through explaining that the meaning of dependent-arising is no inherently existent production he avoids propounding things as existent [i.e., as inherently existent], and through indicating the arising of effects that are like a magician’s illusions and so forth as the meaning of dependent-arising, he avoids propounding things as non-existent [that is, devoid of all capacity to perform functions].

Therefore, “thing” can be taken as “inherent existence” or can be taken as “the capacity to perform a function”.

From among these two, “thing” in “propounding things as existent” refers to only inherent establishment, and “thing” in “propound things as non-existent” refers to things which perform functions.

For, when [Chandrakirti] avoids those two [extremes, i.e., propounding things as existent or as non-existent] he refutes inherent existence and indicates that causes and effects which are like a magician’s illusions exist.
Moreover, Chandrakirti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* says:

If someone asks, “Do you [Madhyamikas propound] that a memory consciousness having a past thing as its object does not exist?”, [we Madhyamikas answer:] who would propound that such does not exist?

We [Madhyamikas] do not eliminate depending-arising.

The way in which it exists was posited by the master [Āryadeva’s] himself [XI.25bcd]:

Therefore, the “memory” which arises is only an unreal [subject]

Having an object which is unreal.

Therefore, the object of observation of a remembering consciousness is a past thing.

If [the past thing] did exist by way of its own entity, then because the memory of it would be observing an object that [inherently] exists, [that memory] would be established by way of its own entity. But, when the past thing [is shown to be] without inherent existence, then the remembering consciousness observing it also is without inherent existence. Therefore, [Āryadeva’s] has established that [the past object and the remembering consciousness] are unreal.
“Unreal” does not mean something other than “without inherent existence” and “dependent-arising”; the non-existence of things [which perform functions] is not the meaning of “unreal”.

A past thing is not non-existent in all ways because of being an object of memory and because effects of it are seen.

It also does not exist by way of its own entity because it would [absurdly] follow that it was permanent and because it would [absurdly] follow that it would be actually apprehended [i.e., the remembering consciousness would actually contact the past object].

Hence [Chandrakīrti] says that these past objects and so forth are not utterly non-existent and are also not established by way of their own entities and that the meaning of unreal or false is the meaning of dependent-arising and does not mean that things are non-existent.

Therefore, if you assert these phenomena to be established by way of their own entities, you are propounding things [i.e., inherent existence], or fall to an extreme of [inherent] existence; however, propounding these as merely existent is not a propounding of things [i.e., inherent existence], or a propounding of [inherent] existence.

Similarly, if you assert that internal and external things are non-things, empty of the capacity to perform functions, you are propounding the non-existence of things, or fall to an extreme of [utter] non-existence; ... however, through propounding them as without inherent existence, you do not fall to an extreme of [utter] non-existence.
When, not differentiating in this way utter non-existence, no inherent existence, establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity, and mere existence, you [try to] prevent falling to the extremes of existence and non-existence through putting hope in just propounding, “We do not propound [such and such] as non-existent, we say it is not existent.”

“So we do not propound [such and such] as existent, we say it is not non-existent,” you are propounding only a collection of contradictions and do not set forth even slightly the meaning of the middle way.

For, when you [who claim to be Madhyamikas] refute others, since you engage in refutation within having investigated the two [possibilities] of inherent existence, no inherent existence, and so forth, you yourself assert that the possibilities must be limited to two, and yet you assert a meaning that is neither of those two.

This is as follows: since you are investigating with respect to some base [i.e., any phenomenon] whether it exists inherently or not, you must assert that the possibilities are limited to those two;

...if there were a third possibility not included in those [two], it would not be reasonable to investigate, “Which of these two, inherently existent or not inherently existent, is it?”

For example, it would be like asking when something exists as a color, “Is it blue or is it yellow?”

Also, being limited in this way to the two, inherent existence and no inherent existence, depends upon in general being limited to the two, existence and non-existence, with regard to objects of knowledge.
This is like the way in which, for example, being limited to truly existent one or truly existent many with respect to true existence depends upon being limited in general to the two, one or many.

When there is such limitation, this must eliminate any third possibility, hence, asserting a phenomenon that is neither of those two is senseless babble.

For, Nāgārjuna’s *Refutation of Objections* (26cd) says:

If no inherent existence were overturned,
Inherently existence would be thoroughly established.

Moreover, those who assert such, since they have no way to make a definite enumeration that eliminates any third possibility, can only be doubtful. For eliminating one possibility such as “exists” or “does not exist” would not positively include [or affirm] the other possibility.

If you assert that with respect to some things such as “is”, “is not” and so forth there is no third possibility, it is utterly the same also with respect to “exists” and “does not exist”.

Since it appears such is asserted due to mistaking the mere words of Madhyamika texts that say, “is not existent”, “is not non-existential”, then just as [according to you] it is unsuitable to propound “exists” or “does not exist”, so also it would be unreasonable to propound, “is not existent”, “is not non-existental” because such is said with respect to all four possibilities.
Therefore, Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way* (XV.10) says:

Saying “exists” is a conception of permanence;
Saying “does not exist” is a view of annihilation.
Hence the wise should not dwell
in either existence of non-existence.

Even this statement is not said with respect to mere existence and non-existence; rather it is said clearly that asserting things as inherently established comes to be a view of permanence and annihilation.

Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words*, after explaining that the conceptions of existence and non-existence [spoken of] in the earlier text [i.e., in the passage from Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way* just cited] refer to the views of inherent existence and inherent non-existence, says:

Why is it that when one has views of things and non-things [or inherent existence and inherent non-existence,] it follows that one has views of permanence and of annihilation?

Whatever exist inherently is permanent
Since it does not become non-existent.
If one says that what arose formerly [as inherently existent] is now non-existent,
Through that [as extreme of] annihilation is entailed.
Since the inherently existent is not overcome, something that is said to be inherently existent does not ever become non-existent;

...in that case it follows that through asserting [something] as just inherently existent, one has a view of permanence.

Also, through asserting as inherent existence of thing when formerly there were abiding and then asserting that now, later, they are destroyed whereby they do not exist, it follows that one has a view of annihilation.

Thus [Chandrakīrti] calls the assertion of inherent existence a view of permanence and says that if one asserts the later destruction of what was formerly inherently existent, such is a view of nihilism.

He does not call mere existence and mere disintegration [views of permanence and annihilation].

Also the *Buddhapālita Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) Treatise on the Middle Way*) clearly explains that [XV.11]:

Whatever exists inherently [is permanent
Since it does not become non-existent.
If one says that what arose formerly (as inherently existent) is now non-existent,
Through that (an extreme of) annihilation is entailed.]

indicates the type of permanence and annihilation [intended when XV.10, cited above] explains that saying “exists” and saying “non-exists” are views of permanence and annihilation.
In brief, if you propound that the emptiness which is the absence of inherent existence is not the excellent emptiness and refute it, due to abandoning the doctrine, that is, abandoning the Perfection of Wisdom, you will go to a bad migration.

Further, even if you have interest in the absence of inherent existence, but thinking, “If there is no inherent existence, what is there?”, assert that all phenomena do not exist at all, you will still fall into that chasm of a view of annihilation.

In this way also [Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way*, XXIV.11ab] says:

If they wrongly view emptiness,
Those of small wisdom will be ruined.

As commentary on this, Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* says:

If, on the one hand, one were to think, “All [phenomena] are empty, that is, all do not exist,” at that time one would be viewing [emptiness] wrongly.
In this vein [Nāgārjuna’s Precious Garland] (stanza 119) says:

This doctrine wrongly understood
Causes the unwise to be ruined
Because they sink into the filth
Of nihilistic views.

On the other hand, if you do not assert a deprecation of all [phenomena, but] as the same time say, “How could these things, having been observed, be just empty? Therefore, the meaning of an absence of inherent existence is not the meaning of emptiness,” you have definitely abandoned emptiness.

Having abandoned [emptiness] in this way, you will definitely go to a bad transmigration due to the action of having become bereft of dharma.

10 Hopkins translation.
11 Those who accept emptiness but take it to mean nothingness thereby turn away from the practice of virtue and overcoming of non-virtuous activities.
In this vein [Nāgārjuna’s *Precious Garland*]\(^{12}\) (stanza 120) says:

Further, the stupid who fancy
Themselves wise,\(^{13}\) having a nature
Ruined by rejecting [emptiness] go headfirst
To a terrible hell from their wrong understanding.

Some persons might think:

If we, having asserted things formerly, later viewed them as non-existent, we would have a view of annihilation. However, since we from the very beginning do not assert them as existing, what is annihilated [so that] there would come to be a view of annihilation?

Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way*, XV.11cd, says:

If one says that what arose formerly [as inherently existent] is now non-existent, Through that [as extreme of] annihilation is entailed.

Thus [Nāgārjuna] says that such is a view of annihilation.

\(^{12}\) Hopkins translation.

\(^{13}\) These are those who take emptiness to mean a denial of cause and effect and therefore reject emptiness.
Also, Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words* say:

> Yogis, who, having realized conventional truths which are produced only by ignorance as without inherent existence, then realize that the emptiness of those has the character of the ultimate do not fall to the two extremes.

[Answer:] This [argument] is not reasonable because if, in order to have a view of annihilation, it were necessary to have asserted formerly whatever thing was annihilated, then it would absurdly follow that even the worldly Materialists would not have a view of annihilation since they do not propound former and future lives, actions and their effects and so forth, as later non-existent having asserted them formerly, but rather do not assert them as existing from the very start.

Therefore, [Nāgārjuna’s] statement,

> If one says that what arose formerly [as inherently existent] is now non-existent, through that [an extreme of] annihilation is entailed, [XV.11cd]
means that Proponents of True Existence who assert that things have inherent existence, that is, are established by way of their own entities, unquestionably come to have views of permanence or annihilation.

For, if they assert that that [which has] inherent existence does not change at any time, they come to have a view of permanence, and if they assert that what existed [inherently] at a former time is later destroyed, they come to have a view of annihilation.

Therefore, when indicating that [the Madhyamikas] do not have a view of annihilation in which an inherent existence that existed at a former time is held to be destroyed at a later time, their [the Madhyamikas’] nonassertion of even a particle of inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of their own entities, in things serves as the reason [for this].

All views of annihilation are not abandoned through this [assertion].

Another mode of [Mådhyamikas’] difference from those having a view of annihilation, who assert that actions and their effects do not exist, is set forth extensively in Chandrakârti’s \textit{Clear Words} as follows:

Those having a view of annihilation assert that actions and their effects as well as other lifetimes do not exist, whereas Madhyamikas assert those as without inherent existence; hence there is a difference in their theses.

\footnote{\textit{DA and E} note 406: The remainder of the chapter is no longer primarily concerned with rejecting the position of those Madhyamika interpreters who negate too much, but instead lays out directly the ways in which the true Madhyamikas — i.e., Chandrakârti and Buddhâpalita — defend themselves from the charges that Madhyamikas are no different from Nihilists.}
Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words* says:

There is a great difference in their reasons. Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words* says:

Madhyamikas propound that actions and their effects and so forth are without inherent existence by reason of their being dependent-arisings; Annihilationists, since they do not assert that actions and their effects and so forth are dependent-arising, do not take this as their reason; rather, they propound actions and their effects as non-existent having taken as their reason the fact that a present...  

...they propound [actions and their effects] as non-existent having taken as their reason the fact that a present sentient being is not seen to come to this like from a former one and to go from this to a future one. Hence there is a great difference [also] in their reasons. Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words* says:

Some say that Madhyamikas do not differ from Nihilists.

Why? Because [Madhyamikas] propound that virtuous and non-virtuous actions, agents, effects, and all worlds [i.e., former and later lives] are empty of inherent existence and Nihilists also propound those as non-existent. Hence they argue that Madhyamikas do not differ from Nihilists.

Such is not the case, for Madhyamikas propound dependent-arising and propound that everything this world, other worlds, and so forth this because of being dependent-arisings are without inherent existence.

Nihilists do not realize other worlds [lifetimes] and so forth as non-things [that is, without inherent existence] by way of their emptiness of inherent existence due to being dependent-arisings.
What do they [propound]?

They, observing as inherently existent the aspects of the things in this world and not seeing them come to this world from another world and go from this world to another, deprecate those other things [former and future lives] which [in fact] are like the things observed in this world.

Someone [else] might think: Even though the reasons cited by the two, Madhyamikas and Annihilationists, are not the same, nonetheless, because they are similar in realizing that actions and their effects and former and future worlds are without inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of their own entities, their views of an absence of inherent existence are the same.

Even with respect to this they differ.

For, since [Nihilists] assert non-inherent existence to be utterly non-existent, they do not assert [actions and their effects and former and future lifetimes] as either of the two truths; however, Madhyamikas conventionally assert those ṃ actions and their effects and so forth ṃ as existing. Chandrakirti’s Clear Words says:

Should someone say: “Even so, they are similar in one way, in terms of the view, because [Nihilists] realize the non-existence of an intrinsic entity of things as non-existent.”
This is not so. Because Madhyamikas assert [those] as existing conventionally and these [Nihilists] do not assert them at all, they are just not similar.

This indicates that those claiming to be Madhyamikas who do not assert actions, effects, and so forth even conventionally are similar in view to the Worldly Materialists.

Here the master [Chandrakīrti], as the reason for [Madhyamikas] being different from those having a view of annihilation did not say [as you who negate too much would], “Because they have assertions, whereas we do not.”

He also did not say, “They assert those as non-existent whereas we do not propound them as non-existent but rather assert them as not existent. Instead, he spoke of [Madhyamikas’] propounding [actions, effects, and so forth] as without inherent existence, of their stating dependent-arising as the reason for that, and of their conventionally asserting those presentations as existent.

Someone might think: “That actions, their effects, and so forth are without inherent existence, that is, establishment from their own entities, is correct [from your viewpoint], and since when those having a view of annihilation also assert them as non-existent, they assert then as without inherent existence, therefore from the viewpoint of [asserting] an absence of inherent existence they are similar to Madhyamikas.”

[Answer:] With respect to this also, there is a very great difference.
For example, with respect to a person who stole some jewels, one person, whereas he does not [in fact] know that a certain [person] committed the robbery, says by way of speaking falsely, “That person committed the robbery.”

Another person, having seen that thief steal the jewels says, “That person committed the robbery.” In this case, indeed, in just the way that both of them said, “That person committed the robbery,” that thief did steal.

However, since one person spoke falsely and the other spoke truly, they are not alike. In this vein, Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* says:

Someone might say that they [Madhyamikas and Nihilists] are the same in fact.

[Answer:] Even if they are the same with respect to the fact of non-establishment [by way of the objects’ own entities], still, because the realizer [of that fact] are different, they are just not the same.

For example, with respect to a person who has committed a robbery, one person, although not knowing correctly [who did it], motivated by lack of closeness with that [robber] proclaims falsely, “This person committed the robbery.” another person makes the accusation having actually seen that [robbery].

Even though there is no difference between those two with respect to the fact, still, since there is a difference in the two realizers, of the one it is said, “That one spoke falsely,” and of the other, “That one spoke truly.”
When one investigates correctly with respect to the former, this leads to ill-renown and a sense of unseemliness, but such is not the case with the later.

Similarly, here also, when the [mode] of understanding and speaking of Madhyamikas who know just as it is the self-entity of things [that is to say, non-inherent existence] is put together with that of Nihilists, who do not know just as it is the self-entity of things, the [modes of] understanding and expression are not alike.

Some persons, when they understand the absence of inherent existence, understand that actions, their effects, and so forth have been refuted by reasoning and hence [assert] that cause and effect are unpositable in their own system.

This [passage by Chandrakīrti] refutes well the proposition [by some Tibetans] that although such persons are wrongly perspected with respect to the class of appearances ņ conventionalities ņ they have gained an unerring view of the class of emptiness.

Therefore, without emptiness coming to be an emptiness of the capacity to perform functions, you must have way of positing the dependent-arising of causes and effects even though there is no inherent existence.

Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on Āryadeva’s “Four Hundred” says:
In that case, regarding any object, [it is said]:

With respect to production, it does not come [here from somewhere] And, similarly, with respect to cessation, it does not go [from here to somewhere]. (XV.10ab)

[Hence], it definitely does not inherently exist.

Should someone ask, “If these do not inherently exist, then what is there?”, the answer is as follows:

Those [objects] that are dependent-arisings, entities produced from the thoroughly afflicted and the very pure acting as causes, exist.

This clearly answers the question, “If there is no inherent existence, then what does exist?”

The master Buddhapalita also gives an answer differentiating clearly between existence and establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity; the Buddhapalita Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, commenting on the twentieth chapter [of Nāgārjuna’s Treatise] says:

Someone might say, “If [as you Madhyamikas say] time does not exist, and also causes, effects, and collections [of causes and conditions] do not exist, then what other thing does exist? Therefore, this [proposition by you Madhyamikas] is just a proposition of Nihilism.”
Answer: It is not so. Time and so forth are not feasible in the way in which you thoroughly imagine them to exist from [their own] entityness. However, those are established as dependent designations.

Thus [Buddhapalita] engages in refutation, saying, “Establishment [of phenomena] by way of their own entities as the Proponents of True Existence assert is not feasible.”

Also, saying, “They are established as dependent designations,” he says that dependent-arisings exist.

Thus, if you differentiate between the four – inherent existence and existence and no inherent existence and non-existence, you will overcome measureless wrong ideas. Further, you will not generate the mistake that the reasonings refuting inherent existence refute mere existence.

Hence, since the main of the answers given by Madhyamikas to scholars who are Proponents of True Existence are given by way of [differentiating] these four, I have explained this a little.
Second, showing that the discredit expressed does not overwhelm [our position]. This has four parts:

1) [Conventional phenomena, forms and so forth,] cannot be overcome through a refutation upon investigating whether they can or cannot withstand analysis by reasoning;

2) they cannot be overcome through a refutation upon investigating whether they are or are not established by valid cognition;

3) they cannot be overcome through a refutation upon investigating whether there is or is not production of the four alternatives [from self, other, both, or neither]; and

4) and an indication that a refutation of all four alternatives—the existence, non-existence, and so forth of things—is unsuitable to discredit [the conventional existence of phenomena].

Proper analysis from the point of view of whether these phenomena, forms and so forth, have or do not have, or are or are not produced as, [their own] factual mode of being is called reasoning analyzing reality and reasoning analyzing the final [mode of being].
Since we [Madhyamikas] do not assert that the production of forms and so forth can withstand analysis by that reasoning, we do not have the fallacy of it [absurdly] following that [production and so forth] are truly existent things.

Some raise the qualm, “If these cannot withstand analysis by reasoning, how is it feasible that objects refuted by reasoning exist?”

This [misconception] is a case of mistaking as one two things—the inability to withstand analysis by reasoning and being discredited by reasoning.

[607] Many who have such [error] propound that production and so forth exist, even though the reasoning analyzing reality does indeed refute them. Since such is senseless chatter, we [Madhyamikas] do not assert such.

The meaning of being able or unable to withstand analysis by reasoning is to be found or not found by the reasoning analyzing reality.

Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says:

... for our analysis is intent upon seeking inherent existence.
Thus, [reasoning] is searching out whether or not forms and so forth have production and cessation that are established by way of their own entities; it is not that this reasoning is searching out mere production and cessation.

Therefore, this reasoning is said to be “analyzing reality” because it is analyzing whether production, cessation, and so forth are or are not established in reality.

When analyzed or sought with such a reasoning [consciousness], production and so forth are not found in the least and are said to be “unable to withstand analysis”.

However, they are not refuted due to merely not being found by that reasoning. Rather, what is refuted [by such reasoning] is something that, if it exists, must be established by that reasoning but is not established by it.

The production and cessation of forms and so forth are established by a conventional consciousness; although those exist, they are not established by a reasoning consciousness. Therefore, how could they be refuted due to not being found by that [reasoning consciousness]?

For example, it is like the way in which an eye consciousness does not find sounds, but [sounds] are not refuted by it.

Therefore, if production, cessation, and so forth were established by way of their own entities, or were established in reality, they would have to be found by that reasoning.
For, that reasoning is analyzing properly whether or not forms and so forth have production and cessation that are established by way of their own entities.

Because such [reasoned analysis] does not find production and so forth, it refutes production, cessation, and so forth that are established by way of their own entities, or are established in reality.

For, if they were established by way of their own entities, they would have to be found by that [reasoned analysis], but they are not.

For example, when a searcher who is definite to find a pot in the east if it exists there searches in the east for a pot and does not find it, through that, the existence of a pot in the east is refuted.

However, how could the mere existence of pot be refuted by that?

Similarly, when sought with Mådhyamika reasoning which is definite to find production that is established by way of its own entity if it exists, that non-finding of production refutes inherently existent production, or production that is established by way of its own entity.

How could mere production be refuted? In this vein, Chandrakirti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says clearly:

Therefore, since when one analyzes thus with reasoning, there is no [intrinsic] entity that exists in sense powers, objects, and consciousnesses, they have no establishment by way of their own entities.
If they were established by way of their own entities, then, when analyzed with reasoning they would be observed even more clearly, in just that way, as existing by way of their own entities, but they are not.

Therefore, they are established as “empty of inherent existence”.

This Master [Chandrakīrti] says again and again that it is allowed that these conventionalities such as forms, sounds, and so forth, exist, but since they are not in the least established by the reasoning analyzing reality, that is, reasoning analyzing whether they exist inherently or not, reasoned investigation does not operate on them.

Also, he says many times that those who say that these conventionalities are destroyed when, upon reasoned analysis, they are not found by reasoning are unskilled in positing conventionalities.

If the reasoning analyzing whether or not they inherently exist were able to refute them, then it would be the case that one should engage in a great deal of reasoned investigation with regard to these conventionalities, forms, feelings, and so forth.

However, such [refutation of conventionalities with reasoning] is refuted in all ways in the texts of this Master [Chandrakīrti]. Thus, those who assert that something’s not being found by the reasoning analyzing whether it exists inherently or not means that it is discredited by that reasoning have wandered very far from the middle way.
Similarly, the meditative equipoise of a Noble One does not see the production and cessation of forms and so forth, but how could it be that it sees production, cessation, and so forth as non-existent?

Also, the reasoning analyzing whether or not things inherently exist does not find production and so forth, but it does not comprehend production, cessation, and so forth to be non-existent.

Therefore, not differentiating and apprehending as being the same the following [pairs]:

1. being unable to withstand analysis by reasoning and being discredited by reasoning;
2. production and cessation’s not being seen by and been seen as non-existent by the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of a Noble One; and
3. production and cessation’s not being found by a reasoning consciousness analyzing whether they inherently exist or not and production and cessation’s being found to be non-existent by [that reasoning consciousness]

is seen to have generated error even in some earlier scholars, never mind those of the present. Therefore, those of intelligence should analyze in detail and differentiate these well!

We do not in that case assert that conventional consciousnesses are of greater power than valid cognitions having the ultimate as their object nor that conventional consciousnesses discredit valid cognitions having the ultimate as their object.

However, if you assert that conventional forms, feelings, and so forth are refuted by the reasoning analyzing reality when it, upon analyzing them, does not find them, [we answer] not only are [those forms and so forth] not refuted by that [reasoning], but also such an [erroneous] refuter [of forms] is discredited by valid cognition renowned in the world.
For, Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.83 says:

If you are not discredited by the world
Then refute these [conventionalities] which are based just on the world.
You and the world debate here / And afterwards I will rely on the stronger.

Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says:

We, in order to overcome worldly conventionalities, abide in great hardship. You please eliminate worldly conventionalities.

If you are not discredited by the world, then I too will follow after you.

[However] the world does discredit [your refutation].

[Chandrakīrti’s] statement, “We, in order to overcome worldly conventionalities, abide in great hardship,” refers to striving at the path in order to purify mistaken subjects, such as eye consciousnesses and so forth, and mistaken appearances of objects, such as forms and so forth.
Hence we do not assert that these are objects to be negated by reasoning. Rather, they are taken as objects to be negated through cultivating the path.

With regard to [Chandrakīrti’s] statement, “You please eliminate worldly conventionalities,” [Chandrakīrti] is saying the following to those [Cittamātrins] who draw the parallel, “If you Mādhyamikas refute substantially existent dependent entities, we will refute your conventionalities with reasoning,”: “If, just as we are able to refute the inherent existence of dependent entities, you [Cittamātrins] are able to refute conventionalities with reasoning, then we too will accompany you in that.”

With these words he is indicating that if [conventionalities] could be refuted with reasoning, we would want that since the difficult deeds of cultivating the path in order to overcome those [false appearances of conventionalities] would not be necessary. Hence this teaches that conventionalities are not refuted by reasoning.

Not only are they not refuted, but [Chandrakīrti] says that if they are [claimed to be] refuted, [that faulty reasoning refuting them] is discredited by worldly renown. Hence, such counterfeit reasonings are discredited by conventional consciousnesses, whereby we assert [conventional consciousnesses] to be more powerful than those [faulty reasonings].

Therefore, also when proponents of [true] existence refute conventionalities such as external objects and so forth upon entering into reasoned analysis, [those conventionalities] are not found by that reasoning, but they are not discredited [by it].
Some propound that the meaning of forms and so forth not being refuted conventionally is that they are not refuted for ordinary worldly persons, shepherds and so forth, but are refuted by the reasoning analyzing reality. This is very incorrect.

For, the discriminative have qualms as to whether these are or are not refuted by the reasoning analyzing reality; they do not have qualms concerning their non-refutation for those whose minds have not been affected by tenets.

Also, [that proposition is incorrect] because if [forms and so forth] are refuted by the reasoning analyzing reality, that refutation must be done conventionally.

The fact that the reasoning analyzing reality does not refute production in all forms was also set forth clearly by the Master Chandrakīrti.

His Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says clearly:

Should someone assert that it is being taught that compounded phenomena are without production due to a refutation of production in all ways by this analysis, then that [production of compounded phenomena and so forth] would not be like a magician’s illusions.

Rather, it would be comprehensible through [examples] such as the son of a barren woman and so forth.
Fearing that in that case it would [absurdly] follow that dependent-arisings would not exist, we do not make comparison with those [the son of a barren woman and so forth] but rather make it with such things as a magician’s illusions and so forth that are not contradictory with those [dependent-arisings].

The phrase “by this analysis” refers to the reasoning analyzing reality.

“A refutation of production in all forms” refers to refuting all whatsoever production without affixing any qualification to the object to be negated.

The meaning of “barren woman and so forth” is as follows:

If all production were refuted, then, like the son of a barren woman, the horns of a hare, and so forth, it would be a non-thing empty of all [capacity] to perform functions, and, in that case, there would be the fallacy that dependent-arisings would not exist;

...fearing that [fallacy], we refute true, or inherently existent, production since, unlike the non-existence of the production of the son of barren woman and so forth which are devoid of all capacity to perform functions, [there does occur production] that is like a magician’s illusions and so forth.

Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* also says:
Qualm: “If eyes and so forth do not exist, because of that, how can these sense powers, eyes and so forth, be posited as entities that are fruitions of actions?”

[Answer:] Do we [Mādhyamikas] refute the fruitional entitiness of these? [We do not.]

[Opponent:] Since you prove eyes and so forth to be refuted, how could you not refute that?

[Answer:] [We do not refute that] because our analysis is intent upon seeking out inherent existence.

We [Mādhyamikas] are here refuting that things are established by way of their own entities; we do not refute that eyes and so forth are products and are dependently-arisen fruitions of actions.

Therefore, those exist, whereby those eyes and so forth that are explained as just being fruitions exist.

Hence [Chandrakīrti] says very clearly that reasoning refutes just this and does not refute just that. Therefore, in that such a differentiation is stated on one occasion, since those where it is not stated are similar, it should be applied throughout.

Therefore, with regard to the fact that reasoning refutes existence by way of its own entity that exists objectively when sought from the object’s own side and does not refute mere existence, since [Chandrakīrti] said that [the Mādhyamika] reasonings are intent on seeking out inherent existence, reasoning is searching out whether [something] does or does not inherently exist.
Therefore, this means that a refutation by that [reasoning] is a refutation of inherent existence. Hence these two should be differentiated.

Not only are such actions and effects not refuted, but also it is said that Mādhyamikas must assert them.

The continuation of that passage [from Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”*] says:

Therefore, the wise, not applying to worldly objects the analysis that has been explained, which accords with the perception of reality, assert [those objects of the world] as just inconceivable fruitions of actions.

All the world is to be asserted in the manner of emanations arising from emanations.

Thus, within your presentation of the two truths, if the reasoning determining the ultimate discredits the presentation of conventionalities, then an internal contradiction in [your] presentation of the positing of the two truths has arisen, whereby...

...how could you [be said to] have fully developed skill in positing the two truths?

If there is not the slightest internal contradiction in those two presentations, then it is contradictory that the reasoning determining the ultimate refutes the presentation of conventionalities [as you say it does].
Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* also says:

> You, who are unskilled in ultimate and conventional truths apply reasoning to some [conventional objects] whereas they are not [suitable objects for such analysis by] reasoning and destroy those [conventionalities].

Because we [Mādhyamikas] are skilled in positing conventional truths, dwelling in just the class of the world, we overcome with another reasoning [worldly conventional valid cognition] that other reasoning [i.e., your facsimile of reasoning] that you state for the sake of eliminating one class of conventionalities.

Like the elders of the world who [refute] those who fall from the worldly way, we refute only you;

we do not refute conventionalities.

Thus [Chandrakīrti] says that he refutes only those propounders of tenets who fall from conventionalities and does not refute conventionalities.

Also, since he says that those who destroy conventionalities upon having applied reasoned analysis analyzing reality are unskilled in positing the two truths, a refutation of conventional forms and so forth by reasoning is not at all the intent of this Master [Chandrakīrti].
In brief, not just among Mādhyamikas, but also among Buddhist tenet systems of the land of Noble Ones [India] that make presentations of the two truths, there indeed does occur some other person’s aligning of contradictions with regard to their presentation of the two truths.

However, I propound that there is not even one who asserts that, of the two truths posited in their own system, the reasoning of the class of the ultimate eradicates conventional objects.
[Chapter 9. Valid Establishment]

Second, [conventional phenomena, forms and so forth] cannot be overcome through a negation upon investigating whether they are or are not established by valid cognition. With regard to the assertion of forms and so forth, we do not assert that they are not established by valid cognition, but rather that they are established by valid cognition.

One might wonder then how the statement [in Chandrakīrti’s Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.31a], “In all respects the world is not valid,” could be correct.

[Answer:] This [passage] refutes that worldly consciousnesses such as an eye consciousness are valid with regard to reality. It is not refuting that they are valid cognizers with regard to all objects.

For, in this vein, Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says:

In that case, only Noble Ones are valid with regard to the contemplation of reality. Non-Noble Ones are not.

They would be if one asserted that even worldly perception were valid with regard to analyzing reality due to asserting worldly expressions of discredit. However, [the Supplement to Nāgārjuna’s “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.30 says]:

Page 108 of 230
If worldly [perception] were valid,
Since the world would see reality, what need for others, Noble Ones?
What would be accomplished by the noble path?
It is not reasonable that the stupid be valid.

And, in the commentary following that, Chandrakīrti says [in the Supplement]:

Because the mere eye consciousnesses and so forth would ascertain reality, the hard work at ethics, hearing, thinking, meditating, and so forth for the sake of understanding the noble path would be fruitless. However, it is not thus.

Therefore [the Madhaymakāvatāra, VI.31ab, says]:

Because in all ways the world is not valid
There is no discredit by the world on the occasion of reality.
Also Chandrakīrti’s *Yuktiśākārvṛtti, Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning”* says:

It is established that viewing just the existence of those [forms and so forth by those eye consciousnesses and so forth] is not seeing reality.

Therefore, the Transcendent Lord said, “Eye, ear, and nose [consciousnesses] are not valid cognitions.”

Since he quoted that and so forth, it can be seen very clearly that what is being refuted is that [eye consciousnesses and so forth] are valid with regard to a special object—reality—and not [that they are valid] with regard to other objects.

If it is not taken in this way, it [his statements] would be inconsistent.

If he were saying that if eye consciousnesses and so forth are valid with regard to conventional objects such as forms, sounds, and so forth, ...

then it would [absurdly] follow that there was no need to strive at the Noble path for the sake of viewing reality, this would be like saying that if the eye consciousness knows forms, it [absurdly] follows that the ear is purposeless for hearing [sounds]. And, if he is saying that [if eye consciousnesses and so forth are valid with regard to forms, and so forth], then it [absurdly] follows that striving at the Noble path for the sake of viewing forms, sounds, and so forth is senseless, since we very much assert this, what unwanted thing is proved by this?
Qualm: Chandrakirti’s Commentary on (Aryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says:15

Those who, imputing these sense consciousnesses as direct perceptions, consider them to be valid with regard to other things also [are holding a position in which former and later statements] are very much unrelated.

“Non-deceptive consciousnesses” are seen in the world as just valid cognitions; however, the Transcendent Lord said that even consciousnesses, because of being composites of phenomena, have the qualities of being false and deceptive and are like a magician’s illusions.

Whatever has the qualities of being false and deceptive and like a magician’s illusion is not non-deceptive because of being something that abides in one way but appears in another.

It is not reasonable to designate that which is such as a valid cognition because it would then [absurdly] follow that all consciousnesses would be valid cognitions.

---

15 P5266, vol. 98, 259.4.1-259.4.4. This is commentary on XIII.1. Bracketed material in the translation is from mchan, 301.5ff. Note that a rather critical line which Dzong-ka-ba refers to several times in this chapter, appears in the Peking edition as

This would appear to be a textual corruption in the Peking edition.
How do you interpret this general refutation that consciousnesses such as those of the eye, and so forth, are valid cognitions?

[Answer:] This statement, unlike the earlier one, “Eye, ear, and nose are not valid cognitions,” [when context clearly showed that it was said with regard to the nature of reality] is a very great source of qualms, and therefore I will explain it in detail.

The refutation in this way that eye consciousnesses and so forth are direct perceptions and are valid cognitions is a refutation of the assertions of the logicians. Therefore, let us initially set forth what they assert.

Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says:16

Because these logicians are not at all trained in worldly meanings, they need to train in them from the very beginning, like young children. Hence, in order to teach them,

one questions them in detail, asking them, “What is the direct perception of your [system]?”

They answer, “A consciousness is a direct perception.”

“What sort of consciousness?”

“That which is free from conceptuality.”

16 P5266, vol. 98, 259.1.2-259.1.5. This is commentary on XIII.1. Sanskrit does not survive.
“What is this conceptuality?”

“It is the fluctuation of the discrimination involved in the superimposition of names and types to objects.

Because they are free from that, the five sense consciousnesses operate on just the inexpressible own-character of objects and therefore are called ‘direct perceptions’.”

Hence they [the logicians] assert that a direct perception is a consciousness that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken.

This “non-mistakenness” is an apprehension of the object’s own character as it abides.

Hence, since [according to them] all five sense direct perceptions comprehend the self-character [of the object], the self-character of forms, sounds, and so forth is the object of comprehension of those five direct perceptions, and therefore, they assert that that with regard to which these [direct perceptions] are valid cognitions is the self-character of the five objects.

This master [Chandrakirti], as will be explained, does not assert even conventionally an establishment [of objects] by way of their own entities or by way of their own character. Thus, how could he assert that these sense consciousnesses are valid with regard to the self-character [of objects]?
Therefore, the refutation here of these as being valid cognitions is a refutation of the assertion that they are valid cognitions with regard to the self-character of the five objects.

As for how the refutation [is done, that the sense consciousnesses are valid with regard to the self-character of the five objects] was refuted by the Transcendent Lord's statement that the consciousnesses are false and deceptive.

The statement that they are deceptive refutes that they are non-deceptive whereupon it is refuted that they are valid cognitions, for “that which is non-deceptive” is the definition of “valid cognition”.

In what way are they deceptive?

This is stated [by Chandrakīrti, see above] “…being something that abides in one way but appears in another.”

That is to say, the five objects, forms, sounds, and so forth, whereas they are not established by way of their own character, appear to the sense consciousnesses to be [established by way of] their own character, and, therefore, those [sense consciousnesses] are not valid cognitions with regard to the own character [of their objects].

In brief, [Chandrakīrti’s] intended meaning is that the sense consciousnesses are not valid cognitions with regard to the own character of the five objects because of being deceived in terms of the appearance of own character of the five objects.

This is because, whereas those five objects are empty of own character (rang gi mtshan nyid), they appear to have own character (rang mtshan).
It is like, for example, a consciousness perceiving two moons.

With regard to this, the proponents of [true] existence assert that if forms, sounds, and so forth did not exist inherently, that is, were not established by way of their own character, they would be non-things empty of all capacity to perform functions.

Therefore, they assert that if [sense consciousnesses] are not direct valid cognitions with regard to the own-character of the five objects, then there is no way for there to be valid cognition with regard to the five objects, and if [the sense consciousnesses] are valid cognitions with regard to the five objects, then they serve as a valid cognitions with regard to their own character.

For this master [Chandrakirti], if something were established by way of its own character, [616] or its own entity, it would be true, whereby a valid cognition that posited a truly established object would have to serve as a valid cognition with regard to [the object’s] own character. However, because objects are false, the valid cognition that posits them need not serve as a valid cognition with regard to their own character.

For, Chandrakirti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says:17

It is not reasonable for worldly perception to open up perception of reality for it is valid in terms of only the world and the objects observed by it are established as having the qualities of being false and deceptive.

---

17 This is commentary on XIII.12.
Therefore, since [Chandrakīrti] is refuting that [sense consciousnesses] are valid cognitions with regard to the own character [of objects] there is no need to refute that they are merely valid cognitions. Therefore, he is not refuting in general that there are valid cognitions among conventional consciousnesses.

