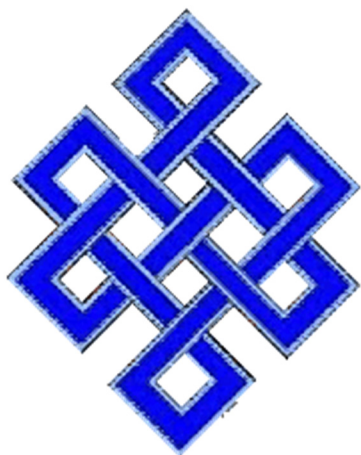


*Emptiness in the Middle Way School  
of Buddhism:  
Mutual Reinforcement of  
Understanding Dependent-Arising  
and Emptiness*



*Dynamic Responses to Tsong-kha-pa's  
The Essence of Eloquence: IV*

Jeffrey Hopkins

UMA INSTITUTE  
FOR TIBETAN STUDIES



# Emptiness in the Middle Way School of Buddhism

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Edited by Kevin Vose

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2. Śūnyatā. 3. Dge-lugs-pa (Sect)--Doctrines. 4. Phar-phyin.
5. Wisdom--Religious aspects--Buddhism. I. Vose, Kevin, 1949- II. Title.

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of wisdom”! 468

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# Preface

This volume continues a presentation of dynamic responses by Tibetan and Mongolian scholars to the opening part on the Middle Way School in Tsong-kha-pa's *Treatise Differentiating Interpretable and Definitive Meanings: The Essence of Eloquence*. The topics here are twofold—(1) what the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* says about differentiating between what requires interpretation and what is definitive and (2) how Nāgārjuna expounds on this.

In presenting the series of fascinating reactions to Tsong-kha-pa's presentation I utilize the works of twenty Tibetan and Mongolian scholars in Tibetan. Eleven wrote commentaries on Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence*, whereas the rest in other works address issues central to this section of his text. The first group are listed below chronologically by date of birth. (The author's name is followed by the shorter title used in the notes, the author's dates, the largest Tibetan colleges using the text if applicable, and the full translated title of the text; for the Tibetan title, and other information, see the bibliography).

Chronological listing by date of birth:<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Others with little commentary on this section of Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* include:

- Jay-tsun Chö-kyi-gyal-tshan's *General-Meaning Commentary* (1469-1546): Se-ra Jey and Gan-den Jang-tse  
*General Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive": Eradicating Bad Disputation: A Precious Garland*, 39a.5-54a.3. (Begins with the section on the Autonomy School.)
- Paṇ-chen Sö-nam-drag-pa's *Garland of Blue Lotuses* (1478-1554): Dre-pung Lo-sel-ling and Gan-den Shar-tsay  
*Distinguishing through Objections and Answers (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and Definitive Meanings of All the High sayings, The Essence of Eloquence": Garland of Blue Lotuses*, 76a.1-76b.6 (only one folio on the Autonomy School which is solely concerned with the topic of the definition of the interpretable and the definitive).
- Gung-ru Chö-jung's *Garland of White Lotuses* (fl. most likely late-sixteenth- to mid-seventeenth centuries):<sup>a</sup> Dre-pung Go-mang and Tra-shi-khyil  
*Decisive Analysis of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence":*

1. Khay-drub's *Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate* (Khay-drub-ge-leg-pal-sang, 1385-1438): used by all colleges  
*Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate: Treatise Brilliantly Clarifying the Profound Emptiness*
2. Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching* (1427-1514): Se-ra Jey  
*Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "The Essence of Eloquence": Lamp for the Teaching: Cycle on the Autonomy School, 1a.2/2.2-12a.6/23.6.*
3. Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning* (Gen-dün-gya-tsho, 1476-1542): used by all colleges  
*Commentary on the Difficult Points of "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive" from the Collected Works of the Foremost Holy Omniscient [Tsong-kha-pa]: Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Meaning of his Thought, 50a.3/99.3-55a.6/109.6.*
4. Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-drub's *Ornament for the Thought* (born seventeenth century): Se-ra Jey  
*Ornament for the Thought of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Interpretable and Definitive: The Essence of Eloquence,"*
5. Lo-sang-ge-leg's *Mirror Illuminating the Meaning* (Tra-ti Ge-she the Lesser, born eighteenth century; Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po was his student): Se-ra Jey  
*Mirror Illuminating the Meaning of the Thought of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence," 146b.2/292.2-168b.5/336.5.*
6. Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan's *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures* (1764-1853): Dre-pung Go-mang and Tra-shi-  


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*Garland of White Lotuses, 129a.1-129a.4. (Begins with Bhāva-viveka)*
- Gung-thang Lo-drö-gya-tsho's *Precious Lamp* (1851-1930): Dre-pung Go-mang and Tra-shi-khyil): Dre-pung Go-mang and Tra-shi-khyil  
*Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Treatise Differentiating Interpretable and the Definitive Meanings, The Essence of Eloquence": A Precious Lamp, 149a.6/299.6-150a.5/301.6.*

khyil

*Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "The Essence of Eloquence": Stream of the Speech of the Omniscient, Offering for Purification, 28b.3/431.3-31a.5/436.5.*

7. Dön-drub-gyal-tshan's *Four Intertwined Commentaries* (born late eighteenth and early nineteenth century): Dre-pung Go-mang and Tra-shi-khyil

*Extensive Explanation of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Treatise Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence," Unique to Ge-lug-pa: Four Intertwined Commentaries, 46b.4/292.4-58.5/315.5.*

8. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog's *Notes* (Ser-shül Ge-she Lo-sang-pün-tshog, born in nineteenth century): Se-ra Jey

*Notes on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive": Lamp Illuminating the Profound Meaning, 1a.2-10b.2.*

9. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry* (1898-1946): Dre-pung Go-mang and Tra-shi-khyil

*Treatise Distinguishing All the Meanings of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "The Essence of Eloquence," Illuminating the Differentiation of the Interpretable and the Definitive: Port of Entry to "The Essence of Eloquence," vol. 2, 1a.1/2.1-29a.2/57.2.*

10. Lo-sang-wang-chug's *Notes* (1901-1979): Se-ra Jey

*Notes on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Interpretable and Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence": Lamp for the Intelligent, 320.5-332.9.*

11. Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations* (1920-1986): Se-ra Jey

*Annotations for the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "The Essence of Eloquence": Festival for the Unbiased Endowed with Clear Intelligence, 84a.1/167.1-101a.5/201.5.*

The translation portion of the present book relies on these commentaries to enhance access through additions in footnotes and in brackets within the

translation, primarily utilizing Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog's *Notes*, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, and Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog's *Notes* also provides helpful fleshing out of citations, which has been put in footnotes, and Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry* contains an elaborate outline, which has been brought over to Tsong-kha-pa's text in brackets. My intention here in the translation is to provide a plethora of clearly marked annotations to show how these various scholars make Tsong-kha-pa's text more accessible.

Then in a second part I turn to presenting how Tsong-kha-pa's text provocatively gave rise to dynamic sets of issues primarily around (1) the criteria for differentiating what is definitive and what requires interpretation and (2) how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising and dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness. In an earlier trilogy on dynamic reactions to Tsong-kha-pa's presentation of the Mind-Only School in *The Essence of Eloquence* I was ironically fortunate to have come upon the most comprehensive commentary, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry* written in the first half of the twentieth century, only late in working on eighteen commentaries on that section. I say fortunate because had I seen his condensed presentation of their opinions earlier, I might not have probed the detail of their opinions as much as they deserved, whereas my endeavors at probing this history proved invaluable.

However, regarding the material in this section on the Middle Way School many of the major textbook authors of Ge-lug-pa colleges wrote either very little or nothing,<sup>a</sup> with the excuse that issues to do with the Autonomy School are covered in the phase of study called Perfection of Wisdom (*phar phyin*) and issues to do with the Middle Way School are covered in the phase of study called Middle Way (*dbu ma*), but perhaps also because they had tired from the weight of considering the tangle of issues in the Mind-Only section. Thus, especially for the topic of the mutual reinforcement of understanding dependent-arising and emptiness, almost from the very beginning I used Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry* as a virtual gold mine for clues to find the plethora of sources that explore this topic even though his references were almost always very brief. My attempt here, therefore, is to present this fascinating material, coupled with earlier work I did on the formation of the Sanskrit term for dependent-arising, as a journey into the riches of one of the most profound topics of Tibetan religious geography.

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<sup>a</sup> For instance, Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of the Interpretable and the Definitive* merely stops at the end of the Mind-Only section.

This section of the book ranges through presentations by ten scholars—Jam-yang-shay-pa, Gyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen, Pur-bu-jog Jam-pa-gya-tsho, Ngag-wang-tra-shi, Jang-kya Röl-pay-dor-jay, Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa, Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po, Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me, Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho, and Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho himself. Like a voyage through captivating countryside, the aim is not the end site, the final chapter, but stimulation along the way. It may be any one of these many thinkers who evokes your greatest response.

## EDITIONS CONSULTED

For the section of Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* on the Mind-Only School, I provided in the first volume in this series a critical edition of the Tibetan text utilizing ten editions, five of which were checked exhaustively. During the editing process, Palden Drakpa and Damdul Namgyal published a critical edition in 1991<sup>a</sup> and Ye-shay-thab-khay<sup>b</sup> published a critical edition in 1997.<sup>c</sup> Not feeling a need now to produce a critical edition of this section in this book, I have interspersed with the translation a digital version of the Tibetan of Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* from ACIP, which was originally typed in Wylie from a printing the *zhol* blocks in volume *pha* of the Collected Works in 114 folios.<sup>d</sup> Nevertheless, since an early team of graduate students at the University of Virginia performed preliminary editorial work on the Middle Way School sections of Tsong-kha-pa's text, I have made this different Wylie version available on the website of the UMA Institute for Tibetan Studies at [umaitibet.org](http://umaitibet.org) in case it is helpful for text searches.

It is helpful to keep in mind that Tsong-kha-pa wrote five major works on the view of emptiness from age forty-five to sixty-one, *The Essence of Eloquence* being completed when he was fifty-three:<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *The Essence of Eloquent Speech on the Definitive and Interpretable* (Mundgod, India: SOKU Publication, 1991), the relevant section here being 84.16-103.6.

<sup>b</sup> *ye shes thabs mkhas*, b. 1930.

<sup>c</sup> *shar tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pas mdzad pa'i drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po* (*The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa Lo-sang-drag-pa's "Treatise Differentiating Interpretable and Definitive Meanings: The Essence of Eloquence"*), the relevant section here being Part Two, 125.1-145.13.

<sup>d</sup> Many thanks to Craig Preston for providing the digital version and to Paul Hackett for confirming the edition.

<sup>e</sup> This brief rehearsal of his works is drawn from Elizabeth Napper, *Dependent-*

1. In 1402, at the age of forty-five, he wrote the *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path*,<sup>a</sup> which has a long and complicated section on special insight<sup>b</sup> into emptiness.
2. Five years later, when he was fifty, he began writing a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle*,<sup>1</sup> called *Ocean of Reasoning*,<sup>c</sup> at Chö-ding<sup>d</sup> Hermitage above what became Se-ra Monastic University on the northern outskirts of Lhasa, but in the midst of explicating the first chapter, he foresaw that there would be interruptions if he stayed there. Thus, he left Chö-ding Hermitage for another hermitage at Se-ra, Ra-ka Precipice,<sup>e</sup> where he wrote the *Treatise Differentiating Interpretable and Definitive Meanings: The Essence of Eloquence*.<sup>f</sup> (I imagine that he felt the need to compose his own independent work

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*Arising and Emptiness* (London: Wisdom, 1989), 6-7.

<sup>a</sup> *lam rim chen mo*, in *gsung 'bum* (*tsong kha pa, bla brang par ma*), TBRC W22273.13:51026 (*bla brang: bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, [199?]); Peking 6001, vol. 152. For a translation into English, see Tsong-kha-pa, *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, vols. 1-3, trans. and ed. Joshua W. C. Cutler and Guy Newland (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2000-2004). I refer to page numbers of this translation throughout this work. For a translation of the part on the excessively broad object of negation, see Elizabeth Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1989), 153-215; for a translation of the part on the excessively narrow object of negation, see William Magee, *The Nature of Things: Emptiness and Essence in the Geluk World* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1999), 179-192.

<sup>b</sup> *lhag mthong, vipaśyanā*.

<sup>c</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*, in *gsung 'bum* (*tsong kha pa, bla brang par ma*), TBRC W22273.15:5-622 (*bla brang: bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, [199?]); Peking 6153, vol. 156. For a translation of the entire text, see Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield, *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). For a translation of chapter 2, see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Ocean of Reasoning* (Dharmasala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1974).

<sup>d</sup> *chos sdings*.

<sup>e</sup> *rva kha brag*; perhaps the meaning of the name is Goat-Face Crag.

<sup>f</sup> *drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par phye ba'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po*, in *gsung 'bum* (*tsong kha pa, bkras lhun par rnying; dha sar bskyar par brgyab pa*), TBRC W29193.14:483-720 (Dharmasala: Sherig Parkhang, 1997); Peking 6142, vol. 153. The Prologue and Mind-Only section are translated in Jeffrey Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). For a translation of the entire text, see Thurman, *Tsong Khapa's Speech of Gold in the Essence of True Eloquence*, 185-385.

on the view of emptiness in the Great Vehicle schools as background for his commentary on Nāgārjuna's treatise. If this is so, he wrote *The Essence* as an overarching structure in which that commentary could be understood.)

3. After completing *The Essence* in 1408,<sup>a</sup> he returned to commenting on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle*, completing the *Ocean of Reasoning*.
4. At age fifty-eight in 1415, he wrote the *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*.<sup>b</sup>
5. At age sixty-one, one year before his death, he wrote a commentary on Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle,"*<sup>c</sup> called *Illumination of the Thought*.<sup>c</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> For the date, see Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, "Apropos of a Recent Contribution to the History of Central Way Philosophy in Tibet: *Tsong Khapa's Speech of Gold*" in *Berliner Indologische Studien* 1 (Reinbek, Germany: Verlag für Orientalistische Fachpublikationen, 1985), 68, n. 2.

<sup>b</sup> *skyes bu gsum gyi nyams su blang ba'i byang chub lam gyi rim pa*, in *gsung 'bum (tsong kha pa, bla brang par ma)*, TBRC W22273.14:5-474 (bla brang: bla brang bkra shis 'khyil, [199?]); Peking 6002, vols. 152-153. A translation of the section on supramundane special insight is included in Jeffrey Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2008), 25-180. His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama gave an expansive series of lectures on Tsong-kha-pa's *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* in 1972 in Dharmasala, India; for a book largely based on those lectures, see His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *How to See Yourself As You Really Are*, trans. and ed. by Jeffrey Hopkins (New York: Atria Books, 2006).

<sup>c</sup> *dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rgya cher bshad pa dgongs pa rab gsal*, in *gsung 'bum (tsong kha pa, bla brang par ma)* TBRC W22273.16:5-582 (bla brang: bla brang bkra shis 'khyil, [199?]); Peking 6143, vol. 154. For a translation of chapters 1-5, see Hopkins, *Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism*, 93-230; for a translation of chapter 6 stanzas 1-7, by Jeffrey Hopkins and Anne C. Klein, see Anne C. Klein, *Path to the Middle: Madhyamaka Philosophy in Tibet: The Oral Scholarship of Kensur Yeshay Tupden* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1994), 147-183, 252-271.





# Technical Notes

It is important to recognize that:

- citations from volume one, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism*, are indicated by “*Emptiness in Mind-Only*”; those from volume two, *Reflections on Reality*, are indicated by “*Reflections on Reality*,” and those from volume three, *Absorption in No External World*, are indicated by “*Absorption in No External World*,” notes within those citations are not repeated in this volume;
- footnotes are marked “a, b, c”; backnotes are marked “1, 2, 3.” References to texts are mostly given in the backnotes, whereas other information, more pertinent to the reading of the material at hand, is given in the footnotes. References to issues in the present volume are often by issue number;
- full bibliographical references are given in the footnotes and backnotes at the first citation in each chapter;
- translations and editions of texts are given in the Bibliography;
- citations of the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* include references to the edited Tibetan text and French translation of it in consultation with the Chinese by Étienne Lamotte in *Samdhinirmocanasūtra: L’explication des mystères* (Louvain: Université de Louvain, 1935) and to the English translation from the *stog* Palace edition of the Tibetan by C. John Powers, *Wisdom of Buddha: Samdhinirmocana Sūtra* (Berkeley, Calif.: Dharma, 1995). There is also a translation from the Chinese by Thomas Cleary in *Buddhist Yoga: A Comprehensive Course* (Boston: Shambhala, 1995), in which the references are easily found, as long as chapter 7 of Lamotte and Powers is equated with chapter 5 of Cleary as per the Chinese edition that he used (see *Emptiness in Mind-Only*, Appendix 2, p. 457ff.). Passages not cited in Tsong-kha-pa’s text are usually adaptations of Powers’ translation as submitted for his doctoral dissertation under my guidance;
- I have translated the term *drang don* (*neyārtha*) sometimes as “interpretable meaning” and other times as “requiring interpretation,” or a variant thereof. There is no significance to the multiple translations other than variety and clarity, the latter being to emphasize that the scripture requires interpretation;
- the names of Indian Buddhist schools of thought are translated into English in an effort to increase accessibility for non-specialists;

- for the names of Indian scholars and systems used in the body of the text, *ch*, *sh*, and *ṣh* are used instead of the more usual *c*, *ś*, and *ṣ* for the sake of easy pronunciation by non-specialists; however, *cch* is used for *cch*, not *chchh*. In the notes the usual transliteration system for Sanskrit is used;
- transliteration of Tibetan is done in accordance with a system devised by Turrell Wylie; see “A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 22 (1959): 261-267;
- the names of Tibetan authors and orders are given in “essay phonetics” for the sake of easy pronunciation; the system has changed since the first three volumes in this series with a view toward internet searchability;
- titles of numerous subsections, drawn from the commentaries, are given in square brackets.

PART ONE:  
*ANNOTATED TRANSLATION*

Tsong-kha-pa Lo-sang-drag-pa's  
*Treatise Differentiating Interpretable  
and Definitive Meanings:  
The Essence of Eloquence*

༄༅། །དང་བ་དང་ངེས་པའི་དོན་རྣམ་པར་འབྱེད་པའི་བསྟན་  
བཅོས་ལེགས་བཤད་སྟིང་པོ་བཞུགས་སོ། །

Beginning of the section  
on the Middle Way School

(Continuing from *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism*,  
after the section on Mind-Only)



PRESENTATION OF THE POSITION  
DIFFERENTIATING THE INTERPRETABLE  
AND THE DEFINITIVE RELYING ON THE  
*TEACHINGS OF AKṢHAYAMATI SŪTRA*

This has two parts: stating what is said in the sūtra and exegesis of its meaning.

གཉིས་པ་སྒྲོ་གྲོས་མི་བད་པས་བསྟན་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་དྲང་ངེས་  
འབྱེད་པའི་ཕྱོགས་ལ་གཉིས། མདོ་ནས་ཇི་ལྟར་གསུངས་པ་དགོད་  
པ་དང་། དེའི་དོན་ཇི་ལྟར་བཀའ་བའོ། །



## Stating what is said in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* about differentiating the interpretable and the definitive

དང་པོ་[མདོ་ནས་ཇི་ལྟར་གསུངས་པ་དགོང་པ་]ནི།

There is no differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive by the father, the protector Nāgārjuna, and his spiritual son [Āryadeva]<sup>3</sup> within explicitly mentioning a sūtra source for the differentiation into the interpretable and the definitive, but from the way they explain the meaning of sūtras they, by its import, have such an explanation. Furthermore, since Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* (see 92),<sup>4</sup> Avalokitavrata's *Commentarial Explanation of (Bhāvaviveka's) "Lamp for (Nāgārjuna's) 'Wisdom', "*<sup>5</sup> and Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle*,<sup>6</sup> taking the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* as a source, say that the interpretable and the definitive are to be posited in that way, here that sūtra is taken as a source.

མགོན་པོ་སྐུ་སྐྱབ་ཡབ་སྐུ་གྱིས་དྲང་ངེས་འབྱེད་པའི་མདོའི་  
ཁྱད་སྟེན་སྐུ་སྐྱོས་ནས་དྲང་ངེས་བྱེ་བ་མེད་ཀྱང་མདོའི་དོན་  
བཤད་པའི་ཚུལ་ལས་ནི་དོན་གྱིས་བཤད་པ་ཡོད་དོ། །དེ་ཡང་  
ཆོག་གསལ་དང་ཤེས་རབ་སྒྲོན་མའི་འབྲེལ་བཤད་དང་དབྱུག་  
སྤང་བ་ནུས་སྐུ་སྐྱོ་གྲོས་མི་བྱད་པས་བཞུན་པ་ཁྱད་སྟེན་མཛད་  
ནས་དེ་བཞིན་དུ་དྲང་ངེས་འཛོག་བར་གསུངས་པས་འདིར་མདོ་  
དེ་ཁྱད་སྟེན་སྐུ་བྱའོ། །

That sūtra says:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa'i mdo (akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra)*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud, 175)*, TBRC W22084.60:159-350 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979), chapter ten, *akṣaya* 30; Peking 842, vol. 34, 64.3.6; Tibetan, Sanskrit, and English translation of the entire sūtra in Jens Braarvig, *Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra*, 2 vols. (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 1993); for this passage see vol. 1, 117-118. For Tsong-kha-pa's citation of this passage in his *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* see Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, trans. and ed. Joshua

Which are sūtras of definitive meaning? Which are sūtras of interpretable meaning?

Whichever sūtras teach establishing conventionalities are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach establishing ultimates are called “definitive meaning.”<sup>a</sup>

Whichever sūtras teach [various objects by way of] various words and letters are called “interpretable meaning.”<sup>b</sup> Whichever sūtras teach the profound [emptiness]—difficult to view and difficult to realize<sup>c</sup>—are called “definitive meaning.”

Whichever sūtras teach what are set out with various vocabulary—[such as] self, sentient being, living being, the nourished, creature, person, mind-progeny, pride-child, agent, and feeler—like [teaching] an owner<sup>d</sup> when there is no owner are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach the doors of liberation—things’ emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no composition, no production, no produced, no sentient being, no living being, no person, and no owner<sup>e</sup>—are called “definitive meaning.”<sup>f</sup>

This is called “reliance on sūtras of definitive meaning and non-reliance on sūtras of interpretable meaning.”<sup>g</sup>

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W. C. Cutler and Guy Newland (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2000-2004), vol. 3, 112, and Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness*, 159-160 and 255-259. The Sanskrit for the first and third modes cited here is found in Louis de la Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhyamikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā Commentaire de Candrakīrti* (Osnabrück, Germany: Biblio Verlag, 1970), 43.4: *katame sūtrāntā neyārthāḥ katame nītārthāḥ / ye sūtrāntā mārgāvatārāya nirdiṣṭā ima ucyante neyārthāḥ / ye sūtrāntāḥ phalāvatārāya nirdiṣṭā ima ucyante nītārthāḥ / yāvadye sūtrāntāḥ śūnyatānimittāprañihitānabhisaṃskārājātānupādābhāvanirāt-maniḥsattvanirjīvanīhpudgalāśvāmikavimokṣamukhā nirdiṣṭāḥ / ta ucyante nītārthāḥ /*. See also Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 809.

<sup>a</sup> See 103, Issue #2:.

<sup>b</sup> See 108, Issue #4: and 109, Issue #5:.

<sup>c</sup> See 106, Issue #3:.

<sup>d</sup> *bdag po lta bur* (Michio and Khangar, 2.15); Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s citation (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 6.4) reads *bdag po dang bcas par*. See 116, Issue #9: and 117, Issue #10:.

<sup>e</sup> See 114, Issue #8: for the meanings of these ten terms as well as how to unravel the apparent similarity with how conventionalities are taught.

<sup>f</sup> For how scholars get around the apparent similarity between the way the two truths are taught, see 109ff., Issue #5:.

<sup>g</sup> For discussion of the four reliances see 157, Issue #24:; also, for Jam-yang-



མདོ་ཐེ་དེ་ལས་ཇི་སྐད་དུ། དེས་པའི་དོན་གྱི་མདོ་ཐེ་ནི་གང་དང་  
 པའི་དོན་གྱི་མདོ་ཐེ་ནི་གང་ཞེ་ན། མདོ་ཐེ་གང་དག་ཀྱན་རྫོབ་  
 སྐབ་པ་བསྟན་པ་དེ་དག་ནི་དང་པའི་དོན་ཞེས་བྱའོ། །མདོ་ཐེ་  
 གང་<sup>[41b]</sup>དག་དོན་དམ་བསྐྱབ་པ་བསྟན་པ་དེ་དག་ནི་དེས་པའི་  
 དོན་ཞེས་བྱའོ། །མདོ་ཐེ་གང་དག་ཚིག་དང་ཡི་གེ་སྒྲ་ཚིགས་པ་  
 བསྟན་པ་དེ་དག་ནི་དང་པའི་དོན་ཞེས་བྱའོ། །མདོ་ཐེ་གང་དག་  
 ཟབ་མོ་བསྟར་དཀའ་བརྟོགས་པར་དཀའ་བ་བསྟན་པ་དེ་དག་ནི་  
 དེས་པའི་དོན་ཞེས་བྱའོ། །མདོ་ཐེ་གང་དག་བདག་དང་སེམས་  
 ཅན་དང་སྟོག་དང་གསོ་བ་དང་སྐྱེས་བྱ་དང་གང་ཟག་དང་ཤེད་  
 ལས་སྐྱེས་དང་ཤེད་བྱ་དང་བྱེད་པ་པོ་དང་ཚོར་བ་པོ་སྐད་སྒྲ་  
 ཚིགས་ཀྱིས་བཤད་པར་བྱ་བ་བདག་པོ་མེད་པ་ལ་བདག་པོ་ལྟ་  
 བྱར་བསྟན་པ་དེ་དག་ནི་དང་པའི་དོན་ཞེས་བྱའོ། །མདོ་ཐེ་གང་  
 དག་དངོས་པོ་སྟོང་པ་ཉིད་དང་མཚན་མ་མེད་པ་དང་སྟོན་པ་  
 མེད་པ་དང་མངོན་པར་འདུ་བྱེད་པ་མེད་པ་དང་སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་པ་  
 དང་མ་སྐྱེས་པ་དང་། སེམས་ཅན་མེད་པ་དང་སྟོག་མེད་པ་དང་  
 གང་ཟག་མེད་པ་དང་བདག་པོ་མེད་པ་རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པའི་སྟོ་  
 སྟོན་པ་དེ་དག་ནི་དེས་པའི་དོན་ཞེས་བྱ་སྟེ། འདི་ནི་དེས་པའི་  
 དོན་གྱི་མདོ་ཐེ་ལ་རྟོན་གྱི་དང་པའི་དོན་གྱི་མདོ་ཐེ་ལ་མི་རྟོན་བ་  
 ཞེས་བྱའོ། །ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ། །

In that:

- The first two [sentences in reply to the rhetorical question] differentiate interpretable and definitive [sūtras] by way of the topics,<sup>a</sup> treating the two truths, [veil and ultimate, respectively] as interpretable meanings and definitive meanings.
- The two middle [sentences] explain that the teaching of conventionalities is a teaching of various meanings through various different words and that the teaching of the ultimate is a teaching of the single taste that is an elimination of proliferations, the meaning difficult to realize; this mode of positing [the interpretable and the definitive] is not separate [from the former].<sup>7</sup>
- The last two sentences indicate the mode of teaching through which [a sūtra] comes to teach conventionalities or the ultimate. Those that teach self, sentient being, and so forth as like existent<sup>b</sup> teach conventionalities; furthermore, they do not teach just those [agents];<sup>c</sup> these [also] refer to all that teach, as like existent, the things that are the objects and the means<sup>d</sup> related with those agents.<sup>e</sup> The description of things as empty, without production, and so forth is an explanation that phenomena are without inherent existence; the teaching of sentient beings as nonexistent and so forth is an explanation that persons are without inherent existence. Those that teach in accordance with such a mode of teaching teach the ultimate.<sup>f</sup> Due to the fact that these [definitive sūtras]<sup>8</sup> are described as twofold [describing phenomena as without inherent existence and describing persons as without inherent existence], the above [sūtras requiring interpretation] also must [be understood as]<sup>9</sup> teaching both phenomena and persons as existent [although on the literal level this passage just mentions persons].<sup>10</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *brjod bya*; literally, objects of expression.

<sup>b</sup> *yod pa ltar*.

<sup>c</sup> Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog, *Notes*, 2b.1.

<sup>d</sup> *byed pa*, which Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, 8.3) glosses as “things that are the means” (*byed pa'i dngos po*).

<sup>e</sup> See Issue #6:.

<sup>f</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 7.3) summarizes these points as:

The first two sentences of the sūtra differentiate the interpretable and the definitive by way of the mere topics; the middle two sentences of the sūtra differentiate the interpretable and the definitive by way of not only the topics but also the modes of expression; and the final two sentences of the sūtra differentiate the interpretable and the definitive by way of indicating the modes of teaching through which [sūtras] come to teach the two truths.

དེ་ལ་དང་པོ་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་ནི་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་པོ་ལ་དང་ངེས་སུ་  
 མཛད་དེ་བཟོད་བྱའི་སྒྲོ་ནས་དང་ངེས་བྱེ་བའོ། །བར་པ་གཉིས་  
 ཀྱིས་ནི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་སྟན་པ་ནི་ཆོག་མི་འདྲ་བ་སྟེ་ཆོག་པས་དོན་སྟེ་  
 ཆོག་སྟེན་པ་དང་དོན་དམ་སྟེན་པ་ནི་རྟོགས་དཀའ་བའི་དོན་  
 སྟོས་པ་རྣམས་པར་བཅད་པའི་རོ་གཅིག་པ་སྟེན་པར་བཤད་དེ་  
 འཇོག་ཚུལ་ལོགས་པ་མིན་ལོ། །ཇི་འདྲ་ཞིག་བསྟན་པས་ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
 དང་དོན་དམ་པ་བསྟན་པར་འགྲོ་བའི་བསྟན་ལུགས་ནི་ཐ་མ་  
 གཉིས་ཀྱིས་སྟེན་ཏེ། བདག་དང་སེམས་ཅན་སོགས་ཡོད་པ་ལྟར་  
 བསྟན་པ་ནི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་སྟེན་པ་སྟེ། དེ་<sup>[42a]</sup>ཡང་དེ་ཅུ་ཞིག་སྟེན་པ་  
 མིན་གྱི་བྱེད་པ་པོ་དེ་ལ་སྟོས་ནས་བྱ་བ་དང་བྱེད་པའི་དངོས་པོ་  
 ཡོད་པར་སྟེན་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་བྱའོ། །དངོས་པོ་རྣམས་སྟོང་པ་  
 ཉིད་དང་སྟེ་བ་མེད་པ་སོགས་སུ་བཤད་པ་ནི་ཆོས་རང་བཞིན་  
 མེད་པར་བཤད་པ་ཡིན་ལ་སེམས་ཅན་མེད་པ་སོགས་སུ་སྟེན་པ་  
 ནི་གང་ཟག་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པར་བཤད་པ་སྟེ། སྟེན་ལུགས་དེ་  
 ལྟར་སྟེན་པ་ནི་དོན་དམ་སྟེན་པའོ། །འདི་ལ་གཉིས་བཤད་པའི་  
 གནད་ཀྱིས་གོང་མ་ལ་ཡང་ཆོས་དང་གང་ཟག་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ཡོད་  
 པར་སྟེན་པ་དགོས་སོ། །

Furthermore, these [sūtras of definitive meaning] do not take some other permanent phenomenon, [the thoroughly established nature, for instance,]<sup>11</sup> as the substratum and describe it as without production and so forth, [in which case this would be an emptiness of other phenomena, as the Jo-nang-pas put forth];<sup>12</sup> rather, as is said in the sūtra itself, taking as substrata (1) the things that are the aggregates and so forth and (2) persons,

[sūtras of definitive meaning] teach that these are without true existence.<sup>a</sup> Since just the mere elimination of true establishment of those substrata is the ultimate, [sūtras] teaching such are called “teaching the ultimate.”

འདི་ཡང་ཆོས་རྟག་པ་གཞན་ཞིག་བྱང་གཞིར་བཟུང་ནས་སྟེ་བ་  
མེད་པ་སོགས་སུ་བཤད་པ་མིན་གྱི་མདོ་ཉིད་ལས་གསུངས་པ་  
སྟར་ཕྱང་པོ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་དངོས་པོ་དང་གང་ཟག་བྱང་གཞིར་  
བཟུང་ནས་དེ་དག་བདེན་པ་མེད་པར་བསྟན་པ་སྟེ་གཞི་དེ་དག་  
བདེན་པར་གྲུབ་པ་རྣམ་པར་བཅད་པ་ཙམ་དེ་ཉིད་དོན་དམ་  
ཡིན་པས་དོན་དམ་སྟན་པ་ཞིས་བྱའོ། །

## [ANOTHER SŪTRA CONCORDANT WITH THAT]<sup>13</sup>

In his *Clear Words* Chandrakīrti explains that the differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive even in the *King of Meditative Stabilizations Sūtra* also accords in meaning with the earlier [quote from the *Teaching of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*.<sup>b</sup> The *King of Meditative Stabilizations Sūtra* clearly<sup>14</sup> says]:

<sup>a</sup> Tsong-kha-pa is implicitly refuting Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's presentation of the ultimate as empty of compounded phenomena, in which the ultimate is taken to be the substratum, whereas the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* itself speaks of persons and other phenomena as being the substrata. As Lo-sang-ge-leg (*Mirror Illuminating the Meaning*, 298.1) rephrases this:

Therefore, nonproduction and so forth must be delineated within taking all compounded and uncompounded phenomena as the substrata. Furthermore, taking the aggregates and the person as the substrata and thereupon teaching ultimates that are negations of true establishment in terms of these are the way the ultimate is taught in these sūtra passages cited above and in [other] sūtras of definitive meaning.

See Hopkins, *Emptiness in Mind-Only* (226-227, and the Synopsis, 335-341) for Tsong-kha-pa's cogent case that the innate misconception of self must be countered by taking those very same phenomena—which are misperceived so as to lead to suffering and finitude—as the substrata and by seeing that these do not have the status that ignorance falsely superimposes; he indicts Döl-po-pa for putting forth a system that is inadequate to the task of opposing the basic ignorance drawing beings into trouble. See also Hopkins, *Reflections on Reality*, 328ff.

<sup>b</sup> For Chandrakīrti's citation see 94.

Just as [explicit] explanations by the One-Gone-to-Bliss of [the entities of phenomena as] empty [of true establishment are sūtras of definitive meaning,

Those explicitly teaching signlessness, wishlessness, and so forth also] are to be recognized as instances of sūtras of definitive meaning;

All those doctrines [explicitly] teaching [conventional phenomena such as] sentient beings,

Persons, and beings are to be recognized as [sūtras] requiring interpretation.<sup>a</sup>

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་རྒྱལ་པོ་ལས་ཀྱང་། ལྷོང་པ་བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པས་  
བཤད་པ་ལྟར། །ངེས་དོན་མདོ་སྡེ་དག་གི་བྱེ་བྲག་ཤེས། །གང་ལས་  
སེམས་ཅན་གང་ཟག་སྦྱིས་བྱ་བ་ལྟར། །ཆོས་དེ་ཐམས་ཅད་དྲང་  
བའི་དོན་དུ་ཤེས། །ཞེས་དྲང་ངེས་བྱེ་བ་ཡང་ལྷན་མ་དང་དོན་  
མཐུན་པར་ཆོག་གསལ་ལས་བཤད་དོ། །

## [FEATURES OF HOW THE INTERPRETABLE AND DEFINITIVE ARE POSITED]<sup>15</sup>

[With regard to the term *neyārtha* (*drang don*, “interpretable meaning” or

<sup>a</sup> *ting nge 'dzin rgyal po'i mdo (samādhirājasūtra)*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 127), TBRC W22084.55:3-342 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), stanza VII.5; Peking 795, vol. 31, 281.1.5; Sanskrit in La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 44.2: *nītārthasūtrānta-viśeṣa jānati yathopadiṣṭā sugatena śūnyatā / yasmin punaḥ pudgalasattvapuruṣā neyārthato jānati sarvadharmān //*; Tibetan, *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 8.2.8; cited in Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 812. The brackets are from Ser-shül's *Notes*, 5a.1. I wonder whether the reason why Tsong-kha-pa emphasizes that Chandrakīrti found this passage to present the differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive similar to that in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* is that (if one reads this passage without the bracketed commentary) it could be seen to support Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's view that the ultimate is to be taken as the substratum and conventional phenomena are taken as that of which the ultimate is empty.

“meaning requiring interpretation”)] although it is indeed the case that trainees are to be led by sūtras requiring interpretation, this [leading of trainees]<sup>a</sup> is not the meaning of *drang (neya)*<sup>b</sup> [in *drang don (neyārtha)*, literally “meaning to be led”].<sup>c</sup> Rather, it is the style of leading [that is, interpreting] that occurs according to whether the meaning of the sūtra is [just] that or needs to be interpreted [or understood]<sup>d</sup> as other than that.<sup>e</sup>

བླ་མ་གྱི་མདོ་ཐུགས་གསུལ་བྱ་ཁ་བླ་བར་བྱ་བ་ཡང་ཡིན་མོད་  
 ཀྱང་དེ་ནི་བླ་མེས་པའི་དོན་མིན་གྱི་མདོའི་དོན་དེའམ་དེ་ལས་  
 གཞན་དུ་བླ་མ་དགོས་མི་དགོས་གྱི་བླ་མུལ་དེ་ཡིན་ནོ། །

Among those in which the meaning needs to be interpreted, there are two types [one when the meaning of the literal reading<sup>f</sup> must be interpreted as something else and another when the meaning of the mode of being<sup>g</sup> must be interpreted as something else]:<sup>16</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *gdul bya kha drang*; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 12.4.

<sup>b</sup> Literally, “to be led” or “that which is to be led,” and thus *neyārtha (drang don)*, which is an abbreviation of *drang bya'i don* is “a meaning to be led” and more loosely “interpretable meaning” or “meaning requiring interpretation,” as it is usually translated here for the sake of clarity.

<sup>c</sup> See 119, Issue #11:.

<sup>d</sup> *go dgos pa*; Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan's *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures*, 29.5/432.5.

<sup>e</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan (*Annotations*, 172.2), perhaps following Lo-sang-ge-leg's *Mirror Illuminating the Meaning* (298.6), takes this somewhat opaque sentence (their additions are in bold) as:

Rather, it is the style of leading [that is, interpreting,] as in whether that meaning **of the literal reading** of the sūtra or that **meaning taught** does or does not need to be interpreted as other than that. (*mdo'i sgras zin gyi don de'am bstan don de las gzhan du drang dgos mi dgos kyi drang tshul de yin no//*)

I prefer the simpler reading given in the translation in the body, though the sentence might also be read as:

Rather, it is the style of leading [that is, interpreting,] as in whether that meaning of the sūtra does not need to be interpreted or does need to be interpreted as other than that.

<sup>f</sup> *sgras zin gyi don*.

<sup>g</sup> *yin lugs kyi don*.

- One mode is, for instance, the need to interpret the statement that father and mother are to be killed in “Having killed father and mother.”<sup>a</sup> This must be interpreted as other than the meaning of the explicit reading;<sup>b</sup> namely, father and mother are to be taken as existence [that is, a fully potentialized karma that will produce the next lifetime, this being the tenth link of the dependent-arising of cyclic existence] and attachment [the eighth link].<sup>c</sup>
- In the second mode, with respect to the [literally acceptable] statement, for instance, that from wholesome and unwholesome actions effects of pleasure and pain [respectively] arise, when someone propounds, for instance, that:

The production of pleasure and pain by the two actions is the mode of being of those two, and there is no mode of being of those that is not this; hence, the suchness of the objects [mentioned] in that sūtra is definite as just this, and therefore it is not suitable to interpret [the suchness of the objects mentioned in that sūtra] as other than this.

it is to be explained that the suchness of the objects [taught] in that [sūtra, namely, the suchness of the arising of pleasure from wholesome actions and the arising of pain from unwholesome actions]<sup>17</sup> must be interpreted as other than the explicit reading [that is to say, it must be interpreted as the emptiness of true existence of the arising of pleasure from wholesome actions and the emptiness of true existence of the arising of pain from unwholesome actions].

དོན་དང་དགོས་པ་འདི་ལ་གནིས་ལས། བ་དང་མ་ནི་བསང་བྱས་  
 ཤིང་། ཞིས་པ་མ་བསང་བར་གསུངས་པ་ནི་དངོས་ཟིན་གྱི་དོན་པ་  
 མ་ལས་གཞན་དུ་<sup>[42b]</sup>ལས་གྱི་སྲིད་པ་དང་སྲིད་པ་ལ་དང་དགོས་  
 པ་ལྟ་བུ་ནི་ཚུལ་གཅིག་གོ། ཚུལ་གནིས་པ་ནི། ལས་དཀར་ནག་  
 ལས་འབྲས་བུ་བདེ་སྐྱེག་འབྱུང་བར་གསུངས་པ་ལ་ལས་གནིས་  
 གྱིས་བདེ་སྐྱེག་བསྐྱེད་པ་དེ་དེ་གནིས་གྱི་ཡིན་ལྷགས་ཡིན་གྱི་དེ་

<sup>a</sup> *pha dang ma ni bsad byas shing.*

<sup>b</sup> *dngos zin gyi don.*

<sup>c</sup> See 124ff., Issue #12:-Issue #16:.

མེན་པའི་དེ་དག་གི་ཡིན་ལུགས་མེད་པས། མདོ་དཔེ་དོན་གྱི་དེ་  
 ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་ན་དེར་ངེས་པས་དེ་ལས་གཞན་དུ་བྱང་དུ་མི་བྱང་ངོ་  
 ཞེས་སྒྲ་བ་ལ། དཔེ་དོན་གཉིས་ཀྱི་དེ་ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་ནི་དངོས་ཟིན་དེ་  
 ལས་གཞན་དུ་བྱང་དགོས་སོ་ཞེས་འཆད་པ་ལྟ་བུའོ། །

Therefore, Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle* says:<sup>18</sup>

What is a definitive meaning? It is that which possesses valid cognition<sup>a</sup> [that is to say, is literally acceptable]<sup>19</sup> and [moreover]<sup>20</sup> is set out in terms of the ultimate because it cannot be interpreted<sup>b</sup> by another as anything separate from that.

Having valid cognition would be sufficient [to characterize what is definitive] if meanings that do not exist in accordance with how they are taught and those that do exist in accordance with how they are taught were taken as the interpretable and the definitive; however, since this is not sufficient, Kamalashīla says “in terms of the ultimate.”<sup>c</sup>

དེས་ན་དབུ་མ་སྒྲ་བ་ལས་ངེས་པའི་དོན་གྱི་དེ་གང་ལ་བྱ་ནི་  
 བྱ། ཆད་མ་དང་བཅས་པ་དང་དོན་དམ་པའི་དབང་དུ་མཛད་  
 བས་བཤད་པ་གང་ཡིན་པ་སྟེ། དེ་ནི་དེ་ལས་ལོགས་ཤིག་དུ་  
 གཞན་གྱིས་གང་དུ་ཡང་བྱང་བར་མི་བྱས་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། །ཞེས་  
 གསུངས་ཏེ། ཇི་ལྟར་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་གྱི་དོན་ཡོད་མེད་ལ་བྱང་ངེས་  
 སུ་བྱེད་ན་ཆད་མ་དང་བཅས་པས་ཆོག་གྱིང་དེས་མི་ཆག་པས་  
 དོན་དམ་པའི་དབང་དུ་མཛད་པ་ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ། །

<sup>a</sup> See 141ff., Issue #18:.

<sup>b</sup> *drang bar mi nus pa*. The term *nus pa* (“able”), repeated twice by Tsong-kha-pa two paragraphs below, confirms the appropriateness of translating *drang don* as “interpretable meaning.” I find “provisional meaning” to be too loose since “provisional” does not lend itself to the range of grammatical situations such as these.

<sup>c</sup> See 140ff., Issue #17:-Issue #21:.



## [ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE INTERPRETABLE AND THE DEFINITIVE AS WELL AS AN ELIMINATION OF QUALMS]<sup>21</sup>

Hence, in statements that a sprout is produced from a seed, and the like, the meanings as taught do have verification by valid cognition, but they are not in terms of the ultimate, due to which they require interpretation; the mode of interpreting [the mode of subsistence]<sup>22</sup> as a meaning other than this is as was explained above.<sup>a</sup>

Therefore, statements that things do not have truly established production possess valid cognition [since they *are* established by valid cognition]<sup>23</sup> and also cannot be interpreted as meaning other [than this]<sup>24</sup> in the sense that the meaning as taught is not the suchness of those phenomena [because it *is* the suchness of those phenomena].<sup>25</sup> Such sūtra [passages] are of definitive meaning, for they cannot be interpreted as anything else by way of either of the two modes of interpretation.

དེས་ན་ས་བོན་ལས་སྐྱུ་གུ་སྐྱེ་བ་སོགས་གསུངས་པ་ལ་བཟུན་པ་  
ལྟར་གྱི་དོན་ལ་ཚད་མའི་སྐྱབ་བྱེད་ཡོད་ཀྱང་དོན་དམ་པའི་  
དབང་དུ་མཛད་པ་མིན་པས་དྲང་དོན་ཡིན་ཏེ་འདིའི་དོན་ལས་  
དོན་གཞན་འདྲེན་ལུགས་བཤད་ཟིན་པ་ལྟར་རོ། དེས་ན་དངོས་  
པོ་རྣམས་ལ་བདེན་པའི་སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་པར་གསུངས་པ་ནི་ཚད་མ་  
དང་ཡང་ལུན་ལ་ཇི་ལྟར་བཟུན་པའི་དོན་དེ་ཆོས་དེའི་དེ་ཁོ་ན་  
ཉིད་མིན་པར་དོན་གཞན་དུ་ཡང་དྲང་མི་རུས་པ་དེ་འདྲ་བའི་  
མདོ་སྡེ་རྣམས་ངས་པའི་དོན་ཏེ། འདྲེན་ཚུལ་གཉིས་གང་གི་སྒོ་  
ནས་ཀྱང་གཞན་དུ་དྲང་བར་མི་རུས་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

When the interpretable and the definitive are posited in terms of the

<sup>a</sup> Just above, beginning with “In the second mode, with respect to the [literally acceptable] statement...”

meaning of these [sūtras]<sup>26</sup> needing or not needing to be interpreted otherwise, the high sayings<sup>a</sup> themselves are held as illustrations of the interpretable and the definitive, but when meanings [that is to say, objects] that need or do not need to be interpreted otherwise are posited as the interpretable and the definitive, conventionalities and ultimates are treated as the interpretable and the definitive,<sup>b</sup> Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* (see below, 164) for instance, says that:<sup>c</sup>

- with respect to the doctrine in “rely on the doctrine but do not rely on the person” there are two, words and meanings
- with respect to meanings there are two, the interpretable and the definitive
- and with respect to definitive meanings one should not rely on consciousness but should rely on pristine wisdom.

Also, the *Ornament Illuminating Pristine Wisdom Sūtra* says, “That which is the definitive meaning is the ultimate,”<sup>27</sup> and the *Teachings of Akṣhaya-mati Sūtra* teaches that nonproduction and so forth are the ultimate,<sup>d</sup> whereby solely<sup>e</sup> nonproduction and so forth are to be held to be the ultimate, and solely those [high sayings]<sup>28</sup> teaching these are to be held to be [sūtras of]<sup>29</sup> definitive meaning.

འདིའི་དོན་གཞན་དུ་བྱང་དགོས་མི་དགོས་ཀྱི་དབང་དུ་བྱས་ནས་  
བྱང་ངེས་འཇོག་<sup>[43a]</sup>པ་ན་གསུང་རབ་ཉིད་བྱང་ངེས་ཀྱི་མཚན་  
གཞིར་གཟུང་ལ། གཞན་དུ་བྱང་དགོས་མི་དགོས་ཀྱི་དོན་ལ་བྱང་

<sup>a</sup> *gsung rab, pravacana*; this term is often translated as “scriptures,” but “high sayings” conveys its literal connotation as speech (*vacana*), with *rab* (*pra-*) as an intensifier.

<sup>b</sup> See 157, Issue #24:.

<sup>c</sup> *sa'i dngos gzhi (bhūmivastu)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 4035)*, TBRC W23703.127:4-567 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); *sems tsaṃ, tshi*, 130b.1. Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* is also known as *Grounds of Yogic Practice (yogācārabhūmi)*. Tsong-kha-pa gives a paraphrase, not a quotation; see 159, Issue #25:.

<sup>d</sup> As cited above at the beginning of the chapter:

Whichever sūtras teach the doors of liberation—the emptiness of things, signlessness, wishlessness, and no composition—no production, no produced, no sentient being, no living being, no person, and no owner are called “definitive.”

<sup>e</sup> *kho na*. See 140, Issue #17:.

ངེས་སུ་འཇོག་པ་ན་ཀུན་རྫོབ་དང་དོན་དམ་ལ་བྱང་ངེས་སུ་བྱ་  
 རྟེ། ས་ཡི་དངོས་གཞི་ལས་གང་ཟག་ལ་མི་རྟོན་པར་ཆོས་ལ་རྟོན་  
 པའི་ཆོས་ལ་ཆོག་དོན་གཉིས་དང་དོན་ལ་བྱང་ངེས་གཉིས་དང་  
 ངེས་དོན་ལ་རྣམ་ཤེས་ལ་མི་རྟོན་ཡེ་ཤེས་ལ་རྟོན་ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་  
 ལྟ་བུའོ། །ཡེ་ཤེས་སྣང་བ་རྒྱན་གྱི་མདོ་ལས་ཀྱང་། ངས་པའི་དོན་  
 གང་ཡིན་པ་དེ་ནི་དོན་དམ་པའོ། །ཞེས་གསུངས་ལ། ལྟོ་གྲོས་མི་  
 ཟད་པས་བརྟན་པ་ལས། རྟེན་བ་མེད་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་དོན་དམ་པར་  
 བརྟན་པས་རྟེན་བ་མེད་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཁོ་ན་དོན་དམ་པ་དང་དེ་  
 རྟོན་པ་རྣམས་ཁོ་ན་ངེས་པའི་དོན་དུ་གཟུང་ངོ་། །

You should not hold that [statements of] no production and so forth in which, at that point, a qualification is not [explicitly]<sup>30</sup> affixed to the object of negation are not literal and hence are not of definitive meaning.<sup>a</sup> When in the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, for example, [a qualification] is affixed on one occasion [to the object of negation] with respect to the production of phenomena and so forth [such as when it says,]<sup>31</sup> “That also is in the conventions of the world and is not ultimately,” it is, by import, affixed also on other occasions; therefore, even those in which [such a qualification] is not explicitly mentioned are also literal.

དགག་བྱ་ལ་ཁྱད་པར་སྐབས་དེར་མ་སྐྱར་བའི་རྟེན་བ་མེད་པ་ལ་  
 སོགས་པ་སྐྱེ་ངི་བཞིན་པ་མིན་པས་ངེས་དོན་མ་ཡིན་ནོ་སྟེ་མ་དུ་

<sup>a</sup> See 153, Issue #22:.. Ta-drin-rab-tan (*Annotations*, 175.6) explains that one might think that certain statements in the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* that production does not exist are not definitive because they are not literal, since production does indeed exist, but there is no such problem because the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* in other places affixes the qualification “ultimately” to the object of negation. In this vein, Tsong-kha-pa points out at the end of this paragraph that even statements that there is no production are literal because of this implicit affixing of the qualification.

མི་གཟུང་སྟེ་དཔེར་ན་འབྲུམ་ལས་དེ་ཡང་འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཐ་སྟངས་  
 དུ་ཡིན་གྱི་དོན་དམ་པར་མིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་ཆོས་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་བ་  
 སོགས་ལ་སྐབས་གཅིག་དུ་སྐྱུར་ན་སྐབས་གཞན་དུ་ཡང་དོན་གྱིས་  
 སྐྱུར་ཟིན་པས་དངོས་སུ་མ་སྟོས་པ་དེ་དག་ཀྱང་སྐྱེ་བཞིན་པ་  
 ཡིན་ནོ། །

# Exegesis of the meaning of the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* on differentiating the interpretable and the definitive

This section has two parts: how the protector Nāgārjuna comments on the meaning of the sūtra and how his followers comment on it.<sup>a</sup>

གཉིས་པ་[དེའི་དོན་ཇི་ལྟར་བགས་པ་]ལ་གཉིས། མགོན་པོ་ལྷ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱིས་  
མདོའི་དོན་ཇི་ལྟར་བགས་པ་དང་། དེའི་རྗེས་སུ་འབྲང་བ་ནམས་  
ཀྱིས་ཇི་ལྟར་བགས་པའི་ཚུལ་ལོ། །

## HOW THE PROTECTOR NĀGĀRJUNA COMMENTS ON THE MEANING OF THE *TEACHINGS OF AKṢHAYAMATI SŪTRA*

དང་པོ་[མགོན་པོ་ལྷ་སྦྱབ་ཀྱིས་མདོའི་དོན་ཇི་ལྟར་བགས་པ་]ལ་གཉིས། རྟེན་  
འབྱུང་གི་དོན་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པའི་དོན་དུ་བགས་ཚུལ་དང་། དེ་  
ཉིད་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱི་དོན་གྱི་སྒྲིང་པོར་བསྐྱགས་པའི་ཚུལ་ལོ། །

This section has two parts: how [Nāgārjuna] comments on the meaning of dependent-arising as the meaning of the absence of inherent existence and how [Nāgārjuna] praises just that as the essence of the meaning of the high sayings.

## *HOW NĀGĀRJUNA COMMENTS ON THE MEANING OF DEPENDENT-ARISING AS THE MEANING OF THE ABSENCE OF INHERENT EXISTENCE*

དང་པོ་[རྟེན་འབྱུང་གི་དོན་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པའི་དོན་དུ་བགས་ཚུལ་]ནི།

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<sup>a</sup> Only the first part is translated in this volume.

[How Nāgārjuna, commenting on dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness, differentiates the interpretable and the definitive]<sup>32</sup>

*[How Nāgārjuna comments on dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness]*<sup>33</sup>

It is even explained in sūtra both:

- that production, cessation, and so forth exist [set forth in the first wheel of doctrine],<sup>34</sup> and
- that production, cessation, and so forth do not exist [set forth in the middle wheel of doctrine]<sup>35</sup>

and some sūtras [such as the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*]<sup>36</sup> explain that the nonexistence of production and so forth is a definitive meaning, and some [such as the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*]<sup>37</sup> describe this [non-existence of production and so forth that are established by way of their own character]<sup>38</sup> as an interpretable meaning. If, from between those, the literality<sup>a</sup>—of the explanation [in the explicit reading<sup>b</sup> of the *Mother Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*]<sup>39</sup> that production and so forth that are ultimately existent, or established by way of their own character, do not exist—was damaged by reasonings [as is taught by the Proponents of Cognition],<sup>c</sup> then it would even be reasonable to explain [in accordance with the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*, Asaṅga's *Grounds of Bodhisattvas*, and so forth]<sup>40</sup> that:

- [Buddha spoke of] the nonexistence of entities, production, cessation, and so forth that are established by way of their own character in consideration of imputational natures,
- the other two [other-powered natures and thoroughly established natures]<sup>41</sup> are established by way of their own character, and
- in that case the self of phenomena, through the negation of which selflessness is taught [in the *Mother Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*],<sup>42</sup> is the mere imputational factors:

<sup>a</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *dngos zin.*

<sup>c</sup> *rnam rig pa*; that is to say, the Proponents of Mind-Only.

1. that phenomena are established by way of their own character as entities of imputation as entities and attributes, and
  2. that apprehended-object and apprehending-subject are different substantial entities,
- and thus the voidness<sup>a</sup> [or emptiness]<sup>43</sup> of those is the final suchness.

However, no such damage exists [with regard to Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras]<sup>44</sup> because if there were inherent existence in the sense of ultimate establishment, or establishment by way of the [object's] own character, it would be very contradictory for effects to rely on causes and conditions [since effects would have to be established without relying on anything].<sup>45</sup>

མདོ་ལས་སྐྱེ་འགག་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཡོད་པ་དང་མེད་པ་གཉིས་  
 ཀའང་བཤད་ལ། མདོ་ཁ་ཅིག་ལས་སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་པ་སོགས་གསུངས་  
 [43b]པ་ངེས་དོན་དང་། ཁ་ཅིག་ལས་དང་དོན་དུ་བཤད་པ་རྣམས་  
 ལས། དོན་དམ་པར་རམ་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་སྐྱེ་བ་སོགས་  
 མེད་པར་བཤད་པའི་སྐྱེ་ངེ་བཞིན་པ་ལ་རིགས་པའི་གཞོད་པ་  
 ཡོད་ན། རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་ངོ་བོ་དང་སྐྱེ་འགག་  
 སོགས་མེད་པ་ཀུན་བརྟགས་ལ་དགོངས་ཤིང་གཞན་གཉིས་རང་  
 གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ་པ་དང་། དེའི་ཆོ་གང་བཀག་པས་བདག་  
 མེད་པར་སྟོན་པའི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་བདག་ནི་ཆོས་རྣམས་ལ་ངོ་བོ་དང་  
 བྱད་པར་དུ་བརྟགས་པའི་ངོ་བོར་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ་  
 པ་དང་། གཟུང་འཛིན་རྣམས་ཐ་དད་ཀྱི་ཀུན་བརྟགས་ཅམ་ལ་  
 བཤད་ནས། དེ་དག་གིས་དབེན་པ་ཉིད་དེ་ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་མཐར་ཐུག་  
 པར་འཆད་པ་ཡང་རིགས་ན། གཞོད་པ་དེ་ནི་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་  
 ཏེ། འདི་ལྟར་དོན་དམ་པར་རམ་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ་  
 པའི་རང་བཞིན་ཡོད་ན་འབྲས་བུ་རྣམས་རྒྱ་དང་རྒྱུན་ལ་སྟོན་

<sup>a</sup> *dben pa nyid*.

པར་ཤིན་རྒྱ་འགལ་བའི་ཕྱིར་རོ།

*[How, in dependence upon this, Nāgārjuna opens a chariot-way of the interpretable and the definitive]<sup>46</sup>*

Therefore, it is the case that due to being contingent on causes and conditions, [effects]<sup>47</sup> are without establishment by way of their own character, and hence the [misguided] proposition that if [other-powered natures]<sup>48</sup> are not established by way of their own character, then bondage and release, adoption [of virtues] and discarding [of non-virtues], cause and effect, and so forth would be nonexistent is to hold [reliance on causes and conditions which is] the final proof—of the emptiness of inherent existence in the sense of establishment by way of the object’s own character—to be the final damage [disproving the emptiness of inherent existence].

This explanation is the protector Nāgārjuna’s opening of the chariot way demonstrating:

- the reasonings proving (1) that the meaning of the Mother Sūtras and high sayings<sup>a</sup> concordant with those are of definitive meaning in the sense that [the final mode of subsistence] is definite as just that meaning, it being unsuitable to interpret them otherwise, and
- the damage by reasoning to the literality of sūtras [such as the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* and so forth] that teach in a manner that does not accord with those.<sup>b</sup>

དེས་ན་རྒྱ་ཤིན་ལ་རག་ལས་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་  
 གྲུབ་པ་མེད་པ་ཡིན་པ་ལ། རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་མ་གྲུབ་ན་  
 བཅིངས་གྲོལ་དང་སྒྲུབ་དོར་དང་རྒྱ་འགལ་སྐྱེགས་མེད་པར་  
 འགྱུར་རོ་ཞེས་སྒྲུབ་པ་ནི། རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་རང་

<sup>a</sup> *gsung rab, pravacana*; more literally, “high speech.”

<sup>b</sup> As Ta-drin-rab-tan’s *Annotations*, 179.2, says:

Nāgārjuna opened a chariot-way explaining as the thought of the *Mother Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras* and so forth that whatever is a dependent-arising is necessarily empty of true existence and that the functionality of cause and effect and so on are feasible in things empty of true existence.



བཞིན་གྱིས་སྟོང་པའི་སྐབ་བྱེད་མཐར་ཐུག་པ་ལ་གཞོན་བྱེད་  
 མཐར་ཐུག་པར་འཛིན་པ་ཡིན་མོ་ཞེས་འཆད་བ་འདི་ནི་མགོན་  
 བོ་ལྷ་སྐབ་གྱིས་ཡུམ་གྱི་མདོ་དང་དེ་དང་རྗེས་སུ་མཐུན་པའི་  
 གསུང་རབ་རྣམས་གྱི་དོན་གཞན་དུ་བྲང་དུ་མི་བྲང་བར་དོན་  
 དེར་ངེས་པའི་ངེས་དོན་དུ་སྐབ་པའི་སྐབ་བྱེད་གྱི་རིགས་པ་  
 དང་། དེ་དག་དང་མི་མཐུན་པར་སྟོན་པའི་མདོ་རྣམས་གྱི་སྐྱེ་ཇི་  
 བཞིན་པ་ལ་རིགས་པའི་<sup>[44a]</sup>གཞོན་པ་སྟོན་པའི་ཤིང་རྟའི་སྟོལ་བྱེད་  
 བ་ཡིན་མོ། །

*[How the Sūtra Unraveling the Thought  
 becomes a sūtra of definitive meaning due to  
 the trainee]*<sup>49</sup>

The statement in the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*<sup>a</sup> that if one views

<sup>a</sup> *dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa'i mdo (samdhinirmocanasūtra)*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud)*, 106), TBRC W22084; mdo sde, ca, 49:1b1-55b7 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 774, vol. 29, Chap. 7; *lha/ bka' / mdo sde/ ca* 32b.6 (as per Ye-shay-thab-khay's *The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa*, Part Two, 132); Lamotte, *Samdhinirmocana*, 77 [20], and 200-201; Dön-drub-gyal-tshan's *Extensive Explanation of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Treatise Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence," Unique to Ge-lug-pa: Four Intertwined Commentaries.*, 17.1-17.6; see also Powers, *Wisdom of Buddha*, 119. The passage, as cited in the Mind-Only section of Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* (Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School*, 95-96), is:

Even though they have interest in that doctrine [of the profound thoroughly established nature], they do not understand, just as it is, the profound reality that I have set forth with a thought behind it. With respect to the meaning of these doctrines, they adhere to the terms as only literal: "All these phenomena are only natureless. All these phenomena are only unproduced, only unceasing, only quiescent from the start, only naturally thoroughly passed beyond sorrow." Due to that, they acquire the view that all phenomena do not exist and the view that [establishment of objects by way of their own] character does not exist. Moreover, having

[other-powered natures and the thoroughly established nature] as not established by way of their own character, one generates a view deprecating all three characters is not in terms of all those who see such [that is, who view other-powered natures and the thoroughly established nature as not established by way of their own character] but is in terms of trainees who do not possess the supreme intelligence [differentiating between nonexistence by way of objects' own character and nonexistence].<sup>a</sup> Hence, this

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acquired the view of nihilism and the view of the nonexistence of [establishment of objects by way of their own] character, they deprecate all phenomena in terms of all of the characters—deprecating the imputational character of phenomena and also deprecating the other-powered character and thoroughly established character of phenomena.

Why? Paramārthasamudgata, it is thus: If the other-powered character and the thoroughly established character exist [by way of their own character], the imputational character is known [that is, is possible]. However, those who perceive the other-powered character and the thoroughly established character as without character [that is to say, as not being established by way of their own character] also deprecate the imputational character. Therefore, those [persons] are said to deprecate even all three aspects of characters.

Tsong-kha-pa (Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School*, 96-97) explains:

In “With respect to the meaning of [these] doctrines, they adhere to the terms as only literal,” the terms are the statements in sūtras [such as the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras] teaching non-nature—that all phenomena are ultimately empty of inherent existence, empty of [establishment] by way of their own nature, and empty of [establishment] by way of their own character. This [Mind-Only school] is a system in which holding what is literally indicated in those passages is asserted to be [mistaken] adherence to the literal reading.

[Wrongly] perceiving other-powered and thoroughly established characters to be without character is to view those two as not being established by way of their own character. The passage from “Why?” on through to the end of that citation indicates the reason why all three natures come to be deprecated. It should be known that even if one holds [a position] in accordance with the statement that production and cessation do not exist by way of their own character, one [explicitly] deprecates other-powered natures, and thereby one also comes to deprecate the other two [natures—the imputational and the thoroughly established]. For, this [Mind-Only School] is a system in which if production and cessation are not established by way of their own character, production and cessation become nonexistent [since they would not be established in any other way, in which case the bases of imputation of imputational factors and the substrata of the thoroughly established nature would not exist].

<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 28.5. Alternatively, as

statement in the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* is made through the force of trainees' thought but is not the assertion [or final thought]<sup>50</sup> of the Teacher [Buddha] because trainees of supreme intelligence [who can make such a differentiation, namely, Consequentialists,]<sup>51</sup> realize the emptiness of establishment by way of [objects'] own character just through the requirement of presenting cause and effect, and hence for those [trainees]<sup>52</sup> just that [view of the nonexistence of establishment by way of objects' own character]<sup>53</sup> serves as a method for stopping a view of deprecation.

རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་མ་གྲུབ་པར་མཐོང་ན་མཚན་ཉིད་གསུམ་  
ག་ལ་སྐྱར་འདེབས་ཀྱི་ལྷ་བ་སྐྱེ་བར་དགོངས་འབྲེལ་ལས་གསུངས་  
པ་ནི། དེ་ལྟར་གང་མཐོང་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་མིན་གྱི་སྒོ་མཚོག་དང་  
མི་ལྷན་པའི་གདུལ་བྱ་ལ་ཡིན་ནོ། །དེའི་ཕྱིར་གདུལ་བྱའི་བསམ་  
པའི་དབང་གིས་དེ་ལྟར་གསུངས་ཀྱི་སྒོན་པའི་བཞེད་པ་མིན་  
ཏེ། སྒོ་མཚོག་གི་གདུལ་བྱས་ནི་རྒྱ་འབྲས་རྣམ་པར་གཞག་དགོས་  
པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་སྟོང་པར་རྟོགས་པས་དེ་ལ་  
ནི་དེ་ཉིད་སྐྱར་འདེབས་ཀྱི་ལྷ་བ་འགོག་པའི་ཐབས་སུ་འགྱུར་  
བའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Relative to trainees [of lesser intelligence such as Proponents of Mind-Only],<sup>54</sup> the Mother Sūtras become of interpretable meaning and the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* becomes of definitive meaning,<sup>a</sup> like the statement in Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* that for a trainee who [for the time being]<sup>55</sup> is not fit as a vessel for the teaching of selflessness, between the two

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Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan's *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures* (29b.5/433.5) puts it, supreme intelligence is "an awareness to which emptiness dawns as the meaning of dependent-arising."

<sup>a</sup> As the Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) Thought* (104.3) says, this is because if these trainees of lesser intelligence are not taught that other-powered natures are truly established and, instead of this, are taught that other-powered natures are empty of true establishment, it is not meaningful for them—that is to say, they would lose the functionality of cause and effect.

teachings of self and selflessness the former is supreme.<sup>a</sup>

གདུལ་བྱ་དེ་ལ་སྟོན་ཏེ་ཡུམ་གྱི་མདོ་བྱང་དོན་དང་དགོངས་  
འགྲེལ་ངེས་དོན་དུ་འགོ་སྟེ། བཞི་བརྒྱ་པ་ལས། བདག་མེད་པ་  
བསྟན་པའི་སྟོན་དུ་མི་རུང་བའི་གདུལ་བྱ་ལ་བདག་དང་བདག་  
མེད་བསྟན་པ་གཉིས་སྡེ་མ་མཚོག་དུ་གསུངས་པ་བཞིན་ནོ། །

<sup>a</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa (catuḥśataka)*, XIV.23; in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge* 3846), TBRC W23703.97:3-37, dbu ma, vol. tsha, (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). This is a paraphrase of stanza XII.12ab; the entire stanza is: *ahaṃkāro 'sataḥ śreyān na tu nairātmyadarśanam / (dam pa min la bdag 'dzin mchog / bdag med ston pa ma yin te// gcig ni ngan 'gro nyid 'gro la// tha mal ma yin zhi nyid du 'o// )*:

For the nonexcellent the apprehension of self is supreme,  
Not the teaching of selflessness;  
The one goes to just a bad transmigration,  
But the non-ordinary go just to peace.

Sanskrit and Tibetan in Karen Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1986), 114; Lang's English translation is on page 115. This verse is also translated in Geshe Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *The Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1994), 244 (their numbered stanza 287); they translate *dam pa min* as “the unreceptive” suggestive of Tsong-kha-pa's gloss here as “not fit as a vessel” (*snod du mi rung ba*).

As Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 3a.5) explains:

If selflessness is taught to the one, that is to say, to those who are not vessels, either they generate the view of annihilation upon holding that the meaning of emptiness is utter nonexistence, or they make a deprecation thinking that the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras and so forth teach a view of annihilation; hence, [both of these] go to a bad transmigration. However, if emptiness is taught to the non-ordinary, that is, to those who are vessels, they go to peace, the city of nirvāṇa.

[How Nāgārjuna, commenting on emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising, differentiates the interpretable and the definitive]<sup>56</sup>

*[How Nāgārjuna comments on emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising]*<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, in Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text* called "Wisdom" an objection is made [by Proponents of True Existence to Proponents of the Middle]<sup>58</sup> that if phenomena are empty of inherent existence, that is, of existing by way of their own character, then production and disintegration would not be suitable, whereby all presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa [such as the four truths and so forth]<sup>59</sup> would not be feasible:<sup>a</sup>

If all these were empty [of inherent existence],<sup>60</sup>  
There would be no arising and no disintegration,  
And it would [absurdly] follow for you  
That the four noble truths would not exist.

==Since the four noble truths would not exist,  
Knowing thoroughly, abandoning,  
Meditating upon, and actualizing  
Would not be logically feasible.

Since those would not exist,  
The four fruits also would not exist.  
When the fruits would do not exist, Abiders in the Fruit would  
do not exist.  
Enterers also would do not exist.

If those eight persons did not exist  
The spiritual community would not exist.

<sup>a</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūla-madhyamakakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3824)*, TBRC W23703.96:3-39 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapa chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), stanza XXIV.1; 14b.4; J.W. de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ* (Adyar, India: Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1977), 34: *yadi śūnyam idaṃ sarvaṃ udayo nāsti na vyayaḥ / caturṇām āryasatyānām abhāvas te prasajyate //*. For discussion of this objection and Nāgārjuna's response, see 169.

Because the noble truths would not exist,  
The doctrine of the excellent also would not exist.

If the doctrine and spiritual community were not to exist,  
How would the Buddhas exist?

When (with) such speech emptiness is propounded  
Harm is done to the Three Jewels, and

The existence of effects,  
What is not the doctrine, the doctrine itself,  
And the conventions of the world:

Even to all harm is done. This objection is a display of a reasoning [at-tempting] to damage the literality of the Mother Sūtras and so forth.

ཅ་ཤེལས་ཀྱང་། གལ་ཏེ་འདི་དག་ཀྱན་སྟོང་ན། །འབྱུང་བ་མེད་  
ཅིང་འཇིག་པ་མེད། །འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི་པོ་རྣམས། །ཁྱོད་  
ལ་མེད་པར་ཐལ་པར་འགྱུར། །ཞིས་སོགས་ [འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི་  
མེད་པས། །ཡོངས་སུ་ཤིས་དང་སྟོང་བ་དང་། །སྟོམ་དང་མངོན་དུ་བྱ་བ་དག་ །འཐད་  
པར་འགྱུར་བ་མ་ཡིན་ནོ། །དེ་དག་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་པས ། །འབྲས་བུ་བཞི་ཡང་ཡོད་མ་  
ཡིན། །འབྲས་བུ་མེད་ན་འབྲས་གནས་མེད། །ཞུགས་པ་དག་ཀྱང་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན། །གལ་ཏེ་  
སྐྱེས་བུ་གང་ཟག་བརྒྱུད། །དེ་དག་མེད་ན་དག་འདུན་མེད། །འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་རྣམས་  
མེད་པའི་བྱུང་། །དམ་པའི་ཆོས་ཀྱང་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན། །ཆོས་དང་དག་འདུན་ཡོད་མེད་  
ན། །མངས་རྒྱས་ཇི་ལྟར་ཡོད་པར་འགྱུར། །དེ་སྐད་སྟོང་པ་ཉིད་སྟུང་། །དཀོན་མཆོག་  
གསུམ་ལ་གཞོད་པ་ནི། །བྱེད་ཅིང་འབྲས་བུ་ཡོད་པ་དང་། །ཆོས་མ་ཡིན་པ་ཆོས་ཉིད་  
དང་། །འཇིག་རྟེན་པ་ཡི་ཐ་སྟོང་ནི། །ཀྱན་ལའང་གཞོད་པ་བྱེད་པ་  
ཡིན། །] ཀྱིས། ཆོས་རྣམས་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་ཡོད་པའི་རང་  
བཞིན་གྱིས་སྟོང་ན་སྟེ་འཇིག་མི་རུང་བས་འཁོར་འདས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་  
གཞག་ཐམས་ཅད་མི་འཐད་པར་བརྟུན་པ་ནི་ཡུམ་གྱི་མདོ་ལ་  
སོགས་པ་སྐྱ་ཇི་བཞིན་པ་ལ་གཞོད་བྱེད་ཀྱི་རིགས་པ་བསྟན་པའོ། །

In answer to this, Nāgārjuna [thinking to fling back the same fallacy flung by the objector,]<sup>61</sup> says:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Stanza XXIV.20; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba*

If all these were not empty [of inherent existence],<sup>62</sup>  
 There would be no arising and no disintegration,  
 And it would [absurdly] follow for you  
 That the four noble truths would not exist.

and so forth. Thereby he speaks of the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence as the meaning of dependent-arising, saying that “Within a non-emptiness of inherent existence the dependent-arisings of production and disintegration are not suitable, whereby all presentations are not feasible, but in the position of the emptiness of inherent existence all those are very feasible.”<sup>a</sup>

(*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, dbu ma, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 15a.7; de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 35: *yady aśūnyam idaṃ sarvaṃ udayo nāsti na vyayaḥ / caturṇām āryasatyānām abhāvas te prasajyate //*.

<sup>a</sup> In commentary, Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* (Dharmasala, Shes rig par khang, 422.2; for the Sanskrit, see Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*, 500.1ff.) says:

Not only does the consequence [expressing] the fallacy [that all activities such as arising, disintegration, and so forth would not be feasible] set forth [by you 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 logical. In order to indicate this, [Nāgārjuna] says [in the *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle* (XXIV.14)]:

For whom emptiness is suitable,  
 All is suitable.  
 For whom emptiness is not suitable,  
 All is not suitable.

For whom this emptiness of inherent existence of all things is suitable, all the above-mentioned are suitable. How? Because we call dependent-arising “emptiness.” Hence, for whom this emptiness is suitable, dependent-arising is suitable, the four noble truths are suitable. How? Because just those that arise dependently are sufferings, not those that do not arise dependently. Since those [that arise dependently] are without inherent existence, they are empty.

When suffering exists, the sources of suffering, the cessation 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 meditative cultivation of paths are also suitable. When thorough knowledge and so forth of the truths—suffering and so forth—exist, the fruits are suitable. When Approachers to and Abiders in the fruits exist, the spiritual community is suitable.

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

དེའི་ལན་དུ། གལ་ཏེ་འདི་ཀུན་མི་སྟོང་ན། །འབྱུང་བ་མེད་ཅིང་  
 འཇིག་པ་མེད། །འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི་པོ་རྣམས། །བྱུང་ལ་  
 མེད་པར་ཐལ་བར་འབྱུང། །ཞེས་སོགས་གྲིས་རང་བཞིན་གྲིས་མི་  
 [44b]སྟོང་བ་ལ་སྐྱེ་འཇིག་གི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་མི་རུང་བས་རྣམ་གཞག་  
 ཐམས་ཅད་མི་འཐད་ལ་རང་བཞིན་གྲིས་སྟོང་པའི་སྒྲགས་ལ་དེ་  
 དག་ཐམས་ཅད་ཆེས་འཐད་དོ་ཞེས་རང་བཞིན་གྲིས་སྟོང་བའི་  
 དོན་རྟེན་འབྱུང་གི་དོན་དུ་གསུངས་སོ། །

*[How, in dependence upon this, Nāgārjuna differentiates the interpretable and the definitive]*<sup>63</sup>

Through delineating with reasoning just this mode [of how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising]<sup>64</sup> in his Middle Way treatises the master [Nāgārjuna] explains that there is not even the slightest damage by reasoning to the literality of high sayings that set out that production and so forth do not truly exist, and when there is not [any such damage], then since there also is no way from another viewpoint to comment on those [high sayings] as of interpretable meaning, those are very much established as of definitive meaning. In consideration of this, Chandrakīrti says in the *Clear Words*.<sup>a</sup>

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and when the excellent doctrine and spiritual community exist, then Bud-dhas are also suitable. Thereby, 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.

For an expansive discussion of this quote, see Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness*, 184-185 and 329-332.

<sup>a</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba 'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (prasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 7.5.7; La Val-lée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 40.7: *evedaṃ madhyamakaśāstram praṇītam ācāryeṇa neyanītārthasūtrāntavibhāgopadarśanārthaṃ* /. For more context for this and next quote, see the lengthy citation later in the Analysis of Issues, 90, and



The master [Nāgārjuna] composed this *Treatise on the Middle* for the sake of showing the difference between sūtras of interpretable meaning and of definitive meaning.

Chandrakīrti says such in answer to the objection that the two statements<sup>a</sup> that the eight—ranging from cessation through difference—exist and do not exist in phenomena are contradictory. Moreover, that very text [Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words*] says:<sup>b</sup>

Due to not understanding [Buddha's] thought in teaching this way, some would have doubt, "Here, what is the teaching having the meaning of suchness? What indeed is that having [some other] thought [as its basis]?" And due to having weak intelligence some think teachings of interpretable meaning are of definitive meaning. In order to dispel with reasoning and scripture the doubt and wrong understanding of these two, the master [Nāgārjuna] composed this [*Treatise on the Middle*].

སྒོ་བ་དཔོན་གྱིས་ཚུལ་འདི་ཉིད་དབུ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་རྣམས་སུ་  
རིགས་པས་གཏན་ལ་འབེབས་པས་ནི། སྟེ་བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་བདེན་  
པ་མེད་པར་གསུངས་པའི་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱི་སྒྲ་ཇི་བཞིན་པ་ལ་

in Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 806ff.

<sup>a</sup> Chandrakīrti (see below, 90) frames the objection as:

If in that way you [Nāgārjuna] present dependent-arising as qualified by no production and so forth, then how would this not be contradicted by the teachings by the Supramundane Victor that dependent-arising are qualified by cessation and so forth thusly...

Therefore, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 30.1/378.27) identifies the two statements as "the statements in sūtra that the eight, cessation and so forth [that is, cessation, production, annihilation, permanence, coming, going, difference, and sameness], exist and the statements in Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called 'Wisdom'* that those do not exist."

<sup>b</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba* (*mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 8.1; La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 42.5: *yasyaivaṃ deśanābhiprāyānabhiṣṇatayā samdehaḥ syāt / kā hy atra deśanā tattvārthā kā nu khalv ābhiprāyikīti / yaścāpi mandabuddhitayā neyārtham deśanām nūārthānavagacchati / tayo ubhayor api vineyajanayor ācāryo yuktyāgamābhyām saṃśayamithyājñānayoḥ apākaraṇārtham idamārabdhavān /*. Cited in Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 807.

རིགས་པའི་གཞི་དཔ་ཅུང་ཟད་ཀྱང་མེད་པར་འཆད་པ་ཡིན་  
 ལ། དེ་མེད་ན་སྒྲིག་ཞུ་ནས་དེ་དག་དྲང་དོན་དུ་འབྲེལ་བའི་  
 ཐབས་ཀྱང་མེད་པས་དེ་རྣམས་ངེས་པའི་དོན་དུ་ཤིན་ཏུ་འབྲུབ་  
 བ་ལ་དགོངས་ནས་ཆོག་གསལ་ལས། སློབ་དཔོན་གྱིས་དྲང་བ་  
 དང་ངེས་པའི་དོན་གྱི་མདོའི་རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་བསྟན་པར་བྱ་  
 བའི་ཕྱིར་དབྱེ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་འདི་མཇུག་པ་ཡིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་  
 ཆོས་རྣམས་ལ་འགག་པ་ནས་དོན་ཐ་དད་པའི་བར་བརྒྱད་ཡོད་  
 བར་གསུངས་པ་དང་མེད་པར་གསུངས་པ་གཉིས་འགལ་ལོ་ཞེས་  
 བརྒྱད་པའི་ལན་དུ་དེ་ལྟར་གསུངས་ཤིང་། ཡང་དེ་ཉིད་ལས། དེ་  
 ལྟ་བུར་བསྟན་བའི་དགོངས་པ་མི་ཤེས་པས། འདིར་དེ་ཁོ་ནའི་  
 དོན་ཅན་གྱི་བསྟན་པ་ནི་གང་ཞིག་ཡིན། དགོངས་པ་ཅན་ནི་  
 འདིར་གང་ཞིག་ཡིན་སྟེ་ལྟ་བུ་གང་ཞིག་ཐེ་ཆོས་དུ་འགྱུར་བ་  
 དང་། གང་ཞིག་སྒྲིག་ཞུ་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་དྲང་བའི་དོན་གྱི་བསྟན་པ་  
 ལ་ངེས་པའི་དོན་དུ་རྟོགས་པ་དེ་གཉི་གའི་ཐེ་ཆོས་དང་ལྷག་པའི་  
 ཤེས་པ་དག་རིགས་པ་དང་ལྷང་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིག་ནས་བསལ་བར་བྱ་  
 བའི་ཕྱིར། སློབ་དཔོན་གྱིས་འདི་བརྒྱུམས་སོ། །ཞེས་ཀྱང་གསུངས་  
 སོ། །

*[Indicating that those teaching the profound  
 are definitive sūtras and that others than those  
 are interpretable sūtras]<sup>65</sup>*

In answer to a question concerning what the profound doctrines are,

Nāgārjuna's *Compendium of Sūtra*<sup>a</sup> cites sūtras teaching the profound such as the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, the *Diamond Cutter*, the *Seven Hundred Stanza [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, and so forth, and [Nāgārjuna's] Collections of Reasonings<sup>b</sup> make it definite that it is unsuitable to interpret the meaning of these as other than what is taught. Thereby, [Nāgārjuna] asserts that these are of definitive meaning and those spoken in a way other than these have a thought [behind them].

མདོ་ཀུན་ལས་བདུས་བ་ལས་ཆོས་ཟབ་མོ་གང་ཡིན་དྲིས་པའི་

[45a] ལན་དུ་འབྱུང་དང་དོན་རྒྱུ་ལྔ་པ་དང་ཤིང་ཕྱིན་བདུན་བརྒྱ་  
པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཟབ་མོ་སྟོན་པའི་མདོ་རྣམས་དྲངས་ཤིང་། རིགས་  
ཆོགས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་འདི་དག་གི་དོན་རྒྱུ་རྣམས་བསྟན་པ་ལས་གཞན་  
དུ་དྲང་དུ་མི་རྒྱུང་བར་ངེས་པར་མཛད་པའི་ཕྱིར་དེ་དག་ངེས་  
པའི་དོན་དང་དེ་དག་ལས་གཞན་དུ་གསུངས་པ་རྣམས་དགོངས་  
པ་ཅན་དུ་བཞེད་དེ།

Nāgārjuna's *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*<sup>c</sup> says that the refutation of external objects and then the establishment of inherent existence with respect to mind-only are not literal:<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *mdo kun las btus pa (sūtrasamuccaya)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3934)*, TBRC W23703.110:298-431 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5330, vol. 102. For citations of the question and of the passages from the three sūtras mentioned just below, see Ye-shay-thab-khay's *The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa*, Part Two, 134-135 n. 2.

<sup>b</sup> These are enumerated as six—*Fundamental Treatise on the Middle*, *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, *The Finely Woven*, *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness*, *Refutation of Objections*, and *Precious Garland of Advice to the King* or five, in which case the last is put in the category of the Collections of Advice despite containing a great deal of reasoning about emptiness.

<sup>c</sup> About the title of this book by Nāgārjuna, Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me's *Explanation of the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Afflicted Mind and Basis-of-All"*: *Entrance for the Wise (vid dang kun gzhi'i dka' gnad rnam par bshad pa mkhas pa'i 'jug ngogs)*, Musoorie: Gomang College, n.d., 6a.5, says, "This book is called *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment* because it explains the meaning of a stanza on the mind of enlightenment spoken by Vairochana in the second chapter of the *Guhyasamāja Tantra*."

<sup>d</sup> *byang chub sems 'grel (bodhicittavivaraṇa)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 1800)*,

The statement by the Subduer  
 That all these [three realms]<sup>66</sup> are mind-only  
 Is so that childish beings might give up their fear [of the pro-  
 found];<sup>67</sup>  
 It is not thus.<sup>a</sup>

and Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* also says:<sup>b</sup>

TBRC W23703.35:77-86 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); stanza 27; Peking 2665 and 2666, vol. 61; Sanskrit in Christian Lindtner, Master of Wisdom (Berkeley, CA: Dharma Publishing, 1986), 172: *cittamātram idaṃ sarvaṃ iti yā deśanā muneḥ / uttrāsaparihārārtham bālānāṃ sā na tattvataḥ* //; Tibetan on page 42.

<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chō-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.3) comments on the final line as "It does not abide in accordance with the literal [reading]" (*de ni sgra ji bzhin pa de bzhin du gnas pa nyid min pa*); it seems to me that this properly reflects the significance of the adverbial ablative in the Sanskrit *tattvataḥ*, which in the Tibetan translation of the *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment* is rendered simply as *de bzhin nyid*.

<sup>b</sup> *rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba* (*rājaparikathāratanāvalī*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 4158), TBRC W23703.172:215-253 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); stanzas 394-396. See Jeffrey Hopkins, *Nāgārjuna's Precious Garland: Buddhist Advice for Living and Liberation* (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion, 1998), 65, 90-91, 147. Sanskrit text (stanzas IV.94-96) in Michael Hahn, *Nāgārjuna's Ratnāvalī*, vol. 1 (Bonn: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1982), 128-130: *yathāiva vaiyākaraṇo mātṛkāṃ api pāthayet / buddho 'vadat tathā dharmāṃ vineyānāṃ yathākṣamam // keṣāṃ cid avadat dharmāṃ pāpebhyo vinivṛttaye / keṣāṃ cit puṇyasiddhyartham keṣāṃ cid dvayaṇīśritam // dvayāṇīśritam ekeṣāṃ gambhīraṃ bhīrubhīṣaṇam / śūnyatākaruṇāgarbham ekeṣāṃ bodhisādhanaṃ* //. This is quoted in Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* in commentary on XVIII.6; La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 359.

With bracketed commentary from Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations* (*stod pa*, 50.5) this reads:

Just as a grammarian [first] has [students] read a model of the alphabet, so Buddha taught trainees the doctrines they were able to bear. To some he taught doctrines in order to turn them away from ill-deeds; this was so that some [beings of small capacity] would achieve [the fruits of] merit [in rebirths as gods and humans]. He taught some [beings of middling capacity] doctrines based on the dualism [of apprehended-object and apprehending-subject as different entities]. To some he taught doctrines not based on dualism [teaching them that apprehended-object and apprehending-subject are empty of being separate entities and that consciousness ultimately exists]. He taught some [beings of heightened fac-

Just as a grammarian [first]<sup>68</sup> has students  
 Read a model of the alphabet,  
 So Buddha taught trainees  
 The doctrines that they could bear.

To some he taught doctrines  
 To turn them away from ill-deeds;<sup>a</sup>  
 To some, for the sake of achieving merit;<sup>b</sup>  
 To some, doctrines based on duality;  
 To some, doctrines based on nonduality;  
 To some what is profound and frightening to the fearful<sup>c</sup>—  
 Having an essence of emptiness and compassion—  
 The means of achieving [unsurpassed]<sup>69</sup> enlightenment.

The first stanza indicates that the Teacher teaches doctrine to trainees in accordance with their awareness. Then three lines indicate his teaching stemming from [achieving] high status [within cyclic existence]. Then one line indicates his teaching—to those having the lineage of the two Proponents of [Truly Existent External] Objects<sup>d</sup>—stemming from the nonexistence of a self of persons but the existence of the duality of apprehended-object and apprehending-subject. Then one line indicates his teaching—to some who have the lineage of the Great Vehicle, [that is, Proponents of Mind-Only]<sup>70</sup>—stemming from the nonexistence of the duality of apprehended-object and apprehending-subject and the [inherent] existence of the emptiness of duality. Then three lines indicate his teaching—to those

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ulties] doctrines profound and frightening to the fearful, having an essence of emptiness and compassion, the means of achieving [highest] enlightenment.

See Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 817-818; the stanzas are also cited in the same, 88 and 295.

<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.6/379.23) takes these two lines as referring to the teaching of actions and their effects and so forth to those predominantly engaging in ill-deeds, for the sake of turning them away from such deeds.

<sup>b</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.6/379.25) takes this line as referring to teaching those who are not achieving merit about how to accumulate merit for the sake of attaining the levels of gods and humans as effects of merit.

<sup>c</sup> *khu 'phrig can*; “the timid” and “the apprehensive”; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 33.5/380.8) glosses *khu 'phrig* as “qualms or apprehensiveness” (*dogs pa 'am rnam rtog*).

<sup>d</sup> That is to say, Proponents of the Great Exposition and Proponents of Sūtra.

of the Great Vehicle who are trainees of highest awareness—stemming from the absence of inherent existence and great compassion, a doctrine generating fear in those having apprehension [of true existence].<sup>71</sup>

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་འགྲེལ་ལས། འདི་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་སེམས་ཅོམ་  
 ཞེས། རྒྱབ་པ་ཡིས་ནི་གང་གསུངས་པ། བྱིས་རྣམས་སྐྱག་པ་སྤང་  
 འོན་དེ། དེ་ནི་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་མ་ཡིན། ཞེས་བྱེ་རོལ་བཀག་ནས་  
 སེམས་ཅོམ་ཞིག་ལ་རང་བཞིན་སྐྱབ་པ་སྤྲ་ཇི་བཞིན་པ་མིན་པར་  
 གསུངས་ལ་རིན་ཆེན་ཕྱེད་བ་ལས་ཀྱང་། བར་སྤྱད་པ་དག་ཇི་ལྟ་  
 བྱས། ཡི་གེའི་བྱེ་མ་སྐྱོག་འབྲུག་ལྟར། དེ་བཞིན་སངས་རྒྱས་  
 གདུལ་བྱ་ལ། ཇི་ཅོམ་བཟོད་པའི་ཆོས་སྟོན་ཏེ། ཁ་ཅིག་ལ་ནི་ཐེག་  
 པ་ལས། རྣམ་པར་བསྐྱོག་བྱེད་ཆོས་སྟོན་ཏེ། ཁ་ཅིག་བསོད་  
 རྣམས་བསྐྱབ་པའི་བྱེད། ཁ་ཅིག་ལ་ནི་གཉིས་ཏེན་པ། ཁ་ཅིག་ལ་  
 ནི་གཉིས་མི་ཏེན། ཟབ་མོ་ཁྱ་འཕྲིག་ཅན་འཇིགས་པ། སྟོང་ཉིད་  
 སྟོང་ཇིའི་སྟོང་པོ་ཅན། བྱང་ཆུབ་སྐྱབ་པ་ཁ་ཅིག་ལ་འོ། ཞེས་  
 ཆོགས་བཅད་དང་པོས་སྟོན་པས་གདུལ་བྱ་ལ་སྟོ་དང་ཇི་ཅོམ་  
 འཆོམ་པའི་ཆོས་སྟོན་པ་དང་། དེ་ནས་རྟེན་པ་གསུམ་གྱིས་མངོན་  
 མཐོ་ལས་བརྒྱམས་ཏེ་སྟོན་པ་དང་། དེ་ནས་གཅིག་གིས་དོན་སྤྲ་  
 གཉིས་ཀྱི་རིགས་ཅན་ལ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་ནི་མེད་ཀྱི་གཟུང་  
 འཇིན་གཉིས་ཡོད་པ་ལས་བརྒྱམས་ནས་དང་། དེ་ནས་གཅིག་  
 གིས་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་རིགས་ཅན་འགའ་ཞིག་ལ་གཟུང་འཇིན་  
 གཉིས་མེད་ཀྱི་གཉིས་སྟོང་ཡོད་<sup>[45b]</sup>པ་དང་། དེ་ནས་གསུམ་གྱིས་  
 ནི་གདུལ་བྱ་སྟོ་རབ་ཀྱི་ཐེག་ཆེན་ལ་དམིགས་པ་ཅན་རྣམས་སྐྱག་  
 པ་སྤྲ་བའི་ཆོས་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པ་དང་སྟོང་ཇི་ཆེན་པོ་ལས་

བརྩམས་ནས་སྟོན་པར་གསུངས་སོ། །

Therefore, as long as it is not allowable to posit all the presentations of bondage and release within the teaching of the absence of true existence, it is necessary to make a differentiation that some [phenomena]<sup>72</sup> are not true and that some [phenomena] are true because:

- [such persons] must be led by stages upon being taught a partial selflessness,<sup>a</sup> and
- if there is no basis for positing cause and effect, even that trifling emptiness is not suitable to be posited [for them].

དེས་ན་ཇི་སྲིད་དུ་གང་བདེན་པ་མེད་པར་བསྟན་པ་དེ་ལ་  
 བཅིངས་གྲོལ་སྟོགས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་གཞག་ཐམས་ཅད་བཞག་པས་མི་  
 ཚོག་པ་དེ་སྲིད་དུ་ཁ་ཅིག་མི་བདེན་ལ་ཁ་ཅིག་བདེན་པའི་རྣམ་  
 དབྱེ་མཛད་དགོས་ཏེ། བདག་མེད་པའི་སྟོགས་རེ་བསྟན་ནས་རིམ་  
 གྱིས་འབྲིང་དགོས་ལ་རྒྱ་འབྲས་འཇུག་པའི་གཞི་མེད་ན་ཉི་ཙེ་  
 བའི་སྟོང་པ་དེ་ཡང་གཞག་དུ་མི་བྱང་བའི་བྱིར་རོ། །

Therefore, [Buddha] set out:

- a mode of refuting an inherent nature in persons<sup>b</sup> and thereupon mostly not refuting it with respect to the aggregates [for the sake of taking care of those of the Hearers schools],<sup>73</sup> and
- a mode of refuting that apprehended-object and apprehending-subject are other substantial entities and thereupon not refuting an inherent nature [that is, true existence] with respect to the emptiness of duality [for the sake of taking care of Proponents of Cognition].<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 41a.3) identifies the “partial selflessness” (*bdag med pa’i phyogs re*) here and the “trifling emptiness” (*nyi tshe ba’i stong pa*) in the next clause as substantial existence in the sense of self-sufficiency (*rang rkya thub pa’i rdzas yod*).

<sup>b</sup> In Lo-sang-wang-chug’s *Notes* (325.10) the “inherent nature” that is refuted with respect to persons is taken to be a self-sufficient self (*rang rkya thub pa’i bdag*) as Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho did just above, but with respect to the aggregates the “inherent nature” that is mostly not refuted is taken as establishment by way of its own character (*rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa*).

<sup>c</sup> *rnam rig pa*, *vijñaptika/vijñaptivādin*; these are the Proponents of Mind-

དེའི་ཕྱིར་གང་ཟག་ལ་རང་བཞིན་བཀག་ནས་ཕྱང་པོ་ལ་ཕལ་  
 ཆེར་མ་བཀག་པ་དང་། གཟུང་འཛིན་རྣམས་གཞན་བཀག་ནས་  
 གཉིས་སྟོང་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མི་འགོག་པའི་ཚུལ་གསུངས་སོ། །

When one is able to realize the very meaning of dependent-arising as the meaning of the absence of inherent existence, there is no need to make such differentiations because it is permissible [for that person]<sup>74</sup> to assert the feasibility of all the presentations [of bondage and release and so forth] within just that basis of the negation of inherent existence. Nevertheless, even with respect to those having the lineage of the Supreme Vehicle:

- among those having little danger of the view of annihilation regarding actions and their effects and so forth, there are very many who although they refute a certain coarse true [existence] as the object of negation, do not refute it from a subtle level, and
- among those who [take up the system of]<sup>75</sup> refuting [the object of negation] from a subtle level there are a very great many for whom there comes to be no way of making all the presentations [of bondage and release] within these being established by valid cognition.

Hence, the differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive by the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* appears as a great skillful means for leading very many trainees to the Great Vehicle.