Otherwise—[that is, if Chandrakīrti were refuting in general that there are valid cognitions among conventional consciousnesses]—it would not be reasonable for him to say, “…non-deceptive consciousnesses are seen in the world as just valid cognitions,” because he would have refuted that there were valid cognitions among all whatsoever conventional consciousnesses.

Also, this would contradict the statement in Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words*,18 “Therefore, in this way it is posited that the world realizes objects by way of the four valid cognitions,” in which he makes a presentation of direct, inferential, scriptural, and exemplary valid cognitions.

Valid cognitions and objects of comprehension that are established by way of their own entities are refuted; however, valid cognitions and objects of comprehension that are dependently-posited dependent-arisings are not refuted.

That same text [Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words*] says:19

Those are established through mutual dependence. When valid cognitions exist, then there are objects that are the objects comprehended. When objects that are the objects comprehended exist, then there are valid cognitions.

---

18 Dzong-ka-ba’s text, 617.11, corrected from *jig rten gyi* to *jig rten gyis* in accordance with the Peking edition of Chandrakīrti’s text, 13.4.8, and *mcham*, 311.4.

19 This follows in Chandrakīrti’s text immediately from the preceding citation.
However, the two, valid cognitions and objects of comprehension, are not established by way of [their own] entities.

Therefore, if the sense consciousnesses are without the impairment of being affected by internal and external causes of error such as dimness of sight, and so forth, their being mistaken in terms of appearance, in that through the force of being affected by ignorance they apprehend objects to inherently exist whereas they do not inherently exist, does not discredit their being conventionally non-erroneous.

Chandrakirti’s Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, [VI.24-25] says:

Also perceivers of falsities [that is, worldly consciousnesses,] are asserted as of two types, Those with clear sense faculties and those with defective sense faculties. A consciousness of which the sense faculty is defective Is asserted as wrong in relation to a consciousness of which the sense faculty is good.

Those objects realized by the world That are apprehended by way of the six unimpaired sense faculties Are true in terms of just the world. The rest Are posited as unreal in terms of just the world.
Thus, the two, conventional consciousnesses and objects, are posited as of two types, erroneous and non-
erroneous, in terms of just a conventional consciousness.

With regard to internal causes of impairment to a sense faculty, Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplementation to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says:

Dimness of sight, jaundice, and so forth as well as eating dadhura\(^{21}\) and so forth are causes of impairment to the sense faculties that exist internally.

With regard to external [causes of impairment to the sense faculties], that same text says:

Sesame oil, water, a mirror,\(^{23}\) sounds expressed in caves and so forth as well as sunlight at special times and places are external causes of impairment to the sense faculties.

For these, without there being an internal source of impairment to the sense faculty, cause the apprehension of reflections, echoes, a mirage as water, and so forth.

This should be understood similarly also with regard to the mantras, medicines, and so forth used by conjurers and so forth.

---

20 This is commentary immediately following VI.25.
21 Hubert Decleer supplied the information that this is a tall plant with white flowers that grows wild in the Nepal area. In small amounts it is a potent hallucinogen; in larger amounts it is poisonous.
22 This follows immediately from the previous citation.
23 *mcham*, 315.5 explains that the first three give rise to reflections and hence to mistaken eye consciousnesses.
With regard to what impairs the mental [sense faculty], there are those [just mentioned above] as well as incorrect tenets and so forth and facsimiles of inference.

Thus [Chandrakirti] says that bad tenets and facsimiles of reasons are causes corrupting the mental consciousness and also says that sleep and so forth are causes corrupting the mental [consciousnesses] of dreams and so forth.

Therefore, even though the object of the mode of apprehension of ignorance does not exist even conventionally, as will be explained below, here the impairment of being affected by ignorance should not be held as a cause of impairment.

[Qualm:] If the five sense consciousnesses which do not have the impairment of other causes of error are non-mistaken conventionally, then the own character that appears to them must exist conventionally.

However, the master [Chandrakirti] does not assert such.

Therefore, [the sense consciousnesses] must be asserted as mistaken, in which case it is not feasible that those consciousnesses be valid cognitions that posit forms, sounds, and so forth conventionally.

For, they are mistaken with regard to forms and so forth conventionally.
Answer: With regard to this, the master Bhāvaviveka asserts that forms and so forth conventionally have natures that are established by way of their own character.

For, when refuting the Cittamātrins' assertion that because imputations do not have entities that are established by way of their own character, they do not have an entityness of own character, he refutes them within investigating “imputation” in two ways—as “imputer” and as “imputed”—and says that if they assert that terms and awarenesses that impute entities and features do not have an entityness of own character conventionally, they are mistakenly denying dependent entities.

Thus, it is clear that he asserts that dependent entities conventionally have natures that are established by way of their own character.

Moreover, Bhāvaviveka’s Prajñāpradīpamālamadhyamakavṛtti (Lamp for (Nāgārjuna’s) “Wisdom”, Commentary on the “Treatise on the Middle Way”) commenting on the twenty-fifth chapter [of Nāgārjuna’s text] says:24

If you say that the entityness of imputations, that is, the mental and verbal expressions of “form,” does not exist, you are mistakenly denying things,

for you are mistakenly denying mental and verbal expressions.

24 P5253, vol. 95, 253.4.6-253.4.7.
The master Avalokitarvata in his explanatory commentary on that [that is, in the Prajñāpradīpaśkā (Commentary on (Bhāvaviveka’s) “Lamp for (Nāgārjuna’s) Wisdom”) says:25

This [statement by Bhāvaviveka] indicates the following: The Yogacārins’ say that the entities of imputations are without entityness due to not having entityness in the sense of own character.

If the entityness of conceptions, or mental expressions, and the imputation of conventions, or verbal expressions, of entities and attributes such as “form” are without entityness due to being without entityness in the sense of character, this is unsuitable, since one would be falsely denying conventionally things that are dependent entities.

Thus he says that if you assert that dependent entities that are included within terms and awarenesses do not have an entityness in the sense of character conventionally, it is a false denial.

“Character” in the phrase, “do not have an entityness in the sense of character” refers to “own character” or “inherent existence”, and the Cittamātrins assert that imputations do not have such.

---

25 P5259, vol. 97, 292.2.8-292.3.2. Dzong-ka-ba’s citation of the passage differs on two points from the passage as found in the Peking edition of Avalokitarvata’s text. Dzong-ka-ba, 620.1.2 reads tshig tu brjod pa tha snyad ’dogs pa’i ngo bo nyid hang yin pa de, Avalokitarvata’s text, 292.3.2 reads: tshig tu brjod pa tha snyad ’dogs pa’i kun brtags pa’i ngo bo nyid hang yin pa de. Also, Dzong-ka-ba’s text, 620.3, reads: gezan dbang gi dngos po la, whereas Avalokitarvata’s text, 292.3.2, reads: gezan dbang gi ngo bo la. Both of Dzong-ka-ba’s variants make the text express more clearly the point he is trying to make: that to say that mental or verbal conventions lack entityness in the sense of own-character is to deprecate dependent entities. Thus it is possible that Dzong-ka-ba knowingly amended the text.

---

26 in the Madhyamakālokaj.
However, because dependent entities do have such a character, they exist inherently.

Nonetheless, because they are produced from other, they are without an entityness in the sense of being produced from themselves and hence it is asserted that they are without entityness [of production].

[Buddha] explained it thus in the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* and said that the statement [in the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras] that all phenomena do not have [their own] entityness is based on another intent.

With regard to this, the master Kamalasāla said that because that sūtra [the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*], through indicating the intended meaning of the three non-entitynesses, thoroughly teaches the middle path free from the two extremes, it sets up the system (*gzhung*) of only the definitive meaning.

Thus, he asserts that [the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*] teaches the meaning of the middle way in that [it teaches] the non-existence of the ultimate entityness superimposed on dependent entities, since such is an imaginary, and avoids false denial due to [teaching that] conventionally dependent entities have own character.

Hence this master [Kamalasāla] also asserts that [objects] have own character conventionally.

---

26 In the *Madhyamakālokajā.*
27 *mchan,* 321.1. The three non-entitynesses are non-entityness in terms of character, *mtshan nyid ngo bo nyid med pa,* non-entityless in terms of production, *skye ba ngo bo nyid med pa,* and an ultimate non-entityness, *don dom pa ngo bo nyid med pa.*

Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says: 28

For example, a snake is an imaginary with regard to a rope, but is thoroughly established with regard to an actual snake. Similarly, a [final] nature is an imaginary with regard to dependent entities, which are dependently-arisen fabrications.

However, as the object of a Buddha, it is posited as thoroughly established. Having come to know the presentation of the three entitynesses [in this way], one should explain the intended meaning of that sūtra [the Sūtra Unraveling the Thought]

This was spoken [by Chandrakīrti] in commentary on the statement [in his Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”), VI.97bc]:

Whatever sūtra has as its meaning the explanation of that which is not reality
And sets forth interpretable objects, having been realized [as such], is to be interpreted.

Thus it is clear that he asserts that the presentation of the three entitynesses in the Sūtra Unraveling the Thought requires interpretation.

Further, since for [Chandrakīrti’s] own system, imaginaries are taken as an inherent existence of dependent entities, [Chandrakīrti] does not assert that dependent entities conventionally have inherent existence, that is, are established by way of their own character.

28 Dzong-ka-ba’s citation of this passage is a gloss, rather than a direct quote.
The Cittamatrins [assert the non-existence of entityness of own character with regard to imaginaries but], except for imaginaries, do not assert the non-existence of entityness in the sense of own character with regard to dependent entities and thoroughly established phenomena.

Thus, they assert that those two have own character, or inherent existence, that is, that they are established by way of their own entities.

It appears that this assertion relies mainly on the Sutra Unraveling the Thought, and, therefore, they assert that those two are ultimately established.

With regard to [their asserting these as ultimately established], the masters Buddhapālita and Chandrakīrti assert that if something has an entity that is established by way of its own character, it must be truly established,

whereas the master Bhāvaviveka and so forth assert that merely due to that, something does not become truly established.

Furthermore, the Cittamatrins say that minute particles individually are not the object of a sense consciousness because they do not appear [to it] and also the aggregation of many [minute particles] is not the object of those [sense consciousnesses] because of not substantially existing.

[They say that] this is like the appearance of two moons. As an answer to their propounding such, Bhāvaviveka’s Blaze of Reasoning says:

29 There are substantial differences between Dzong-ka-ba’s citation of the passage and how it appears in Bhāvaviveka’s text. Dzong-ka-ba would seem to be giving a gloss.
If you are establishing that a single minute particle which is not a composite is not an object of a sense [consciousness], then you are proving that which is [already] established.

As an answer to the latter [position, Bhāvaviveka] says:

If you are propounding that an aggregation of minute particles of one type in one place is not the cause [of a sense consciousness] taking as the reason, “because of not substantially existing”, the reason is just not established for the other [that is, for me, the person to whom you are propounding such].

Why is as follows. This and that entity of minute particles of one type stick together and help that [aggregation], whereby they serve as branches of the entity of the object. From having done this, an awareness having the aspect of an appearance of minute particles as an aggregation arises.

Like minute particles, we assert pots and so forth to be substantially established, due to their being composites of minute particles of one type.

A minute particle has a nature of being an aggregation of the eight substances, and you assert it to be substantially [established].

Therefore, just so, pots and so forth, which have natures of being aggregations are substantially established. A single thing [that is not an aggregation] is just not established.

---

This passage continues almost directly from the preceding quote, and again Dzong-ka-ba’s citation is a gloss, rather than a direct quote.
Thus it appears that [Bhāvaviveka] asserts that each of the minute particles of a composite is a cause of a sense consciousness and is substantially existent and that he asserts [each of these] to be the ultimate of minute particles whereby he asserts partless particles to be observed object conditions [of sense consciousnesses].

Therefore, [Bhāvaviveka] asserts that sense consciousnesses which are not affected by the internal and external causes of error explained earlier are non-mistaken and he asserts an observed object condition [of a consciousness] conventionally in accordance with the Sautrāntikas.

Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says:31

It should be known that those who propound that just those things which are propounded in the system of the Sautrāntikas to be ultimates are asserted in the Mādhyamika [system] as conventionalities are speaking through mere lack of knowledge of the reality [that is expressed in Nāgārjuna’s] Mūlamadhyamikakārikā (Treatise on the Middle Way).

Also, those who think that whatever are propounded by the Vaibhāṣikas to be ultimates are conventionalities for the Mādhyamikas only do not know at all the reality [set forth in] the Mūlamadhyamikakārikā.

For supramundane teachings are not suitable [to be considered] as similar to worldly teachings.

---

31 Dzong-ka-ba’s citation of the passage differs on a few small points from how the passage appears in Chandrakīrti’s text; none are substantive.
The wise should ascertain that this system is uncommon.

Thus [Chandrakīrti] does not assert even conventionally the partless apprehenders and apprehended objects that are imputed by the uncommon tenets of those schools.

Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* says:

For our own [Buddhist] schools to assert substantially established minute particles as do the Vaiśeṣikas is unsuitable.

Thus [Chandrakīrti] says that he does not assert partless particles.

That the Mādhyamikas do not assert conventionally what the two schools—[Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika]—assert as ultimates refers to things that are partless and so forth.

This does not indicate that whatever those two assert as true the Mādhyamikas do not assert conventionally, for although [the Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas] assert forms, sounds, and so forth to be true [which the Mādhyamikas do not accept], the Mādhyamikas do assert these conventionally.

In the *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”*, [Chandrakīrti] refutes the assertion that each [minute particle] on the occasion of a collection of minute particles of a sense power is a cause of a sense consciousness.

---

32 This is commentary on XIV.18.
33 See for instance P5266, vol. 98, 259.2.5-259.2.8.
Also, he does not establish the sense powers as being just those minute particles or as other than them. Thus, that which is designated in dependence on those [minute particles] is the basis of the consciousnesses.

Similarly, with regard to the objects [of the sense consciousnesses], he says that imputed existents that are dependently designated are the objects of sense consciousnesses, and...

...he asserts that consciousnesses are designated pratyākṣa and objects are fully qualified pratyākṣa.

Therefore, although this master [Chandrakīrti] and the master Bhāvaviveka are similar in asserting external objects, it appears that they differ in how they posit the sense powers and objects.

Earlier, at the time of refuting that the sense consciousnesses are valid cognitions with regard to [objects’ establishment by way of] their own character, [Chandrakīrti] said [in the Bodhisattvayogācāracatuḥśatottakā] that objects are deceptive “because of being something that abides in one way but appears in another…” (see above, p.4).

Therefore, forms, sounds, and so forth appear to sense consciousnesses to be established by way of their own character. But, since this own character does not exist even conventionally as it appears, this master [Chandrakīrti] asserts that even conventionally these [sense consciousnesses] are mistaken.

Nonetheless, it is not incorrect that sense consciousnesses be valid cognitions that posit objects such as forms, sounds, and so forth conventionally.
The reason why those [sense consciousnesses] are posited as mistaken is that an object which is established by way of its own character as appears [to them] does not exist.

This is established by a reasoning consciousness analyzing whether or not things exist inherently; it is not at all established by conventional valid cognition.

Therefore, in terms of conventional consciousnesses, they are not mistaken.

With regard to consciousnesses perceiving two moons, reflections, and so forth, those objects as they appear—two moons, the reflected face, and so forth—are established as not existing by conventional valid cognition itself without relying on a reasoning consciousness.

Thus, the distinction of real and unreal conventionalities with regard to [conventional valid cognitions] and these [mistaken sense consciousnesses] is correct.

Qualm: One might allow that there is this difference of whether [a consciousness] is realized as mistaken in dependence upon a reasoning consciousness or conventional valid cognition.

However, just as objects that appear to be a face and so forth do not exist, so also objects that appear to be [established by way] of their own character do not exist;

...and, just as forms and so forth that are empty of own character exist, so also reflections and so forth that are empty of being a face exist.
Therefore, between these two, there is no difference of erroneousness or non-erroneousness in terms of an ordinary conventional awareness.

[Answer:] Indeed, both entities that are established by way of their own character and objects such as reflected faces as they appear are similar in not existing conventionally.

Also, both forms and so forth and reflections and so forth are similar in existing conventionally.

However, Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says:34

Some dependently-arisen things such as reflections, echoes, and so forth are false and appear [to be false] to the ignorant.

Some things like forms, such as blue and so forth, minds, feelings, and so forth appear to be true.

The [final] nature [of things, that is, emptiness] does not appear in any way to those who are ignorant.

Therefore, that [nature, i.e., emptiness] and whatever are false even conventionally are not conventional truths [that is, truths for a worldly conventional consciousness].

34 This is commentary on VI.28.
Should someone say that this difference [set forth by Chandrakīrti] in which blue and so forth are posited as conventional truths and reflections and so forth are not posited as conventional truths is not correct, what answer would one have?

I think [the following]: Although both of those are similar in appearing to conventional consciousnesses, since reflections and so forth are realized to be false by a worldly consciousness itself, they are not posited as truths for the world, that is, for a conventional [consciousness].

However, blue and so forth, even though they are falsities, cannot be understood to be falsities by a worldly consciousness; hence, they are posited as truths for the world, that is, for a conventional [consciousness].

Moreover, just as [a difference of] truth and falsity in this way in terms of conventional consciousnesses is feasible with regard to these two objects, so too [a difference of] erroneousness and non-erroneousness in terms of a conventional consciousness is feasible with regard to the two subjects [that is, between the consciousnesses perceiving forms and so forth and those perceiving reflections and so forth].

Qualm: If [a sense consciousness] is non-erroneous in terms of a conventional consciousness, this contradicts [the position that sense consciousnesses] are mistaken conventionally.

[Answer:] If the two, the conventionality that is the perspective of error for something being mistaken conventionally and the conventional consciousness in terms of which something is posited as non-erroneous, were the same, there would be a contradiction.
However, since these two “conventionalities” are distinct, what contradiction is there?

This is as follows: Since the reasoned refutation of an inherent existence, that is, of an establishment by way of their own entities, of forms and so forth, is not suitable to be done ultimately, it must be done conventionally.

For such a conventional consciousness, the sense consciousnesses are mistaken.

However, for ordinary conventional consciousnesses which are other than those, [the sense consciousnesses] are not mistaken. Hence, there is no contradiction.

For example, it is like the worldly convention, “Some are here; some are not here,” in which the term “some” is the same, but the some who are here and the some who are not here are not posited as being the same objects.

So also the “non-mistakenness” [of the sense consciousnesses] is posited in terms of an ordinary worldly consciousness; Mādhyamikas do not assert them to be non-mistaken.

It is like the statement [by Chandrakīrti], “These are true just for the world.”

Therefore, the Mādhyamikas posit them as false. Nonetheless, there is no contradiction in [the sense consciousnesses] positing false objects.

---

35 Because nothing can be done ultimately in this system which refutes ultimate existence.
36 This passage from Chandrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvatāra*, VI.25, was cited above, p.8
37 (*gtṣo bo, pradhāna*)
[Rather], if a true object were posited, it would be contradictory to assert that it was posited by a mistaken subject.

Because, conventionally, all phenomena are asserted to be like a magician’s illusions, they are false conventionally.