གང་གི་ཆེ་རྒྱུད་གི་དོན་ཉིད་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པའི་དོན་དུ་  
 ཉོགས་པར་ལུས་པ་ན་དེ་འདྲ་བའི་རྣམ་དབྱེ་མཛད་དོན་མེད་  
 དེ། རང་བཞིན་བཀག་པའི་གཞི་དེ་ཉིད་ལ་རྣམ་གཞག་ཐམས་  
 ཅད་འཐད་པ་ཁས་སྒྲངས་པས་ཆོག་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ། །དེ་ལྟ་ན་འང་  
 ཐེག་པ་མཆོག་གི་རིགས་ཅན་ལ་ཡང་ལས་འབྲས་སོགས་ལ་ཆད་  
 པར་ལྟ་བའི་ཉེན་ཚུང་བ་རྣམས་ལ་ནི་དགག་བྱ་བདེན་པ་རགས་  
 པ་འགའ་ཞིག་བཀག་ཀྱང་སྤྱོད་མོ་ནས་མི་ཞིགས་པ་ཤིན་དུ་མང་  
 ལ། སྤྱོད་མོ་ནས་འགོགས་པ་རྣམས་ལ་ནི་ཆད་མས་གྲུབ་པའི་རྣམ་



གཞག་ཐམས་ཅད་བྱ་ས་མེད་པར་སྤང་བ་ཆེས་ཤིན་ཏུ་མང་བས་  
 མདོ་དགོངས་འགྲེལ་གྱིས་དྲང་ངེས་བྱེ་བ་དེ་ནི་གདུལ་བྱ་ཤིན་ཏུ་  
 མང་པོ་ཞིག་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་བཀྲི་བའི་<sup>[46a]</sup>ཐབས་མཁས་ཆེན་  
 པོར་སྤྲད་ངོ་། །

Just as it is explained that this sūtra was spoken [from skill in means]<sup>76</sup> through the force of trainees, so you should understand those [sūtras such as the *Descent into Lañkā* and so forth]<sup>77</sup> that teach in accordance with it. Also, treatises—[such as Asaṅga’s Treatises on the Grounds and so forth]<sup>78</sup> whose meaning in accordance with how they expound commentary on the thought of those [sūtras] is not accepted as those authors’ own system—are to be understood as commentary through the force of trainees in accordance with the thought of those trainees [of Mind-Only].<sup>a</sup>

མདོ་ཐེ་དེ་གདུལ་བྱའི་དབང་གིས་གསུངས་པར་བཤད་པ་དེ་  
 བཞིན་ཏུ་དེ་དང་རྗེས་སུ་མཐུན་པར་སྟོན་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱང་ཤེས་  
 པར་བྱ་ལ། དེ་དག་གི་དགོངས་པ་འགྲེལ་བའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་  
 མཛད་པ་པོས་ཇི་ལྟར་བཀྲལ་བ་ལྟར་བྱ་དོན་དེ་རང་ལྷགས་ལ་མི་  
 བཞིན་པའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་ཀྱང་གདུལ་བྱའི་དབང་གིས་དེའི་  
 བསམ་པ་དང་མཐུན་པར་བཀྲལ་བར་ཁོང་དུ་ཆུད་པར་བྱའོ། །

<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 34b.5: “in accordance with the thought of Proponents of Cognition” (*rnam rig pa’i bsam pa dang mthun par*). As an example of Asaṅga’s setting forth his own system of the Middle Way School, Pal-jor-lhün-drub (*Lamp for the Teaching*, 16.7) refers to Asaṅga’s teaching in his *Commentary on (Maitreya’s) “Sublime Continuum”* that the emptiness of the true existence of sentient beings’ minds is their naturally abiding lineage (*rang bzhin gnas rigs*), that is to say, their buddha-nature. This contrasts with Asaṅga’s teaching in mind-only texts that some sentient beings, specifically those whose lineage of enlightenment is severed, never achieve liberation from cyclic existence, not to speak of achieving the omniscience of Buddhahood.

# HOW NĀGĀRJUNA PRAISES JUST THAT AS THE ESSENCE OF THE MEANING OF THE HIGH SAYINGS

གཉིས་པ་[དེ་ཉིད་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱི་དོན་གྱི་སྤྲིང་པོར་བཞགས་པའི་ཚུལ་]ནི།

[How Nāgārjuna makes praise (of Buddha) from the approach of his setting forth dependent-arising under his own power since just that is the essence of the high sayings]<sup>79</sup>

Perceiving that just this speaking of the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence as the meaning of dependent-arising—“Due to just the reason of arising in dependence upon causes and conditions phenomena do not have inherent existence in the sense of being established by way of their own nature”—is an unsurpassed distinguishing feature elevating our own Teacher above other proponents, the master [Nāgārjuna made] praising [obeisance]<sup>80</sup> to the Supramundane Victor in many texts from the viewpoint of his setting out dependent-arising.

དེ་ལྟར་རྒྱ་དང་རྒྱུན་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་འབྱུང་བའི་གཏན་ཆོག་གས་ཉིད་  
 གྱིས་ཆོས་རྣམས་ལ་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་གྱིས་བྱུང་བའི་རང་བཞིན་  
 མེད་དོ། །ཞེས་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་སྤྲིང་པའི་དོན་རྟེན་འབྱུང་གི་དོན་  
 ཏུ་གསུངས་པ་འདི་ཉིད་རང་གི་སྟོན་པ་སྤྲོ་བ་གཞན་ལས་བྱུང་  
 པར་ཏུ་འཕགས་པའི་འཕགས་ཆོས་སྤྲོ་བ་མེད་པར་གཟིགས་ནས་  
 སྤྲོ་བ་དཔོན་གྱིས་གཞུང་མང་པོར་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་ལ་རྟེན་  
 འབྱུང་གསུངས་པའི་སྒོ་ནས་བསྟོད་དེ།

Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text* called “Wisdom” says:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Introductory stanzas; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 1b.2-1b.3; Sanskrit in La Vallée Poussin,

To the one who taught that what dependently arises  
 Has no cessation, no production,  
 No annihilation, no permanence,  
 No coming, no going,

*Prasannapadā*, 11.13: *anirodhamanutpādamanutchedamaśāśvataṃ / anekārthamanānārthamanāgamamanirgamaṃ // yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaṃ prapañcopaśamaṃ śivaṃ / deśayāmāsa sambuddhastam vande vadatām varam //* Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 5b.5) fleshes out the homage with considerable detail:

To the speaker who from empathy taught trainees that the substrata,  
 compounded dependently arisen phenomena such as forms and so  
 forth,  
 Have—in the perspective of the perception of emptiness by a Superior’s uncontaminated meditative equipoise—the attributes of (1) no  
 cessation in the sense of momentary disintegration, (2) no production  
 in the sense of becoming their own entity,  
 (3) No annihilation in the sense of the severance of an earlier continuum, (4) no permanence in the sense of the abiding of a continuum at  
 all times,  
 (5) No coming from a distant area, (6) no going from the near to the  
 distant,  
 (7) No difference in the sense of the existence of individual meanings,  
 (8) no sameness in the sense of the existence of oneness of meaning,  
 that is, nonindividual meanings,  
 In brief, taught the ultimate mode of subsistence quiescent of all proliferations of knower and known, definition and defined, and so forth in  
 the perspective of such meditative equipoise—nirvāṇa, the pacification of the entirety of the injuries of birth, aging, and so forth within  
 this mode of subsistence:  
 To our Teacher, the completely perfect Buddha, the Supramundane  
 Victor,  
 The best, chief, supreme, and excellent among propounders of what to  
 adopt and what to discard because of being unrivalled even in part by  
 the likes of childish spouters such as Pūraṇa,\* homage.

\* Pūraṇa Kāśhyapa, one of the famed six Indian ascetic teachers, contemporaneous with the Buddha and Mahāvira, renowned for his view of no karmic results.

Ser-shül adds:

The substrata dependent-arising here must be taken as compounded phenomena because of being taken this way in Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* and in Tsong-kha-pa’s *Explanation of (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called “Wisdom,”* and since each of the negatives that are the eight attributes of those [dependent-arising] must be taken as emptinesses, “no permanence” has to be taken as the absence of the abiding of a continuum.

No difference, no sameness—  
 The quiescence of proliferations, and pacification:  
 To the perfect Buddha,  
 The best of propounders, homage.

and his *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* also says:<sup>a</sup>

To the one who spoke of dependent-arising  
 Having abandoned through this mode  
 Production and disintegration,  
 The Sovereign of Subduers, homage.

and his *Refutation of Objections* also says:<sup>b</sup>

Supreme [by] speaking  
 Of emptiness, dependent-arising,  
 And the middle path as having the same meaning,<sup>c</sup>  
 To the unequalled Buddha, I make homage.

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<sup>a</sup> *rigs pa drug cu pa (yuktiṣaṣṭikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3825), TBRC W23703.96:42-46 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab par-tun khang, 1982-1985); *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, 20a.1-20a.2; introductory stanza. Tibetan and English translation also in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 72-73. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 6a.5) fleshes out the homage:

To the speaker who spoke of dependent-arising  
 Having abandoned, or negated, through this mode of reasoning  
 Inherently established production and disintegration, or cessation:  
 To the Sovereign of Subduers who spoke under his own power without  
 relying on others, homage.

For his comparisons with other readings, see Ser-shül's *Notes*, 6b.1.

<sup>b</sup> *rtsod pa bzlog pa (vigrahavyāvartanī)* in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3828), TBRC W23703.96:55-59 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab par-tun khang, 1982-1985); *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, 29a.6; stanza 71. Sanskrit in K. Bhattacharya, E.H. Johnston, A. Kunst, *The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), 85: *yaḥ śūnyatām pratītyasamutpādaṃ madhyamāṃ pratipadaṃ ca / ekārthāṃ nijagāda prañamāmi tam apratimabuddham //*. Sanskrit and Tibetan also in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 217 and 229. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 6b.5) fleshes out the homage:

To the Buddha, supreme in speech who spoke  
 Of the emptiness of inherent existence, dependent-arising,  
 And the middle path as not different and having the same meaning—  
 To the unequalled Buddha who fearlessly proclaimed such in the midst  
 of the retinue, homage.

<sup>c</sup> *don gcig pa*.

and his *Praise of the Inconceivable* also says:<sup>a</sup>

To the one having incomparable, inconceivable,  
Unequaled pristine wisdom  
Who spoke of dependently arisen things  
As just natureless, I make homage.

ཅུ་བ་ཤེས་རབ་ལས། གང་གིས་རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྱེལ་པར་  
འབྱུང་། །འགག་པ་མེད་པ་སྐྱེ་མེད་པ། །ཆད་པ་མེད་པ་རྟག་མེད་  
པ། །འོང་བ་མེད་པ་འགྲོ་མེད་པ། །ཐ་དད་དོན་མེད་དོན་གཅིག་  
མེན། །སྤྱོད་པ་ཉེར་ཞི་ཞི་བཟུན་པ། །རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྱོད་  
རྣམས་ཀྱི། །དམ་པ་དེ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཆའ་ལོ། །ཞེས་དང་། །རིགས་པ་  
དྲུག་ཅུ་པ་ལས་ཀྱང་། །གང་གིས་སྐྱེ་དང་འཇིག་པ་དག་ཚུལ་འདི་  
ཡིས་ནི་སྤངས་གུར་པ། །རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྱུང་བ་གསུང་བ་ཡི། །ཐུབ་  
དབང་དེ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཆའ་ལོ། །ཞེས་དང་། །ཚུངས་སྒྲིག་ལས་  
ཀྱང་། །གང་གིས་སྟོང་དང་རྟེན་འབྱུང་དང་། །དབྱུ་མའི་ལམ་དུ་  
དོན་གཅིག་པར། །གསུང་མཆོག་མཚུངས་པ་མེད་པ་  
ཡི། །<sup>[46b]</sup>སངས་རྒྱས་དེ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཆའ་ལོ། །ཞེས་དང་། །བསམ་གྱིས་  
མི་ཐུབ་པར་བསྟོན་པ་ལས་ཀྱང་། །གང་གིས་དངོས་པོ་རྟེན་འབྱུང་  
རྣམས། །དོ་བོ་མེད་པ་ཉིད་དུ་གསུངས། །ཡེ་ཤེས་མཉམ་མེད་

<sup>a</sup> *bsam gyis mi khyab par bstod pa (acintyastava)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 1128)*, TBRC W23703.1:154-159 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyal-wae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); stanza 1. Sanskrit in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 163: *pratītyajānām bhāvānām naiḥsvābhāvyam jagāda yah / tam namāmy asamajñānam acintyam anidarśanam* //; Tibetan and English translation on pages 12-13. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 7b.5) fleshes out the homage:

To the one having incomparable inconceivable pristine wisdom une-  
qualed in the world  
Because under his own power he spoke of dependently arisen things  
As just without establishment by way of their own nature  
Due to being dependent-arising, to the Buddha I make homage.

བསམ་མི་བྱུང། །དཔེ་མེད་དེ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཁོལ་ལོ། །ཞེས་གསུངས་ཏེ།

The first indicates that dependent-arising are equally devoid of the eight—cessation and so forth. The second indicates that by reason of being dependently arisen they are devoid of those. The third indicates that dependent-arising, middle path, and emptiness of inherent existence have the same meaning. The fourth indicates that for this reason cessation and so forth are devoid of entities established by way of their own character.

དང་པོས་རྟེན་འབྱུང་འགག་སོགས་བརྒྱད་དང་བྲལ་བར་  
 གསུངས་པ་དེ་གཉིས་པས་རྟེན་འབྱུང་ཡིན་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན་གྱིས་དེ་  
 དག་དང་བྲལ་བ་དང་། གསུམ་པས་རྟེན་འབྱུང་དང་དབྱུ་མའི་  
 ལམ་དང་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་སྟོང་པ་རྣམས་དོན་གཅིག་པ་  
 དང་། བཞི་པས་རྒྱ་མཚན་དེས་འགག་སོགས་རང་མཚན་གྱིས་  
 སྒྲུབ་པའི་ངོ་བོ་དང་བྲལ་བར་བསྟན་ཅོ། །

[How the meaning of dependent-arising, the absence of inherent existence, is the essence of (Buddha's) high sayings]<sup>81</sup>

All of the high sayings of the Teacher operate in the context of the two truths, veil and ultimate, and if one does not know the distinction between those two, one does not know the suchness of the teaching.<sup>a</sup> Therefore, the mode of commenting on the high sayings by way of the two truths is just

<sup>a</sup> Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, vol. 2, 7b.6) points out that until here Tsong-kha-pa is condensing the meaning of Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called "Wisdom"* (XXIV.8):

Doctrines taught by the Buddhas  
 Entirely depend on the two truths:  
 Worldly veil truths,  
 And ultimate truths.

Those who do not comprehend  
 The difference between these two truths  
 Do not know the nature  
 Of the Buddha's profound doctrine.

this [speaking of emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising]<sup>82</sup> because all that teach varieties of subjects having the attribute of being dependently imputed and dependently produced are veil truths, whereas the ultimate is exhausted as only the emptiness that is the absence of establishment by way of [objects'] own character due to this reason [that is, due to being dependently imputed and dependently produced];

སྟོན་པའི་གསུང་རབ་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་དང་དོན་དམ་པའི་  
 བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ལ་བརྒྱམས་ནས་འཇུག་ལ། དེ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་  
 དབྱེ་མི་ཤེས་ན་བསྟན་པའི་དེ་ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་མི་ཤེས་པས་བདེན་པ་  
 གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྒྲོ་ནས་གསུང་རབ་འགྲེལ་པའི་ཚུལ་ཡང་དེ་ཉིད་ཡིན་  
 ཏེ། གང་བརྟེན་ནས་བཏགས་པ་དང་བརྟེན་ནས་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚས་  
 ཅན་སྣ་ཚོགས་པ་ཞིག་བསྟན་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི་  
 བདེན་པ་ཡིན་ལ། དོན་དམ་པ་ནི་རྒྱ་མཚན་དེས་རང་གི་མཚན་  
 ཉིད་ཀྱིས་བྱུང་བ་མེད་པའི་སྟོང་པ་དེ་ཙམ་ཞིག་ཏུ་བྱང་བའི་ཕྱིར་  
 ཏེ།

Nāgārjuna's *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* says:<sup>a</sup>

Due to the emptiness of inherent existence

<sup>a</sup> *stong pa nyid bdun cu pa (śūnyatāsaptati)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3827)*, TBRC W23703.96:49-55 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, 26b.4-26b.5; stanzas 68-69. Tibetan and English translation in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 116-117. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 7b.5) fleshes out these stanzas:

Because all things, the qualificands [of the attribute of emptiness], are empty of inherent existence due to being dependent-arising, dependent-arising is the unsurpassed proof of the absence of inherent existence. Therefore, the One-Gone-Thus—unequalled also in qualities such as the ten powers and so forth—taught the dependent-arising of things to trainees as a method for realizing suchness.

The object of the ultimate [pristine wisdom], or the ultimate truth, is exhausted as just that emptiness of inherent existence. All these different varieties of qualificands that the Buddha, the Supramundane Victor, thoroughly, or properly, designated—taught—in dependence upon the conventions of the world are veil truths.

Of all things, the unequalled  
One-Gone-Thus taught  
The dependent-arising of things.

The ultimate is exhausted as that.  
The Buddha, the Supramundane Victor,  
In dependence upon the conventions of the world  
Thoroughly designated all the varieties.

[Nāgārjuna] asserts the ultimate truth in just the way that his own commentary on this says:<sup>83</sup>

The ultimate is exhausted as this “emptiness of inherent existence of all dependently arisen things.”

Therefore, the two chariot-ways [of the Middle Way School and Mind-Only School opened respectively by Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga], except for differences in the object of negation, agree in positing as the ultimate truth just the elimination of self—their respective object of negation—in dependent-arisings that are the bases of negation.<sup>a</sup> Hence, it is not reasonable to posit an ultimate other than this.<sup>b</sup>

སྟོང་ཉིད་བདུན་ཅུ་པ་ལས། དངོས་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་བཞིན་  
གྱིས། སྟོང་པ་ཡིན་པས་དངོས་རྣམས་ཀྱི། ཁྱེན་འབྱུང་འདི་ནི་དེ་  
བཞིན་གཤེགས། མཚུངས་པ་མེད་པས་ཉེ་བར་བསྟན། དམ་པའི་

<sup>a</sup> This statement does not seem to take account of the notion that in the Mind-Only School permanent phenomena also are bases of emptiness but, according to them, are not dependent-arisings.

<sup>b</sup> In the Mind-Only section of Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* (*Emptiness in Mind-Only*, 83) Tsong-kha-pa similarly says:

Hence [it is contradictory for some, namely, Döl-po-pa and others] to explain that the statements in the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras, and so forth, that all phenomena are natureless are in consideration [only] of all conventional phenomena [which, according to them, are self-empty in the sense of being empty of their own true establishment] but do not refer to the ultimate [which, they say, is itself truly established and empty of being any conventional phenomenon]. They thereby contradict the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* as well as the texts of Asaṅga and his brother [Vasubandhu] and are also outside the system of the Superior father [Nāgārjuna], his spiritual sons, and so forth.



དོན་ནི་དེར་ཟད་དོ། །སངས་རྒྱལ་བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས་ཀྱིས་  
 བོ། །འཇིག་རྟེན་ཐ་སྙད་བརྟེན་ནས་སྟུ། །སྣ་ཚོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་  
 ཡང་དག་བརྟགས། །ཞེས་སོ། །དེའི་རང་འགྲེལ་ལས། དོན་དམ་པ་  
 བོ་རྟེན་ཅིང་འགྲེལ་པར་འབྱུང་བའི་<sup>[47a]</sup>དངོས་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་  
 རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་སྟོང་ངོ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་དེར་ཟད་དོ། །ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་  
 བཞིན་དུ་དོན་དམ་བདེན་པ་བཞིན་པས་དགག་བྱ་ལ་མི་འདྲ་  
 བའི་བྱུང་པར་ཡོད་པ་མ་གཏོགས་པ་དགག་གཞི་རྟེན་འགྲེལ་ལ་  
 རང་གི་དགག་བྱའི་བདག་རྣམ་བར་བཅད་པ་ཅམ་ལ་དོན་དམ་  
 བདེན་པར་འཇོག་པ་ནི། ཤིང་རྟེན་སྟོང་གཞིས་མཐུན་པས་དེ་  
 ལས་གཞན་པའི་དོན་དམ་འཇོག་པ་མི་རིགས་ལ།

Furthermore, concerning asserting suchness to be truly [established], Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text Called "Wisdom"* describes [such a person] as having an incorrigible view:<sup>a</sup>

Those who view emptiness [as truly established]<sup>84</sup>  
 Are said to be irredeemable.

and also his *Praise of the Supramundane* speaks of this as a source of great derision:<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Stanza XIII.8cd; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 8a.6-8a.7; Sanskrit in de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 18: *yeṣāṃ tu śūnyatādr̥ṣṭis tān asādhyaṇ babhāṣire* //. For a citation by Döl-po-pa, see Hopkins, *Mountain Doctrine*, 334. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 8b.3) fleshes out these lines:

Those beings who view emptiness as truly established  
 Are said to be irredeemable as long they do not discard this bad view.

<sup>b</sup> 'jig rten las 'das par bstod pa (*lokātītastava*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 1120) TBRC W23703.1:138-140 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); stanza 23. Sanskrit in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 161: *sarvasaṃkalpanāśāya śūnyatāmṛtadeśanā / yasya tasyām api grāhas tvayāsāv avasāditāḥ* //; Tibetan and English on pages 8-9. For a citation in Tsong-

Since the ambrosia of emptiness was taught  
 For the sake of abandoning all conceptualizations,  
 You [Buddha] have greatly derided  
 Those who adhere to it [as truly established].<sup>85</sup>

དེ་ཉིད་བདེན་པར་འདོད་པ་ཡང་རྩ་ཤེས་ལས། གང་དག་སྟོང་པ་  
 ཉིད་ལྟ་བུ། །དེ་དག་བསྐྱབ་དུ་མེད་པར་གསུངས། །ཞེས་གསོར་མི་  
 རུང་བའི་ལྟ་བ་ཅན་དུ་བཤད་ཅིང་། །འཇིག་རྟེན་ལས་འདས་པར་  
 བསྟོང་པ་ལས་ཀྱང་། །ཀུན་རྟོག་ཐམས་ཅད་སྤང་བའི་ཕྱིར། །སྟོང་  
 ཉིད་བདུད་ཅི་སྟོན་མཛད་ན། །གང་ཞིག་དེ་ལ་ཞན་གྱུར་པ། །དེ་  
 ཉིད་ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་ཤིན་དུ་སྤང། །ཅེས་ཤིན་དུ་སྤང་བའི་གནས་སུ་  
 གསུངས་སོ། །

Even the former [Mind-Only]<sup>86</sup> system propounds:

It is in the perspective of a conventional consciousness that the two—a dependent-arising which is the subject [or qualificand]<sup>a</sup> and the ultimate truth which is [its] noumenon<sup>b</sup>—exist as support and supported;<sup>c</sup> it is not in the perspective of a rational conscious-

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kha-pa's *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2008), 162. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 8b.3) fleshes out this stanza:

Since this doctrine of emptiness that is like ambrosia was taught by the  
 Subduer  
 For the sake of eliminating and abandoning all bonds of conceptualiza-  
 tions,  
 You, O Subduer, have very greatly derided  
 Those who adhere to emptiness as truly established since that is an in-  
 corrigible view.

<sup>a</sup> *chos can*, which also could be translated as “substratum.”

<sup>b</sup> *chos nyid*, *dharmatā*; I translate this term as “noumenon” because the term is often found in a combination with *chos* (*dharma*) which I translate in this context as “phenomenon.” Thus, “noumenon” needs to be understood in its basic dictionary sense as reality and thus the final nature of phenomena, and not with an overlay from other systems of thought, such as found in Kant.

<sup>c</sup> *rtan dang bren pa*; or “substratum and what is based on it.” When these terms

ness of uncontaminated meditative equipoise. Therefore, it is indeed not contradictory that although the noumenon exists in its perspective,<sup>a</sup> the subject does not; however, for [something] to exist for the ultimate [consciousness] that analyzes phenomena how they exist in the mode of subsistence by way of their own character, if the subject [the qualificand] does not exist, the noumenon [that is, its quality of reality] has no power to abide in an isolated way. Hence, if other-powered dependent-arising are empty of inherent establishment, the thoroughly established [nature] also would not be established by way of its own character.<sup>b</sup>

and this [Middle Way]<sup>87</sup> system propounds it too.<sup>c</sup> [Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle*] says:<sup>d</sup>

are used with regard to a maṇḍala, they refer to the residence (which is a ground and building) and the residents (which are the deities residing therein).

<sup>a</sup> Reading *de'i ngo na* for *de'i don* (Grags pa & rnam rgyal, 98.16) in accordance with their footnote and in accordance with Ye-shay-thab-khay's *The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa*, Part Two, 141.8 and n.2.

<sup>b</sup> In the Mind-Only School this is taken as the reason why both other-powered natures and thoroughly established natures are inherently established, or established by way of their own character. As Tsong-kha-pa (Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School*, 95) says:

This [Mind-Only School] is a system in which, if other-powered natures are not established by way of their own character, production and cessation are not feasible due to which [other-powered natures] would be deprecated, and it is a system in which if the thoroughly established nature does not exist by way of its own character, it could not be the basic disposition of things.

<sup>c</sup> In the Middle Way School the equivalency of status of other-powered natures and thoroughly established natures is taken as a reason why the ultimate also does not inherently exist and is not established by way of its own character. Döl-po-pa, however, holds that the ultimate truth ultimately exists, or truly exists, whereas dependent-arising do not; see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 295ff., and Tsong-kha-pa's rebuttal, 331ff.

<sup>d</sup> Stanza VII.33cd; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 5b.6-5b.7; Sanskrit in de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 11: *saṃskṛtasyāprasiddhau ca katham setsyatya asaṃskṛtam* //. For citations in Tsong-kha-pa's *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 96 and 98. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 47.4) avers:

The “not established” and “established” in Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the*

When the compounded are thoroughly not established [inherently],<sup>88</sup>

How could the uncompounded be established [by way of their own character]?

and both systems speak many times in accordance with the statement in sūtra, “If even form itself is not observed, how could the thusness of form be observed?”

ཚེས་ཅན་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་དང་ཚེས་ཉིད་དོན་དམ་པའི་བདེན་པ་  
གཉིས་རྟེན་དང་བརྟེན་པར་ཡོད་པ་ནི་ཐ་སྙད་པའི་ཤེས་ངོར་  
ཡིན་ལ་མཉམ་གཞག་ཟག་མེད་ཀྱི་རིགས་ཤེས་ཀྱི་ངོར་མིན་པས་  
དེའི་ངོར་ཚེས་ཉིད་ཡོད་ཀྱང་ཚེས་ཅན་མེད་པར་མི་འགལ་  
མོད། ཚེས་རྣམས་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གནས་ཚུལ་ལ་ཇི་ལྟར་  
ཡོད་དཔྱོད་པའི་དོན་དམ་དུ་ཡོད་པ་ལ་ནི་ཚེས་ཅན་མེད་ན་ཚེས་  
ཉིད་ཡན་གར་བ་ལ་གནས་པའི་མཐུ་མེད་པས་གཞན་དབང་གི་  
རྟེན་འབྲེལ་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་བྱུང་པས་སྟོང་ན་ཡོངས་བྱུང་ཀྱང་  
རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་མ་བྱུང་པར་འགྱུར་ཞེས་ལྷགས་སྒྲ་མས་  
ཀྱང་སྒྲ་ལ། ལྷགས་འདིས་ཀྱང་དེ་ལྟར་སྒྲ་སྟེ། འདུས་བྱས་རབ་དུ་  
མ་བྱུང་པས། འདུས་མ་བྱས་ནི་ཇི་<sup>[47b]</sup>ལྟར་འགྱུར། ཁྱེས་གསུངས་  
ལ། མདོ་ལས་གཟུགས་ཉིད་ཀྱང་མི་དམིགས་ན་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་དེ་  
བཞིན་ཉིད་དམིགས་པར་ལྟ་ག་ལ་འགྱུར། ཁྱེས་གསུངས་པ་བཞིན་  
དུ་ལྷགས་གཉིས་ཀས་ལན་དུ་མར་གསུངས་སོ། །

*Middle* and the “not observed” and “observed” in sūtra [about to be quoted] should be taken as “not inherently existent” and “inherently existent.”

With respect to the statement in Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*,<sup>a</sup> "Only nirvāṇa is true," that is, that it alone is true and compositional phenomena have the attribute of falsity and deception, on this occasion of the meaning of untruth, falsity, Nāgārjuna speaks of deceptiveness, and hence the meaning of true, which is its opposite, is also non-deceptive. However, it does not mean true in the sense of existing by way of its own character when analyzed as to whether it is established or is not established as [its own] the mode of being.<sup>b</sup>

Concerning deceptiveness, just as, for example, misleading upon pretending to seem helpful despite not being helpful is called deceptive, these compositional phenomena—despite not being established by way of their own character—appear to be so, whereupon childish beings are deceived, due to which compositional phenomena are called “false” or “deceptive.” However, since—in the perspective of one who directly sees it—*nirvāṇa*, ultimate truth, is not deceptive through appearing as above [that is, within a discordance between how it appears and how it subsists],<sup>90</sup> it is said to be “nondeceptive” or “true.”<sup>c</sup>

རིགས་པ་རྒྱག་ཅུ་པ་ལས། ཟླ་ངན་འདས་པ་བདེན་གཅིག་ཤུ། ཞེས་  
དེ་གཅིག་ཤུ་བདེན་གྱི་འདུ་བྱེད་རྣམས་བརྟུན་བསྐྱུ་བའི་ཆོས་ཅན་  
ལོ་ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་ནི་མི་བདེན་པ་བརྟུན་པའི་དོན་སྐབས་འདིར་

<sup>a</sup> Stanza 35a; sde dge 3825, *sde dge dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, 21b.5; Tibetan and English also found in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 84-85. The full stanza is:

When the Conqueror said  
That only nirvāṇa is true,  
What wise person would think,  
“The rest are not unreal”?

Tsong-kha-pa challenges Döl-po-pa's reading that this stanza indicates that nirvāṇa, here meaning ultimate truth, is truly established. For more discussion of this, see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 98ff.

<sup>b</sup> Although emptiness is the mode of being of phenomena, it itself is not established as its own mode of being, and hence is not established by way of its own character.

<sup>c</sup> In the perspective of one who directly sees the ultimate truth—nirvāṇa, here meaning ultimate truth—does not appear to be established by way of its own character.

སྐྱུ་བ་ལ་གསུངས་པས་དེའི་བསྐྱོག་ཕྱོགས་བདེན་པའི་དོན་ཡང་མི་  
 བསྐྱུ་བ་ཡིན་གྱི་ཡིན་ལྟགས་ལ་གྲུབ་མ་གྲུབ་དབྱུང་བའི་ཆོ་རང་གི་  
 མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་ཡོད་པའི་བདེན་པ་མིན་ཅོ། །སྐྱུ་བ་ནི་དཔེར་ན་  
 གན་འདོགས་པ་ཡིན་ཡང་གན་འདོགས་པ་ལྟར་བཅོས་ནས་  
 འདྲིད་པ་ལ་སྐྱུ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པ་བཞིན་དུ་འདུ་བྱེད་འདི་རྣམས་  
 རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་མ་གྲུབ་བཞིན་དུ་དེར་སྤང་ནས་བྱིས་པ་  
 སྐྱུ་བས་བརྟུན་པའམ་སྐྱུ་བ་བེར་ལ། ཟུང་འདས་དོན་དམ་བའི་  
 བདེན་པ་ནི་དེ་མངོན་སུམ་དུ་མཐོང་བའི་ངོར་སྡུ་མ་ལྟར་སྤང་  
 རས་སྐྱུ་བ་མེད་པས་མི་སྐྱུ་བའམ་བདེན་པ་ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ། །

*[How when the meaning of dependent-arising  
 is not realized, one falls to extremes of  
 permanence and annihilation]*<sup>91</sup>

Others' [that is, non-Buddhists'] Schools who do not assert persons and phenomena as dependently arisen relative phenomena<sup>a</sup> but assert those two [persons and phenomena] to be tru[ly established] fall into the chasms of views of permanence and annihilation. Also, our own schools that, although they assert those two as relative phenomena, assert them to be established as [their own] suchness and to be established by way of their own character have come under the influence of views of permanence and annihilation. Hence, if you want to be free from views of permanence and

<sup>a</sup> *rten nas 'byung ba'i rten 'brel*. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 8b.3) points out:

Many speak in accordance with this [statement by Tsong-kha-pa] that Others' Schools do not assert persons and phenomena as dependent-arising; however, Khay-drub's *Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate* says that except for the Diverged Afar [Nihilists] (*rgyang phan pa, ayata*), even [Others' Schools] have established that the compounded are dependent-arising; [his] meaning is that they have already merely established that they assert that the compounded are produced in dependence upon causes and conditions.

annihilation, just this mode of asserting persons and phenomena to be dependent-arising, empty of inherent existence like a moon in water, is asserted to be the excellent door for abandoning permanence and annihilation.

གང་ཟག་དང་ཆོས་བརྟེན་ནས་འབྱུང་བའི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་མི་འདོད་  
 པར་དེ་གཉིས་བདེན་པར་འདོད་པའི་གཞན་སྡེ་ནི་རྟག་ཆད་ཀྱི་  
 ལྟ་བའི་གཡང་དུ་ལྷུང་ལ། དེ་གཉིས་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་དུ་འདོད་ཀྱང་དེ་  
 ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་དུ་གྲུབ་པ་དང་རང་གི་མཆོན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ་པར་  
 འདོད་པའི་རང་སྡེ་དེ་དག་ཀྱང་རྟག་ཆད་ཀྱི་ལྟ་བའི་དབང་དུ་  
 འགྱུར་བས། རྟག་ཆད་ཀྱི་ལྟ་བ་དང་བྲལ་བར་འདོད་ན་གང་ཟག་  
 དང་ཆོས་རྣམས་བརྟེན་ནས་འབྱུང་བ་ཟུ་ཟླ་བཞིན་དུ་རང་བཞིན་  
 གྱིས་སྟོང་པར་ཁས་ལྗང་ངོ་ཞེས་ཚུལ་འདི་ཉིད་རྟག་ཆད་སྟོང་  
 བའི་སྒོ་དམ་བར་བཞེད་དེ།

Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Stanzas 43-45; sde dge 3825, *sde dge dbu ma*, vol. tsa, 22a.2-22a.3; Tibetan and English also found in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 86-87. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 9a.1) fleshes out these stanzas:

Those Other Schools, Saṃkhyas and so forth, who adhere to the true establishment of the self

Or the world—that is, the aggregates—by way of asserting them as not dependent, not dependent-arising,

Alas! are in a situation of ruin. The way they are in a situation of ruination is that when adhering to such, they are captivated by—come under the influence of—bad views

That the mind is permanent, impermanent—annihilated—and so forth.

How could those among our own schools who accept dependent-arising and assert dependent things

As established as [their own] suchness—as truly established—

Also not be involved

In the fallacies of views permanence and so forth—annihilation! They are!

How once they have asserted that the aggregates and so forth are inherently established, this turns into view of permanence and annihilation is as Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called*

Those who adhere to the self  
 Or the world as not dependent,  
 Alas, are captivated by views  
 Of permanence, impermanence, and so forth.

How could those who assert dependent things  
 As established as [their own] suchness  
 Also not be involved  
 In the fallacies of permanence and so forth!

Those who assert dependent things  
 As not real and not unreal  
 Like a moon in water  
 Are not captivated by views.

Through [objects] not being established as [their own] reality, the view of permanence is abandoned, and through [objects] being able to perform

“*Wisdom*” (XV.11) says:

Whatever exists by way of its nature is permanent  
 Since it does not become nonexistent.  
 If it is said that what arose formerly [by way of its nature] is now  
     nonexistent,  
 Therefore annihilation follows.

Tsong-kha-pa’s *Explanation [of (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called ‘Wisdom’”]* on this point says that: If the aggregates and so forth are asserted as inherently established, then even though they are not explicitly asserted as permanent, this becomes a view that they are permanent since it is not logically feasible for a nature [the inherently established] to become otherwise [that is, to change]. And when it is asserted that the truly established that arose formerly is now nonexistent upon having disintegrated, then since it is not fitting for truly established former and later to have the same continuum, it must be asserted that the continuum of the former has been severed, whereby this becomes a view of annihilation.

Those wise proponents of the Middle Way School who assert dependent produced things  
 As not real, or not true, and not unreal—not nonexistent—  
 Like a moon in water  
 Are not captivated by bad views of permanence and annihilation, as Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle”* (VI.38cd) says:

Because of not inherently existing even as either of the two truths,  
 Those are not either permanent or annihilated.



their respective functions, the view of annihilation is abandoned—they are also not unrealities unable to do such [that is, unable to perform their respective functions].

རིགས་པ་རྒྱུ་མཉམ་པ་ལས། གང་དག་གིས་ནི་མ་<sup>[48a]</sup>བརྟེན་  
 པར། །བདག་གམ་འཇིག་རྟེན་མངོན་ཞེན་པ། །དེ་དག་གྱེ་མ་རྟག་  
 མི་རྟག་ལ་སོགས་ལྟ་བུས་འཕྲོགས་པ་ཡིན། །གང་དག་བརྟེན་ནས་  
 དངོས་པོ་རྣམས། །དེ་ཉིད་རྟེན་གྱི་འདོད་པ། །དེ་དག་ལ་ཡང་  
 རྟག་སོགས་སྒྲིན། །དེ་དག་རི་ལྟར་འབྱུང་མི་འབྱུང་། །གང་དག་  
 བརྟེན་ནས་དངོས་པོ་རྣམས། །ཁུ་ཡི་ཟླ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་ནི། །ཡང་དག་མ་  
 ཡིན་ལོག་མིན་པར། །འདོད་པ་དེ་དག་ལྟས་མི་འཕྲོགས། །ཞེས་  
 གསུངས་ཏེ་ཡང་དག་པར་མ་གྱུ་བ་པས་རྟག་ལྟ་སྤྲོང་ལ་རང་རང་  
 གི་བྱ་བ་བྱེད་ཀྱས་པས་ཆད་ལྟ་སྤྲོང་སྟེ་དེ་ལྟར་མི་རྣམས་པའི་ལོག་  
 པ་ཡང་མིན་ནོ། །

## [REFUTING A WRONG PROPOSITION ABOUT THE MEANING OF SELF-EMPTINESS]<sup>92</sup>

Therefore, to propound that:

- these external and internal things are asserted to be empty of inherent existence and
- this emptiness is an emptiness annihilating conventionalities

is a proposition contradicting the two systems of the great openers of the chariot-ways [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga] who earnestly prove dependent-arising to be devoid of both permanence and annihilation. Also, many who claim to be Proponents of the Middle assert that this [proposition] and their own assertion that conventionalities are empty of their own entities are similar. Even both misapprehend the meaning of self-emptiness and also are [perforce] proclaiming, “We have no method for showing that these external and internal dependent-arising are devoid of permanence and annihilation.”

དེས་ན་ཕྱི་ནང་གི་དངོས་པོ་འདི་རྣམས་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་སྟོང་  
 བར་ཡང་འདྲོད་ལ་སྟོང་བ་དེ་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཆད་སྟོང་ངོ་ཞེས་སྒྲ་བ་  
 བྱི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་རྟག་ཆད་གཉིས་ཀ་དང་བྲལ་བར་ནན་ཏན་གྱིས་  
 སྒྲུབ་བ་ཤིང་རྟ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལྷགས་གཉིས་ཀ་དང་འགལ་བར་སྒྲ་བ་  
 ཡིན་ལ་དབྱ་མ་བར་སྒྲུབ་པ་མང་པོ་ཡང་དེ་དང་རང་ཉིད་ཀུན་  
 རྫོབ་རྣམས་རང་གི་ངོ་བོས་སྟོང་བར་འདྲོད་པ་གཉིས་མཐུན་པར་  
 འདྲོད་པ་གཉིས་ཀ་ཡང་རང་སྟོང་གི་དོན་ཕྱིན་ཅ་ལོག་ཏུ་གཟུང་  
 བ་ཡིན་ཞིང་། ཁོ་བོ་ཅག་ལ་ཕྱི་ནང་གི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་འདི་རྣམས་  
 རྟག་ཆད་དང་བྲལ་བར་སྟོན་པའི་ཐབས་མེད་དོ་ཞེས་སྒྲིག་པ་  
 ཡང་ཡིན་ནོ། །

[INDICATING THAT THE ASSERTION DEPENDENT-  
 ARISING IS TRULY ESTABLISHED IS A SOURCE OF  
 LAUGHTER]<sup>93</sup>

Since Outsiders who propound that things are permanent do not assert dependent-arising, their assertion that phenomena are truly established is not the system of our Teacher, and therefore they are not a source of amazement; however, that those who, upon asserting dependent-arising<sup>a</sup> in which [things] are produced and arise in dependence upon causes and conditions, assert [things] to be truly established are said to be a source of great laughter.

དངོས་པོ་རྣམས་རྟག་པར་སྒྲུབ་པའི་ཕྱི་རོལ་བ་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་ཁས་མི་  
 ལེན་པས་ཆོས་བདེན་པར་གྲུབ་པར་འདྲོད་པ་ནི། རང་གི་སྟོན་  
 པའི་ལྷགས་ཡིན་པས་མཆར་པའི་གནས་མིན་ལ་རྒྱ་རྒྱེན་ལ་བརྟེན་  
 ནས་སྐྱེ་ཞིང་འབྱུང་བའི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་ཁས་སྒྲངས་ནས་བདེན་པར་

<sup>a</sup> *rten 'brel*.

གྲུབ་པར་འདོད་པ་ནི་ཆེས་བཞད་གད་ཀྱི་གནས་སྐོམ་ཞེས་གསུངས་  
 དེ།

Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:<sup>a</sup>

Those [Outsider] Proponents of Existence  
 Who upon apprehending things as supreme [that is, as truly es-  
 tablished]<sup>b</sup>

Abide in just that path  
 Are not amazing even in the slightest for that.

Those who, depending on the path of the Buddha,  
 Propound impermanence to all  
 And then with debate abide apprehending things as supreme  
 [that is, as truly established]<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Stanzas 40-41; sde dge 3825, *sde dge dbu ma*, vol. tsa, 21b.7-22a.1; Tibetan and English also found in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 84-87. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 9b.3) fleshes out these stanzas:

Those Outsider Proponents of Inherent Existence such as the Sāṃkhyas who assert a general principal (*spyi gtso bo*, *sāmānyapradhāna*; also called, nature, *rang bzhin*, *prakṛti*), the Vaiśeṣikas who assert that the minute particles of the four elements are permanent, and so forth and

Who upon apprehending things as supreme, or truly established,  
 Abide in, or depend on, just that path taught by their teachers  
 Are, therefore, not amazing—surprising—even in the slightest for that.

On the contrary, those Proponents of Things among our own schools who, depending and abiding in the path of the view of dependent-arising taught by their teacher, the Buddha,  
 Propound to all trainees that the compounded are impermanent  
 And then by way of debating against Proponents of No Inherent Existence abide in apprehending things as supreme—that is, as truly established—

Are indeed fantastic! Chandrakīrti's commentary says that “fantastic,” a term of praise, is used ironically for what is not a situation of praise.

<sup>b</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 51.6. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (52.4) prefers the translation of this line in the commentary as *ngos la zhen par gnas pa ni* (“abiding in adhering to things”).

<sup>c</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 51.6. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (52.4) prefers the translation of this line in the commentary as *rtsod pa yis ni ngos po la* (“with debate [abiding] in things”).

Are indeed fantastic!

This [second stanza] says that those who assert that fully qualified production, cessation, and so forth are not positable within no true establishment and nonexistence by way of [the object's] own character are a source of laughter.

རིགས་པ་<sup>[48b]</sup> ཐུག་ཅུ་པ་ལས། གལ་ཏེ་ཡོད་པར་སྒྲིབ་  
 རྒྱུ་སྒྲིབ་། དངོས་མཚོག་བཟུང་ནས་གནས་པ་ནི། ལམ་དེ་ཉིད་ལ་  
 གནས་པ་སྟེ། དེ་ལ་ཡ་མཚན་མུང་ཅུང་མེད། སངས་རྒྱལ་ལམ་  
 ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་ནི། ཀྱུན་ལ་མི་རྟག་སྒྲིབ་རྒྱུ་སྒྲིབ་། རྩོད་པས་དངོས་  
 རྒྱུ་སྒྲིབ་མཚོག་བཟུང་ནས། གནས་པ་གང་ཡིན་དེ་མེད་དོ། ཞེས་  
 སོ། །འདིས་ནི་བདེན་པར་མེད་པ་དང་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་  
 མེད་པ་ལ་སྐྱེ་འགག་སོགས་མཚན་ཉིད་པ་གཞག་ཏུ་མེད་པར་  
 འདོད་པ་རྒྱུ་སྒྲིབ་བཞད་གང་གི་གནས་སུ་གསུངས་སོ། །

*[Indicating the difficulty of realizing such]*<sup>94</sup>

Since this dependent-arising devoid of permanence and annihilation is very greatly difficult to realize, the Teacher [Buddha] himself thought, “If I teach to others the profound doctrine that I have understood, they will not realize it, and therefore for the time being I will remain without speaking.” Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Text Called “Wisdom”* says:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Stanza XXIV.12; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3824)*, TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 15a.3; Sanskrit in de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 35: *ataś ca pratyudāvṛttam cittam deśayitum muneh / dharmam matvāsyā dharmasya mandair duravagāhatām //*. Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 9b.6) fleshes out these stanzas:

When the meaning of emptiness is misapprehended, ruination is incurred; therefore, knowing that it would be difficult  
 For those of weak intelligence to realize the depth of this doctrine of the profound emptiness,  
 The mind of the Subduer made a display of turning

Therefore, knowing that it would be difficult  
 For the weak to realize the depth of this doctrine,  
 The mind of the Subduer turned  
 Away from teaching doctrine.

According to the first opening of the way [that is, the Mind-Only system<sup>95</sup> dependent-arising devoid of permanence and annihilation]<sup>a</sup> is not quite that difficult.

“Therefore” is explained [as meaning that] those who misapprehended this [very subtle] mode [of positing the two truths in the Middle Way system] would be ruined and that even those who did not possess supreme intelligence would have difficulty realizing it.

རྟོག་འབྲེལ་རྟག་ཆད་དང་བཅུ་ལ་བ་འདི་ནི་ཆེས་ཤིན་ཏུ་རྟོགས་  
 དཀའ་བས་སྟོན་པས་ཀྱང་ངས་ཆོས་ཟབ་མོ་ཁོང་དུ་ཆུད་པ་དེ་  
 གཞན་ལ་བརྟན་ན་དེ་དག་གིས་མི་རྟོགས་པས་རེ་ཞིག་མི་སྤྲོ་བར་  
 གནས་པར་བྱའོ་སྐུ་དཔོངས་པ་ཡིན་ཏེ། ཅུ་ཤེ་ལས། དེ་ཕྱིར་  
 བན་པས་ཆོས་འདི་ཡི་གཏིང་རྟོགས་དཀའ་བར་མཁྱེན་གྱིར་

Away from teaching this profound doctrine for forty-nine days after being enlightened.

As [the *Extensive Sport Sūtra*, *mdo rgya cher rol pa* (*lalitavistara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*), in *bka' 'gyur* (*sde dge par phud*, 95), TBRC W22084.46:3-434 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979); Peking 763, vol. 27, 238.5.6, chapter 25; Buddhist Sanskrit Texts No. 1, 286.10)] says:

I have found a truth, profound, peaceful, lacking proliferations,  
 Radiant, uncompounded, the ambrosia.  
 Though I taught it, no one would understand.  
 I should stay without speaking in the forest.

and the *Compendium* says:

Therefore, having found beneficial empathetic enlightenment  
 But thinking who among the groups of sentient beings would  
 understand, he displayed little urgency.

<sup>a</sup> Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching* (12a.2) specifies this as “realizing (1) the emptiness of apprehended-object and apprehending-subject as other substantial entities and (2) imputational natures imputed as entities and attributes as not established by way of their own character.”

ནས། ལྷུབ་པའི་ལྷགས་ནི་ཚེས་བསྟན་ལས། རབ་ཏུ་ལོག་པར་  
 གྱུར་བ་ཡིན། ཞེས་གསུངས་ཏེ། སྒོལ་བྱེ་བ་དང་པོ་སྒྱུར་ཡིན་ན་དེ་  
 ཅུ་ཏུ་མི་དགའོ། དེ་བྱུར་ཞེས་བ་ནི་ཚུལ་དེ་ལ་ལོག་པར་བཟུང་  
 བས་ནི་ཕུང་བར་བྱེད་ལ། སྒྲོ་མཚོག་དང་མི་ལྡན་པས་ཀྱང་རྟོགས་  
 པར་དགའ་བ་ལ་བཤད་དོ།

[Advising that therefore it is necessary to strive at realizing that the emptiness of inherent existence is the meaning of dependent-arising]<sup>96</sup>

Hence, [two stanzas from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*]<sup>97</sup> say, “Strive at knowing the meaning of suchness, having abandoned (1) forsaking both the words or the meaning of this mode and (2) nihilistic views in which cause, effect, and so forth cannot be posited<sup>a</sup> [within the absence of inherent existence];”<sup>98</sup> the *Precious Garland* says:<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 10a.3) fleshes out Tsong-kha-pa's commentary before the quote from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*:

Abandon (1) rejecting both the words and the meaning or, though not the words, rejecting the meaning of this mode of the *Perfection of Wisdom* teaching emptiness and (2) abandon nihilistic views in which—upon apprehending emptiness as meaning utter nonexistence—cause, effect, and so forth are viewed as nonexistent! And strive at methods for realizing emptiness!

<sup>b</sup> Stanzas 121-123; an extra stanza has been added at the beginning for context. See Hopkins, *Nāgārjuna's Precious Garland: Buddhist Advice for Living and Liberation*, 70 and 111-112. Sanskrit text (stanzas II.21-23) in Hahn, *Ratnāvalī*, vol. 1, 48: *durbhuktena yathānena vināśam adhigacchati / subhuktenāyur ārogyaṃ balaṃ saukhyāni cāśnute // durjñātena tathānena vināśam adhigacchati / samyagjñātena tu sukhaṃ bodhiṃ cāpnoty anuttarām // tasmād atra pratikṣepaṃ dṛṣṭiṃ tyaktvā ca nāstikīm / samyagjñānaparaṃ yatnaṃ kuru sarvārthasiddhaye* // Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 10a.4) fleshes out the citation:

Just as through appropriate diet and proper quantity  
 Good physical qualities such as greater strength arise  
 And through inappropriate diet and improper quantity  
 Diseases are generated,

[Just as one comes to ruin  
Through wrong eating but obtains  
Long life, freedom from disease,  
Strength, and pleasures through right eating,]

So one comes to ruin  
Through wrong understanding  
But obtains happiness and highest enlightenment  
Through right understanding.

Therefore having abandoned with respect to this [doctrine of  
emptiness]  
Rejection and nihilistic views,  
Be supremely intent on the understanding of reality  
For the sake of achieving all aims.

དེས་ན་ཚུལ་འདིའི་ཚིག་དང་དོན་གཉིས་ཀ་དང་དོན་སྤང་བ་  
དང་རྒྱ་འབྲས་སོགས་གཞག་ས་མེད་པའི་མེད་ལྷ་སྤངས་ལ་དེ་ཁོ་

So one comes to ruin  
Through wrong understanding of the meaning of emptiness  
But obtains the benefits of happiness temporarily and highest enlighten-  
ment in the end  
Through right understanding the meaning emptiness nonerroneously.

Therefore having abandoned with respect to this emptiness rejecting  
both the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras* that are words expressing emp-  
tiness and the emptiness that is the meaning expressed or though the  
words are not rejected, rejecting the meaning  
And having abandoned nihilistic views in which emptiness is appre-  
hended as meaning nonexistence and thereupon viewing that there is  
no way of positing cause, effect, and so forth,  
Be supremely intent on methods for understanding the mode of subsist-  
ence, the meaning of reality,  
For the sake of achieving all aims of beings.

The advice is addressed to King *bde spyod bzang po*, identified by Dr. Heramba Chatterjee Sastri as “presumably Gautamīputra Śātakarṇī, the lord over the three oceans as recorded in *Nasik Edict* of his mother Bālaśrī, stated to be a friend of Nāgārjuna, as the person to whom two of the friendly epistles were addressed. The date of Gautamīputra as assigned by K. A. N. Sastri is 80-104 A. D.” See *The Philosophy of Nāgārjuna as contained in the Ratnāvalī* (Calcutta: Saraswat Library, 1977), 11-12. Robert Thurman identifies the king as Udayi in “Nagarjuna’s Guidelines for Buddhist Social Action” in *Engaged Buddhist Reader* edited by Arnold Kotler (Berkeley: Parallax, 1996), 80.

ན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དོན་ཤེས་པ་ལ་འབད་པར་གྱིས་ཤིག་ཅེས་གསུངས་  
 ཏེ། རིན་ཆེན་ཐེང་བ་ལས། དེ་བཞིན་ལོག་བར་བབུང་བ་  
 དེས། རྒྱང་བ་དག་ནི་ཐོབ་འགྱུར་ཞིང་། ལེགས་པར་ཤེས་པས་  
 བདེ་བ་དང་། རྒྱང་ཆུབ་སྒྲ་ན་མེད་པ་འཐོབ། དེ་ཕྱིར་འདི་ལ་  
 སྒྲོང་བ་དང་། མེད་པའི་སྒྲ་<sup>[49a]</sup>བ་སྤངས་ནས་ནི། དོན་ཀུན་  
 བསྐྱབ་ཕྱིར་ཡང་དག་པའི། ཤེས་ལ་ནན་ཏན་མཆོག་མཛོད་  
 ཅིག་ཅེས་སོ། །

You should understand the many other forms of reasoning, spoken by the master [Nāgārjuna] in commenting on the profound meaning of the high sayings, to be branches of understanding this [dawning of dependent-arising as emptiness]<sup>99</sup> and train in the meaning of the middle.<sup>a</sup> I have explained this mode of reasoning manifoldly elsewhere<sup>b</sup> and also wish to compose a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise Called "Wisdom"*; therefore, here I will not elaborate any more beyond just this.

སྒྲོང་བ་དོན་གྱིས་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱི་ཟབ་དོན་འགྲེལ་པ་ལ་རིགས་པའི་  
 རྒྱུ་གངས་མང་དུ་གསུངས་པ་གཞན་རྒྱུ་མས་ནི་འདི་ཁོང་དུ་  
 རྒྱུད་པའི་ཡན་ལག་དུ་ཤེས་པར་གྱིས་ལ་དབུ་མའི་དོན་ལ་སྤྱང་

<sup>a</sup> Pal-jor-lhün-drub (*Lamp for the Teaching*, 12a.5) concludes this section by saying:

The endless forms of reasonings set forth by the master [Nāgārjuna] in the *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called "Wisdom"* and so forth to comment on the profound meaning of the high sayings—contradictory consequences, nonestablishments [drawing] parallels with propositions, parallels with reasons, other-renowned reasons, and so forth—are quintessential instructions for understanding dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness and emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising.

<sup>b</sup> Dön-drub-gyal-tshan's *Four Intertwined Commentaries* (58a.5/315.5) identifies these as Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* and *Praise of Dependent-arising*. Tsong-kha-pa completed *The Essence of Eloquence* in 1408 after which he returned to commenting on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle*, completing the *Ocean of Reasoning*.



བར་བྱའོ། །རིགས་པའི་ཚུལ་འདི་ནི་གཞན་དུ་མང་དུ་བཤད་ཟེན་  
 ཅིང་། ཚུ་བ་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་རྣམ་འགྲེལ་ཡང་བྱེད་པར་འདོད་པས་  
 འདིར་དེ་ཙམ་ལས་མི་སྒྲོའོ། །



PART TWO:  
*ANALYSIS OF ISSUES I:  
CRITERIA FOR DIFFERENTIATING  
THE INTERPRETABLE  
AND THE DEFINITIVE*



# 1. What does the Sūtra Say?

Lo-sang-ge-leg<sup>a</sup> opens his commentary on the Middle Way School section of *The Essence of Eloquence* by quoting a stanza from sūtra:<sup>100</sup>

The Sages do not wash away ill-deeds with water,  
Nor remove sufferings with their hands,  
Nor transfer their own realizations to others.  
Beings are freed through the teaching of the truth, the noume-  
non.<sup>b</sup>

As the last line says, liberation from suffering depends on understanding the Buddha's teaching, and thus a practitioner needs to be able to distinguish which among his high sayings teach the ultimate truth. As Lo-sang-ge-leg explains:

The actual way to tame our mental continuum is uniquely the Conqueror's high sayings, and also for it to be able to actually tame the mental continuum:

- you must know whether the meanings taught by those high sayings abide or not in accordance with how they are taught, and
- although those abiding this way are suitable to be asserted literally, you must understand whether the meaning expressed in accordance with this literal assertion does not need to be interpreted as a second meaning, other than that one—that is to say, it must be understood whether it teaches the final mode of abiding, emptiness, as the definitive meaning.

This knowledge depends on differentiating the interpretable and the definitive among the high sayings; hence, in general [this knowledge] is the purpose of differentiating the interpretable and

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<sup>a</sup> *pra/bra sti dge bshes blo bzang dge legs*; the Lesser Tra-ti Ge-shay born in the seventeenth century, not to be confused with the Greater Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-drub (*pra/bra sti dge bshes rin chen don grub*) who flourished in the mid-seventeenth century and was born in Am-do, *dpa' ris pra sti*.

<sup>b</sup> *chos nyid, dharma*tā; I translate this term as “noumenon” because it is often found in combination with *chos (dharma)* which I translate in this context as “phenomena.” Thus, “noumenon” needs to be understood in its basic English dictionary sense as the final nature of phenomena, and not with an overlay from other systems of thought, such as that found in Kant.

the definitive. Moreover, the means of eradicating the apprehension of self [that is, inherent existence], as well as what accompany it, is solely this profound view of the Middle Way School.

It is necessary to understand both whether a scriptural passage is literal and whether it teaches the ultimate, since it is through meditating on the ultimate that freedom from pain is achieved. This means that some high sayings are not literal and that others, though literal, do not teach the ultimate; hence, differentiation of what requires interpretation and what is definitive among the high sayings is crucial to the process of liberation from cyclic existence and to attaining the great liberation of Buddhahood.

## THE *TEACHINGS OF AKṢHAYAMATI SŪTRA* AS A SCRIPTURAL SOURCE FOR DIFFERENTIATING THE INTERPRETABLE AND THE DEFINITIVE IN THE MIDDLE WAY SCHOOL

When Nāgārjuna and his chief student Āryadeva differentiate between the interpretable and the definitive, they do not explicitly identify sūtra sources for doing so, but their mode of differentiation implicitly shows that the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* is such a source. In addition, Chandrakīrti, Avalokitavrata, and Kamalashīla explicitly cite the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* as a source for differentiating between interpretable and definitive sūtras. Let us cite these respective passages. Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* says:<sup>a</sup>

*Objection:* If in that way you present dependent-arising as qualified by no production and so forth, then how would this not be contradicted by the teachings by the Supramundane Victor that dependent-arising are qualified by cessation and so forth thusly:

Due to the condition of ignorance compositional actions are produced, and due to the cessation of ignorance compositional actions are ceased.

<sup>a</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba* (*mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Chapter One; Peking 5260, vol. 98, 7.5.7ff.; Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*, 39.8-42.8. This is partially quoted by Tsong-kha-pa in his *Ocean of Reasoning, Explanation of (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* (Peking 6153, vol. 156, 64.2.3).

and likewise:

Alas, compositional factors are impermanent,  
Having the attributes of production and disintegration.  
The quiescence of those that disintegrate  
Upon being produced is bliss.

and likewise:

Whether Ones-gone-thus arise or Ones-gone-thus do not  
arise, this noumenon of phenomena only abides.

and:

The phenomena causing sentient beings to remain are singular—the four foods. The phenomena sustaining the world are twofold—knowing shame and having embarrassment.

and so forth, and likewise:

One has come to here from another world. One will go  
from here to another world.

*Response:* Since in that way cessation and so forth are heard to exist in dependent-arisings, the master [Nāgārjuna] composed this *Treatise on the Middle* for the sake of showing the difference between sūtras of interpretable meaning and of definitive meaning. With respect to this, those scriptural passages speaking of production and so forth of dependent-arisings were not spoken from the viewpoint of the nature of objects [as known by] the uncontaminated wisdom of those free from the dimness of ignorance. Rather, they were spoken from the viewpoint of the objects of consciousness of those whose eye of intelligence is obscured by the dimness of ignorance. From the viewpoint of perceiving suchness, the Supramundane Victor said:

O monastics, this which is nirvāṇa, having the attribute of non-deceptiveness, is the ultimate truth. All conditioned things are false, having the attribute of deceptiveness [appearing to exist in their own right when in fact they do not].

and so forth. Similarly:

There is here no suchness and no non-erroneous suchness.  
These have the attribute of deception. These also have the

attribute of destructive allurements.<sup>a</sup> These also are falsities; these are illusions, bewilderments of children.

Similarly:<sup>b</sup>

Forms are like balls of foam.

Feelings are like bubbles.

Discriminations resemble mirages.

Compositional factors are like banana tree trunks.<sup>c</sup>

Consciousnesses resemble magical illusions.

Thus the Sun Friend Buddha said.

and similarly:

If monastics—mindful and attentive, exerting effort—analyze phenomena day and night, they should realize peace, the auspicious abode of the extinction of conditioned things, the selflessness of phenomena.<sup>d</sup>

and so forth. Due to not understanding [Buddha's] thought in teaching this way [that is to say, teaching relative to individual perspectives that cessation and so forth exist and do not exist],<sup>101</sup> some would have doubt, "Here [among these high sayings whose literal readings are not in agreement], what is the teaching having the meaning of suchness? What indeed is that having [some other] thought [as its basis]?" and due to having [even] weaker [and duller] intelligence [than those (doubters)] some think teachings of interpretable meaning are of definitive meaning. In order to dis-

<sup>a</sup> Missing in the Tibetan.

<sup>b</sup> *Samyutta Nikāya III*, ed. M. Leon Feer (London: Pali Text Society, Luzac and Company, 1960), 141-142; *The Book of Kindred Sayings III*, trans. F. L. Woodward, Pali Text Society 13 (London: Luzac and Company, 1954), 120-121. (Note drawn from Lopez, *A Study of Svātantrika*, 451 n.4.)

For Buddhapālita's citation of this, Bhāviviveka's objection to Buddhapālita's explanation, and Ngag-wang-pal-dan's defense of the position of the Consequence School see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 719-722; for Bhāviviveka's extensive explanation of the passage, see *Maps of the Profound*, 722.

<sup>c</sup> The plantain tree. I assume this to be referring to the trunk of the tree which, much like an onion, has no core. However, the late Ye-shay-thub-tan (*ye shes thub bstan*), abbot emeritus of Lo-sel-ling College, took it as referring to the fact that such trees bear fruit only once and are useless thereafter. Poussin (41, n. 8) refers to the citations of these lines in *Samyuttanikāya III*, 142.

<sup>d</sup> Translation follows the Tibetan.



pel with reasoning and scripture the doubt and wrong understanding of these two [respectively], the master [Nāgārjuna] composed this [*Treatise on the Middle*].

Concerning this, he set forth the reasonings with “Not from self”<sup>a</sup> and so forth. He set forth the high sayings with:<sup>b</sup>

The Supramundane Victor said that  
Deceptive phenomena are falsities  
All conditioned things are deceptive phenomena,  
Therefore, they are falsities.

When asked “Is a former limit [of cyclic existence]<sup>102</sup> discerned?”

The Great Subduer said, “No.”  
Cyclic existence is without beginning or end.  
[Ultimately] it has no former and later parts [and thus does not inherently exist].

In the “Advice to Kātyāyana”  
“Exists,” “does not exist,” and “both”  
Are rejected by the Supramundane Victor,  
Knower of things and non-things.

and so forth. The *Superior Sūtra of the Teachings of Akṣhayamati* says:<sup>c</sup>

Which are sūtras of definitive meaning? Which are sūtras of interpretable meaning?

Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of entering the path are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of entering the fruit are called “definitive meaning.”

Whichever sūtras teach those set out in various vocabulary—self, sentient being, living being, the nourished, creature, person, mind-progeny, pride-child, agent,

<sup>a</sup> This is the start of the first stanza in the first chapter of Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle*:

Not from self, not from others,  
Not from both, not causelessly  
Are any things  
Ever produced anywhere.

<sup>b</sup> Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle*, XIII.1, XI.1, and XV.7.

<sup>c</sup> For bibliographic information and the Sanskrit see the footnote on 29.

and feeler—as well as an owner when there is no owner—are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach ranging through to the doors of liberation—emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no composition, no produced, no arisen, no thing, no self, no sentient being, no living being, no person, and no owner—are called “definitive meaning.”

This is called “reliance on definitive sūtras and non-reliance on those of interpretable meaning.”

and similarly the *Superior [Sūtra] of the King of Meditative Stabilizations* says:<sup>a</sup>

Just as [explicit] explanations by the One-Gone-to-Bliss of [the entities of phenomena as] empty [of true establishment are sūtras of definitive meaning,

Those explicitly teaching signlessness, wishlessness, and so forth also] are to be recognized as instances of sūtras of definitive meaning;

All those doctrines [explicitly] teaching [conventional phenomena such as] sentient beings,

Persons, and beings are to be recognized as [sūtras of] interpretable meaning.

Avalokitavrata’s *Commentarial Explanation of (Bhāvaviveka’s) “Lamp for (Nāgārjuna’s) ‘Wisdom’*” says:<sup>103</sup>

Regarding the characters of definitive meaning and interpretable meaning, the *Superior Sūtra of the Teachings of Akṣhayamati* says:

About those, which are sūtras of definitive meaning?  
Which of interpretable meaning?

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a For bibliographic information and the Sanskrit see the footnote on 35. *ting nge 'dzin rgyal po'i mdo, samādhirājasūtra*, stanza VII.5; Peking 795, vol. 31, 281.1.5; Sanskrit in La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 44.2: *nītārthasūtrānta-viśeṣa jānati yathopadiṣṭā sugatena śūnyatā / yasmin punaḥ pudgalasattvapuruṣā neyārthato jānati sarvadharmān //*; Tibetan, *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 8.2.8; cited in Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 844. The brackets are from Ser-shül’s *Notes*, 5a.1.