However, it is not contradictory to posit them as conventional truths [or truths for a concealer] (samyutisatya).

For [Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.28a)] says, “Because ignorance obstructs the nature [of phenomena] it is [called a] ‘concealer’ (samvrti).” Hence there is no contradiction in something being true for that conventionality/concealer (samvrti) which is ignorance and false for that conventional consciousness (samvrti) in terms of which the refutation of an establishment by way of their own entities in phenomena is posited.

The statement [in Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatārābhbāya ([Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”)], “…whatever are false even conventionally are not conventional truths,” is to be taken as their being realized as false by conventional valid cognition.

It is not suitable to be taken merely as their being false conventionally.
In this way, the Madhyamikas within their own system posit many presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa conventionally and also refute the conventional existence of the objects imputed by the uncommon assertions of the proponents of [true] existence.

Since this is very difficult to do, a non-erroneous realization of the presentation of the truths is almost non-existent.

[The erroneous view] is as follows: When one refutes the conventional existence of those things asserted by the proponents of [true] existence, it must be done through reasoned analysis.

Also, with regard to one’s own assertion of the existence of production, cessation, and so forth conventionally, the assertion or non-assertion of such by the discriminative is done in terms of whether or not there exist proofs, and...

that in turn depends upon a sequence of reasoning.

Thinking the above, some feel that, when analyzed with reasoning, the conventionalities that would be asserted by oneself and those objects imputed by the proponents of [true] existence are, if discredited by reasoning, equally discredited, and, if not discredited, equally not discredited.
Thus, if one asserts that Iśvara, the Principal\(^{37}\), and so forth do not exist conventionally, one must also assert that forms and so forth do not exist conventionally, and if those [forms] do exist conventionally, one must also assert Iśvara and so forth to exist. They see those two as equivalent.

They hold that it is unsuitable in one’s own system to identify or assert with regard to any phenomenon, “This is such and such; this is not such and such,” and claim with this to have found the Mādhyamika reality.

Further, in accordance with such understanding, they hold that setting [the mind] without apprehending anything at all is cultivation of the meaning of the pure [Mādhyamika] view. There appear to be a great many who assert such.

Such things do not appear to be talk pleasing the wise.

For, not identifying the object to be negated by reasoning as explained before, [those who propound such] destroy with the reasoning refuting inherent existence all presentations of conventionalities.

Thus, this is a greatly erroneous view in which the correct view and the wrong view are, if mistaken, equally mistaken, and, if non-mistaken, equally non-mistaken.

\(^{37}\) (gtṣo bo, pradhāna)
Therefore, even though one might familiarize with such [a view] for a long time, not only does one not come the least bit closer to the correct view, in fact, one moves farther away from it, for [such a wrong view] is very contradictory with the path of dependent-arising in which all the presentations of the dependent-arisings of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are suitable within one’s own system.

Therefore, Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.26) says:

The self as it is imagined by the non-Buddhist [philosophers],
Disturbed by the sleep of ignorance,
And those things imputed to mirages,
Magicians’ illusions, and so forth, do not exist even for the world.

Thus [Chandrakīrti] says that those things imputed by the uncommon assertions of the non-Buddhist [philosophers] and, as cited earlier, by the uncommon assertions of the proponents of [true] existence among our own schools do not exist even conventionally in [the Mādhyamika’s] own system. I will explain the meaning of this.

Someone might wonder, “From what point of view is the assertion of one thing as existing conventionally and another as not existing posited?”
That which (1) is renowned to a conventional consciousness; (2) with regard to which the object, as it is renowned, is not discredited by another consciousness which is a conventional valid cognition, and (3) on which there is no descent of discredit by the reasoning properly analyzing reality, that is, analyzing whether there is inherent existence or not, is asserted to exist conventionally.

That which is opposite from those is asserted not to exist.

With regard to this, “conventional consciousnesses” operate within non-investigation, being consciousnesses that merely operate within the context of how whatsoever phenomenon appears to them; they do not analyze thinking, “Is this object that appears just an appearance in that way to the mind, or is the object’s mode of being established in that way?”

They are called non-analytical consciousnesses, but it is not the case that they are utterly non-investigative.

They operate within the context of how things appear, or are renowned, to worldly, or conventional, consciousness and do not operate within analyzing what the nature of things is. Therefore, they are called “worldly renown”.

Since such consciousnesses occur in all [persons]—those who are and are not involved with tenets—they are called “worldly renown” or “non-analytical consciousnesses” no matter what sort of [person’s] continuum they occur in.

38 CP: Napper uses “nature of things” in this section for yin lugs.
One should not hold that they exist only in the continuums of those worldly persons whose minds have not been affected by tenets.

Although in the continuums of those whose minds have been affected by tenets, there are many awarenesses analyzing whether something is as it is renowned conventionally or whether it abides that way in reality, how could it be that all their consciousnesses must be consciousnesses analyzing what the nature of things is?

Therefore, with regard to what worldly renown is like, it is not a matter of asking only old worldly persons who are devoid of tenets; it is sufficient to view the mode of operation of non-analytical minds in the continuums of parties in a debate.

Those things that are renowned to those consciousnesses are bases for the designation of conventions of [that is, based on] appearance and experience.

Even with regard to the effects of actions, the levels and paths, and so forth, which are not renowned to ordinary persons, since when they are taken as objects [of the mind] through hearing about or experiencing them, they appear even to ordinary consciousnesses that are not analyzing what the nature of things is, there is no fallacy that they are not [objects of] worldly renown.

With regard to discredit by another [consciousness which is a] conventional valid cognition, there is an example:
Even though when one conceives with regard to a rope, “This is a snake,” or with regard to a mirage, “This is water,” these are apprehended by an awareness that is not analyzing what the nature of things is, since the objects apprehended by those [consciousnesses] are discredited by conventional valid cognition, they do not exist even conventionally.

With regard to the non-descent of discredit by a reasoning consciousness properly analyzing whether something inherently exists or not, although objects posited conventionally must be established by conventional valid cognition, they must also definitely not be discredited in any way by a reasoning consciousness properly analyzing whether they inherently exist or not.

Therefore, there is no place for the wrong idea that, holding the two—not being discredited by a reasoning consciousness and being established by that [reasoning consciousness]—to be the same, conceives that if pleasure and pain arise conventionally from virtue and non-virtue, then it would equally be the case that pleasure and pain would arise from Iśvara and the Principal, and if the first is not the case, then the second is equally not so.
With regard to this, when those things such as partless objects and subjects, self, the Principal, and Iśvara that are imputed by the uncommon assertions of the proponents of [true] existence among our own and others’ schools are posited by them, they are posited upon analysis with reasoning as to whether such things are or are not established by way of their own entities and within the thought that those objects are found by reasoning analyzing in that way.

Therefore, they must assert that such is done by others’ reasoned analysis analyzing whether those inherently exist or not because they assert that those objects are able to bear reasoned analysis.

When analyzed in this way, they are unable to bear the burden of investigation by stainless reasoning, whereby, upon not being found by that reasoning, they are refuted, for if they did exist, they would have to be found by those reasonings.

Forms, sound, and so forth are only posited in accordance with how they are renowned to conventional consciousnesses that are not discredited by internal and external causes of error.

They are not asserted in the context of a system of inherent existence, that is, one in which, having been analyzed by way of the thought, “Are these mere conventions, or are they established in terms of an objective mode of being?”, they are found by such analysis to be established by way of their own entities.

Therefore, reasoned analysis analyzing whether or not these inherently exist is not applicable, for we do not assert that these objects are able to bear reasoned analysis.
It is like, for example, the way in which, upon being told, “This is a sheep,” it is unsuitable to analyze, “Is this a horse or is it an elephant?”

With regard to things that although renowned in the world from beginningless time do not exist even conventionally due to their being discredited by reasoning, these are such things as the objects of the imputation by ignorance of an own entity in things, the objects of the conception by the view of the perishing collection of an I and mine that are established by way of their own entities, and the objects of the conception that yesterday’s mountain is today’s mountain.

Therefore, it is not the case that the M›dhyamikas assert conventionally whatever is renowned in the world.

When some propound that the reason for the dissimilarity between forms, sounds, and so forth and the imputations of the non-Buddhist [philosophers] in terms of whether they do or do not exist conventionally is the fact that the former [sounds and so forth] are renowned to all the world whereas the latter [Išvara, the Principal, and so forth] are renowned to only propounders of tenets, they have not differentiated well.

Otherwise, there would be many [unwanted entailments] such as that forms and so forth being illusion-like would not exist conventionally and that their being established by way of their own entities would exist conventionally.

Also, Chandrakñiti’s Yuktisåstikàvṛtti, Commentary on (Någårjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning says:39

---

39 This is commentary on 7b.
The erroneous are those things that are apprehended as being just blissful and so forth, because even conventionally those things do not abide as having that nature.

The non-erroneous are those things apprehended as just suffering and so forth because those things have such a nature conventionally.

Thus, [Chandrakīrti] explains that even though the four, permanence and so forth, are renowned in common to the world, the conception of them is erroneous conventionally.40

And, even though the four, impermanence and so forth, are not renowned to all the world, the conception of them is non-erroneous.

Hence, a conceptual consciousness apprehending the aggregates to be impermanent and so forth, even though it is mistaken with regard to its appearing object, is said to be non-erroneous, or non-mistaken, because the mode of apprehension of its ascertainment factor is not discredited by valid cognition.

However, sense consciousnesses are mistaken with regard to their appearing objects and are not said to be non-mistaken because they do not have any other factor which is without error.

[All] sense consciousnesses are similar in being mistaken with regard to what appears.

---

40 This refers to the misconception that impermanent phenomena which in fact have a nature of suffering are permanent, blissful, pure, and having self.
However, in terms of whether an object concordant with what appears to the world exists or not, sense consciousnesses such as those to which a reflection appears [as a face] are incorrect conventionalities, and non-defective sense consciousnesses that are other than those are correct conventionalities.

Since the objects of the mode of apprehension of conceptual consciousnesses apprehending the aggregates to be permanent and so forth do not exist conventionally, they can be refuted.

However, since the objects of the conception [of them] as impermanent and so forth do exist conventionally, they cannot be refuted by reasoning.

Just as the four, permanence and so forth, that are established ultimately, or are established by way of their own entities, do not exist, so also the four, impermanence and so forth, that are established in those two ways [i.e., ultimately, or by way of their own entities] do not exist.

Thinking of this, [Buddha, in the Perfection of Wisdom sūtras] said that meditating upon forms as permanent or impermanent, blissful or painful, having self or not having self is meditation on signs.

Qualm: It is contradictory to overcome with reasoning the mode of apprehension of the ignorance that superimposes inherent existence on things and not to refute conventional objects because Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.28) says:41

The Sage said that because ignorance obscures the nature [of phenomena] it is a “concealer” (saôv¸ti).

Those fabrications which it perceives as true Are called “truths-for-a-concealer” (saôv¸tisatya).

Thus [Chandrakirti] says that forms, sounds, and so forth are posited as conventional truths [or truths for a concealer] through the force of ignorance.

[Answer]: There is no fallacy. “Truth” in the context of forms, sounds, and so forth being posited as truths for a concealer [or conventional truths] means that they are true through the force of a [particular] thought.

Since that thought must be taken as a conception of true existence, they [forms, sounds, and so forth] are truths for the ignorance that superimposes inherent existence [on them].

Therefore, for the two Arhats who have abandoned afflicted ignorance and for Bodhisattvas on the eighth level and above, Chandrakirti said, “these appearances are [seen] as having natures that are fabricated and not as true because they do not exaggerate [phenomena] as true.”

This is the reason why [Chandrakirti] said that for those who do not have the conception of true existence, [forms and so forth] are “mere conventionalities” [i.e., not conventional truths].

---

42 Most of this paragraph is a paraphrase of Chandrakirti’s commentary on VI.28. The phrase in quotation marks is a direct quote. See La Vallée Poussin’s edition 108.2-3 and ff. The mention of the phrase “mere conventionalities” that he is about to explain is found at 108.5-6.

43 P5262, vol.98, 103.5.7. La Vallée Poussin’s edition of the Tibetan, 228.1-4.
Therefore, although the truth of forms, sounds, and so forth is for ignorance, forms, sounds, and so forth are not posited by that ignorance.

It is like the way in which, for example, even though, for a wrong consciousness apprehending a snake with regard to a rope, the rope is a snake, that wrong consciousness does not posit the rope.

The awarenesses that posit forms, sounds, and so forth are the six non-defective consciousnesses—eye and so forth. Therefore, the objects established by them exist conventionally whereby they are not refuted by reasoning.

However, in the manner in which they are apprehended by ignorance, they do not exist even conventionally because this is a superimposition of inherent existence, that is, an establishment by way of their own entities, on things, and such inherent existence does not exist even conventionally.

Therefore, [forms and so forth as they are apprehended by ignorance] are refuted even conventionally by reasoning; if they were not refuted, then conventionally things would not be established as like magicians’ illusions.

Having superimposed features of attractiveness, unattractiveness and so forth to an inherent existence superimposed by ignorance, then desire, hatred, and so forth are generated. Thus the mode of apprehension of these also can be overcome by reasoning.
Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on Āryadeva’s “Four Hundred” says [in commentary on VI.10]

Desire and so forth engage in superimposing features of attractiveness, unattractiveness, and so forth to just an inherent existence of things that is superimposed by ignorance.

Therefore they do not operate differently from ignorance and depend upon ignorance because ignorance is chief.

Hence, these afflictions are innate ones that have operated from beginningless time. However, because their mode of apprehension can be eradicated by reasoning, their referent objects do not exist even conventionally.

Therefore, among the objects of innate awarenesses, there are two types: those that can and cannot be refuted by reasoning.

The objects of those innate conventional valid cognitions that posit things such as forms, sounds, and so forth exist conventionally; thus, they are not refuted by reasoning.

Therefore, in the system of the masters Buddhaplīta and Chandrakīrti, inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity, is refuted even conventionally.
Hence it appears to be very difficult to posit conventional objects.

If one does not know how to posit these well, without discredit [by reasoning], one does not gain ascertainment well with regard to the class of deeds whereby it appears that most fall to a view of [false] denial.

Therefore, those with intelligence should become skilled in how this system posits conventionalities.

Fearing too many words here, I will not elaborate more than this.
[Chapter 11. Production Is Not Refuted]


There are two propositions: (1) if production [in general] is refuted through refuting production from self, other, both, and causelessly, then, since production of the four alternatives does not exist even conventionally in this one’s [the Mādhyamika’s] own system, one need not affix any qualification to the refutation of production; and...

...(2) if production is not refuted [through that refutation of production from self, other, both, and causelessly], then the refutation of production of the four alternatives would not negate even ultimate production. From among these two, since we do not assert the former, I will explain the answer to the latter.

If one asserts ultimate production, it must be asserted as able to withstand analysis by the reasoning analyzing reality.

And, in that case, one must then assert that reasoning analyzes from which of the four alternatives—self, other, and so forth, there is production. Hence, one who asserts ultimate production must definitely assert that it is analyzable as one of the four alternatives.

Since a mere production that is the arising of such and such in dependence on such and such causes and conditions is asserted, real [or ultimate] production is not asserted; ...
...since such is not asserted, how could one analyze with the reasoning analyzing reality, “From which—self, other, and so forth—is there production?” For, there is no need to assert [production] as able to withstand analysis by reasoning.

Moreover, dependent production itself refutes production of the four alternatives, for Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.115) says:43

Because things arise dependently
These [mistaken] conceptions cannot withstand investigation.
Therefore, this reasoning of dependent-arising
Cuts all the nets of bad views.

Therefore, Chandrakīrti asserts dependent production as a means of refuting production of the four alternatives.

However, since you are asserting that if there is no production from any of the four alternatives, then even mere production does not exist, it appears that you are propounding something opposite to what Chandrakīrti asserts.

Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.114) also says:44

43 P5262, vol.98, 103.5.7. La Vallée Poussin’s edition of the Tibetan, 228.1-4.
44 P5262, vol.98, 103.5.6-103.5.7. La Vallée Poussin’s edition of the Tibetan, 226.6-9.
Because things are not produced
Causelessly, from causes such as Śāvāra,
Or from self, other, or both [self and other],
They are produced dependently.

However, according to you, it would be contradictory [for Chandrakirti] to say this.

Therefore, since the dependent-arising of dependent production is free from the four extremes, do not ask which among the four extremes is this which is free from extremes.

Once again, these persons go wrong through not differentiating between non-inherent production and non-production.

Qualm:: How do you explain the statement [in Chandrakirti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.36a-c)]:

Through that very reasoning through which [it is seen] on the occasion of [analyzing] reality
That production from self and from other are not reasonable
[It is seen] that [production] is not reasonable even conventionally.

This passage was cited earlier by Dzong-ka-ba at the point of setting forth the overall assertions of those whom he considers to negate too much. See the Tibetan text 581.9. Also Chapter 4 Misidentifying the Object of Negation, p.179 of Dependent-Arising and Emptiness, also p. 41 above.
[Answer:] This indicates that if substantially established production, or production that is established by way of its own character, is asserted, then those reasonings refute it even conventionally.

It does not at all indicate a refutation of mere production, for in the transition to that passage [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, Chandrakīrṭi says:46

If someone says, “It must be taken that things having a substantial nature which serve as the causes of thoroughly afflicted and very pure phenomena are produced,” [we answer] that in that case there would not remain even the words to propound such [?]. Why?

At this point Chandrakīrṭi cites the passage above, “[Through that very reasoning through which] on the occasion of [analyzing] reality...” and then in commentary on that says:

Therefore, even though you do not want to, you must assert that production by way [an object’s] own character does not exist as either of the two truths.

Therefore, production that is established by way of its own entity is ultimate production; hence if it is asserted, even if it is asserted conventionally, it must be refuted in the way in which ultimate production is refuted.

Since this is the excellent assertion of this master [Chandrakīrṭi], one should not assert production that is established by way of its own entity even conventionally.

---
46 This is commentary leading into VI.36.
Chandrakirti’s Madhyamakavatara (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.111) says:

Regarding the son of a barren woman, production by way of its own nature
Does not exist in reality nor in the world.
Similarly, all these things are not produced by way of
Their own entities for the world or in reality.

To those who hold that non-inherent production, or the absence of inherent production, necessarily means that production does not exist and then raise the objection that dependent production and non-inherent production are contradictory, [Chandrakirti] says [in the Yuktiśāṅkhyāvatī (Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning”), cited immediately below], “They do not have ears or hearts [that is, minds].”

He said, “They do not have ears,” thinking that they, without hearing [the qualification] “inherent” in our statement “non-inherent production” hold [that we have said] “non-production”. He said, “They do not have hearts [that is, minds],” thinking that [even though they hear] the word “inherent”, no meaning for that appears [to their minds].

Nāgārjuna’s Yuktiśāṅkhyā (Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning, stanza 48cd) says:

The supreme of knowers of reality [i.e., Buddha]
Said that that which is produced dependently is not produced.
Commenting on that passage, Chandrakīrti’s *Yuktisāśīkāvṛtti* (Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning”) says:47

When one sees dependent-arising, one does not observe things as inherently existent because that which is dependently produced is, like a reflection, not produced inherently.