Whichever sūtras teach those set out in various vocabulary—self, sentient being, living being, the nourished, creature, person, mind-progeny, pride-child, agent, feeler, knower, and seer—as well as an owner when there is no owner are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach ranging through to the doors of liberation—emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no composition, no produced, no arisen, no thing, no self, no sentient being, no living being, no nourished, no creature, no person, and no owner—are called “definitive meaning.”

and the *Moon Lamp Superior [Sūtra]*<sup>a</sup> says:

Just as [explicit] explanations by the One-Gone-to-Bliss of [the entities of phenomena as] empty [of true establishment are sūtras of definitive meaning],  
[Those explicitly teaching signlessness, wishlessness, and so forth also] are to be recognized as instances of sūtras of definitive meaning;  
All those doctrines [explicitly] teaching [conventional phenomena such as] sentient beings,  
Persons, and beings are to be recognized as [sūtras of] interpretable meaning.

Kamalashīla’s *Illumination of the Middle* says:<sup>104</sup>

Therefore, all those that teach in whatsoever little way in terms of the ultimate that has the character of no production and so forth are to be held as definitive meanings; the opposite are interpretable meanings. The *Superior Sūtra of the Teachings of Akṣhayamati* sets out the character of sūtras of definitive meaning and of interpretable meaning:

Which are sūtras of definitive meaning? Which are sūtras of definitive meaning?

Whichever sūtras teach establishing conventionalities are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach establishing ultimates are called “definitive meaning.”

Whichever sūtras teach various words and letters are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach

<sup>a</sup> ‘phags pa zla ba sgron me; this is another name for the *Superior Sūtra of the King of Meditative Stabilizations*.

the profound—difficult to see and difficult to realize—are called “definitive meaning.”

Whichever sūtras teach what are set out in various vocabulary—self, sentient being, living being, the nourished, creature, person, mind-progeny, pride-child, agent, and feeler—like an owner when there is no owner are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach the emptinesses, the doors of liberation—things’ emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no composition, no produced, no arisen, no sentient being, no living being, no person, and no owner—are called “definitive meaning.”

The *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* itself, which is structured around eighty topics called “imperishables,”<sup>a</sup> speaks—in the thirtieth imperishable—of eight ways of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive. With numbers for the eight modes added, the full passage in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* is:<sup>105</sup>

1. Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of entering the path are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of entering the fruit are called “definitive meaning.”
2. Whichever sūtras teach so as to establish conventionalities are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach so as to establish ultimates are called “definitive meaning.”
3. Whichever sūtras teach entering into actions and deeds are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of extinguishing actions and afflictive emotions are called “definitive meaning.”
4. Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of describing thorough afflictions are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of thoroughly purifying complete purification are called “definitive meaning.”
5. Whichever sūtras teach renunciation from cyclic existence are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach entering the nonduality of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are called “definitive meaning.”
6. Whichever sūtras teach in the manner of various words and

<sup>a</sup> *mi zad pa, akṣaya*; see Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 3.4. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho also (16.6/364.17) lists the eighty based on a commentary (Peking 5495) attributed to Vasubandhu (*dbyig ’grel du grags pa*) and identifies (5.2) the passage given below as from the thirtieth imperishable.

letters are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach the profound—difficult to see and difficult to understand—are called “definitive meaning.”

7. Whichever sūtras teach with many words and letters and for the sake of pleasing the minds of sentient beings are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach with few words and letters and to cause the minds of sentient beings to be contemplative are called “definitive meaning.”
8. Whichever sūtras teach those set out in various vocabulary—self, sentient being, living being, the nourished, creature, person, mind-progeny, pride-child, agent, feeler—as well as an owner when there is no owner are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach ranging through to the doors of liberation—emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no composition, no produced, no arisen, no thing, no self, no sentient being, no living being, no person, and no owner—are called “definitive meaning.”

From these descriptions Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho fashions means of positing<sup>a</sup> the eight:<sup>106</sup>

1. A sūtra that teaches within taking—as the principal topics of its explicit teaching—methods such as impermanence, suffering, and so forth for entering the path of realizing the absence of inherent existence is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that teaches within taking ultimate truths as the principal topics of its explicit teaching for the sake of generating realization of the absence of inherent existence, the method for direct entry into the fruit, nirvāṇa, is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.
2. A sūtra that teaches within taking veil truths as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that teaches within taking ultimate truths as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.
3. A sūtra that teaches within taking the arisings of pleasurable and painful effects from virtuous and sinful actions as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that teaches within taking methods for extinguishing actions and afflictive emotions as

<sup>a</sup> *'jog byed.*

the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.

4. A sūtra that for the sake of abandoning phenomena of the afflictive class teaches within taking methods for this as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that for the sake of purifying the pure [class of phenomena] teaches within taking its methods as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.
5. A sūtra that teaches within taking methods for renunciation from cyclic existence as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that teaches within taking the ultimate nonduality of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as the principal topic of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.
6. A sūtra that teaches within taking various veil truths through various words as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that teaches within taking ultimate truth, the elimination of proliferations, difficult to realize, as the principal topic of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.
7. A sūtra that teaches within taking meanings concordant with worldly activities for the sake of pleasing the world as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that teaches within taking mere brief quintessential instructions for cultivating meditative stabilization within using few words and letters as the principal topic of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.
8. A sūtra that teaches within taking conventional phenomena included within phenomena and persons as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning, and a sūtra that teaches within taking those as without inherent existence as the principal topic of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of definitive meaning.

He restates these in brief form:<sup>107</sup>

The interpretable and the definitive are posited by way of:

1. teaching for the sake of entering into the path and teaching for the sake of entering into the fruit
2. teaching so as to establish conventionalities and teaching so

as to establish the ultimate

3. teaching for the sake of entering into actions and deeds and teaching for the sake of entering into extinguishing actions and afflictive emotions
4. teaching for the sake of describing thorough afflictions and teaching for the sake of describing thoroughly purifying complete purification
5. teaching renunciation from cyclic existence and teaching entry into the nonduality of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa
6. teaching in the manner of various words and letters and teaching the profound
7. teaching with many words and letters pleasing sentient beings and teaching brief quintessential instructions for meditative stabilization with few words and letters
8. teaching according to the existence of self<sup>a</sup> and teaching the emptiness of things and so forth.

It strikes me that the eight modes are an instance of the Indian delight in multiple meanings of terms, from which scholars select the predominant. As quoted above, Chandrakīrti cites only the first and eighth in his *Clear Words*; Avalokitavrata cites only the eighth in his *Commentary on (Bhāvaviveka's) "Lamp for (Nāgārjuna's) 'Wisdom'"*; and Kamalashīla cites only the second, sixth, and eighth in his *Illumination of the Middle*.<sup>b</sup>

Like Kamalashīla, here in *The Essence of Eloquence* Tsong-kha-pa cites the second, sixth, and eighth ways. I conjecture that he found the three cited in Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle* more concordant with framing interpretable and definitive sūtras around the teaching of the two truths, veil and ultimate, and thus he avoided Chandrakīrti's selection of the first, which is devised in terms of trainees. Still, it takes a good deal of bending even to see these three as framed around the two truths. Let us look at the issues, first setting the scene and then unpacking complexities.

<sup>a</sup> *bdag yod pa ltar*.

<sup>b</sup> My source is Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 17.1. He also points out that the versions that these scholars cite vary in manifold ways among themselves and also vary from translations of the sūtra. Elizabeth Napper details the differences between Tsong-kha-pa's citation and Chandrakīrti's; see Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness*, 735-736 n. 307.

## FIRST MODE OF POSITING THE INTERPRETABLE AND THE DEFINITIVE CITED BY TSONG-KHA-PA

The first mode of positing the interpretable and the definitive that Tsong-kha-pa (30) cites is the second in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*.<sup>a</sup>

Whichever sūtras teach establishing conventionalities are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach establishing ultimates are called “definitive meaning.”

Tsong-kha-pa (32) describes this way of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive in terms of the two truths:

The first two [sentences in reply to the rhetorical question] differentiate interpretable and definitive [sūtras] by way of the topics, treating the two truths, [veil and ultimate, respectively] as interpretable meanings and definitive meanings.

This indicates that veil truths such as minds, bodies, houses, and mountains themselves are interpretable meanings and that the ultimate truth, the emptiness of true existence, is the definitive meaning. As the Second Dalai Lama succinctly puts it:<sup>108</sup>

In the context [of the Middle Way School], ultimate truths are definitive meanings, and veil truths are interpretable meanings; hence, those [sūtras] that teach within taking ultimate truths as their main topic are sūtras of definitive meaning, and those [sūtras] that teach within taking veil truths as their main topic are sūtras of interpretable meaning.

Gung-thang Lo-drö-gya-tsho<sup>109</sup> calls this a differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive by way of topics—objects of expression<sup>b</sup> (as opposed to a differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive by way of the words that are the means of expression)—treating the ultimate truth as the definitive meaning and veil truths as interpretable meanings.

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a It is quoted here and in the following two sections in accordance with Tsong-kha-pa's citation.

b *brjod bya'i drang nges*.



Issue #1: Is there any way that Chandrakīrti's citation of the first of the eight ways of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive listed in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* could be seen as revolving around the topics taught and thus around veil and ultimate truths?

The first of the eight ways of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive described in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*:

Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of entering the path are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach for the sake of entering the fruit are called “definitive meaning.”

is devised in terms of trainees, those entering the path and those entering the fruit of the path. Nevertheless, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho avers<sup>110</sup> that this mode has the *same thrust*<sup>a</sup> as positing the interpretable and the definitive by way the topics taught. By limiting himself to saying that it has the same thrust he still suggests a certain similarity without having to hold that these are the same. He cites Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho's *Lamp Illuminating the Profound Thought, Set Forth to Purify Forgetfulness of the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) “Great Exposition of Special Insight”*<sup>b</sup> which in the same way hedgingly says, “This is *like equivalent*<sup>c</sup> with the mode of positing [the interpretable and the definitive] in terms of topics.”

Both phrasings indicate a reluctance to claim that positing the interpretable and the definitive by way trainees and by way of topics are actually equivalent while suggesting a close connection. To provide some support for this, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho offers a statement from Gyal-tshab's *Notes [on Tsong-kha-pa's Teachings] on the Eight Difficult Topics*.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> gnad gcig pa.

<sup>b</sup> zhwa dmar dge bdun btan 'dzin rgya mtsho (1852-1910), *lhag mthong chen mo'i dka' gnad rnams brjed byang du bkod pa dgongs zab snang ba'i sgron me*, TBRC W2993 (lha sa sman rtsis khang gi par khang, n.d.).

<sup>c</sup> don gcig pa 'dra.

<sup>d</sup> TBRC, W29193, 17a.4-17a.6. The writer is Gyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen (*rgyal tshab dar ma rin chen*, 1364-1432), who is one of Tsong-kha-pa's two chief disciples, the other equally prominent student being Khay-drub-ge-leg-pal-sang (*mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang*, 1385-1438). In Dön-drub-gyal-tshan's *Four*

With respect to those set forth in terms of trainees, those set forth for the sake of entering the path are interpretable meanings, and those set forth for the sake of entering the fruit are definitive meanings. The path is the wisdom realizing the absence of inherent existence, and the techniques for entering into it are the teachings of impermanence and so forth. The fruit is *nirvāṇa*, and the technique for directly entering into it is realization of the absence of inherent existence.

With respect to those set forth in terms of topics, those teaching conventionalities are interpretable meanings, and those teaching the ultimate truth are definitive meanings.

Since the topics taught for the sake of entering the path are veil truths such as impermanence and so forth and the topic taught for the sake of entering the fruit is the ultimate truth, the absence of inherent existence, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, based on this, accepts that this first mode *has the same thrust* as positing the interpretable and the definitive by way of the topics taught. Still, he does not allow that it *is* a mode of positing the interpretable and the definitive by way of the topics taught, since these two styles are described separately, as Tsong-kha-pa indeed does, as indicated above.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho is suggesting that Tsong-kha-pa's separate treatment of these two modes is why Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho merely says that this first mode is "like equivalent<sup>a</sup> with the mode of positing [the interpretable and the definitive] in terms of topics," that is to say, more or less equivalent but not exactly so. Through this route, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho justifies his own phrasing that the two modes have "the same thrust," and in doing so, he shows how thin the boundary can be between the mode in terms of trainees and the mode in terms of topics. His not so hidden agenda is likely to show the logic behind Chandrakīrti's citation of the first and the eighth modes, which at first blush seem incongruent. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho thereby (stealthily) shows that Tsong-kha-pa did not reject outright Chandrakīrti's inclusion of the first when Tsong-kha-pa chose Kamalashīla's three modes of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive, which do not include the first.

Now let us turn to unpacking the issues provoked by the three modes that Tsong-kha-pa, following Kamalashīla, cites.

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*Intertwined Commentaries*, 50b.2/300.2, the writer is listed as *dar ma rgyal mtshan*.

<sup>a</sup> *don gcig pa 'dra*.

## Issue #2: How can “teaching *establishing* conventionalities” be taken as “teaching veil truths,” and how can “teaching *establishing* ultimates” be taken as teaching ultimate truths?”

The second mode of positing the interpretable and the definitive, which is the first cited by Tsong-kha-pa (30), is:

Whichever sūtras teach establishing conventionalities are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach establishing ultimates are called “definitive meaning.”

This seems to be saying that scriptural passages that teach the *establishing* (or the establishment) of conventionalities require interpretation and scriptural passages that teach the *establishing* (or the establishment) of ultimates are definitive. Since proofs establishing the ultimate are not the ultimate itself but the means of establishing it, establishment of the ultimate is, in fact, a veil truth and not an ultimate truth. This leaves the problem that then this sūtra passage would not frame the interpretable and the definitive around teaching the two truths, since it would not teach ultimate truth and thus would contradict Tsong-kha-pa’s framing of the interpretable and the definitive around teaching the two truths.

In the fifteenth century Ba-so-chö-kyi-gyal-tshan,<sup>a</sup> most likely from seeing this problem, takes the first merely as “veil truths” and the second merely as “ultimate truths”<sup>b</sup> in commentary on the same passage in Tsong-

<sup>a</sup> *ba so chos kyi rgyal mtshan*, born 1402; for problems related with identifying this author with the younger brother of Khay-drub (*mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang*, 1385-1438), one of Tsong-kha-pa’s two closest students, see Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness*, 219-220.

<sup>b</sup> *kun rdzob bden pa* and *don dam bden pa*. From the *Four Interwoven Annotations/ The Lam rim chen mo of the incomparable Tsong-kha-pa, with the interlineal notes of Ba-so Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, Sde-drug Mkhan-chen Ngag-dbang-rab-rtan, 'Jam-dbyangs-bshad-pa'i-rdo-rje, and Bra-sti Dge-bshes Rin-chen-don-grub, lam rim mchan bzhi sbrags ma/ mnyam med rje btsun tsong kha pa chen pos mdzad pa'i byang chub lam rim chen mo'i dka' ba'i gnad rnams mchan bu bzhi'i sgo nas legs par bshad pa theg chen lam gyi gsal sgron*, in *lam rim mchan bzhi sbrags ma* (bla brang bkra shis 'khyil par ma), TBRC W29037.1:3-978 (bla brang bkra shis 'khyil edition printed from the 1807 bla brang bkra shis 'khyil blocks in 1999?), 155.4 and 155.5; see also Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 17.2.

kha-pa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path*; taken this way, scriptural passages that teach veil truths (anything except emptiness) require interpretation and scriptural passages that teach the ultimate truth, emptiness, are definitive. However, two centuries later, seemingly oblivious to this issue, Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-drub,<sup>a</sup> takes "establishing conventionalities" as "means of establishing conventionalities"<sup>b</sup> and takes "establishing ultimates" as "means of establishing ultimates."<sup>c</sup> A century later Yang-jan-ga-way-lo-drö passes off the various readings as not making any substantial difference, saying in *A Brief Explanation of Terminology Occurring in (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path"*:<sup>111</sup>

However the meaning of the statement in the *Teachings of Akṣhaya-mati Sūtra* of teaching establishing conventionalities and establishing ultimates is taken—whether as "teaching the mode of establishing conventional entities and the mode of establishing ultimate entities"<sup>d</sup> or as "teaching the means of establishing conventionalities and means of establishing ultimates"<sup>e</sup> or as "teaching veil truths and ultimate truths,"<sup>f</sup> it is similar.

Early in the twentieth century, however, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>112</sup> clearly is concerned about the problem. He does not want to just ignore the issue, so he adjusts the reading of "teaching establishing conventionalities" so that it yields "teaching **so as to** establish conventionalities." He turns the spelling of *kun rdzob sgrub pa bstan pa*, as Tsong-kha-pa cites it, into *kun rdzob bsgrub par bstan pa*, and he adjusts the reading of "teaching establishing ultimates" to yield "teaching **so as to** establish ultimates" by turning the spelling of *don dam pa sgrub pa bstan pa* into *don dam bsgrub par bstan pa*. Reading the term "establishing" as "what is established," a verbal object noun, he differs from Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-

<sup>a</sup> *pra/bra sti dge bshes rin chen don grub*, fl. mid-seventeenth century; his position is cited in Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 17.3; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho refers to him as *pra sti* throughout.

<sup>b</sup> *kun rdzob sgrub byed*; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 17.3.

<sup>c</sup> *don dam sgrub byed*; in *Four Interwoven Annotations* (155.5) this identification is attributed to Jam-yang-shay-pa.

<sup>d</sup> *kun rdzob pa'i ngo bo sgrub tshul dang don dam pa'i ngo bo sgrub tshul bstan pa*.

<sup>e</sup> *kun rdzob sgrub byed dang don dam sgrub byed bstan pa*.

<sup>f</sup> *kun rdzob sgrub pa ste bden pa bstan pa/ don dam sgrub pa bstan pa ste don dam bden pa bstan*.

drub who reads it as a verbal agent noun, “means of establishing.” He does this to justify explaining that the first means “teaching veil truths explicitly and mainly **as what are to be established**”<sup>a</sup> and to justify explaining that the second means “teaching ultimate truths explicitly and mainly **as what are to be established.**”<sup>b</sup> He thereby can take the two truths themselves as what are taught in those respective sūtras.

Since it would be arbitrary and thus inelegant merely to fiddle with the spelling, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>c</sup> indicates that he bases these changes on the *Commentary on the “Teaching of Akṣhayamati Sūtra”*<sup>d</sup> where it says:

With respect to the statement [in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*], “Whichever sūtras teach **so as** to establish conventionalities (*kun rdzob bsgrub par bstan pa*),” whichever sūtras teach **for the sake of** establishing that the manifold conventions of conventionalities exist only in conventional terms (*kun rdzob kyi tha snyad mang po tha snyad tsam du yod par bsgrub pa’i phyir gsungs pa*) are sūtras of interpretable meaning. With respect to the statement [in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*], “Whichever sūtras teach as ultimates (*don dam par bstan pa*),” [this means that] whichever sūtras teach the characters of no production and no cessation as ultimates are sūtras of definitive meaning.

After presenting this corroborative evidence, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho assumes a humble posture, concluding that he thinks this is probably<sup>e</sup> the way the term “establishing” should be read. I find his presentation to be incisive.

<sup>a</sup> *kun rdzob bden pa dngos su gtso bor bsgrub par bya bar bstan pa*; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 7.5.

<sup>b</sup> *don dam bden pa dngos su gtso bor bsgrub par bya bar bstan pa*; *ibid.*, 7.6.

<sup>c</sup> The Peking edition of the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* reads *sgrub par bstan pa*, unlike either Tsong-kha-pa’s *sgrub pa bstan pa* or Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *bsgrub par bstan pa*; for other variations see Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness*, 736 n. 307.

<sup>d</sup> *’phags pa blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa’i rgya cher ’grel pa (āryākṣayamatinirdeśaṭkā)*, in *bstan ’gyur (sde dge 3994)*, TBRC W23703.114:4-539 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5495, vol. 104. No author is attributed in the Peking catalogue; Dr. Phillip Stanley reports that “Bu ston, the sNar thang (N4284) and Co ne (C3961) bstan ’gyurs, and the sDe dge (D3994) bstan ’gyur dkar chag state that this text is by Vasubandhu.”

<sup>e</sup> *yin nam snyam*.

## SECOND MODE OF POSITING THE INTERPRETABLE AND THE DEFINITIVE CITED BY TSONG-KHA-PA

The second mode that Tsong-kha-pa (30) cites is the sixth in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*:

Whichever sūtras teach various words and letters are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach the profound—difficult to view and difficult to realize—are called “definitive meaning.”

About this Tsong-kha-pa (32) says:

The two middle [sentences] explain that the teaching of conventionalities is a teaching of various meanings through various different words and that the teaching of the ultimate is a teaching of the single taste that is an elimination of proliferations, the meaning difficult to realize; this mode of positing [the interpretable and the definitive] is not separate [from the former].

As Gung-thang Lo-drö-gya-tsho says,<sup>113</sup> here the differentiation is by way of how the two truths are taught. This looks simple enough, but the terminology evokes exploration.

### Issue #3: How are the three terms, “profound,” “difficult to view,” and “difficult to realize” related?

Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog<sup>114</sup> takes the latter two terms—“difficult to view,” and “difficult to realize”—as explaining the first, “profound”. He identifies the *profound* as emptiness and indicates that its mode of profundity is that it is *difficult to view* through examples, reasons, and so forth<sup>a</sup> and *difficult to realize* with wisdom arisen from meditation.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan’s *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po’s) Lectures* associates “difficult to view” with the level of hearing and associates “difficult to realize,” as Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog does, with the level of wisdom arisen from meditation. He says that this division of level is done in order to avoid redundancy.

<sup>b</sup> My translation of Tsong-kha-pa’s text follows this explanation, though the others also are suitable.

Jam-yang-shay-pa,<sup>a</sup> however, sees a list of three: *profound* due to being difficult to fathom;<sup>b</sup> *difficult to view* due to being difficult to see;<sup>c</sup> and *difficult to realize* since it must be comprehended only by the mind.<sup>d</sup> If we follow him, the passage should be translated as:

Whichever sūtras teach the profound, the difficult to view, and the difficult to realize are called “definitive.”

Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-drub similarly sees a list of three but with different meanings: *profound* since its depth cannot be realized; *difficult to view* by way of methods such as examples, reasons, and so forth; and *difficult to realize* since although a mere estimate of how it exists is understood through such methods, it is difficult to realize in the sense of penetrating exactly how its entity is.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho also sees a list of three, but his third (oddly to me) seems to explain the meaning that he himself posits for the first.<sup>115</sup>

[Ultimate truth] is “profound” due to being difficult to realize; “difficult to view” because it cannot be known by [a consciousness] having apprehension [of true existence], and “difficult to realize” because it is difficult to be known by a common being’s direct perception.

<sup>a</sup> My renderings of Jam-yang-shay-pa’s and Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-drub’s descriptions are drawn from Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 18.4, which are taken from *Four Interwoven Annotations/ The Lam rim chen mo of the incomparable Tsong-kha-pa, with the interlineal notes of Ba-so Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, Sde-drug Mkhan-chen Ngag-dbang-rab-rtan, ‘Jam-dbyangs-bshad-pa’i-rdo-rje, and Bra-sti Dge-bshes Rin-chen-don-grub, lam rim mchan bzhi sbrags ma/ mnyam med rje btsun tsong kha pa chen pos mdzad pa’i byang chub lam rim chen mo’i dka’ ba’i gnad rnams mchan bu bzhi’i sgo nas legs par bshad pa theg chen lam gyi gsal sgron*, in *lam rim mchan bzhi sbrags ma* (bla brang bkra shis ’khyil par ma), TBRC W29037.1:3-978 (bla brang bkra shis ’khyil edition printed from the 1807 bla brang bkra shis ’khyil blocks in 1999?), vol. 2, 156.2. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho also cites the commentary on the sūtra and Vasubandhu’s *Principles of Explanation, rnam par bshad pa’i rigs pa* (vyākhyayukti), in *bstan ’gyur* (sde dge 4061), TBRC W23703.136:59-270 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); also Peking 5590.

<sup>b</sup> *dpag dka’ bas*.

<sup>c</sup> *mthong dka’ bas*.

<sup>d</sup> *yid kho nas ’jal dgos pas*.

Issue #4: It is easy to see how “teach the profound—difficult to view and difficult to realize” means “teach ultimate truths,” but how can “teach various words and letters” be taken as “teach veil truths”?

Since sūtras teaching conventionalities do not just teach “various words and letters” but teach any phenomenon except ultimate truths, it is necessary to get around taking “various words and letters” as limiting what is taught to just what it says, words and the letters composing words. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho accomplishes this by taking “various words and letters” as the *manner* in which veil truths are taught:<sup>a</sup>

A sūtra that teaches within taking various veil truths *through* various words as the principal topics of its explicit teaching is posited as a sūtra of interpretable meaning.

Similarly, he fleshes out the description in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* as:<sup>b</sup>

Those that—*through* various different words and letters, that is, names,<sup>c</sup> within associating substrata and attributes—explicitly and mainly teach veil truths, which appear as various meanings, are [sūtras of] interpretable meaning.

and again when restating this in brief, he says, “teaching *in the manner of* various words and letters.”<sup>d</sup>

Through making this adjustment, the second mode of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive that Tsong-kha-pa cites is seen to be the

<sup>a</sup> *tshig mi 'dra ba sna tshogs pas kun rdzob bden pa sna tshogs pa de ltar ston pa'i mdo drang don*; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 11.3.

<sup>b</sup> *don sna tshogs su snang ba'i kun rdzob bden pa rnam khyad gzhi dang khyad chos sbyar nas ston pa'i tshig dang yi ge ste ming mi 'dra ba sna tshogs pas gtso bor dngos su ston pa drang don*; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 7.6.

<sup>c</sup> Whereas Jam-yang-shay-pa (*Four Interwoven Annotations*, 155.6) takes “letters” (*yi ge*) literally since individual letters are the foundations of words, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho glosses “letters” as “names” (*ming*), which in Tibetan grammar are stems (that is, without case endings or other particles) and thus not redundant with “words,” which have case endings and can even be phrases.

<sup>d</sup> *tshig dang yi ge sna tshogs su bstan pa*; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 7.1.



same as his first. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho thereby justifies Tsong-kha-pa's pointing out that "this mode of positing [the interpretable and the definitive] is not separate [from the former]."

## Issue #5: But are ultimate truths not also taught with a variety of names such as "emptiness," "suchness," and "thusness"?

Just as on the occasion of teaching conventionalities one meaning, such as person, is taught with a variety of names such as "sentient being," "living being," and so forth, so on the occasion of teaching the ultimate one meaning, the noumenon, is taught with a variety of names such as "emptiness," "signlessness," and so forth. However, given the way that the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* posits the interpretable and the definitive in this second mode:

Whichever sūtras teach various words and letters are called "interpretable meaning." Whichever sūtras teach the profound—difficult to view and difficult to realize—are called "definitive meaning."

it is necessary to avoid having to accept that the ways the interpretable and the definitive are taught are the same—that is, in the manner of various words and letters. To get around this, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>116</sup> points out that indeed the ultimate is taught with a variety of names, but when these dawn to a conceptual consciousness, aside from the single taste of a mere negative of inherent establishment, nothing else dawns to the mind, whereas, regarding conventionalities, a variety of different isolatable connotations as many as the number of names dawn to conceptuality even with regard to one object.<sup>a</sup>

## THIRD MODE OF POSITING THE INTERPRETABLE AND THE DEFINITIVE CITED BY TSONG-KHA-PA

The third mode of positing the interpretable and the definitive that Tsong-kha-pa (30) cites is the eighth in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*:

Whichever sūtras teach what are set out with various vocabulary—[such as] self, sentient being, living being, the nourished, creature, person, mind-progeny, pride-child, agent, and feeler—

<sup>a</sup> This will be explained in more detail below, 112, Issue #7:.

like [teaching] an owner<sup>a</sup> when there is no owner are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach the doors of liberation—things’ emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no composition, no production, no produced, no sentient being, no living being, no person, and no owner—are called “definitive meaning.”

Tsong-kha-pa (32) explains this mode of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive:

The last two sentences indicate the mode of teaching through which [a sūtra] comes to teach conventionalities or the ultimate. Those that teach self, sentient being, and so forth as like existent<sup>b</sup> teach conventionalities; furthermore, they do not teach just those; these [also] refer to all that teach, as like existent, the things that are the objects and the means related with those agents. The description of things as empty, without production, and so forth is an explanation that phenomena are without inherent existence; the teaching of sentient beings as nonexistent and so forth is an explanation that persons are without inherent existence. Those that teach in accordance with such a mode of teaching teach the ultimate.

Let us consider issues raised by these somewhat opaque descriptions.

## Issue #6: Is the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* saying that sūtras requiring interpretation only teach about persons? What about other conventional phenomena?

In describing sūtras requiring interpretation this sūtra passage, in its literal reading, refers merely to sūtras teaching about persons. However, as Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho points out,<sup>117</sup> it speaks of definitive sūtras in two groups, teaching the selflessness of phenomena and teaching the selflessness of persons:

1. teaching the absence of inherent existence of phenomena
  - the three doors of liberation: emptiness, signlessness, and

<sup>a</sup> *bdag po lta bur* (Michio and Khangar, 2.15); Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s citation (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 6.4) reads *bdag po dang bcas par*. See 116, Issue #9; and 117, Issue #10:.

<sup>b</sup> *yod pa ltar*.

- wishlessness
  - a fourth door of liberation, no composition
  - no production
  - no produced
2. teaching the absence of inherent existence of persons
- no sentient being
  - no living being
  - no person
  - no owner.

From this division of definitive sūtras into those that teach the emptiness of phenomena and those that teach the emptiness of persons, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho draws the conclusion that it can be understood that sūtras requiring interpretation also teach both phenomena and persons even if the above passage in the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* only speaks of sūtras requiring interpretation as those teaching persons. In this vein, Tsong-kha-pa (32) says:

Due to the fact that these [definitive sūtras] are described as two-fold [describing phenomena as without inherent existence and describing persons as without inherent existence], the above [sūtras requiring interpretation] also must [be understood as] teaching both phenomena and persons as existent.

That definitive sūtra passages address the emptiness of both phenomena and persons implies that both phenomena and persons—the bases, or substrata, of those emptinesses—are presented in other sūtra passages that necessarily require interpretation to determine the final mode of being of the objects under discussion since they do not themselves teach emptiness and thus are interpretable sūtra passages. The reasoning is cogent and seals the point that sūtras requiring interpretation teach both phenomena and persons even if only persons are explicitly mentioned.

However, the issue is not left there, most likely because the terms “persons” and “phenomena” are used so frequently within the tradition without “persons” including a wider meaning; a more elegant resolution of the issue has somehow to stretch the very meaning of “persons” to include “phenomena.” Thus, as an additional way to justify the extension within the sūtra’s own description of sūtras requiring interpretation, Tsong-kha-pa (32) cogently takes “persons” to be agents but then stretches the term “agents” to include the objects of those agents and the means used by those agents:

Those that teach self, sentient being, and so forth as like existent<sup>a</sup> teach conventionalities; furthermore, they do not teach just those; these [also] refer to all that teach, as like existent, the things that are the objects and the means dependent upon those agents.

As Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog<sup>118</sup> explains, sūtras requiring interpretation do not just teach self, sentient being, and so forth, which are agents, even though that is the literal reading of this passage in the *Teachings of Akṣaya-yamati Sūtra*; rather, the meaning of self, sentient being, and so forth is extended to include everything related with persons (or as Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho rephrases it, “illustrated by persons”).<sup>b</sup> Drawing out the significance of this move, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho concludes:<sup>119</sup>

In brief, these [sūtras] are all those that teach the phenomena of the aggregates and so forth and persons as existent.<sup>c</sup>

Through this forced extension of the meaning of “persons” to include other phenomena, the third mode of positing the interpretable and the definitive is seen to be the same as the other two—framed around the two truths.

## Issue #7: What are the individual connotations of “person” and its ten equivalents?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho lists the connotations of the ten equivalents of person<sup>d</sup> by providing etymologies for “person” drawn from Asaṅga’s *Compendium of Synonyms*<sup>e</sup> in the *Grounds of Bodhisattvas*.<sup>f</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> *yod pa ltar.*

<sup>b</sup> *des* [that is, *gang zag gis*] *mtshon pa'i*, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 8.3.

<sup>c</sup> *yod par.*

<sup>d</sup> Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan (*Notes on [Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po’s] Lectures*, 432.3) points out that these terms are indicated in Manifest Knowledge (*mngon pa*, *abhidharma*) as being imputed during the first eon.

<sup>e</sup> *rnam grangs bsdu ba* (*yogācārabhūmau paryāyasamgrahaṇī*), in *bstan ’gyur* (*sde dge* 4041), TBRC W23703.132:46-96 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

<sup>f</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 8.5) acknowledges that these terms are described in many diverse ways but chooses Asaṅga’s presentation here.