**Objection:** Is it not the case that that which is dependently produced is only produced? How can you say that it is not produced?

If you say that something is not produced, then you should not say that it is dependently produced.

Therefore, because [these things] are mutually exclusive, [your position] is unsuitable.

**Answer:** Poor thing! Such an objection [to us] due to either not having ears or not having a heart [that is, a mind] has put us in a difficult situation.

How, when we propound that dependently produced things are, like reflections, not produced inherently, could there be a chance for an objection?

Thus you should cherish making those distinctions.

---

47 P5265, vol. 98, 182.1.3-182.1.7. The differences between the passage as found in the Peking edition of the canon and as cited by Dzong-ka-ba are so numerous that either Dzong-ka-ba is merely giving a gloss of the text, or, as is more likely, he was looking at a different translation of it.
Also, the *Anavatapta-nāgarājaparipṛcchāsūtra* (*Questions of the King of Nāgas, Anavatapta, Sūtra*) says:

Whatever is produced from conditions is not produced;  
It does not have an inherent nature of production.  
Whatever depends upon conditions is said to be empty;  
One who knows emptiness is aware.

Having stated in the first line, “Whatever is produced from conditions is not produced,” [Buddha] indicates with the second line the manner of non-production, “It does not have an inherent nature of production.” Thus, affixing a qualification to the object of negation, [Buddha] says that things are not produced inherently.

Some, not understanding such and hearing [just] those words say, “Just the produced is non-produced; just the dependent does not depend.” This appears to be a case of taking what is an assertive propounding of a collection of contradictions to be a high view.

This is also stated very clearly in the *Lāṅkāvatārasūtra* (*Descent into Lāṅkā Sūtra*) which is quoted by Chandrakīrti in his *Prasannapadā* (*Clear Words*):

Mahāmati, thinking that they are not produced inherently, I said that all phenomena are not produced.
Although an answer as to whether or not the qualification “ultimately” is to be affixed in the refutation of 
production and so forth has in fact been given [above], a specific answer will be set forth below [in Chapter 
Fourteen].

These [points explained above] indicate that all the refutations [set forth by the M›dhyamikas’ opponents] 
cannot refute [the M›dhyamikas’] mode of positing cause, effect, and so forth within no inherent existence.

In general, the ultimate fallacious refutation refers to one in which the analyses in the way in which one 
refutes one’s opponent, those very agents of refutation, are made into nothing.

Therefore, those things stated by you are the ultimate of fallacious refutations.

For, in just the way that you refute the other’s [that is, the M›dhyamika’s] position, analyzing whether there 
is or is not discredit by reasoning and so forth, it is turned back on you and even your refutory reasonings 
become objects to be negated.

Qualm: Because you assert the existence of forms and so forth, those analyses with regard to them apply to 
you.

However, since we have no position which is our own system, those analyses do not apply [to us].

[Answer:] That this [argument] cannot dispell these fallacies will be set forth [later] at the point of explaining 
whether [the view] is settled by way of consequences or syllogisms.
Fourth, indicating that the refutation of all four alternatives—the existence, non-existence, and so forth of things—is not suitable to overcome [the conventional existence of production and so forth].

Qualm: In the Madhyamika texts, all four possibilities—the existence of things, or inherent existence; their non-existence; both; and neither—are refuted, and since there are no phenomena that are not included in those, all [phenomena] are refuted by reasoning.

[Answer:] With regard to this, “thing” (bhāva, dngos po), as indicated earlier, has two [meanings].\(^{48}\) From among these, we refute the assertion that things that are established by way of their own entities exist as either of the two truths; however, things that are able to perform functions are not refuted conventionally.

Also, with regard to non-things, if non-compounded phenomena are being asserted to be non-things that are established by way of their own entities, we refute also such non-things.

Similarly, we refute also that which is both such a thing and such a non-thing, and we also refute something that is not both that is established by way of its own entity.

Thus, you should know that all the ways of refuting the four alternatives are like this [that is, include the affixing of a qualification, “inherently”].

\(^{48}\) See above, 597.16, for where Dzong-ka-ba discussed this earlier. The two meanings he sets forth are that it can mean “inherent existence” or “capacity to perform a function”. It is in Chapter 7, p.203 of Dependent Arising and Emptiness.
If you refute all four alternatives without having any such qualification to affix, then, having refuted, at the time of refuting that things exist and things do not exist, [something that is both] saying, “[Things] are not both [existent and non-existent],” if you then refute [that which is neither] saying, “[Things] are not not both” you have explicitly contradicted your own assertion.49

Furthermore, when inherent existence, or self, that is to say, an establishment by way of their own entity, is refuted with regard to the aggregates, a wisdom consciousness thinking, “Inherent existence, or self, does not exist,” is produced.

Should you refute the non-inherent existence that is the object of that wisdom consciousness, you are casting away50 the Madhyamika view. For, you are casting away the object of the wisdom consciousness realizing that phenomena do not inherently exist.

I will ask this question to those who assert that both inherent existence and non-inherent existence are cast away: Please set forth just how the non-inherent existence that is the object of the wisdom ascertaining, “The aggregates do not inherently exist,” is cast away.

49 Basically, Dzong-ka-ba is asserting a commitment to common sense and meaningful use of words and negatives. His point is that if you assert that something does not exist, you have asserted that it is non-existent; by asserting that something is not non-existent, you have asserted that it is existent; having asserted that it is not both [existent and non-existent], through then asserting that it is not not both, you have asserted that it is both. In this paragraph, he is focusing on the contradiction involving the last two alternatives. If you say that something is not both (existent and non-existent), you cannot with any logical consistency turn right around and say that it not not both—because you are explicitly contradicting what you have just said.

50 I’ve tried cast away 4 times here for sun ‘byin. I’m not sure how it works, It might be better just to use “refute”.
[Perhaps] you think it is because Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* (Treatise on the Middle Way, XIII.7) says:

If there were anything not empty,
Then something emptiness would also exist;
If there is anything not empty,
How could the empty exist?

Therefore, because there is nothing that is not empty, the emptiness that is the absence of inherent existence also does not exist.

[Answer:] Here [in Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakārikā*] “empty” and “non-empty” refer to being empty and not empty of inherent existence, and they are used in this way throughout the entire text, beginning to end.

Thus “not empty of inherent existence” means “inherently established”.

What could be more laughable than your propounding that since inherent establishment does not in the least exist, the emptiness that is the non-existence of inherent establishment also does not exist!

Furthermore, the ascertainment apprehending that some such thing as a sprout does not inherently exist, that is, is not established by way of its own entity, is apprehending that the sprout does not have inherent existence.
It is not apprehending either of the two—that the absence of inherent existence exists or does not exist. With regard to this, close your eyes, turn inward, and realize it; it is very easy to understand.

Even if it were the case that, due to its being unsuitable to apprehend non-inherent existence as existing, it were correct to refute with reasoning the existence of emptiness in order to overcome the apprehension of non-inherent existence as existing, one would still have to assert that one was refuting the object of some other mind that was apprehending non-inherent existence to exist.

A refutation of the object of the wisdom realizing that a sprout does not exist inherently is extremely incorrect.

When we refute inherent existence, that is establishment by way of its own entity, with regard to a sprout, there is ascertainment thinking that [the sprout] does not inherently exist.

Then, even if some other awareness apprehends that non-inherent existence as existing, its object is not refuted with reasoning. However, if that emptiness were asserted to be established by way of its own entity, it would be refuted.

**Question:** How could one generate an apprehension that the absence of inherent existence inherently exists?

**Answer:** Even though, upon observing the non-inherent existence of a sprout, it is not established as an inherent existence of the sprout, one might generate an apprehension thinking that that non-inherent existence exists as an inherent existence of that [sprout].
For example, even though one would not generate the thought, “It is true that a pot exists [here],” with regard to [a place where] a pot does not exist, one might generate the thought, “It is true that a pot does not exist [here].”

Since, taken in this way, there does not exist at all anything that is not empty of inherent existence, it is perfectly right to say that even the emptiness that is a sprout’s absence of inherent existence is not established by way of its own entity.

Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” speaks of refuting that emptiness is established by way of its own entity:

If that which is called emptiness did have some establishment by way of its own entity, then things would come to have inherent existence. However, it does not. In order to indicate this, [Āryadeva] said (XVI.7):

In that nothing is not empty,
From what could emptiness arise?
In that there does not exist the other side [alt., As there is nothing to oppose]
How could an antidote arise?

51 P5266, vol. 98, 276.3.2-276.3.4.
Otherwise, if one refuted the existence of emptiness, that is, of non-inherent existence, then non-inherent existence would become non-existent. In that case, inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity, would exist, whereby it would be unsuitable in all ways to refute inherent existence.  

For, in this vein, Nāgārjuna’s *Vigrahavyavartanī* (*Refutation of Objections*, stanza 26) says: 

> How could that which is without inherent existence
> Overturn non-inherent existence?
> If non-inherent existence were overturned,
> Inherent existence would be thoroughly established.

And, Nāgārjuna’s *Vigrahavyāvartitā* (Commentary on the “Refutation of Objections”), commenting on that, says very clearly:

> Someone might say that just as through saying, “Don’t speak,” speaking is stopped, so non-inherently existent words refute the non-inherent existence of things.

[Answer:] Even though the example is correct, [the meaning exemplified is not].

Here, non-inherently existent words refute an inherent existence of things.

---

52 The last two lines were cited earlier by Dzong-ka-ba, 599.15-16, Ch 7, *DA cycE*, p.206
53 P5232, vol. 95, 60.3.5-60.3.8.
If non-inherently existent words could refute the non-inherent existence of things, then because non-inherent existence itself was refuted, things would come to have inherent existence, and because of having inherent existence, they would not be empty.

Therefore, just after the passage in the *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* (Treatise on the Middle Way, XIII.7) cited above, “...How could the empty exist?” Nāgārjuna says (XIII.8):

The Conqueror said that emptiness eradicates all [bad] views;
Those who view emptiness [as inherently existent]
Were said to be incurable.

Here also, “viewing emptiness” does not refer to the view thinking, “This is empty of inherent existence,” but is said with regard to conceiving the emptiness that is the emptiness of inherent existence to be truly existent or viewing it as an inherently existent thing (*bhāva, dngos po*).
For, the *Buddhapālita commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) Treatise on the Middle Way*) says this very clearly along with an example:\textsuperscript{54}

When one expresses “emptiness” to those who conceive that things exist by way of their own entities, indicating things’ emptiness of existing by way of their own entities by saying, “These dependently-arising are designated as things through the force of causes and conditions; things do not exist by way of their own entities,” those [persons’ mis-]conceptions can be overcome.

However, nothing can overcome the conceptions of those who conceive that emptiness is an inherently existent thing.

For example, if you tell someone, “I have nothing,” and that person then says, “Give me that nothing,” how could you cause that person to enter into conceiving that you have nothing?

If it is not taken in this way, the example would be inappropriate. When one person says to another, “Give me some wealth,” and that person responds, “I have no wealth,” there is no fault if the first person thinks, “This one has no wealth.”

\textsuperscript{54} P5242, vol. 95, 101.4.7-101.5.2.
However, if that absence of wealth is considered to be wealth, then there is no way to generate an ascertainment of the absence of wealth. In just the same way, if one says to a person who asks, “Do things have inherent existence or not?”; “They do not have inherent existence,” what fault is there if the questioner conceives, “Things do not have inherent existence,” since the speaker wished [the questioner] to generate that [conception]? 

However, there is a fault if that non-inherent existence of things itself is considered to exist inherently.

Since according to your interpretation, even the conception, “This one has no wealth,” [generated upon] being told, “I have no wealth,” must be refuted, if you rely upon our explanation, it is beautiful.

Also in the Prasannapadā (Clear Words), [Chandrakīrti] speaks of adhering to emptiness as an inherently existent thing (bhāva); hence, he is not refuting emptiness, and further, there is no fault in merely viewing emptiness.

Therefore, one should understand as explained earlier the Ārya-prajñāpāramitā-sancaya-gāthā (Condensed Perfection of Wisdom in Verse, I.9cd) which says:

If a Bodhisattva conceives, “The aggregates are empty,” then he or she is practicing signs [a false reality] and does not have faith in the topic (yul) of non-production.
Also, Nāgārjuna’s Ratnāvali (Precious Garland, 103cd) says:

Therefore the great Sage refuted Views of self and selflessness.

Although these and other scriptures and treatises say that it is unsuitable to view emptiness and selflessness, they should be understood as was explained earlier.

Otherwise, this would contradict a great many statements such as those which follow. As an answer to Śāriputra who asked Avalokiteśvara how one who wished to practice the profound Perfection of Wisdom should train, [Avalokiteśvara] said [in the Heart Sūtra]:

[A bodhisattvā] should thoroughly and correctly view these five aggregates as empty of inherent existence.

The Ārya-prajñāpāramitā-sānta-gāthā (Condensed Perfection of Wisdom in Verse, I.28cd) says:

One who thoroughly knows that phenomena do not inherently exist is practicing the supreme Perfection of Wisdom.
Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.165cd) says:

Therefore, through the view of the emptiness of I and mine,
A yogi will be released.

Therefore, the root of all difficulties is the ignorance that superimposes inherent existence.

That which eradicates it by way of a mode of apprehension explicitly contradicting it is only the wisdom realizing non-inherent existence, or selflessness. If that is so, then, if you refute its [that wisdom’s] mode of apprehension, you must assert, even if you do not wish to, that you are refuting the view of suchness.

Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on (Aryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”, at the point at which [Āryadeva] says, “There is no second door to peace,” (XII.13a) says:

The thorough extinguishment of attachment is the cause of attaining nirvāṇa, and, except for the view of non-inherent existence, there is no other doctrine that is a cause of thoroughly extinguishing such attachment.

Therefore, this selflessness that has the character of non-inherent existence is the door to peace that has no second, for just this is the door without equivalent for entering to the city of nirvāṇa.
Even though there are the three doors of liberation called “emptiness”, “signlessness”, and “wishlessness”, nonetheless only the view of selflessness is chief.

How could one who knows all phenomena without exception as selfless and has extinguished completely attachment with regard to all things be intent on [i.e., wish for] or apprehend signs with regard to anything at any time?

Therefore, selflessness is the door to peace having no second. Thus the Collection of Enlightenment explains:

Because [phenomena] do not inherently exist, they are empty.

Further, because one has [realized] emptiness, what use is [misconception of] signs.  
Because they have overcome all signs [i.e., misconceptions about reality]

Why would the wise plant wishes [for such]?

Thus [Chandrakīrti] dispels the contradiction of explaining that there are three doors to liberation and also explaining that just the view that is the view of the emptiness of inherent existence is the door to liberation, and he proves with scripture and reasoning that just that [view] is the door to liberation.
Why should the mere elimination of inherent existence imply the refutation of object [of a wisdom consciousness]?

For, the realization of such is the antidote to misconceiving the two selves and it does not have even the odor of misconception of reality.

If, viewing even such a conception as faulty, you refute all conceptuality whatsoever—good or bad—then it is clear that you wish to set up the system of the Chinese abbot Hva-shang.
[Chapter 12. Not Negating Enough]

Qualm: The object to be negated is svabhāva and it is that which possesses the three attributes: entity—not being produced by causes and conditions; state—being immutable; and certification—not depending on another.

For, Nāgārjuna’s Mulamadhyamakakārikā (Treatise on the Middle Way, XV.1-2) says:

It is not reasonable that an [inherent, or final] nature Arise from causes and conditions.
If it did arise from causes and conditions That [inherent, or final] nature would be something made.

For an [inherent, or final] nature to be “made”? An [inherent, or final] nature is non-fabricated And does not depend on another.
[Answer:] In general, if one asserts that internal and external things such as sprouts are established as such [inherent, or final] natures, the Mādhyamikas indeed must refute such.

However, here, the identification of the object to be negated is an identification of that basic object to be negated with regard to which, when it is negated, the Mādhyamika view realizing that phenomena lack inherent existence [or an inherent nature] is generated in one’s continuum.

Hence, since our own [non-Mādhyamika Buddhist] schools have already established that compounded phenomena are produced by causes and conditions and are mutable, it would [absurdly] not be necessary to prove non-inherent existence to them and also they would [absurdly] have realized the non-inherent existence of things. Because there are such fallacies, how could this be the uncommon object to be negated!

In many Mādhyamika texts, there occurs the flinging [of consequences] such as: If things were established inherently, that is, if they were established by way of their own entities, they would have not to depend on causes and conditions, they would have to be immutable, and so forth.

However, this is an expression of fault by way of an entailment; it is not an identification of the object to be negated by way of its entity.
Moreover, even though it is the case that if something were ultimately established, were actually established, or were truly established, it would necessarily not depend on causes and conditions, and so forth, those attributes of not depending on causes and conditions, and so forth] are not the meaning of ultimate establishment, and so forth.

For example, even though pot entails impermanence, impermanence is not suitable to be the meaning of pot; rather “bulbous thing …” must be posited as its meaning.

Similarly, if something were ultimately established and so forth, it would have to be a partless thing; nonetheless, partless thing is not asserted as the basic object to be negated here.

For, since those [partless things] are merely imputed by the uncommon apprehension of proponents of [false] tenets, such conceptions are not the root [cause] that binds embodied beings in cyclic existence.

Further, although you determined and then meditated on those [partless things] as without inherent existence, it would not at all counter the ignorant conception that has operated from beginningless time. Therefore, even if you brought to completion the direct realization of that meaning, it would not overcome innate afflictions.

Thus, when determining [the nature of phenomena] by way of the view, you should take as primary determining that an object as conceived by innate ignorance does not exist and as a branch of that refute objects of artificial conceptions.

55 Yang dag par.
56 The technical definition of “pot” is “bulbous, splay based thing able to perform the function of holding water.”
If, not knowing that, you forsake overcoming the mode of apprehension of innate ignorance, and, when refuting a self of persons, refute a self that is permanent, single, and independent and, when refuting a self of phenomena, refute things that are imputed only by proponents of tenets—objects that are partless particles, subjects that are partless moments, an [inherent, or final] nature possessing the three attributes, and so forth——this is in all ways unsuitable.

If you don’t see this, at the time of determining [the nature of phenomena] by way of the view, you have determined nothing more than this, whereby, also at the time of meditation, you have to meditate only on this, for the determining [of the nature of phenomena] by way of the view is for the sake of meditation.

Therefore, even if you upon meditation actualized [such a selflessness] and brought familiarization with it to completion, it would be no more than just that.

If you assert that through seeing as non-existent the two selves merely as they are imputed by such artificial conceptions, innate afflictions are overcome, it is extremely absurd.

Chandrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.140) says:

Some, at the time of realizing selflessness, abandon a permanent self,
But this is not asserted as the basis of the conception of I.
Therefore, propounding that the view of self is thoroughly removed
Through knowing [such a] selflessness is very absurd.
Chandrakirti’s *Madhaymakāvatārabhāṣya* ([Auto]commentary on the Supplement to *Nāgārjuna’s* “Treatise on the Middle Way”) says:

In order to illuminate by way of an example the meaning of this senseless propounding, it is said (VI.141):

\[
\text{रङ्गिणिकृत्वा} खँभाश्च जलो जलो जलो जलो ।
\text{वै च न लक्ष्यं संबोध्यात्} ।
\text{ज्ञात्वा भौलो भौलो भौलो भौलो ।}
\text{लक्ष्यं भौलो भौलो भौलो भौलो!} ।
\]

Someone sees a snake living in the wall of his house.

[Another] to dispel his fear says, “There is no elephant here.”

That this would dispel the fear of the snake

Is, alas, a source of laughter for others.

This was said with regard to the selflessness of the person, but it is similar also with regard to the selflessness of phenomena, being applied [to the above verse as follows]:

\[
\text{रङ्गिणिकृत्वा} खँभाश्च जलो जलो जलो जलो ।
\text{वै च न लक्ष्यं संबोध्यात्} ।
\text{ज्ञात्वा भौलो भौलो भौलो भौलो ।}
\text{लक्ष्यं भौलो भौलो भौलो भौलो!} ।
\]

Some, at the time of realizing selflessness, abandon an acquired [conception of] self,

But this is not asserted as the basis of ignorance.

Therefore, propounding that ignorance is thoroughly removed

Through knowing [such a] selflessness is very absurd.
Question: In the statement by Nāgārjuna set forth above, in which he said that not being fabricated and not depending on another were the defining characteristics of svabhāva, was he speaking hypothetically or does such a svabhāva exist?

Answer: This spoken of as the “reality of phenomena” is posited as the “nature” (svabhāva), and it is non-fabricated and does not depend on another.

That it exists is established along with a source from śūtra in Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”:

Does a nature, as asserted by the master [Nāgārjuna], that is qualified in such a way [as described in Mālamadhyamakakārikā, XV.2, which Chandrakīrti has just cited] exist?

The “reality” (chos nyid, dharmaṭā) extensively set forth by the Transcendent Lord—“Whether the Tathāgatas appear or not, the reality of phenomena just abides”—exists.

What is this “reality”? It is the nature of these eyes and so forth.

And, what is the nature of these? It is their non-fabricatedness, that which does not depend on another, their entity that is realized by knowledge free from the dimness of ignorance.

57 The verb “established” is at the end of the quote passage.
Does it exist or not? If it did not exist, for what purpose would Bodhisattvas cultivate the path of the perfections?

Why would Bodhisattvas initiate hundreds of difficulties for the sake of realizing reality?

Question: Did you not earlier refute the establishment of a nature with regard to all phenomena?

[Answer:] Have we not given many times the answer that, with regard to phenomena that are not internal mental imputations, a nature that is their establishment by way of their own entities does not exist, not even a particle?

Therefore, what need to speak about other phenomena [being established] as such natures (svabhāva). Even reality, the ultimate truth, is not in the least established [as such a nature].

For, Chandrakīrti’s Prasannapādā (Clear Words) says:58

That which is the non-fabricated fundamental entity [abiding] ineluctably in fire even over the three times, that which is not the subsequent arising of something that did not arise previously, that which does not depend on causes and conditions like the heat of water or here and there or long and short, is called the “[final] nature”.

58 This is commentary on XV.2.
Does such a self-entity\textsuperscript{59} of fire exist? By way of its own entity, it does not exist and also does not not exist.

Though it is so, in order to dispel the fear of listeners, it is said upon imputation, “It exists conventionally.”

Thus [Chandrakīrti] refutes that that nature is established by way of its own entity and says that it exists conventionally.

[Qualm:] Since [Chandrakīrti] says that it is taught as existing upon imputation, in order to dispel the fear of listeners, [does this mean that Chandrakīrti] does not assert it as existing?

[Answer:] That is not reasonable, for other phenomena as well are said [to exist conventionally] upon imputation for a specific purpose, whereby [if svabhāva did not exist] they also would not exist.\textsuperscript{60}

As cited earlier, [Chandrakīrti] established [that that nature exists] upon expressing the discredit that if that object did not exist, it would [absurdly] follow that pure behavior was senseless.

\textsuperscript{59} rang gi ngo bo, svarīpa.

\textsuperscript{60} In his \textit{Tsa shes tik chen} (Ocean of Reasoning, Explanation of (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way Called ‘Wisdom”) rje tsong kha pa’i gyung dbu ma’i lta ba’i skor edition, Vol.1,732 ff., Dzong-ka-ba, when explaining this point, cites a śūtra, the \textit{ebor yang dag par idud pa}, that makes this same point with regard to production and cessation. He also cites a passage from the \textit{Samādhīrājasūtra} (King of Meditative Stabilizations Sūtra) which Chandrakīrti cites in the \textit{Prasannapadā} immediately after making the point about such being said upon imputation in order to dispell the fears of listeners:

\begin{verbatim}
What hearing, what teaching is there
Of the inexpressible doctrine.
The inexpressible is heard and taught
Upon superimposition.
\end{verbatim}

In this, the hearers, explainers, and doctrines to be explained are all said to be done upon superimposition. Thus for something to be said to exist “upon superimposition”, need not imply that it is doesn’t exist, like the superimposition of the two selves.
Also Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says: 61

Not only does the master [Nāgārjuna] assert this nature, others also can be caused to assert it. Thus this nature is posited as established for both [parties of the debate].

Otherwise, one would have to assert that in the Mādhyamika system the attainment of release could not occur.

For, the attainment of nirvāṇa is an actualization of nirvāṇa.

That nirvāṇa is explained as a true cessation, and those [true cessations] are said to be ultimate truths and ultimate truths would not exist.

Chandrakīrti proves with great effort in his Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas on Reasoning” that when nirvāṇa is attained the ultimate truth of cessation must be actualized.

Hence, these compounded phenomena, eyes and so forth, are not established as natures that are established by way of their own entities and are also not established as that [nature] when reality is posited as a [final] nature.

Thus, they are not established as either sort of nature.

61 This is commentary on VI.182 and follows shortly after the passage cited just above.
Ultimate truths are established as that [final nature] when reality is posited as a [final] nature, but what establishes them as being such a [final] nature are their being non-fabricated and not depending on another.

They do not exist in the least as natures that are established by way of their own entities. Thus, they are merely established conventionally.

“Fabricated” means “produced” in the sense of something that did not exist before arising newly, and “depend on another” means to depend on causes and conditions.

Because forms and so forth are not established as either type of nature, one cultivates the path in order to view that [final] nature in which reality is taken as “nature,” whereby it is said that pure behavior [its basis] is not senseless.

Moreover, it is explained that it is not contradictory not to assert in the least a nature that is established by way of its own entity of phenomena and to assert a nature adventitiously [that is, conventionally].

Chandrakīrti’s Madhaymakāvatārābhāṣya ([Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”) says:62

[Objection:] Alas, utterly wrong! You, who do not assert things (bhāva) at all but also assert a nature that adventitiously is non-fabricated and does not depend on another are expressing meanings that are patently contradictory.

62 This comes just before the passage from the same text cited by Dzong-ka-ba just above.
[Answer] You in saying such do not understand the intent of [Nāgārjuna’s] Mūlamadhyamakārikā (Treatise on the Middle Way).

That intent is as follows: If the self-entity of eyes and so forth, dependent-arisings that are apprehensible by ordinary childish beings, were the nature of those, then because that nature is realizable even by the erroneous, pure behavior would be senseless.

Because just this [self-entity of eyes and so forth] is not the [final] nature, pure behavior for the sake of viewing that [final] nature is purposeful.

Further, I [Chandrakīrti] say that [this final nature] is, relative to conventional truths, non-fabricated and does not depend on another.

Just that which is not something viewed by ordinary childish beings is suitable to be the nature, and due to just that, the ultimate is not a thing [that is, is not established by way of its own entity] and is also not a non-thing [that is, is not utterly non-existent] because it is naturally peaceful.

Here “thing” and “non-thing” are, as explained before at the time of dualistic proposition [of bhāva and abhāva], existence by way of [an object’s] own entity and utter non-existence.63

The emptiness that is the emptiness of [inherent] nature (svabhāva), the determination that there does not

63 See pp.594-6 where Dzong-ka-ba discusses this topic. See, DA & E, pp.199ff.
exist in phenomena even a particle that is established as an [inherent] nature, or is established by way of its
own entity, exists as an attribute of those phenomena, forms and so forth, which serve as substrata.

Thus, it is not contradictory that both those [that is, substrata and attribute] exist for one awareness. Further,
since dualistic appearance has not been overcome, that emptiness is an imputed ultimate truth.

Through familiarizing with the view realizing the absence of an [inherent] nature, [or of inherent existence],
that object [the emptiness of inherent existence] is realized directly. For that [consciousness], all mistaken
appearances that are the appearance of inherent existence whereas there is no inherent existence are overcome.

Thus, since the consciousness actualizing that reality does not observe subjects such as forms, the two—such a
reality and the subject—do not exist for that awareness.

Thus, the positing of those two as reality and subject must be posited from the viewpoint of some other
conventional awareness.

In that case, an ultimate truth is posited with regard to the mere vanishing of all elaborations of mistaken
appearances which involve the appearance of inherent existence, whereas there is none, in addition to the
pacification of all elaborations of establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity.

Thus, although that is asserted, how could it be necessary to assert a nature that is established by way of its
own entity!
Chandrakīrtī’s Prasannapāda (Clear Words) says:64

That aspect of things that is observed due to the power of the dimness of sight of ignorance in the manner of non-perception [by ordinary beings] by its nature becomes the object of Noble Ones, who are free from the dimness of ignorance. That very entity is posited as the [final] nature of those [things].

Also:65

The lack of inherently existent production of things, due to its not being anything [demonstrable as it appears to a direct perceiver] is just a non-thing, whereby because its entity does not exist, it does not exist as an [inherent] nature of things.

Some [Tibetans] do not posit the ultimate truth as the mere elimination of the elaborations of the object to be negated, the two selves and so forth.

Rather, they assert that it appears in the manner of being established under its own power as the object of a non-mistaken awareness realizing the mode of being, like the way in which blue and yellow and so forth [appear to the mind as separate substantial entities], and ascertaining that it exists in that way is the view realizing the profound meaning.

---

64 This is commentary on XV.2.
65 This continues almost immediately from the preceding passage.
Further, they assert that the realization that these external and internal phenomena that are the bases with regard to which living beings adhere to the two selves are without inherent existence is a place for going wrong with regard to the correct view. 5

These assertions are outside the sphere of all the scriptures, Hinayana and Mahayana.

For, they assert that it is necessary to overcome the conception of self, the root that binds all living beings in cyclic existence. 10

And, they then assert that that conception of self is not overcome through realizing those bases which are apprehended by it as a self as without inherent existence, but rather is overcome through realizing some other phenomenon that is unrelated with it as truly existent. 15

This does not appear to be the least bit different from saying, in order to overcome the distress of someone who, even though there is no snake in the east, perceives one there, fears it, and is distressed, “You cannot overcome the conception of a snake through thinking, ‘There is not in the least a snake in the east.’ Rather you should think, ‘There is a tree in the west.’ Through that, you will overcome your perception of a snake and your distress.”
Hence, those who wish the good for themselves should put far away such [wrong views]. Relying on the texts of the Superior Nāgārjuna and his spiritual sons which set forth clearly the vast collections of reasonings that establish deep ascertainment of the scriptures of definitive meaning, the method for eradicating the mode of apprehension of ignorance that is the root of all difficulties binding one in cyclic existence, and which [show] that the meaning of those [scriptures] is not suitable to be interpreted otherwise, you should cross to the other side of the ocean of cyclic existence.

Because the refutation of wrong ideas with regard to the object to be negated is a great key to eliminating places where one might go wrong in gaining the Mādhyamika view, I have explained it here at length.
Chapter 13. The Actual Object to be Negated

This has three parts: the actual identification of the object to be negated; how that [object to be negated] is or is not affixed to other objects to be negated; and an explanation of whether or not the qualification “ultimately” needs to be affixed to the object to be negated.

First, The Actual Identification Of The Object Of Negation

In general, with regard to objects to be negated, there are objects to be negated by the path and objects to be negated by reasoning.

Regarding to the first of these, Maitreya’s *Madhyântavibhaṅga (Differentiation of the Middle Way and the Extremes, II.17)* says:

There is teaching of afflictive obscurations and cognitive obscurations. We assert that all obscurations are [included] in these, and when they are extinguished, one is released.

Thus, there are the two—afflictive obscurations and cognitive obscurations.

---

66 This is the third part of a topic entitled “Identifying the object to be negated by reasoning,” that began on 579.13.
With regard to objects to be negated by reasoning, Nāgārjuna’s *Vigrahavyāvartanī* (*Refutation of Objections*, stanza 27) says:

Someone thinks that an emanated woman is a woman. The occurrence of such a wrong conception is stopped by another emanation. This is like that.

Commenting on that, his *Vigrahavyāvartinarātaka* (*Commentary on the “Refutation of Objections”*) says:

A woman emanated by some being is empty of the nature [of being a woman], but [someone else] wrongly conceives, “This is ultimately a woman.”

Therefore, due to that wrong conception, desire is generated.

A Tathāgata or a Śrāvaka of the Tathāgata emanates another emanation, and it overcomes that [person’s] wrong conception.
Similarly, my words, which are empty like an emanation, overcome that which is an apprehension with regard to all things—which, like an emanated women, are empty and do not inherently exist—that they exist inherently.

Thus [Nāgārjuna] speaks of an erroneous conception as an object to be negated and also treats the inherent existence that it apprehends as an object to be negated, [making] two [objects to be negated].

However, the primary object to be negated is the latter.

For, in order to overcome an erroneous subject [i.e., a consciousness], one must initially refute the object that it apprehends.

For instance, one refutes inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity, in terms of persons and phenomena due to their being dependent-arisings.

This object to be negated must be one that does not exist among objects of knowledge because if it did exist, it could not be refuted.

Even so [that is, even though it does not exist], because mistaken superimpositions that apprehend it to exist are generated, it must be refuted.

This refutation is not like destroying a pot with a hammer, but rather is a case of generating an ascertaining consciousness that recognizes the non-existent to be non-existent.
When one generates ascertainment of it as non-existent, the mistaken consciousness apprehending that it exists will be overcome.

Similarly, establishing something with reasoning is not a case of the new establishment of something that formerly did not exist, like the production of a sprout by a seed, but rather is the generation of an ascertaining consciousness that recognizes a phenomenon as it is.

Nāgarjuna’s *Vigrahavyāvartana (Refutation of Objections*, stanza 65) says:67

[What use] is there to establish a negative
Of that which is non-existent even without words?
To [answer] that, the words, “does not exist”
Cause understanding, they do not eliminate.

[Nāgarjuna’s] *Vigrahavyāvartinirvṛtti (Commentary on the "Refutation of Objections") says:

[Quahm:] If you are establishing a negation of something that is non-existent even without words, that is, separate from any words, then what is the use of your words, “All things are without inherent existence”? 

67 Dzong-ka-ba cites the verse as it is found in Nāgarjuna’s commentary, P5232, vol. 95, 63.4.8.
Answer: The words, “All things are without inherent existence,” do not make an inherent existence of things non-existent, but they do cause someone to understand with regard to that which is without inherent existence, “These things are without inherent existence.”

For example, even though Devadatta is not in the house, someone says, “Devadatta is in the house.” Someone else, in order to [cause understanding] that [Devadatta] is not there says, “[Devadatta] is not there.”

Those words do not cause Devadatta not to be there, but merely indicate the fact that Devadatta is not in the house.

Similarly, the words, “Things are without inherent existence” do not cause an inherent existence of things not to exist.

However, because beings are confused with regard to the lack of a correct entity of all things, which are without inherent existence, like beings [emanated by] a magician, they [need] to be caused to understand that there is no inherent existence in those things that childish beings, due to the confusion of ignorance, mistakenly superimpose as having inherent existence.

Therefore, this which you are propounding—that if there is no inherent existence, of what use are the words, “There is no inherent existence,” in that things would be established as without inherent existence even without any words, that is, separate from any words—is not reasonable.
You should understand in accordance with this very clear statement.

Therefore, the assertion that a great deal of analysis with the reasonings of refutation and proof is a wandering in mere conventional words since [all phenomena] are devoid of refutation and proof in that, if something exists, it cannot be refuted, and if it does not exist, it need not be refuted, is a propounding of nonsense that is a collection of contradictions without even an image of [the meaning of] refutation and proof by reasoning and by the path appearing [to the mind].

This is because while you yourself are refuting an opponent’s use of analysis involving refutation and proof, citing as your reason, “If something exists, it cannot be refuted, and if it does not exist, it need not be refuted,” you are asserting that refutation and proof should not be done.

Further, it is not reasonable that the reason stated by you—[that if something exists, it cannot be refuted, and if it does not exist, it need not be refuted]—refute an opponent who asserts that actions of refutation and proof are necessary because [according to you] if something exists, it cannot be refuted, and if it does not exist, it need not be refuted.

Refutation with excellent reasoning is for the sake of overcoming erroneous mistaken conceptions, and proof with reasoning is a technique for generating non-erroneous ascertainment.

Therefore, those wishing to overcome the various erroneous awarenesses and generate the various non-erroneous awarenesses should follow after the collections of reasonings [set forth] by Nāgārjuna and so forth and generate an awareness that ascertains refutation and proof non-erroneously.
[Question:] If, in this way, refutation through reasoning is in order to generate non-erroneous ascertainment by way of eradicating erroneous modes of apprehension, what sort of awareness is it the object of the mode of apprehension of which is to be eradicated with reasoning?

[Answer:] Although there are, in general, limitless conceptual consciousnesses apprehending the object to be negated, you should identify well the erroneous conceptual consciousness that is the root of all faults and defects and eradicate its referent object.

For, if that is overcome, all faults and defects will be overcome.

Moreover, the antidotes set forth [by the Buddha] for other [afflictions], desire, and so forth, are antidotes for [only] a portion [of the afflictions], whereas the antidotes set forth for ignorance are antidotes to all [afflictions].

Therefore, ignorance is the basis of all faults and defects. Chandrakīrti’s Prasannapadā (Clear Words) says:

In the nine aspects of the Buddha’s teachings based on the two truths—the sets of sūtras and so forth,

Proclaiming correctly greatly vast [antidotes] corresponding to the deeds of worldly beings,

Those spoken to clear away desire do not extinguish hatred,
Those spoken to clear away hatred do not extinguish desire,

And those spoken to extinguish pride and so forth do not vanquish other defilements.

Therefore, they are not very pervasive, and those scriptures are not of great meaning.

Those spoken to extinguish bewilderment vanquish all afflictions;

The Conqueror said that all afflictions thoroughly depend upon ignorance.

What is this bewilderment [or ignorance] like?

That awareness which mistakenly superimposes inherent existence, which apprehends internal and external phenomena to be established by way of their own characteristic natures, is, on this occasion, ignorance.

Chandrakirti’s *Bodhisattvayogācāracatubhṣatakaṭākā* (Commentary on *Āryadeva’s* “Four Hundred”) says:

It is posited that, through the force of afflicted non-knowing, a consciousness which mistakenly superimposes [an establishment] by way of their own entities of things, one comes to possess attachment to things. From stopping in all ways that which is the seed of entering into cyclic existence, cyclic existence is overcome.
In order to indicate this, [Āryadeva’s *Catuhātaka* (Four Hundred, XIV.25)] says:

The seed of cyclic existence is a consciousness;
Object is its sphere of activity.
When one sees selflessness in objects,
The seeds of cyclic existence are stopped.

Hence, it is asserted that from overcoming in all ways the consciousness that is the cause of attachment, the seed of cyclic existence, by means of seeing objects as without inherent existence, cyclic existence is overcome for Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas who have attained forbearance with regard to the doctrine of non-production.

Just as the physical sense power [pervades] the body,
Bewilderment abides in all.
Therefore, through destroying bewilderment
All afflictions will also be destroyed.

---

68 See Lang, pp.134-5.
69 See Lang, pp.66-67.
Commenting on this verse, Chandrakīrti’s *Bodhisattvavagocāracatūḥṣataκāṭakā* (Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”) says:

Because bewilderment is confused with regard to those [things] due to conceiving them to be true in accordance with how [they appear], it engages in mistakenly superimposing on things a self-entity that is true.

[Qualm:] If, in this way, ignorance is the root of cyclic existence, then it would be incorrect [for Chandrakīrti] to explain in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”) and in the *Prasannapadā* (Clear Words) that the view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] is the root of cyclic existence because there are not two primary causes [or roots, of cyclic existence].

[Answer:] With regard to the mode of assertion of ignorance and the view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine], I have already explained the assertions of other masters at the point of [explaining the practices] of a person of medium capacity.

Therefore, here [I will explain] the assertions of the master Chandrakīrti:

That conception of a true existence of things which other Mādhyamikas assert to be a cognitive obscuration, he asserts to be ignorance and, moreover, asserts it to be afflicted ignorance.

For, as cited earlier, it is explained in his *Bodhisattvavagocāracatūḥṣataκāṭakā* (Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”) as afflicted.

---

70 See above, where Chandrakīrti, in commentary on XIV.25, uses the term, “afflicted non-knowing”.
Also, his [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” says:71

Because this [ignorance] causes sentient beings to be confused with regard to viewing the actual nature of things, it is [called] bewilderment;

ignorance mistakenly superimposes an existence of things by way of their own entities that they do not have; it has a nature of obscuring perception of the nature [of things]. It is a concealer.

Also:72

Thus, truths for a concealer (saôv¸tisatya) are posited through the force of the afflicted ignorance that is included within the [twelve] links of [the dependent-arising of] cyclic existence.

Thus, because [Chandrakirti] explains that [ignorance] is the first of the twelve links of dependent-arising, it is an affliction and not a cognitive obscuration.

To what do the cognitive obscurations refer? This will be explained below.

Therefore, within it being the case that the ignorance which is the first of the twelve links is the root of cyclic existence, it is also explained that the view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] is the root of cyclic existence. Since ignorance is the generality and the view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] is its instance, there is no contradiction.

---

71 This is commentary on VI.28.
72 This is still commentary on VI.28.
With regard to this, ignorance is the opposite of knowledge, and this does not refer to just any knowledge, but to the wisdom that knows the reality that is selflessness.

The opposite of that [knowledge] is not suitable to be the mere non-existence of that wisdom or merely something other than it; therefore, it is the conception of [that wisdom’s] contradictory equivalent.73

That is the mistaken superimposition of self, and since there are two [types of] mistaken superimpositions—of a self of phenomena and of a self of persons—both the conception of a self of persons and the conception of a self of phenomena are ignorance.

Therefore, when it is indicated that the view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] is the root of all other afflictions, it is not that ignorance is not indicated as the root.

Also when [Nāgārjuna in his *Ratnāvali, (Precious Garland, 35ab)*] says,

As long as one conceives the aggregates [to be inherently existent], so long does one conceive an [inherently existent] I with regard to them74 indicating that the ignorance that is a confusion with regard to a self of phenomena is the cause of confusion with regard to a self of persons,

since he is indicating that the two internal divisions of ignorance are in a relationship of cause and effect, ...

---

73 In other words, an ignorant consciousness must be conceiving something that is directly contradictory with, or the opposite of, that which is apprehended by wisdom. Since the highest wisdom is realizing selflessness, or non-inherent existence, the ignorance that it overcomes must be conceiving the opposite of that, i.e., self, or inherent existence.

74 Dzong-ka-ba also cited this earlier, 577.7-8, see p.172 *DA and E.*
...this does not contradict the teaching that the view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] is the root of all afflictions other than ignorance.

If one does not know to explain in this way the intent of the master [Chandrakīrti], it is very difficult to dispel the contradiction that two roots of cyclic existence have been explained.

This system of identifying ignorance is also the assertion of the protector Nāgarjuna.

For, the Śūnyatāsaptati (Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness, stanzas 64-65) says:75

Knowing well that things are empty because of seeing
The real, ignorance does not arise.
That is the cessation of ignorance
Whereby the twelve links cease.

---

75 Dzong-ka-ba appears to be working from a different translation.
Also, the twenty-sixty chapter of Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlāndhyamikākārikā* (*Treatise on the Middle Way*, XXVI.11-12) says:

When ignorance is stopped
Compositional [actions] will not arise at all.
That which stops ignorance
Is knowing and meditating on reality.

Through stopping this and that [earlier link of dependent-arising]
This and that [later link] will not arise.
The sole mass of suffering
Is thoroughly stopped in this way.

This and [the other passage just cited] are in agreement and fit together very well with [the line in Nāgārjuna’s *Ratnāvali*, (Precious Garland)], “As long as one conceives the aggregates [to be inherently existent]...” (see just above) which says that the conception of the aggregates [as inherently existent] is the root of cyclic existence.
That this is also the assertion of the Noble Åryadeva is clearly indicated by those passages cited earlier,

Just as the physical sense power [pervades] the body...

and also,

The root of cyclic existence is a consciousness...76

[Buddhapālita explains that] all whatsoever of the reasonings refuting the object to be negated stated by the master [Nāgārjuna] in the Mūlamadhyamakārikā (Treatise on the Middle Way) were set forth to indicate the non-existence of an own entityness of phenomena, having refuted a nature in phenomena that is mistakenly superimposed by bewilderment as being established by way of their own entities.

Thus [Nāgārjuna] stated the varieties of reasonings only for the sake of eradicating the mode of apprehension of ignorance.

The BuddhapālitaMūlamadhyamakāvṛtti (Buddhapālita Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”) says:77

What is the purpose in teaching dependent-arising?

76 These were cited just above. Note that here Dzong-ka-ba has changed the wording of the second reference. Åryadeva said, “The seed of cyclic existence” and Dzong-ka-ba has changed it to, “The root of cyclic existence”; he has also shifted terms for cyclic existence, from srid pa to ’khor ba.

77 This is commentary on Chapter One.
The master [Nāgarjuna], whose very nature is compassion, saw that sentient beings are beset by various sufferings and assumed the task of teaching the reality of things just as it is so that they might be liberated.

Therefore, he began teaching dependent-arising.

For, it is said:

Seeing what is not real, one is bound;
Seeing the real, one is released.

What is the reality of things just as it is? It is non-entityness.

Unskilled persons whose eye of intelligence is obscured by the darkness of bewilderment conceive an entityness in things and then generate desire and hatred with regard to them.

When, through the illumination of the knowledge of dependent-arising, the darkness of bewilderment is cleared away and the eye of wisdom sees the non-entityness of things, there is no base [for error], and desire and hatred are not generated with regard to them.

Also, in the transition to the twenty-sixth chapter [that same text says]:
Someone says: You have already explained entry into the ultimate through the Mahāyāna texts. Now explain entry into the ultimate through the texts of Śrāvakas.

In answer [the Mūlamadhyamakārikā (Treatise on the Middle Way, XVI.1)] says,

Because of being obscured by ignorance, cyclic existence [occurs] again...

And, in the transition to the twenty-seventh chapter, [Buddhapālita] says:

Someone says: Now show the non-occurrence of [wrong] views in dependence on scriptures that accord with the vehicle of Śrāvakas.

In answer, [Nāgārjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakārikā (Treatise on the Middle Way, XVII.1)] says, “In the past, [I] arose…”

Through these statements, it is clear that the master Buddhapālita also asserts that the ignorance that is the first of the twelve links [of dependent-arising] is the mistaken superimposition of inherent existence on things and that he asserts that Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas also realize the selflessness of phenomena.

Therefore, know that the great proof that Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas realize the non-inherent existence of phenomena is this [fact] that the conception of a self of phenomena is the ignorance that is included within the twelve links [of dependent-arising].
Äryadeva’s *Catubśataka* (*Four Hundred*, XVI.23cd) says,

“Conceptuality sees [and] one is bound; it is to be stopped here.”

Even the conceptuality mentioned in that statement does not refer to all conceptual consciousnesses whatsoever, but rather to conceptual consciousnesses that mistakenly superimpose on phenomena an establishment by way of their own entities.

For, [commenting on that passage], Chandrakirti’s *Bodhisattvayogācāracatubśatākṣāya* (*Commentary on (Äryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”) says,

A conceptual consciousness mistakenly superimposes a meaning of inherent existence that is not correct.”

Further, it is asserted to be an afflicted ignorance. Hence, those who assert that reasoning refutes the objects of all whatsoever conceptual consciousnesses which conceive, “This is such and such,” have not at all investigated in detail.

Otherwise, since, for ordinary beings, the meaning of reality is a hidden phenomenon, they have no way of apprehending the meaning of emptiness with a non-conceptual consciousness.
Also, if the objects of all whatsoever conceptual consciousnesses were discredited by reasoning, then even the object of an ascertaining consciousness would be like the inherent existence mistakenly superimposed by a mistaken wrong consciousness.

Then, it would have to be the case that there was no correct view leading to the state of nirvāṇa, whereby all the activities of hearing, thinking, and so forth with regard to the Mādhyamika texts would be senseless.

For, Āryadeva’s Catubhiataka (Four Hundred, VIII.7) says:78

[Some say] “I will attain nirvāṇa,”
Seeing what is not empty as if empty, [but they will] not.
The Tathāgatas said that
One does not reach nirvāṇa through [such] wrong views.

All those things posited through the force of tenets, the many different mistaken superimpositions by the proponents of [true] existence of our own [Buddhist] and other [i.e., non-Buddhist] schools, having taken as their basis just this referent object of the mode of apprehension of the ignorance that has been explained above, will be overcome completely when one eradicates the object of the mode of apprehension of ignorance, like a tree that is cut from the root.

78 P5246, vol. 95, 136.2.4-136.2.5. See Lang, p.80.
Therefore, those having the faculty of wisdom should know that the referent object of innate ignorance is the basic object to be negated and should not be intent on refuting merely those imputations that are imputed by only some propounders of tenets.

For, refuting the object to be negated in this way is not done upon being bereft of activity [that is, not having anything else to do].

Rather, having seen that living beings are bound in cyclic existence by the wrong conceptual consciousness that has the object to be negated as its object, one eradicates its object.

And, that which binds all sentient beings in cyclic existence is innate ignorance; acquired ignorance, since it exists in only those who propound tenets, is not feasible to be the root of cyclic existence.

It is very important to gain definite ascertainment with regard to this.

Hence, the final wrong conceptual consciousness conceiving the object to be negated is the innate ignorance that is the first of the twelve links [of dependent-arising].

Further, artificial objects to be negated are merely mistaken superimpositions based on the former. Thus, all modes of apprehension of non-conceptual consciousnesses, sense consciousnesses and so forth, are in no way eradicated by reasoning.
Therefore, the awarenesses whose mode of apprehension is to be eradicated by reasoning are only conceptual mental consciousnesses and, moreover, are the two conceptions of self or those conceptual consciousnesses mistakenly superimposing [further] attributes on objects that are imputed by those [two conceptions of self].

They are not all conceptual consciousnesses whatsoever.

Question: What is the mode of mistaken superimposition of inherent existence a) by ignorance?

[Answer:] In general, there appear in the texts of this master [Chandrakīrti] many usages of verbal conventions such as “nature”/“inherent existence (rang bzhin, svabhāva) or “own entity” “(rang gi ngo bo, svārūpa) with regard to objects that are established as mere conventionalities.

However, here [in the case of mistaken superimposition of inherent existence], there is, with regard to objects, be they persons or [other] phenomena, a conception that those phenomena have a mode of abiding, or a mode of subsistence, from their own sides without being posited through the force of an awareness; the referent object that is apprehended thus by that [conception], that own mode of subsistence of those phenomena, is identified as a hypothetical “self” or “inherent existence”.79

For, Āryadeva’s Catuḥśataka (Four Hundred, XIV.23cd) says:

All these are without self-power;
Therefore there is no self.

79 It is “hypothetical,” since it does not in the least exist.
Commenting on this, Chandrakīrti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says:

That which is [established] by its own entity, inherently, under its own power, and without depending on another...

Thus [Chandrakīrti] says that those are synonyms.

“Without depending on another” [in the above passage] does not mean not depending on causes and conditions. Rather “other” refers to an object-possessor, a conventional consciousness, and [something is said] not to depend on another due to not being posited through the force of that [conventional consciousness].

Therefore, “self-powered” means an entity of an object that is its own uncommon mode of abiding or mode of subsistence.

Just that is called an “own entity” or “own nature” [i.e., inherent existence].

For example, with regard to a snake imputed to a rope, leaving aside how it is imputed from the side of an awareness apprehending a snake, since when one analyzes what the snake is like from the point of view of its entity, a snake is just not established in terms of that object, its features are unanalyzable.

Similarly, with regard to these phenomena also, leaving aside analysis with regard to the mode of appearance, this being how they appear to a conventional awareness, when one analyzes in terms of objects what those phenomena’s own mode of abiding is like, it is not established at all.
Whereas this is so, such is not apprehended; rather there is the conception that those phenomena each have a mode of abiding that is comprehended from their own sides without being posited through the force of a conventional consciousness.

Chandrakirti’s Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred” says:\textsuperscript{80}

Those that exist only through the existence of thought and those that do not exist without thought are unquestionably to be ascertained as not established by way of their own entities, like a snake that is imputed to a coiled rope.

[Chandrakirti] sets forth thus the way in which [phenomena] are not established by way of their own entities.

Therefore, establishment with an object by way of its own entity without being posited through the force of an internal mind is called “self” or “inherent existence”, and it is said that the non-existence of that with the person as the substratum is the selflessness of the person and the non-existence of that in terms of phenomena such as eyes, ears, and so forth is the selflessness of phenomena.

Therefore, one can realize implicitly that conceptions of that inherent existence as existing in terms of persons and phenomena are conceptions of the two selves.

\textsuperscript{80} This is commentary on VIII.3.
It is as Chandrakīrti’s Bodhisattvavyāgāracatuhītakaṭākā (Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”) says:81

“Self” is an entity of things that does not depend on others—inherent existence. The non-existence of that is selflessness.

It is realized as twofold through the division into phenomena and persons—a “selflessness of phenomena” and a “selflessness of persons”.

[Qualm:] It is not reasonable that the conception of persons as established by way of their own characteristic natures be a conception of a self of persons.

For then, even observing other persons and conceiving them to be established by way of their own characteristic natures would be a conception of a self of persons.

And, if that is asserted, whereas it should be a view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine], in that there is no conception thinking, “I”, it is not reasonable that it be a view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine].

[Answer:] Since, as explained earlier, Chandrakīrti said that an inherent existence of persons is a self of persons, a conception of the person as inherently existent must be asserted as a conception of a self of persons.

However, a conception of a self of persons is not necessarily a view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine].

81 This is from Chapter Twelve.
What is needed in order to have a conception of self that is view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine]?

Regarding a conception of self that is an acquired view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine], it does not appear to be definite, as in the case of some Sa`mitya schools, which [propound] a conception of self upon observing the aggregates.

However, regarding an innate view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine], Chandrakirti’s *Supplement to (Naggerjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”* refutes that the aggregates are the object of observation and his *[Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Naggerjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”* says that the dependently imputed self is the object of observation.

Hence, [an innate view of the perishing aggregates as I and mine] does not take the aggregates as its object of observation, but rather observes the mere person.

Moreover, it must a person who is a basis for generating the thought “I.” Thus, a person of another continuum is not the object of observation.

With regard to how that object of observation is apprehended, Chandrakirti’s *Madhaymakavataraabhaya* ([Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Naggerjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”) says:

Concerning that, a view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] operates within thoughts of “I” and “mine”.

---

82 This is commentary on VI.120.
Thus, it is not a conception of mere inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of [an object’s] own characteristic nature, but must be a conception thinking “I”.

Chandrakīrti’s [Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way” also says:

Just the view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] is to be abandoned, and it is abandoned upon understanding the selflessness of the self.

Thus [Chandrakīrti] says that [the view of the perishing aggregates] is abandoned by way of realization of the selflessness, that is, the non-inherent existence, of that self which is its object of observation contradicting the mode of apprehension [of the view of the perishing aggregates]. Hence, [the view of the perishing aggregates] must apprehend the opposite of that wisdom [realizing selflessness].

Moreover, since [a view of the perishing aggregates as I and mine] is a conception of the person as established by way of its own entity, it is a conception of an “I” that is established by way of its own characteristic nature.

As exemplified by this, you should understand the view of the perishing aggregates that is a conception of mine.

Conceptions of the person as substantially existent that do not conceive “I” or “mine” are cases of ignorance that is obscured with regard to a self of persons. However, they are not not afflictions [that is, they are afflicted ignorance].

---

83 This is still commentary on VI.120.
Hence, mere inherent existence, or establishment by way of [an object’s] own entity, is posited as self and also the object of an awareness that merely thinks “I” is taken as self.

From among these two, the former is the object to be negated by reasoning, whereas the latter, since it is asserted conventionally, is not refuted.

Therefore, this indicates that the object of observation of the innate view of the perishing aggregates [as I and mine] is not refuted. However, since the mode of apprehension which has its aspect is an I that is established by way of its own entity, it is not that that [mode of apprehension] is not refuted.

This is like the way in which, for example, it is not contradictory that the sound which is the object of observation of the conception that sound is permanent is not refuted, but the permanent sound that is the referent object of that [conception] is refuted.

Thus, you should know that the [meaning of] the “inherent existence” and so forth mentioned in the texts of the Noble father [Nāgārjuna], his [spiritual] son [Āryadeva], and the two masters [Buddhapālita and Chandrakīrti] when refuting [others] saying, “If things existed inherently”, “If things existed by way of their own entities”, “If things existed by way of their own characteristic natures”, “If things existed substantially”, is as indicated above.84

And, you should also understand that the meaning of the words indicating that these do not exist is an indication that those objects do not exist as they are conceived by ignorance.