Term	Etymology
self ( <i>bdag, ātman</i> )	so called due to viewing the appropriated aggregates as self and the self's ( <i>nyer len gyi phung po rnams la bdag dang bdag gir lta bas</i> )
sentient being ( <i>sems can, sattva</i> )	so called due to not knowing phenomena as they are in reality and being attached to them ( <i>chos rnam yang dag pa ji lta ba bzhin ma shes pa dang de dag la chags pas</i> )
living being ( <i>srog, jīva</i> )	so called due to being alive and abiding together with life ( <i>tshe dang lhan cig gson zhing gnas pas</i> )
the nourished ( <i>gso ba, poṣa</i> )	so called due to being nourished through being furthered by the path of mundane existence of rebirth ( <i>yang 'byung ba 'i srid pa 'i lam gyis rgyas par byas pas</i> )
creature/person ( <i>skyes bu, puruṣa</i> )	so called due to enacting the prowess of a creature ( <i>skyes bu 'i rtsal byed pas</i> )
person ( <i>gang zag, pudgala</i> )	so called due to not being sated and not knowing satisfaction with again and again transmigrating ( <i>yang dang yang du 'gro ba la mi ngoms pa and chog mi shes pas</i> )
mind-progeny ( <i>shed las skyes, manuḥja</i> )	so called due to being engendered by a mental representation, that is, engendered merely mentally, the situation being that humans in the first eon did not rely upon blood and semen ( <i>yid kyi rnam pa ste bskal ba dang po 'i mi rnams khu khrag la ma ltos par yid tsam gyis skyes pas</i> )
pride-child ( <i>shed bu, mānava</i> )	so called due to becoming higher and lower in dependence upon pride ( <i>nga rgyal la brten nas mtho dman du 'gyur bas</i> )
agent ( <i>byed pa po, kartr/kāraka</i> )	so called due to being the agent of actions ( <i>las byed pa po yin pas</i> )
feeler ( <i>tshor ba po</i> )	so called due to being the experiencer of fruitional feelings ( <i>rnam smin gyi tshor ba myong ba po yin pas</i> )

These etymologies demonstrate that although these eleven are equivalents, they each have their connotation.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> For several of these Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog (*Notes*, 2b.3) gives etymologies from Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-drub and from Jam-yang-shay-pa that are drawn with minor variations from their word commentaries on Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path*:

Term	Tra-ti Ge-she Rin-chen-dön-drub	Jam-yang-shay-pa
self ( <i>bdag, ātman</i> )	so called due to controlling ( <i>dbang byed pa</i> )	so called due to being apprehended as self by the mind ( <i>sems kyi bdag tu bzung ba</i> )
sentient being ( <i>sems can, sattva</i> )	so called due to possessing the exertion of intention ( <i>sems pa 'i rtsol ba dang ldan pa</i> )	so called due to possessing power of heart ( <i>snying ltobs dang ldan pa</i> )

## Issue #8: How to get around the fact that emptiness and so forth also have their respective etymologies?

Each of the ten illustrations of the ultimate also has its respective etymology:<sup>a</sup>

living being ( <i>srog, jīva</i> )	so called due to acting as the basis of living ( <i>'tsho ba'i rten byed pa</i> )	so called due to living ( <i>'tsho ba</i> )
the nourished ( <i>gso ba, poṣa</i> )	so called due to being that which is sustained by many conditions for living ( <i>'tsho rkyen du mas gso bar bya ba</i> )	so called due to being furthered ( <i>rgyas pa</i> )
creature/person ( <i>skyes bu, puruṣa</i> )		so called due to having the power of capacity for actions ( <i>bya ba la nus mthu yod pa</i> )
person ( <i>gang zag, pudgala</i> )	so called due to being a continuum filled ( <i>gang</i> ) with afflictive emotions and fallen ( <i>zag</i> ) into cyclic existence ( <i>rgyud nyon mongs pas gang zhing 'khor bar zag pa</i> )	
mind-progeny ( <i>shed las skyes, manuja</i> )	so called due to being engendered from strength, power, or capacity ( <i>shed dam stobs sam nus pa las skyes pa</i> )	
strength-child ( <i>shed bu, mānava</i> )	so called due to being an offspring established from what has a nature of power or capacity ( <i>stobs sam nus pa'i rang bzhin las grub pa</i> )	
agent ( <i>byed pa po, kartṛ/ kāraka</i> )	so called due to the agent of white and black actions ( <i>dkar nag gi las byed pa po</i> )	
feeler ( <i>tshor ba po</i> )	so called due to being the feeler of fruitions ( <i>rnam smin tshor ba po</i> )	

See *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 157.2; and Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness*, 257.

<sup>a</sup> These are adapted from Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness*, 258-259, which in turn are drawn from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 157.6; Jigmay-dam-chö-gya-tsho's more concise explanations (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 9.4)

Term	Explanation
emptiness ( <i>stong pa nyid, śūnyatā</i> )	absence of true establishment of the respective entities of phenomena
signlessness ( <i>mtshan ma med pa, animitta</i> )	absence of true establishment of the causes, means, and so forth of the entities of phenomena
wishlessness ( <i>smon pa med pa, apraṇihita</i> )	nonexistence of an entity suitable to be an object of wishing by way of hoping to attain its fruits ultimately
no composition ( <i>mngon par 'du byed pa med pa, anabhisaṃskāra</i> )	nonexistence of the capacity of production from the viewpoint of being able to be ultimately composed, or put together, by other causes and conditions/ the noncomposition of actions for birth in the future
no production ( <i>skye ba med pa, anutpāda</i> )	nonexistence of the occurrence of ultimate production of an effect since ultimately causes do not have the capacity of composing, or putting together effects/ an effect's not ultimately being produced from causes
nonproduced ( <i>ma skyes pa, ajāta</i> )	an effect's not having been produced from its own side since the ultimate production of an effect does not occur/ an effect's not having been produced from its own side
no sentient being ( <i>sems can med pa, niḥ sattva</i> )	nonexistence of an autonomous <sup>a</sup> sentient being
no living being ( <i>srog med pa, nirjīva</i> )	nonexistence of an autonomous living being
no person ( <i>gang zag med pa, niḥpudgala</i> )	nonexistence of an autonomous person
no owner ( <i>bdag po med pa, asvāmika</i> )	nonexistence of an autonomous owner

Given these multiple connotations of the synonyms of ultimate truth, it has to be accepted that the ultimate is indeed taught with a variety of names such as signlessness and so forth; thus, how can it be held that the modes of teaching the conventional and the ultimate differ?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>120</sup> answers that when the meanings of these synonyms dawn to a conceptual consciousness, just the single taste of a mere negative of inherent establishment, and nothing else, dawns to the mind, despite there being differences in the bases, the substrata, of emptiness. He thereby unpacks the significance of Tsong-kha-pa's statement (32), "the teaching of the ultimate is a teaching of the single taste

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appear for some entries after a slash.

<sup>a</sup> rang dbang ba.

that is an elimination of proliferations.” Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho adds that with regard to conventional phenomena, however, the many names of even one phenomenon retain their own individual connotations when they appear to a conceptual consciousness. This is the cogent route through which it is maintained that the modes of teaching the conventional and the ultimate differ.

## Issue #9: What does “like [teaching] an **owner** when there is no **owner**” mean? Are the two terms “owner” the same?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>121</sup> takes both mentions of “owner” as meaning an owner that is under its own power.<sup>a</sup> He thereby indicates that these sūtras exaggerate the status of persons, sentient beings, and so forth as being under their own power whereas a status of being under their own power simply does not exist. He frames this passage identifying sūtras requiring interpretation as saying:

Sūtras that explicitly mainly teach those that must be set out by way of various conventions such as self, sentient being, and so forth upon fabricating their mode of appearance as like an owner—whereas in their measure of subsistence<sup>b</sup> an owner having its own power does not exist—are sūtras requiring interpretation.

He<sup>122</sup> cites Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho’s *Lamp Illuminating the Profound Thought, Set Forth to Purify Forgetfulness of the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa’s) “Great Exposition of Special Insight”* which cogently avers:

It being the case that the two—what is taught as existent and what is taught as nonexistent—in the statement “teach...like an **owner** when there is no **owner**” must be equivalent, this must be put together as meaning that it is taught that persons inherently exist whereas they do not inherently exist, since if [an owner] is taken as conventionally existent, it would be difficult to explain how an owner does not exist.

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<sup>a</sup> rang dbang ba.

<sup>b</sup> gnas tshod.



**Issue #10: If both “owners” in “like [teaching] an owner when there is no owner” mean an inherently existent owner, then since an inherently existent owner does not exist and veil truths<sup>a</sup> necessarily exist, how could teaching a nonexistent owner constitute teaching a veil truth?**

Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog,<sup>123</sup> who flourished in the early twentieth century most likely earlier than Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, comes at this issue from a provocatively different angle. He holds that teaching “self” and so forth as like an owner<sup>b</sup> should not be taken as meaning that persons are taught to be truly (or inherently) existent because (1) the sūtra, by saying “like,” is merely citing an analog and (2) these teachings must be applicable to the mode of teaching conventionalities, which necessarily exist. Rather, teaching “self” and so forth as like an owner must be taken as “teaching them as existent in general without refuting that they are truly existent.” Read this way, the sūtra passage is describing the mode of teaching conventionalities, which necessarily exist, whereas an inherently existent or truly existent person and so forth do not exist.

I take his point to be that persons are taught without specifying that a truly existent person does not exist, much like teaching that an owner exists without specifying that a truly existent owner does not exist. If so, the first “owner” is existent, whereas the second is not.

I find both Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s and Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog’s explanations to be cogent, despite being contradictory.

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<sup>a</sup> Or conventional truths.

<sup>b</sup> *bdag po lta bur*.



## 2. Types of Interpretation

Tsong-kha-pa turns to discussing the meaning of the term *drang don* (*neyārtha*) that I translate in various contexts as “interpretable meaning,” “meaning requiring interpretation,” or “meaning to be interpreted.” The problem Tsong-kha-pa addresses revolves around whether *drang* means “leading” or “to be led,” that is, “to be interpreted.” Although the Sanskrit *neya* clearly means “to be led” or “that which is to be led,” and thus *neyārtha* (*drang don*) is “a meaning to be led/interpreted” or, more loosely, “interpretable meaning” or “meaning requiring interpretation,” the Tibetan could mistakenly be taken as “a meaning leading [trainees].” Hence, Tsong-kha-pa (36) says:

Although it is indeed the case that trainees are to be led by sūtras requiring interpretation, this [leading of trainees]<sup>a</sup> is not the meaning of *drang* (*neya*) [in *drang don* (*neyārtha*)]. Rather, it is the style of leading [that is, interpreting] that occurs according to whether the meaning of the sūtra is [just] that or needs to be interpreted [or understood]<sup>b</sup> as other than that.

Jam-yang-shay-pa restates Tsong-kha-pa’s meaning:<sup>c</sup>

Here the way that texts requiring interpretation are to be led [that is, interpreted] does not refer to *leading* trainees—as by the indirect teachings [of, for instance, a real self for the sake of] introducing [certain trainees to virtuous endeavor] but to *interpreting* the subject being discussed.

### Issue #11: Why does Tsong-kha-pa make this seemingly obvious point?

Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan decisively explains that since definitive sūtras also lead students, the mere leading of trainees does not put a sūtra, or sūtra passage, into the category of requiring interpretation. Döl-po-pa seeks to make the further point that the teaching of a matrix-of-One-Gone-

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<sup>a</sup> *gdul bya kha drang*; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 12.4.

<sup>b</sup> *go dgos pa*; Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan’s *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po’s) Lectures*, 432.1.5.

<sup>c</sup> Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 811; the Tibetan:

འདིར་བྱང་དོན་གྱི་བྱང་ཚུལ་ལ་གཞུག་པ་ཞེས་དགོངས་ལྟ་བུའི་གཏུལ་བྱ་ཁ་བྱངས་  
ཚུལ་མ་ཡིན་པས་བརྗོད་བྱའི་སྐོན་ནས་...བྱངས་ཚུལ་

Thus endowed with ultimate Buddha qualities of body, speech, and mind cannot be said to require interpretation just because the *Descent into Laṅkā Sūtra* says that it was taught to lead trainees:<sup>a</sup>

Moreover, since all profound paths of definitive meaning were spoken for the sake of leading trainees from the states of cyclic existence and solitary peace to the supreme city of great liberation, all of them most absurdly would just be of interpretable meaning.

Consequently, there is a great difference between requiring interpretation<sup>b</sup> and being spoken for the sake of leading trainees...

Tsong-kha-pa wants to make it clear that he agrees with Döl-po-pa that the term *drang* (*neya*) in *drang don* (*neyārtha*) does not indicate that trainees are being led and, instead of this, indicates that interpretation of the meaning is required; thus, he affirms that *drang don* (*neyārtha*) connotes “meaning to be led,” that is to say, “meaning to be interpreted, or understood differently.” However, Tsong-kha-pa disagrees with Döl-po-pa’s point that the teaching of a matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus endowed with ultimate Buddha qualities of body, speech, and mind is not an interpretable meaning.

Thus, after agreeing with Döl-po-pa about the connotation of *drang don* (*neyārtha*) as “meaning to be interpreted,” Tsong-kha-pa (36) immediately turns to explaining the criteria for requiring interpretation by detailing two situations calling for it:

Among those in which the meaning needs to be interpreted there are two types [one when the meaning of the literal reading<sup>c</sup> must be interpreted as something else and another when the meaning of the mode of being must be interpreted as something else]:<sup>124</sup>

- One mode is, for instance, the need to interpret the statement that father and mother are to be killed<sup>d</sup> in “Having killed father and mother.”<sup>e</sup> This must be interpreted as other than the meaning of the explicit reading;<sup>f</sup> namely, father and mother are to be taken as existence [that is, a fully potentialized karma that will produce the next lifetime, this being the tenth link of the dependent-arising of cyclic existence,] and attachment [the

<sup>a</sup> Hopkins, *Mountain Doctrine*, 117-121; see also Hopkins, *Reflections on Reality*, chap. 17c, 364-380.

<sup>b</sup> *drang don*.

<sup>c</sup> *sgras zin gyi don*.

<sup>d</sup> *pha ma bsad par gsungs pa*.

<sup>e</sup> *pha dang ma ni bsad byas shing*.

<sup>f</sup> *dngos zin gyi don*.

eighth link].

- In the second mode, with respect to the [literally acceptable] statement, for instance, that from wholesome and unwholesome actions effects of pleasure and pain [respectively] arise, when someone propounds, for instance, that:

The production of pleasure and pain by the two actions is the mode of being of those two, and there is no mode of being of them that is not this; hence, the suchness of the objects [mentioned] in that sūtra is definite as just this, and therefore it is not suitable to interpret [the suchness of the objects mentioned in that sūtra] as other than this.

it is to be explained that the suchness of the objects [taught] in that [sūtra, namely, the suchness of the arising of pleasure from wholesome actions and the arising of pain from unwholesome actions]<sup>125</sup> must be interpreted as other than the explicit reading [that is to say, it must be interpreted as the emptiness of true existence of the arising of pleasure from wholesome actions and the emptiness of true existence of the arising of pain from unwholesome actions].

Jam-yang-shay-pa restates Tsong-kha-pa's meaning:<sup>a</sup>

In brief, there are two modes of interpretation:

- one mode when the literal meaning of the passage is not even suitable to be what is expressed by the sūtra as in, “Father and mother are to be killed,”<sup>b</sup> [which actually teaches that existence and attachment in the twelve links of dependent-arising

<sup>a</sup> Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 811; the Tibetan:

བཤོད་བྱེད་སྒྲིལ་ནས་པ་དང་མ་ནི་བསང་བྱ་ཞིང་ཉ་བྱེད་སྒྲིལ་བའི་མདོ་དཔེ་བཤོད་བྱ་  
ཅས་ཏུ་ཡང་མི་རུང་བའི་བྱངས་ཚུལ་དང་། ལས་དཀར་ནག་ལས་བདེ་སྦྱག་འབྱུང་བར་  
སྦྱོན་པ་སྒྲིལ་བའི་ལུགས་ཡིན་ཡང་ལས་དཀར་ནག་ལས་འབྱས་བྱ་བདེ་སྦྱག་འབྱུང་བ་ནི་  
ལས་དེ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་ཡིན་པར་འདོད་པ་ལ་ལས་གཉིས་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་དེར་  
མི་རུང་གི་དེ་ལས་གཞན་ཏུ་བདག་མེད་ཏུ་བྱང་དགོས་པ་ཉ་བྱེད་སྒྲིལ་བའི་མདོ་དཔེ་  
མིན་གྱི་བྱང་ཚུལ་བསྒྲིལ་ན་གཉིས་ཡོད་པའི་ཕྱིར་

<sup>b</sup> Taipei, 532.12: *pha dang ma ni bsad bya zhing*. At first blush, this change from a past verbal “having killed” (*bsad byas*) to a verbal object noun “are to be

are to be abandoned]

- [another mode when the literal meaning of the passage is suitable to be what the sūtra expresses but interpretation is required to determine the mode of subsistence of the phenomena discussed in the text, that is, their emptiness.] For instance, though the teaching that pleasures arise from wholesome actions and sufferings from unwholesome actions is literal, it would not be suitable to assert that the arising of pleasures from wholesome actions and the arising of sufferings from unwholesome actions is the mode of subsistence of the two actions. Rather, one must interpret their mode of subsistence otherwise, as lacking self [that is, as lacking inherent existence].

Thus, there are, in brief, two modes of interpretation:

1. interpretation of that which is not literal
2. interpretation of the literal [in order to discover the final nature of the phenomena discussed].

As an instance of the first—when the literal meaning of the passage must be interpreted as something else—Tsong-kha-pa (36) cites, as above, Buddha's declaration that father and mother are to be killed. A stanza containing this line is found in the *Compilations of Indicative Verse*:<sup>a</sup>

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killed" (*bsad bya*), which also occurs in the Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) Thought* (101.2), appears to be significant, since the first seems merely to report what the perpetrator did, whereas the second indicates that father and mother indeed should be killed; however, as will be seen below, some Tibetan scholars take the literal meaning of even the first as indicating approval of having killed father and mother.

<sup>a</sup> *Udānavarga*; XXIX.22 (Golden Reprint, vol. 160, 80.3):

*pha dang ma ni bsad byas\* shing/  
rgyal po gtsang sbra can gnyis dang/  
yul 'khor 'khor dang bcas bcom na/  
mi ni dag par 'gyur zhes bya//*

\*Reading *byas* for *bas*. There are also related stanzas at *Compilations of Indicative Verse*, XXX.73-74 (Golden Reprint, vol. 160, 115.2):

The sinless who, having killed father and mother,  
Destroy the king, the two cleanly ones,  
The area as well as the retinue,  
Are brahmins [that is, pure].

*pha dang ma ni bsad byas shing//*

*rgyal po gtsang sbra can gnyis dang //*  
*yul 'khor 'khor dang bcas bcom pa/*  
*sdig med gang yin bram ze yin //*

The sinless who, having killed father and mother,  
 Kill the king, the two cleanly ones,  
 And the fierce tiger  
 Are brahmins [that is, pure].

*pha dang ma ni bsad byas shing//*  
*rgyal po gtsang sbra can gnyis dang //*  
*mi zad pa yi stag bsad pa//*  
*sdig med gang yin bram ze yin //*

See also the translations by Gareth Sparham, *The Tibetan Dhammapada* (New Delhi: Mahayana Publications, 1983; rev. ed., London: Wisdom Publications, 1986); and by W. Woodville Rockhill, *The Udānavarga: A Collection of Verses from the Buddhist Canon* (London: Trübner, 1883; Calcutta: Trübner, 1892; reprint Amsterdam: Oriental Press, 1975). A variation also appears in the *Dhammapada* (294):

Having slain mother and father and two khattiya kings, having slain a kingdom together with the subordinate, without trembling, the brahmana goes.” [John Ross Carter translation].

(Thanks to Donald Lopez for this citation.) For a citation of the Pāli and Gen-dun-chö-pel’s translation into Tibetan see José Ignacio Cabezón, *A Dose of Emptiness: An Annotated Translation of the stong thun chen mo of mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang*, 430 n. 178 (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1992).

The stanza, with slight variation, is cited in Nāgārjuna’s *Compendium of Sūtra* [in *bstan ’gyur* (sde dge 3934), TBRC W23703.110:298-431 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5330, vol. 102]:

*pha dang ma ni bsad byas shing/*  
*bram ze gtsang sbra can nyid dang/*  
*rgyal po yul 'khor bcas bcom la/*  
*mi de yongs su dag par 'gyur//*

Ratnākaraśānti’s *Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Compendium of Sūtra,” Ornament Sparkling with Jewels* [*mdo kun las btus pa’i bshad pa rin po che’i snang ba’i rgyan* (sūtrasamuccayabhāṣyaratnālokālaṃkāra), in *bstan ’gyur* (sde dge 3935), TBRC W23703.110:431-669 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5331, vol. 102] changes the tense of the verb from the past to the future to form a future passive participle:

*pha dang ma ni **gsad** bya zhing/ //*  
*bram ze gtsang sbra can nyid dang/ //*  
*rgyal po yul 'khor bcas bcom la/ //*  
*mi de yongs su dag par 'gyur/ //*

A man who, having killed father and mother,  
 Destroys the king, the two cleanly ones,  
 The area as well as the retinue,  
 Is said to become pure.

Let us consider this provocative statement.

## Issue #12: How is “killing father and mother” to be interpreted?

Prajñāvarman’s commentary on the *Compilations of Indicative Verse*<sup>a</sup> identifies the context of Buddha’s statement as well as the intended meanings of the characters in terms of the twelve links of the dependent-arising of cyclic existence. The backdrop, therefore, is the twelve links:

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This reading of *gsad bya* is how the first line is often cited by Tibetan scholars although Tsong-kha-pa uses the past version given above. Other variations are found in texts including the *Vajradāka Tantra* [*rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po dpal rdo rje mkha’ ’gro* (*śrīvajradākanāmamahātantrarāja*), in *bka’ ’gyur* (*sde dge par phud*, 370), TBRC W22084.78:3-251, 67a.1-67a.2 (Delhi, India: Delhi Kar-mapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979)]:

*pha dang ma ni bsad byas shing/  
 bram ze gtsang ma gnyis bzung nas/  
 rgyal po yul ’khor bcas bcom na/  
 mi de dag par ’gyur zhes bya/*

Thanks to Paul Hackett for the citations from Nāgārjuna’s *Compendium of Sūtra* and the *Vajradāka Tantra*.

<sup>a</sup> Peking 5601, vol. 119, 221.6; Golden Reprint, vol. 161, 357.6. See Gareth Sparham’s presentation of this same material in a note in *The Tibetan Dhammapada*, 217 n. 244.



<i>One Round of Twelve</i>	
<b>Projecting Causes in a Lifetime Prior to the Present Lifetime</b>	
1. ignorance	
2. compositional action	
3. consciousness	
a. cause consciousness	
<b>Projected Effects in the Present Lifetime</b>	
b. effect consciousness	
4. name and form	
5. sense-spheres	
6. contact	
7. feeling	
<b>Actualizing Causes in the Present Lifetime</b>	
8. attachment	
9. grasping	
10. existence	
<b>Actualized Effects in the Next Lifetime</b>	
11. birth	
12. aging and death	

Prajñāvarman explains:

In a mountainous area a fierce man wanted to be king; having destroyed his enemies, he killed father and mother, the king, two cleanly brahmins, and a great many humans in the area and made himself king. He, upon reflection,<sup>a</sup> went in the presence of the Supramundane Victor and said, “If you teach properly, then even I will be pleased and will not destroy the pleasant grove [where you teach doctrine] and so forth, and moreover will enact many good deeds.” Thereupon, [Buddha] spoke this [stanza]. Hearing it, [the fierce man] became faithful and turned into a great householder.

Because it is taught that a mother is the root of what arises, the *mother* (*ma*) is ignorance [the first link], since sūtra says, “From the condition of ignorance, compositional [action arises].” Moreover, it is explained:

Ignorance engenders cyclic existence,  
Which dwells like the mother of a child.  
Without this attachment  
[Cyclic existence] is not suitable to be engendered.

<sup>a</sup> *des bsams pa gang bdag gis*; translation conjectured from context.

The *father* (*pha*) is the link of compositional [action, the second link] because the world is engendered from action (*las*, *karma*). The *king* (*rgyal po*) is consciousness [the third link] because of the phrase “From the condition of compositional [action] consciousness [arises].” “*Rāja*” (*king*) is desire because of the statement “from objects such as forms and so forth.” The *two cleanly ones* (*gtsang sbra can gnyis*) are the link of name and form [the fourth link] because they mutually have different characters. The *surrounding area* (*yul 'khor*) is the six sense-spheres [the fifth link], since they are objects of consciousness. *As well as the retinue* (*'khor dang bcas*) is contact and feeling [the sixth and seventh links] because these are the chief mental factors and the supreme of the accompaniers. Through stopping those, one becomes separated from all causes and effects of transmigratory existence, whereby a *man will become pure*.

Now, let us give the condensation by Kātyāyanaputra:

Due to its meaning of engendering, attachment [the eighth link] is the *mother* (*ma*) because of the phrase “Creatures are engendered from attachment,” since destruction of it is to abandon it by means of an antidote. *Father* (*pha*) is contaminated action and existence [the second and tenth links]; sūtra says, “This one will be born there [from] contaminated virtuous deeds done and will experience the fruition.” Destroying those is to abandon them by means of an antidote. The *king* is consciousness having appropriation [the third link], since scripture says, “The sixth, the lord, is the self of the city.” The *two cleanly ones* are view and holding ethics and discipline to be supreme. The *area* is objects of afflictive emotions. *As well as the retinue* is “as well as secondary afflictive emotions.” To have abandoned all these by means of their respective antidotes is *purity* since all objects [of the afflictive emotions and the secondary afflictive emotions] have been abandoned in that way.

Tsong-kha-pa (36), without citing Prajñāvarman, offers a somewhat similar reading of the meaning by holding that “Having killed father and mother” teaches that the tenth and eighth members of the twelve-linked dependent-arising of cyclic existence, existence and attachment, are to be abandoned:

This must be interpreted as other than the meaning of the explicit

reading; namely, father and mother are to be taken as existence [that is, a fully potentialized karma that will produce the next lifetime, this being the tenth link of the dependent-arising of cyclic existence] and attachment [the eighth link].

## Issue #13: Why call existence and attachment father and mother?

Father and mother are used as metaphors for existence and attachment among the twelve links of the dependent-arising of cyclic existence to illustrate how these two act as uncommon and common causes.<sup>126</sup> The explanation stems from the rules of patrilineal lineage in which a child comes to be of the father's lineage. As Pal-jor-lhün-drub's<sup>a</sup> *Lamp for the Teaching* says:<sup>127</sup>

Just as the father is the uncommon cause and the mother is the common cause [for determining a child's lineage], so the karma [that produces] the next existence is like a seed producing a sentient being in cyclic existence, and attachment is like a cooperative condition. Hence, the karma for the rebirth is indicated with the name "father," and attachment is indicated with the name "mother."

In a patrilineal culture like India the lineage of a child is determined by that of the father, due to which the father is said to be the uncommon cause of the child's lineage, and thus wherever he plants his seed, those children are of his lineage, the mothers only being common conditions. In a similar way the karma that produces, or drives, a particular lifetime is, like that seed, the uncommon cause of a lifetime, though it necessarily involves attachment as a cooperative condition.

In a different context, the late Ngag-wang-leg-dan unfolds the metaphor from the viewpoint of the mother's side:<sup>b</sup>

For instance, in Tibet, Mongolia, and so forth, if a mother had three husbands of different lands and gave birth to a son by each of the three, then the sons would receive the names of their father's lineage. Similarly, the correct view [of emptiness] is like a mother in that it is shared by all three vehicles, and it is necessary for their attainments. The different methods [that is, motivations] of the

<sup>a</sup> Pal-jor-lhün-drub (*dpal 'byor lhun grub, gnyal* [or *gnyan*] *ston*, 1427-1514.

<sup>b</sup> Kensur Lekden, *Meditations of a Tibetan Tantric Abbot* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2001), 122.

three vehicles are like the fathers, and in dependence on these methods, the differences in lineage and attainments arise. The mother, the correct view, is common to all three vehicles in that it is utterly impossible to abandon the respective obstructions to the three attainments without it.

Similarly, here attachment is required for all actions leading to rebirth in cyclic existence, the type of which is determined by the particular action (*karma*) that impels it.

In these ways, father and mother serve as suitable metaphors for karma and attachment among the twelve links of the dependent-arising of cyclic existence.

## Issue #14: But why did Buddha even speak in this other context about killing father and mother? Did anyone need to hear that parents should be killed?

Prajñāvarman's account of the circumstances surrounding this unusual teaching shows that Buddha gave it under threat from a fierce man who had committed patricide. Identified as Ajātashatru,<sup>128</sup> this usurper had killed his father, King Bimbisāra, and mother, Queen Vaidehī. Since the murderer was overcome with grief such that he could not absorb Buddha's teaching, Buddha spoke these lines in order to console him. Although we might speculate that merely framing the process of overcoming cyclic existence in this way consoled him, it seems to me more likely that Ajātashatru was temporarily consoled by hearing that father and mother indeed should be killed.

According to a detailed synthesis of the accounts of Ajātashatru's life by Ryuei Michael McCormick:<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> *Incorrigible Evildoers: The Story of Devadatta and Prince Ajātashatru*; [http://nichirenscoffehouse.net/Ryuei/Devadatta\\_Story.html](http://nichirenscoffehouse.net/Ryuei/Devadatta_Story.html). The following account is drawn from McCormick's lengthy and intriguing interweaving of sūtra sources, which I sometimes quote and sometimes paraphrase. See also the astoundingly thorough presentation of the variety of Buddhist and Jain sources in India and their transformations in China and Japan in Michael Radich, *How Ajātashatru Was Reformed: The Domestication of "Ajase" and Stories in Buddhist History*, Studea Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series XXVII (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2011). I also rely on this, but mainly draw from McCormick since it is written as a story, thus more closely serving my purpose of setting the scene. However, for the full panoply of conflicting stories, see Radich, who holds (p. 18) that the range of variants cannot "be reduced to a

A series of tragic events occurred when the Buddha was seventy-two years old and in the thirty-seventh year of his teaching mission. This was the year when his cousin Devadatta initiated a schism in the ranks of the Sangha, then instigated a palace coup in the city of Rajagriha, the capital of the kingdom of Magadha, and finally made four attempts to assassinate the Buddha.

Devadatta enlisted the help of Prince Ajātashatru in dethroning King Bimbisāra by making magical displays and by explaining to Ajātashatru<sup>a</sup> what his name means:

According to one account, Devadatta pointed to a broken finger that Prince Ajātashatru had since infancy and told the following story:

A long time ago, King Bimbisara was anxious to have an heir. Having heard from a soothsayer that a certain hermit living in the mountains would be reborn as his son three years later, the king immediately sent him [that is, the hermit] a messenger asking him to terminate his own life, but the hermit refused to do so. The angry king ordered the messenger to kill him if he still refused to commit suicide. The hermit thus died determined to take revenge.

Soon Queen Vaidehī became pregnant. The king rejoiced, but was horrified to hear from the soothsayer that she would bear a boy who would do harm to the king. So he told the queen to give birth to the baby on the roof of the tower and let it drop to the ground. She did as told, but the baby miraculously survived with only damage to his little finger...

According to another account, Devadatta explained the true meaning of the name “Ajātashatru,” which is usually taken to mean “One Who Has No Born Enemy” or could be taken to mean “Unborn Enemy.”

From hearing this, Ajātashatru decided to murder his father and made an unsuccessful attempt, after which he was confronted by his father:

King Bimbisara asked: “Why do you want to kill me, prince?” “I want the kingdom, sire.” “If you want the kingdom, prince, the

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single ur-narrative.” Still, we need to remember that the various traditions have done just the opposite, and here we are trying to figure out a plausible one based on the cited Tibetan sources.

<sup>a</sup> *ma skyes dgra.*

kingdom is yours.” He therewith handed the kingdom over to him.

Nevertheless, Ajātashatru, afraid that the king might seek to regain his throne, imprisoned his father, whose life was sustained in prison by the cleverness of the Queen:

The king’s consort, Vaidehī bathed and purified her body. She mixed honey with the flour of roasted barley and smeared it on her body. When she entered the room in which the great king had been imprisoned, she noticed that his face was haggard and his flesh had wasted away. He had become emaciated in a most pitiful way. His consort shed tears and said, “Truly, as expounded by [Buddha] the World Honored One, prosperity is an ephemeral thing; the fruits of our evil deed assault us now.” The great king said, “I have been denied food, and the long starvation is excruciatingly painful, as if several hundred insects were churning away in my stomach. Most of my blood and flesh have wasted away, and I am about to die.” The king nearly lost consciousness and he sobbed. When his consort offered him the mixture of honey and flour of roasted barley that she had smeared on her body, the king devoured it.

The king revived. Ajātashatru figured out what was happening and was angered:

Ajātashatru asked the sentries guarding the gates, “Is my father the king still alive?” They said, “The king’s consort smears honey mixed with roasted barley flour on her body. She then fills her jeweled crown with juices and offers it to the king. The Buddha’s disciples such as Maudgalyāyana and Purna and others come swooping down from the sky to expound the Dharma for the sake of the king. We have not been able to prevent this.”