---

84 In other words, inherence existence, etc., indicate an entity that does not depend upon anything else.
[Chapter 14. When Qualification Is Needed]

[2/3] Second, How These [Qualifications Such As Inherently] Are Or Are Not Affixed To Other Objects To Be Negated

When you propound that utter non-existents such as the horns of a rabbit and the son of a barren woman do not exist, you need not affix a qualification [such as “ultimately”, “inherently”, and so forth].

Similarly, there are things that, although existent among objects of knowledge, exist at some times and places and do not exist at other times and places. When you say that these do not exist at a particular time or place, there is also no need to affix that qualification.

Furthermore, when refuting those things which the M›dhyamikas do not assert to be established conventionally, mistaken superimpositions by the uncommon assertions of both Buddhist and non-Buddhist proponents of [true] existence, except for some occasions when you should affix [that qualification] to those, taking into account the thought [of the opponents], there is [in general] no need to newly affix the qualification “inherently”, that is, “established by way of its own entity” to objects.

For, those proponents of tenets have already asserted those [objects] to have that meaning [i.e., to inherently exist].

85 For instance, mchen gives the example of lotuses, which do not exist in dry and arrid areas but do exist in places that are warm and moist, and similary do not exist, or occur, in winter, but do in summer.
With regard to objects other than those which the Mādhyamikas posit conventionally, whatever they are, if you do not, on occasions of refuting them, affix a qualification, then the fallacies [expressed to the opponent] apply similarly even to just that refutory reasoning whereby it becomes just a facsimile of refutation. Thus, [the qualification] must be affixed.

Moreover, as explained earlier,\(^\text{86}\) the objects posited conventionally by the Mādhyamikas must not be discredited by a reasoning consciousness analyzing whether something exists inherently or not, nor by conventional valid cognition.

For, otherwise, a difference between not asserting conventionally Īśvara and so forth and asserting forms, sounds, and so forth would be utterly unsuitable;

hence, there would be no way to make either mundane or supramundane presentations such as, “Such and such is the path,” “Such and such is not the path,” “Such a tenet is correct,” “Such is not correct.” Thereby, this distinguishing feature that all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are feasible within the emptiness of inherent existence would be unsuitable.

If you assert that those [objects] are refuted even though they are not in this way discredited by valid cognition, this is a source of scornful laughter by the skilled.

Therefore, on occasions of stating that those [phenomena such as forms] are refuted, you should unquestionably affix that qualification.

\(^{86}\) See above, Chapter Ten, where Dzong-ka-ba discussed the criteria that must be met for something to be certified as conventionally existent.
In Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* and in his *Commentary on (Nāgarjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas on Reasoning”*, the affixing of that qualification when refuting the object to be negated appears a great many times. Also, many occasions where it is affixed are seen in Nāgarjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakārikā (Treatise on the Middle Way)*, *the Buddhapālitamūlamadhyamakavyrtti (Buddhapālita Commentary on (Nāgarjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”)*, Chandrakīrti’s *Prasannapadā (Clear Words)*, and his *Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgarjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”)* along with his *Madhaymakāvatārabhāya ([Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgarjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”)*. Thus, seeing that [to affix the qualification every time it is appropriate] involves a great many words, and thinking that it is easy to realize [where it is needed] even when not affixed through the essential of [seeing] those places where it is affixed, [that qualification] should be affixed even on those occasions when it was not affixed.

For, there is not the slightest difference between those places where it was and was not affixed.

Furthermore, frequently there occurs the affixing of a qualification of analysis, saying, “When analyzed, it does not exist.”

As explained above, this is a statement that if something were established by way of its own entity, it would have to be found by a reasoning consciousness analyzing its mode of being; however, it is not found, and therefore, an object that is established by way of its own entity does not exist. Hence, you should realize that this is the same point as saying, “It does not exist inherently, that is, is not established by way of its own entity.”
For, it is as Chandrakīrti’s Bodhisattvayogācaratanubhātataktā (Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”) says:87

If these things did not become non-things due to being deceptive, like the wheel of a firebrand, an emanation, and so forth, then when definitely analyzed with reasoning, their own entities would be observed very clearly, as is the case with gold. However, these, due to possessing causes that are only erroneous, when burned with the fire of analysis, do not not become without their own entity [i.e., they are without an own entity].

87 P5266, vol. 98, 265.1.3-265.1.5.
[3/3] Third, An Explanation Of Whether Or Not The Qualification “Ultimately” Needs To Be Affixed To The Object To Be Negated

To propound that affixing the qualification “ultimately” to the object to be negated is the system of only the Svātantrika-Mādhyamikas is very unreasonable.


“Venerable Subhuti, is it that there is no attainment and no clear realization?”

Subhuti answered, “Venerable Śāriputra, there is attainment and there is also clear realization, but not in the manner of dualism.

Venerable Śāriputra, attainment and clear realization exist as worldly conventions.

Also Stream Enterers, Once Returners, Never Returners, Arhats, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas exist as worldly conventions.

However, ultimately, there is no attainment and there is no clear realization.

---
88 This is in a section of commentary on VI.173.
In that it said in Chandrakīrti’s \textit{[Auto]commentary on the Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”} that one should assert [these matters] in accordance with that statement, do you propound that [this sūtra] is a Svātantrika sūtra?

There are seen to be a great many such cases of the affixing of the qualification “ultimately” in sūtras of definitive meaning.

Also, Nāgārjuna’s \textit{Śūnyatāsaptati (Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness, stanza 1)} says:

\begin{quote}
Do abiding, production, or cessation exist or not?
Buddha said that low, middling, and special [persons exist]
By the power of worldly conventions,
But not through [their own] reality.
\end{quote}

Also, Nāgārjuna’s \textit{Ratnāvalī (Precious Garland, I.28ab)} says:\footnote{The verse as found there is somewhat different from how Dzong-ka-ba has cited it.}

This existence of I and mine
Is not as ultimate objects.
Also (I.29cd):

How could the production of that
Of which the seed is false be true?

Also (II.11):

Similarly, in this world which is like a magician’s illusion
Production and disintegration are seen,
But, ultimately, there is no production
And no disintegration.

Thus, there are many statements in which “ultimately”, “truly”, or “in reality”, are affixed to the object to be negated; ...

...and, even when those are not affixed, there are a great many instances of the affixing of the qualification, “does not exist by way of its own entity,” “does not exist inherently”, and “does not exist in the manner of being established by way of its own characteristic nature”.
Also, the *Buddhapālatamūlamadhyamakavṛtti* (*Buddhapālita Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”*) says:

1. Doctrines taught by the Buddhas
   - Rely wholly on the two truths—
   - Worldly conventional truths
   - And ultimate truths.

Thus, through the force of worldly conventional truths it is said, “A pot exist,” “A bamboo mat exists.” And, through just that, the impermanence of those is also expressed—“The pot broke,” “The bamboo mat burned.”

When one initiates thought about reality, in that pots and bamboo mats are dependently imputed objects, they are unfeasible, in which case how could their being broken or burned be feasible?

Furthermore, even the Tathāgata is expressed as impermanent through the force of worldly conventions, “The Tathāgata has grown old,” “The Tathāgata has passed from sorrow.”
However, if, in that when one contemplates the ultimate, even the Tathāgata is not feasible, how could [his] growing old and passing from sorrow be feasible?

Also, the master Chandrakīrti said that he refuted true production but did not refute mere production.

His *Yuktiśāṭikāvrtti* (Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas on Reasoning”) says: 90

We do not propound that the apprehension of a reflection, dependently produced, being observed as only false, is not produced in whatever aspect.

However, we do propound that it is not produced as that nature which it is posited as being without.

As what nature is it posited as not being produced?

As a [final] nature [or inherent existence] that is asserted as being true.

However, it is not [that it is not produced] as an entity that is false because it is asserted as arising dependently as that [false] entity.

90 Dzong-ka-ba would seem to have been looking at a different translation.
Thus, [Chandrakīrti] says that due to not refuting production that is false like a magician’s illusions and refuting true production, the two, production dependently and non-production inherently, are not contradictory.

That same text [Chandrakīrti’s *Yuktiśātikāvyrtti, Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas on Reasoning”* says: 91

Therefore, because in that case the two, production and non-production, are just different objects, how could they be mutually contradictory?

Also: 15

When we [Mādhyamikas] propound that whatever is produced dependently is not produced inherently, as with a reflection, how could there by any opportunity for dispute?

This was stated as an answer to an objection that production dependently and non-production ultimately are contradictory.

Also, Chandrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.93cd)* says:

Therefore, you should know through such stages, that things, from the beginning, Are not produced in reality, but are produced in the world.

91 This immediately follows that preceding quote. Again, there are significant enough variations to suggest that Dzong-ka-ba was looking at a different translation.
Thus [Chandrakīrti] affixes to “not produced” the qualification “in reality.”

The Madhyamakāvatāra (Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle Way”, VI.113) also says:

Just as these things, pots and so forth, do not exist in reality
But do exist for worldly renown,
So it is for all things.
Thus it does not [absurdly] follow that they are like the son of a barren woman.

Thus since [Chandrakīrti] said that all internal and external things do not exist in reality but do exist conventionally, it is not the case that he did not affix the qualification “ultimately” to the object to be negated.

In brief, if you do not at all assert the affixing of the qualification “ultimately” to the object to be negated, then you have no way to make a differentiation of the two truths, saying, “Ultimately, it is such and such; conventionally, it is such and such.”

Since such a Madhyamika is not explained anywhere, it is only a wrong idea.

The refutation in Chandrakīrti’s Prasannapadā (Clear Words) of affixing the qualification “ultimately” to the object to be negated is in the context of refuting production from self, not in the context of mere production. This is very clear in that commentary.
Also, it is like the statement in Chandrakīrti’s *Madhaymakāvatārabhāṣya* ([Auto]commentary on the Supplement to *Nāgārjuna’s* “Treatise on the Middle Way”):\(^{92}\)

\[\text{The master [Nāgārjuna] refuted production [from self] in general without using a qualification saying, “There is no production from self.”}\]

The use of the qualification “ultimately” by one [i.e., Bhāvaviveka] who makes the distinction, “Things are not produced from self ultimately because of existing, like one having sentience,” is, I think, a senseless qualification.

Therefore, the differentiation between Svātantrika-Mādhyamika and Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika is not made by way of whether or not they affix the qualification “ultimately” to the object to be negated.

Rather, there is a difference in whether or not they refute conventionally inherent existence, that is to say, an establishment [of objects] by way of their own entities.

Hence, when refuting an inherent existence, or establishment [of objects] by way of their own entities with regard to internal and external phenomena, according to the Prāsaṅgikas, it is not necessary newly to add on a qualification such as “ultimately”, “in reality”, or “truly”.

This is because if an inherent existence, that is, an establishment [of objects] by way of their own entities did exist, it would have to be established as an ultimate and so forth.

\(^{92}\) This is commentary on VI.12.
According to the Svātāntrikas, if one does not affix “ultimately” and so forth to those they cannot be refuted, whereby they affix “ultimately”, “in reality”, or “truly”.

However, neither Mādhyamika asserts that one can refute production, cessation, bondage, release, and so forth without affixing some qualification such as “ultimately”, “established by way of its own entity”, and so forth.

What is the meaning of “does not exist ultimately” [that is, “does not exist as a highest object”]?

With regard to this, “object” is an object of knowledge, and “highest” means supreme; [a highest object] is a common locus of both.

In another way, “highest” refers to a non-conceptual exalted wisdom and because of being the object (don) or object (yul) of that, it is the object of the highest.

In yet another way, the wisdom concordant with the non-conceptual exalted wisdom directly realizing the ultimate is called the ultimate.

[Bhāvaviveka’s Madhyamakahrdaya (Essence of the Middle Way, III.26)] says:

Earth and so forth
Are not elements ultimately.

Commenting on this, his Tarkajvala (Blaze of Reasoning) says:
Regarding the term “highest-object” it is an “object” because of being something to be known; synonyms are “something to be examined”, or “something to be understood”.

“Highest” is a verbal term meaning “supreme”.

Brought together into the compound “highest-object”, because of being something that is an object and also the highest, it is the highest-object.

In another way, it means “object of the highest”. Because [emptiness] is the object of the highest, a non-conceptual exalted wisdom, it is the object of the highest [consciousness].

In another way, it means that which is “concordant with the ultimate”. Because that ultimate exists for a wisdom that is concordant with [direct] realization of the ultimate, it is said to be concordant with the ultimate.

“Ultimate” in the statement “does not exist for the ultimate” or “non-existent [ultimately]” is the latter [of these three meanings], for that same text [Bhāvaviveka’s Tarkajñālā (Blaze of Reasoning)] says:

[Qualm:] The ultimate is beyond all [conceptual] awarenesses.

---

93 don dam pa, paramārtha, “highest object”
The refutation of an entityness of things is an object of letters. Thus, for that reason, is it not the case that that refutation does not exist?

[Answer:] There are two types of ultimate. One of these is supramundane, operating without [conceptual] activity, non-contaminated, without elaborations.

The second involves [conceptual] elaborations and is called a pure mundane exalted wisdom; it is concordant with the collections of merit and wisdom and operates with [conceptual] activity.

Here, since this [latter types] is held as the qualification of the thesis, “does not exist ultimately,” there is no fallacy.

This is to be taken as referring to the wisdoms of hearing and thinking properly analyzing reality and above; it does not refer only to a Noble’s [exalted wisdom of] subsequent attainment.
Also, Kamalaśīla’s Madhyamakāloka (Illumination of the Middle Way) says:\footnote{P5287, vol. 101, 83.5.1-83.5.4.} The statement, “Production does not exist ultimately,” is asserted to mean the following:

All consciousnesses arisen from hearing, thinking, and meditating on reality\footnote{yang dag pa’i thos pa dang bsam pa dang byom pa las byung ba’i shes pa} are non-erroneous subjects. Therefore, they are called “ultimate” because of being the ultimate of those consciousnesses.

There is a difference [among them] in terms of directness or indirectness, but by the power of thought of those consciousnesses, all these things are to be known as only not produced. Therefore, the phrase, “Production does not exist ultimately,” is explained as meaning that these are not established by a correct consciousness as produced.

This appears to accord with [Bhāvaviveka’s] statement [in the Tarkajvalā (Blaze of Reasoning)].

\footnote{P5287, vol. 101, 83.5.1-83.5.4.} Dzong-ka-ba’s citation of the passage differs from how it appears in the Peking edition on two points: The Peking edition merely says “consciousnesses arisen from correct hearing, thinking, and meditating (yang dag pa’i thos pa dang bsam pa dang byom pa las byung ba’i shes pa), whereas Dzong-ka-ba has added in the term don so that the passage reads, “consciousnesses arisen from hearing, thinking, and meditating on reality (yang dag pa’i don thos pa dang bsam pa dang byom pa las byung ba’i shes pa). Also, the Peking edition merely says, “by the power of those” (da dag gi dbang gis) whereas Dzong-ka-ba has added bsam pa’i to give the more awkward reading of “by the power of thought of those” (de dag gi bsam pa’i dbang gis). The use of bsam pa’i dbang gis is mirrored in the passage Dzong-ka-ba cites next from Kamalaśīla’s Madhyamakāloka kārāpaṇīka (Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Śāntarakṣita’s) “Ornament for the Middle Way”).

\footnote{yang dag pa’i don}
Also, Kamalaśāla’s Madhyamakāla kārapāñjikā (Commentary on the Difficult Points of Śaṅkarācārya’s “Ornament for the Middle Way”) says:

To the qualm, “In what way is it that things do not exist inherently?” Śaṅkarācārya said, “In reality.” The term “reality” refers to an entity of reality, an object realized by an inference operating through the power of the thing.

This is the same as saying that they are empty when analyzed with [the wisdom penetrating] reality.

This explains the statements “in reality”, “ultimately”, and so forth.

In another way, only the consciousnesses [realizing] reality are expressed by the terms “reality” and so forth because [reality] is their object of observation.

That things do not exist inherently is in terms of the thought of a consciousness [realizing] reality, not in terms of a conventional consciousness.

The affixing of the qualification “in reality” and so forth with regard to non-inherent existence is set forth many times also in Bhāvaviveka’s Prajñāpradīpa (Lamp for Nāgārjuna’s “Wisdom”) and in his Tarkajvalā (Blaze of Reasoning).

96 yang dag par na
97 do kho na nyid kyi ngo bo
In particular, the *Prajñāpradīpa* (Lamp for Nāgārjuna’s “Wisdom”) commenting on the fifteenth chapter [of Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Treatise on the Middle Way)] says:

[Objection:] If things do not have [their own] entityness, how could they be things? If they are things, then they are not without [their own] entityness. Thus there is the fault that you are mistakenly denying those objects through just those [words, “do not have their own entityness”] in the thesis.

As an answer to the objection that one has the fallacy of contradicting one’s own words in the thesis, “Things do not have [their own] entityness,” that same text [Bhāvaviveka’s *Prajñāpradīpa* (Lamp for Nāgārjuna’s “Wisdom”)] says:98

Because we do not have the thesis that things do not have [their own] entityness, having asserted them as having [their own] entityness ultimately, we do not mistakenly deny the object of our thesis.

Thus, since this is not a case of the meaning of the reason not being established, we have no fault here.

Because [Bhāvaviveka] asserts that there is no mistaken denial due to his asserting that things do not have [their own] entityness *ultimately*, it is clear that he asserts that it would be a mistaken denial if they did not have [an own] entityness, that is, if they were not established by way of their own entityness, *conventionally.*

---

98 P5253, vol. 95, 210.2.4-210.2.5. Dzong-ka-ba has omitted an intervening line from 210.2.5-210.2.6 and pulled up from 210.2.6 the concluding phrase “therefore, we have no fault here.”
That same text [Bhāvaviveka’s Prajñāpradāpa (Lamp for Nāgārjuna’s “Wisdom”)] also says:

Ultimately, internal things do not have [an own] entityness because of being produced and because the special expression, this dependence, has dependence.

For example, it is like the humans and so forth emanated by a conjuror.

Thus [Bhāvaviveka] definitely affixed the qualification “ultimately” in the refutation of inherent existence.

With regard to this, all these masters agree that the meaning of something’s not existing ultimately is that it is not established as existing by a reasoning consciousness when analyzed with reasoning analyzing properly what its mode of being is.

Therefore, even in the texts of this master [Bhāvaviveka], when positing conventionalities, he says such things as, “Without engaging in analysis that accords with perception of suchness…,” and, when refuting inherent existence, he frequently says, “…does not exist when analyzed with reasoning.” Thus, these [statements] and those of the former [masters] are similar.
However, they do not agree as to whether something that is established by way of its own entity need or need not be asserted as able to withstand analysis by reasoning analyzing the mode of being. As has been explained extensively above, the two masters [Buddhapālita and Chandrakīrti] assert that something that is established by way of its own entity is necessarily able to withstand analysis by reasoning analyzing reality, whereby it necessarily must also be established ultimately.