Ajātashatru heard this account and was angry. He said, “Even though she is my mother, if she consorts with those who violate the laws of the country, she must also be considered an enemy of the state. Moreover, how dare these evil monks with their magical powers keep this evil king alive!” Then he drew his sword and attempted to kill Vaidehī, the consort of the king. At that moment the minister Chandraprabha together with the physician Jivaka bowed down to the king and said, “From the Vedas we learn that since the creation of heaven and earth, there have been eighteen thousand evil kings who slew their fathers in order to usurp the throne. But there is none so vicious that he slew his own mother. If you commit this foul deed, you will bring disgrace upon the

kshatriya caste. We cannot bear such a deed, for anyone who performs such an act is an outcaste. We cannot stay here any longer.” The two men, with their hands on the hilts of their swords, spoke these words as they slowly inched their way backwards. Ajātashatru was stunned and terrified; he said to Jivaka, “Are you not going to help me?” Jivaka said, “Do not kill your mother.” The king repented his erroneous ways and sought their help; he threw away his sword and ordered his palace officials to confine his mother to the private palace.

Under house arrest, the Queen could no longer feed the King:

Ever since his consort was imprisoned, King Bimbisara was denied all food. Peering through his window, he gazed upon the verdant green Vulture Peak; this provided some consolation for his mind. However, when Ajātashatru heard of this, he blocked up the window and slashed the soles of the king’s feet, so that the king could not stand. Around that time, Ajātashatru’s child Udaya was suffering from a boil on the tip of his finger. Therefore, Ajātashatru, while hugging his child to his bosom, sucked away the pus. Vaidehī, the king’s consort, who was sitting nearby, observed this and said, “King, when you were small, you suffered from an identical boil. Your father, the great king, just as you did, sucked away its pus.” When Ajātashatru heard this, his anger toward his father the king suddenly changed into thoughts of love. He said to his ministers, “If there is someone who will report that my father the king is alive, I shall grant him half of this country.” People rushed to where his father the king was being held. But the king, hearing the clamorous footsteps, became terrified and thought, “They are going to inflict severe punishments on me.” In agony, he collapsed onto the bed and breathed his last.

Blinded by worldly pleasures, Ajātashatru, who thus caused the death of his innocent father the king, was now beset with contrition. His body suffered from high temperature; his whole body was covered with boils. The boils oozed pus and were so foul smelling that it was hard to come near him. He pondered, “Now, in this world, I receive something like the fruits of hell. Before long, I shall receive the fruits of the actual hell.” His mother Vaidehī was struck with grief and smeared various medicines on his body, but the boils would not heal. King Ajātashatru said to his mother, “These boils grow out of the mind and not from the body. They cannot be healed by human power.”

The Queen, in turn, died from grief; McCormick summarizes this phase:

The death of King Bimbisara is said to have occurred in the 38<sup>th</sup> year of the Buddha's teaching mission. According to the Pāli account, Vaidehī died of grief shortly thereafter. This led to a dispute between King Ajātashatru and his uncle, King Prasenajit of Koshala, the brother of Vaidehī. In the 39<sup>th</sup> year of the Buddha's teaching mission King Prasenajit led his Koshalan troops to reclaim a village that had been given to Magadha as part of Vaidehī's dowry when she married King Bimbisara. King Prasenajit declared that Bimbisāra's parricidal son had no right to it. King Ajātashatru led his own Magadhan troops to take back the village and to further his own imperialistic ambitions.

First Ajātashatru triumphed, but in a later battle King Prasenajit defeated him but took pity on his nephew:

After suffering defeat and then a merciful reprieve from his uncle, King Ajātashatru returned home and turned to philosophy for a time. His guilt over the murder of his father and his own accompanying illness had not gone away. He also dreaded the consequences of his deeds if they should come to fruition in a future life. In order to ease his mind he visited the six unorthodox (from a Vedic point of view) teachers who all rejected the authority of the Vedas, the divinely revealed scriptures of the brahmins...King Ajātashatru did not find any of these teachings satisfactory. His sickness remained, as did his guilt and dread of the future.

The physician Jivaka eventually cured Ajātashatru of his physical illness and encouraged him to see the Buddha.

On the night of the full moon, several hundred elephant carriages with torches at their heads quietly made their way toward the forest. When at last they entered the forest, King Ajātashatru was suddenly beset with fear; trembling, he said to Jivaka, "Jivaka, you are not planning to betray and hand me over to the enemy are you? What an eerie silence! They say there are over one thousand disciples, and yet not one sneeze or cough can be heard. I cannot help but think that there is some kind of plot afoot." Jivaka said, "Great king, advance without fear. There is a light burning in that forest retreat. The World Honored One resides there."

The king was bolstered by Jivaka's words, and lowering himself from the elephant he went into the forest; approaching the World Honored One, he bowed and begged to be taught by the



Buddha.

Michael Radich provides detail about Ajātashatru's repentance:

greatly fearing hell, being troubled by an uneasy conscience and bad dreams, etc.; and then is **received or saved by the Buddha**, or by hearing the Dharma; takes the three refuges, and sometimes the five precepts,

and about Ajātashatru's moral state:<sup>a</sup>

has "eliminated all faults, and has no defilements; he is established unwaveringly in the Dharma; in this very place, he has utterly transcended all impurities, and **eye of all dharmas has arisen in him**...Ajātashatru's since have been eradicated...Ajātashatru will be **spared hell**, or spend a **shorter time** there...

Somewhat similarly, Radich's final summary is:

The *Mahāyāna Mahānirvāṇa Sūtra* account is full of fantastic elements, supernatural events, and teachings that developed long after the Buddha's passing. It uses the original story from *The Fruits of the Homeless Life Discourse* to dramatize several important themes of Mahayana teaching and practice, namely the Buddha's compassion for those who have created their own suffering and are lost and confused, the importance of a good friend, the importance of recognizing and repenting of one's misdeeds, the way in which spiritual practice and the concern and care of others can alleviate mental and physical illness, the universality of buddha-nature, and most importantly the transformation of an icchāntika [one whose lineage allowing enlightenment is severed] into a bodhisattva.

These accounts, drawn from many sūtra sources, provide us with an apt context for the statement about the grieving Ajātashatru in the *Compilations of Indicative Verse* which is cited as Tsong-kha-pa's reference by his Tibetan and Mongolian commentators:

A man who, having killed father and mother,  
Destroys the king, the two cleanly ones,  
The area as well as the retinue,  
Is said to become pure.

<sup>a</sup> Of the five radically different varieties that Radich lists, I am listing only the one (with sub-varieties) according with the last line of the stanza about to cited again.

We have seen how Ajātashatru provided the circumstances for the death of his father and mother; “The area as well as the retinue” might be the kingdom won and inhabitants killed in Ajātashatru’s original conquest over King Prasenajit. However, the identities of the slain “king” in the second line, if not a repetition of Ajātashatru’s father, and of the slain “two cleanly ones” remain obscure to me.<sup>a</sup>

For our purposes here the accounts are helpful in painting the scene of Ajātashatru’s grief. We can see the background to an opinion, reported by Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho,<sup>129</sup> that:

There is indeed a trainee who needs to be taught that it is suitable to kill father and mother because if Buddha did not teach Ajātashatru that it is suitable to kill father and mother, due to his grief he would not be fit as a vessel for the teaching of doctrine.

Ajātashatru would have been too disturbed by grief even to hear Buddha’s teaching if he was not gulled into thinking that his deeds were not awful.

Despite some loose ends, we have tentatively identified a possible context for the unusual statement that father and mother are to be killed.

## Issue #15: On the literal level what is the meaning of “father and mother are to be killed”?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>130</sup> lists a few possible literal meanings of “father and mother are to be killed.” The simplest and most obvious is that “killing father and mother” is to be posited as the literal reading of “Having killed father and mother.” However, he asks whether the literal meaning of a passage to be interpreted under this rubric must be something that does not exist, as in the case of Buddha’s teaching that a permanent self exists, whereas a permanent self does not exist.<sup>131</sup> If the literal meaning must be something that does not exist, then since the murder of father and mother does exist, killing father and mother could not be the literal reading of this passage. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho adds that due to this some say that the *suitability* of killing father and mother<sup>b</sup> is to be posited as the literal reading of “Having killed father and mother,” or “father and mother are to be killed.”

Still, it might be objected to this nuance that since there is no trainee who needs to be taught that it is suitable to kill father and mother, it is not fit to posit the suitability of killing father and mother as the literal reading

<sup>a</sup> I welcome your speculations.

<sup>b</sup> *pha ma gsad 'od pa*.

of “Having killed father and mother.” Nevertheless, we have seen that there is indeed a trainee who needed to be taught that it is suitable to kill father and mother because, as Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho says, “If Buddha did not teach Ajātashatru that it was suitable to kill father and mother, due to his grief he would not be fit as a vessel for the teaching of doctrine,” meaning his grief would have overwhelmed his ability even to hear the doctrine—the point being that he had to hear something that is not true, he had to hear that he was alright that he had killed his father and mother so that he could sufficiently calm down to hear the Buddha’s teaching.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>132</sup> calls for more analysis of the issues raised by these positions, giving the impression that he will leave the matter there, but he adds a further exchange that takes it further. This is the next vexing issue.

## Issue #16: Then how can Tsong-kha-pa cite “father and mother are to be killed” as an instance of a sūtra passage that “must be interpreted as other than the meaning of the explicit reading”?

As Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho puts it, if the *suitability* of killing father and mother is posited as the literal reading of that sūtra passage, and the abandonment of the two, existence and attachment, is posited as what is expressed, then the literal reading of that sūtra passage needs to be accepted as it stands. However, if the passage is literal, this would contradict Tsong-kha-pa’s statement (cited here without bracketed material):

One mode is, for instance, the need to interpret the statement that father and mother are to be killed in “Having killed father and mother.” This must be interpreted as other than the meaning of the explicit reading; namely, father and mother are to be taken as existence and attachment.

As Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan puts the point:<sup>133</sup>

Our own textbook [by Jam-yang-shay-pa] says that that father and mother are to be killed is not even the mere literal reading<sup>a</sup> of that sūtra [passage], and here also [Tsong-kha-pa’s *The Essence of Eloquence*] says that the meaning of the explicit reading<sup>b</sup> must be interpreted as other than father and mother, that is to say, as karmic

<sup>a</sup> *sgras zin.*

<sup>b</sup> *dngos zin gyi don.*

existence and attachment. These have much to be analyzed; [for] if this [that is, that father and mother are to be killed] is not even the mere literal reading of that [passage], it would have to be that damage to its literal reading would not exist, due to which the literal reading would be literal[ly acceptable].<sup>a</sup>

To repeat this in Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's own words, which I paraphrased above:

*Someone's opinion:* The *suitability* of killing father and mother is posited as the literal reading<sup>b</sup> of that sūtra passage and [the abandonment of] the two, existence and attachment, is posited as what is expressed.<sup>c</sup>

*Response:* Well then, it [absurdly] follows that the subject, such a sūtra passage, is a sūtra whose explicit reading<sup>d</sup> is literal<sup>e</sup> because of your assertion [that the *suitability* of killing father and mother is posited as the literal reading of that sūtra passage]. If you accept [that such a sūtra passage is a sūtra whose explicit reading is literal], it [absurdly] follows that the subject, such a sūtra passage, is not a sūtra whose meaning of the explicit reading<sup>f</sup> needs to be interpreted because you accepted [that such a sūtra passage is a sūtra whose explicit reading is literal]. It cannot be accepted [that such a sūtra passage is not a sūtra whose meaning of the explicit reading<sup>g</sup> needs to be interpreted] because—from between the two types of meanings that need to be interpreted—[Tsong-kha-pa] posits this sūtra passage as an illustration of a meaning of the explicit reading that needs to be interpreted, because the text [Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence*] says:

One mode is, for instance, the need to interpret the statement that father and mother are to be killed in “Having killed father and mother.” This must be interpreted as other than the meaning of the explicit reading; namely, father and mother are to be taken as existence and attachment.

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<sup>a</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *sgras zin.*

<sup>c</sup> *brjod bya.*

<sup>d</sup> *dngos zin.*

<sup>e</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa.*

<sup>f</sup> *dngos zin gyi don.*

<sup>g</sup> *dngos zin gyi don.*

This should be examined.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho leaves the exchange with a call to examine how to keep from contradicting Tsong-kha-pa.

So, let me try: Just as when Buddha teaches a (nonexistent) permanent self in order to lead certain trainees into taking up the practice of virtue, so Buddha teaches Ajātashatru that it was suitable for him to have killed his parents (whereas such a suitability never existed) in order to relieve him from overwhelming grief so that he could hear the doctrine and turn his mind to virtue.



### 3. Criteria for being Definitive

Tsong-kha-pa finds the criteria for requiring interpretation to be implicit in Kamalashīla's description of the two criteria for a sūtra to be definitive; so, having explained the types of interpretable meanings, he (141) turns to Kamalashīla's description of definitive meaning:

Therefore, Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle* says:

What is a definitive meaning? It is that which possesses valid cognition [that is to say, is literally acceptable] and [moreover] is set out in terms of the ultimate because it cannot be interpreted by another as anything separate from that.

According to Kamalashīla, to be definitive a passage not only must be established by valid cognition but also must address the ultimate. Tsong-kha-pa (141) comments:

Having valid cognition would be sufficient [to characterize what is definitive] if meanings that do not exist in accordance with how they are taught and those that do exist in accordance with how they are taught were taken as the interpretable and the definitive; however, since this is not sufficient, Kamalashīla says "in terms of the ultimate."

Hence, in statements that a sprout is produced from a seed, and the like, the meanings as taught do have verification by valid cognition, but they are not in terms of the ultimate, due to which they require interpretation; the mode of interpreting [the mode of subsistence] as a meaning other than this is as was explained above.

Therefore, statements that things do not have truly established production possess valid cognition [since they *are* established by valid cognition] and also cannot be interpreted as meaning other [than this] in the sense that the meaning as taught is not the suchness of those phenomena [because it *is* the suchness of those phenomena]. Such sūtra [passages] are of definitive meaning, for they cannot be interpreted as anything else by way of either of the two modes of interpretation.<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Tsong-kha-pa takes Kamalashīla's "by another" as "by way of either of the two modes of interpretation" whereas Kamalashīla himself seems to take it as "other sūtras" when he says:

Let us consider issues concerning the two standards for being definitive.

## Issue #17: Are there two separate ways of positing a passage as definitive?

To flesh out Tsong-kha-pa's point that to be definitive a passage not only must be established by valid cognition but also must address the ultimate, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>134</sup> first gives an illustration of a passage that is validly established but does not address the ultimate—the mere teaching that compounded phenomena are impermanent:

If it were the case that the mere nonexistence and existence of meanings in accordance with how they are taught were to be treated as the interpretable and the definitive, the possession of valid cognition alone would be sufficient, but it is not sufficient because then it would [absurdly] follow that a sūtra teaching that compounded phenomena are impermanent would be a sūtra of definitive meaning.

Consequently, it cannot be said that a sūtra that either is only founded in valid cognition or only takes ultimate truth as the principal topic of its explicit teaching is of definitive meaning, since both features are required.<sup>135</sup>

Still, one might think that because there are *two separate* ways of positing that a passage requires interpretation, one being that the passage cannot be taken literally and the other being that it does not take ultimate truth as the principal topic of its explicit teaching, the opposite would have to be case for positing a passage as definitive, and thus there would be *two separate* ways of positing that a passage is definitive. And if that is so, the mere fact that the literal reading of a sūtra does not require interpretation would be sufficient to posit it as definitive. However, to counter this qualm it needs to be emphasized that to posit a passage as definitive both features—literality and taking ultimate truth as the principal topic of its explicit teaching—are needed. In this vein, Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle* says:<sup>136</sup>

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It is not reasonable for other sūtras even to utter that the teachings of nonproduction and so forth are to be explained as having a definitive meaning of another intent, for in that case even the teachings of self and so forth would be definitive meanings.

See the final paragraph in the citation below, .



Therefore, it is to be understood that solely those expressing the ultimate are of definitive meaning, and the opposite are of interpretable meaning.

Similarly, Tsong-kha-pa (40) says:

Therefore, solely nonproduction and so forth are to be held to be the ultimate, and solely those [high sayings]<sup>137</sup> teaching these are to be held to be [sūtras of]<sup>138</sup> definitive meaning.

The definitive is limited to passages teaching the ultimate, as long as they also are acceptable in their literal reading.

To repeat: it has to be admitted that when Tsong-kha-pa says, “Among those in which the meaning needs to be interpreted there are two types [one when the literal meaning must be interpreted as something else and another when the meaning of the mode of being must be interpreted as something else],” he extracts these two separate modes of interpretation as the counterparts of Kamalashīla’s statement (38) that:

What is a definitive meaning? It is that which possesses valid cognition and is set out in terms of the ultimate because it cannot be interpreted by another as anything separate from that.

and thus it may *seem* that there are similarly two separate modes of positing a passage as definitive. However, as Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho says:<sup>139</sup>

Though it is asserted that the two modes of interpreting passages as something else are fully qualified<sup>a</sup> [separate modes of interpretation], there is no way the counterpart [separate] modes of positing passages as definitive could be fully qualified.

## Issue #18: Could Kamalashīla’s “possessing valid cognition” possibly indicate that they do not teach the object of negation, ultimate establishment?

In the context of differentiating the interpretable and the definitive, Kamalashīla himself explicitly speaks of possessing valid cognition only in reference to the definitive. Let us cite the entire passage in his *Illumination of the Middle*:<sup>140</sup>

The Supramundane Victor says to rely on sūtras of definitive

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<sup>a</sup> *mtshan nyid pa*.

meaning but not on interpretable meanings. Moreover, as what is a definitive meaning to be taken? It is that which possesses valid cognition and is set out in terms of the ultimate because it cannot be interpreted by another as anything separate from that. Also, the nonproduction of all phenomena is established as correct by valid cognition; due to this, since it is just reasonable, it is called “ultimate.” The *Superior Compendium of Doctrine Sūtra*<sup>a</sup> says:

Nonproduction is true. Other phenomena, such as production and so forth, are not true, having the attribute of falsity and deception.

Also, the *Superior Sūtra Teaching the Two Truths* says, “Devaputra, objects are not ultimately produced.” [This] is posited with respect to all afflicted and pure phenomena, not just some. Similarly, that [sūtra] itself also says:

For example, the space inside a clay vessel and the space inside a jewel vessel are ultimately reduced to only being the space constituent; in them there is not the slightest thing to be differentiated. Devaputra, similarly whatever is afflictive is ultimately just very nonproduced; whatever is pure also is ultimately just very nonproduced. Cyclic existence is ultimately just very nonproduced; nirvāṇa—right through to it—also is ultimately just very nonproduced; in them there is not the slightest thing to be differentiated. Why? Because ultimately all phenomena are just very nonproduced.

Thus, since this nonproduction accords with the ultimate, it is called “ultimate,” but it actually is not, because actually the ultimate is beyond all proliferations.

Therefore, all those that in whatsoever little way teach in terms of the ultimate that has the character of nonproduction and so forth are to be held as definitive meanings; the opposite are interpretable meanings. The *Superior Sūtra of the Teachings of Akṣhayamati* speaks of the character of sūtras of definitive meaning and of interpretable meaning, extensively saying:

<sup>a</sup> 'phags pa chos yang dag par sdud pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo (ārya-dharmasaṃgīti-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra), in *bka' 'gyur* (sde dge par phud, 238), TBRC W22084.65:3-200 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

Which are sūtras of definitive meaning? Which are sūtras of definitive meaning?

Whichever sūtras teach establishing conventionalities are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach establishing ultimates are called “definitive meaning.”

Whichever sūtras teach various words and letters are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach the profound—difficult to see and difficult to realize—are called “definitive meaning.”

Whichever sūtras teach what are set out in various vocabulary—self, sentient being, living being, the nourished, creature, person, mind-progeny, pride-child, agent, and feeler—like an owner when there is no owner are called “interpretable meaning.” Whichever sūtras teach the emptinesses, the doors of liberation—things’ emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, no composition, no produced, no arisen, no sentient being, no living being, no person, and no owner—are called “definitive meaning.”

It is not reasonable for other sūtras even to utter that the teachings of nonproduction and so forth are to be explained as having a definitive meaning of another intent, for in that case even the teachings of self and so forth would be definitive meanings. Hence, it is to be understood that “Solely those expressing the ultimate are definitive meanings, and the opposite are interpretable meanings.” Also, the *Ornament Illuminating Pristine Wisdom Superior Sūtra* says, “That which is the definitive meaning is the ultimate,”<sup>141</sup> and concerning nonproduction the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra* teaches that it is “the definitive meaning.” Hence, it is definite that “Solely nonproduction and so forth are the ultimate.”

Kamalaśīla’s statement:

Also, the nonproduction of all phenomena is established as correct by valid cognition; due to this, since it is just reasonable, it is called “ultimate.”

shows that “possessing valid cognition” indicates that nonproduction itself is established by valid cognition. He backs this up by quoting the *Compendium of Doctrine Superior Sūtra*:

Nonproduction is true. Other phenomena, such as production and so forth, are not true, having the attribute of falsity and deception.

This quotation even suggests that phenomena such as production are somehow not established by valid cognition; the context, however, is specified by Kamalashīla's next citation, from the *Superior Sūtra Teaching the Two Truths*, which says, "Devaputra, objects are not *ultimately* produced." The clarification is that "ultimately established production" is not certified by valid cognition; the topic is not production in general.

It appears that Kamalashīla's focus on whether a passage possesses valid cognition revolves around whether it (1) teaches the absence of ultimately established production or (2) does not teach ultimately established production. Thus, it could be averred that "possessing valid cognition" centers on not teaching ultimate establishment, the object of negation by emptiness, and on teaching its opposite, the absence of ultimate establishment, flying in the face of Tsong-kha-pa's reading of "possessing valid cognition" as revolving merely around whether the passage is literal in general. Indeed, this contrary opinion seems to be the way Jam-yang-shay-pa presents this topic when in his *Great Exposition of Tenets* he gives the Autonomy School's presentation of the interpretable and the definitive. Let us take a look at his treatment, in which he backgrounds and then cites parts of this longer passage from Kamalashīla and also paraphrases and explains other passages:

How do Autonomy School masters differentiate the interpretable and the definitive? Except for a few topics such as the existence or nonexistence of external objects, [they differentiate the interpretable and the definitive similarly] as follows. One should rely [on the definitive] in accordance with the *Teachings of Akṣhaya-mati Sūtra* which says:

Rely on the sūtras whose meaning is definitive; do not rely on sūtras whose meaning requires interpretation.

What is of definitive meaning? It must be what explicitly teaches from the viewpoint of the ultimate because:

- since the ultimate has valid proofs, it is not suitable to be interpreted otherwise [both with regard to literality and with regard to being the mode of subsistence of phenomena]
- and there is no valid cognition for the opposite, such as ultimate production and so forth.

Notice that he associates valid cognition with the fact that the ultimate has valid cognition, whereas the object of negation, "ultimate production and so forth," lacks it. Jam-yang-shay-pa continues:

Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle* says:

What is a definitive meaning? It is that which possesses valid cognition and is set out in terms of the ultimate because it cannot be interpreted by another as anything separate from that. Also, the nonproduction of all phenomena is established as correct by valid cognition; due to this, since it just has reason, it is called "ultimate." The *Compendium of Doctrine Sūtra* says:

Nonproduction is true. Other phenomena, such as production and so forth, are not true, having the attribute of falsity and deception.

and [Kamalashīla] cites the *Sūtra Setting Forth the Two Truths* which states that there is no difference between cyclic existence and nirvāṇa with respect to the absence of true existence, and says such wishing to refute the Proponents of True Existence [that is, Proponents of Mind-Only] about differentiating the three natures into truly established [other-powered natures and thoroughly established natures] and not truly established [imputational natures].<sup>a</sup> Hence, those [sūtras] explicitly teaching ultimate truth are of definitive meaning, and those, though literal,<sup>b</sup> explicitly teaching conventionalities such as production and so forth require interpretation.

Jam-yang-shay-pa stresses that Kamalashīla's point in quoting the *Sūtra Setting Forth the Two Truths* is to deny that any of the three natures is truly established and thus that Kamalashīla's concern is with refuting true, or ultimate, establishment. Though at the end of his exposition Jam-yang-shay-pa mentions literality, he may be suggesting that Kamalashīla's concern in focusing on valid cognition is *primarily* with countering true existence.

Jam-yang-shay-pa's annotator, Ngag-wang-pal-dan,<sup>c</sup> however, emphasizes that denying true existence does not militate against the centrality of literality with regard to the meaning of "possessing valid cognition." Ngag-wang-pal-dan argues from Kamalashīla's text and from Tsong-kha-pa's presentations of it that literality is actually the focus:<sup>142</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Proponents of the Middle assert that all three natures are not truly established.

<sup>b</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa*.

<sup>c</sup> *ngag dbang dpal ldan*, b. 1797; also known as Pal-dan-chö-jay (*dpal ldan chos rje*).

There are explanations that [Kamalashīla's mention of] "that which has valid cognition"<sup>a</sup> (1) means that [the sūtra] must teach an ultimate that is established by valid cognition<sup>b</sup> and not an ultimate that is the object of negation, like true establishment<sup>c</sup> [as when "established ultimately" means "truly established"], (2) but does not mean that the meaning of the literal reading<sup>d</sup> is established by valid cognition. However, the explanation of it as literality<sup>e</sup> is correct:

- because due to the force of the phrase "anything" [in "it cannot be interpreted by another as anything separate from that"] "that which has valid cognition" must be taken as literality, and
- because even the Foremost Precious [Tsong-kha-pa] comments on "that which has valid cognition" as meaning literal-ity, for his *The Essence of Eloquence* says (38):<sup>143</sup>

Having valid cognition would be sufficient [to characterize what is definitive] if meanings that do not exist in accordance with how they are taught and those that do exist in accordance with how they are taught were taken as the interpretable and the definitive; [however, since this is not sufficient, Kamalashīla said "in terms of the ultimate."]

and (39):<sup>144</sup>

Therefore, statements that things do not have truly established production possess valid cognition [since they *are* established by valid cognition] and also cannot be interpreted as meaning other [than this] in the sense that the meaning as taught is not the suchness of those phenomena [because it *is* the suchness of those phenomena]. Such sūtra [passages] are of definitive meaning, for they cannot be interpreted as anything else by way of either of the two modes of interpretation.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *tshad ma dang bcas pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *tshad mas grub pa'i don dam.*

<sup>c</sup> *bden grub lta bu dgag bya don dam.*

<sup>d</sup> *sgras zin gyi don.*

<sup>e</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa.*

<sup>f</sup> About the two modes of interpretation, see the quote from Tsong-kha-pa's

and (41).<sup>145</sup>

You should not hold that [statements of] no production and so forth in which, at that point, a qualification is not [explicitly]<sup>146</sup> affixed to the object of negation are not literal and hence are not of definitive meaning.<sup>a</sup> When in the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, for example, [a qualification] is affixed on one occasion [to the object of negation] with respect to the production of phenomena and so forth [such as when it says,]<sup>147</sup> “That also is in the conventions of the world and is not ultimately,” it is implicitly affixed also on other occasions; therefore, even those in which [such a qualification] is not explicitly mentioned are also literal.

[These statements] entail [that even the Foremost Precious Tsong-kha-pa comments on “that which has valid cognition” as meaning literality] because:

- this [last statement] is made for the sake of clearing away the qualm that “Since sūtras in which the qualification ‘ultimately’ is implicitly affixed are not literal, they are not sūtras of definitive meaning,”
- and if such sūtras were not literal, he should have cleared away the qualm by saying, “Although they are not literal, they are of definitive meaning,” whereas his saying that they “are literal” could not avoid such a qualm, and not only that but also he would be unskilled in exposition

and because Tsong-kha-pa’s Great Exposition of Special Insight explains that whatever are either non-literal sūtras

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Great Exposition of Special Insight at the end of Ngag-wang-pal-dan’s explanation.

<sup>a</sup> See 153, Issue #22: Ta-drin-rab-tan (*Annotations*, 175.6) explains that one might think that statements in the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* that production does not exist are not definitive because they are not literal, since production does indeed exist, but there is no such problem because the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* in other places affixes the qualification “ultimately” to the object of negation. In this vein, Tsong-kha-pa points out at the end of this paragraph that even statements that there is no production are literal because of this implicit affixing of the qualification.

or sūtras mainly teaching conventionalities are necessarily sūtras requiring interpretation:<sup>a</sup>

They are interpretable meanings, or meanings that must be interpreted, because:

1. their meaning is not fit to be taken in accordance with how it is taught and must be interpreted as something else upon explaining its thought, or
2. though it is permissible to take [the meaning] as literal, merely this is not the final suchness, and its suchness must be sought as other than that.

From this discussion we can see that there are two strands within Kamalashīla's focus on literality, the nonliteral (1) as passages teaching true establishment and (2) as passages teaching anything other than emptiness. Ngag-wang-pal-dan makes the case that Tsong-kha-pa's primary identification is the latter despite Jam-yang-shay-pa's seeming emphasis on the former.

The focus on literality opens the way for Tsong-kha-pa to find an implicit meaning in Kamalashīla's two criteria for a passage to be definitive, this being the dual approach to reading sūtras requiring interpretation:

1. their meaning is not fit to be taken in accordance with how it is taught and must be interpreted as something else upon explaining its thought, or
2. though it is permissible to take the meaning literally, merely this is not the final suchness, and its suchness must be sought otherwise.

However, the focus on literality also opens up the issue of whether there are sūtras that address the ultimate but are not literal.

**Issue #19:** It is easy to see how a passage could be validly established and yet not address the ultimate, but could a passage address the ultimate and still not be validly established?

Tsong-kha-pa cites the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*<sup>b</sup> as a passage that, according to his exposition of the Autonomy School, addresses the ultimate but

<sup>a</sup> See also the translation in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 114.

<sup>b</sup> *bcom ldan 'das ma shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i snying po (bhagavatī-prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya)*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud, 100)*, TBRC



still is not validly established. The primary topic of this sūtra is indeed the ultimate, but it clearly specifies that phenomena do not inherently exist, whereas the Autonomy School, according to Tsong-kha-pa, asserts that conventionally phenomena inherently exist, and thus the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*, thereby being nonliteral, requires interpretation.

The *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra* specifies the object of negation (of the doctrine of emptiness) as inherent existence, whereas if it were literally acceptable, it should have said that phenomena “*ultimately* do not inherently exist”:

This is what I have heard: At one time, the Supramundane Victor was residing together with a great community of monastics and a great community of Bodhisattvas on Vulture Mountain in Rājagṛha. At that time, the Supramundane Victor was absorbed in the meditative stabilization of the enumerations of phenomena called “perception of the profound.” At that time the Bodhisattva great being, the Superior Avalokiteshvara, also was observing the practice of the profound perfection of wisdom and was viewing even these five aggregates[—forms, feelings, discriminations, compositional factors, and consciousnesses—]**as empty of inherent existence.**

Then, through the Buddha’s power, the venerable Shāriputra said to the Bodhisattva great being, the Superior Avalokiteshvara:

How should a child of good lineage—who wishes to practice the profound perfection of wisdom—train?

The Bodhisattva great being, the Superior Avalokiteshvara, replied to Shāriputra:

Shāriputra, sons or daughters of good lineage who wish to practice the profound perfection of wisdom should view [phenomena] as follows. They should correctly and thoroughly view even these five aggregates **as empty of inherent existence.** Form is emptiness; emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form; form is not other than emptiness. Similarly, feelings, discriminations, compositional factors, and consciousnesses are empty.

Shāriputra, in that way all phenomena are empty—

without characteristics, not produced, not ceasing, not defiled, not separated from defilements, not decreasing, not increasing. Therefore, Shāriputra, in emptiness there are no forms, no feelings, no discriminations, no compositional factors, no consciousnesses, no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind, no forms, no sounds, no odors, no tastes, no tangible objects, no [other] phenomena. In emptiness there is no eye constituent through to no mental constituent and through to no mental consciousness constituent. In emptiness there is no ignorance and no extinguishment of ignorance through to no extinguishment of aging and death. Similarly, in emptiness there are no sufferings, sources, cessations, and paths; no pristine wisdom, no attainment, and also no non-attainment.

In this way, even though the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra* takes the ultimate as its principal topic, it presents phenomena as lacking inherent existence, which, according to Tsong-kha-pa's exposition of the Autonomy School, is contrary to fact. Since the passage does not specify that phenomena *ultimately* lack inherent existence, the Autonomy School has to hold that the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra* requires interpretation. As Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho puts it:<sup>148</sup>

Also, merely taking ultimate truth as its main explicit teaching is not sufficient because if it were sufficient, then in the system of the Autonomy School it would [absurdly] follow that the *Heart Sūtra* is a sūtra of definitive meaning, whereas [Tsong-kha-pa's] text [*The Essence of Eloquence*] says that [in this system] it is a sūtra requiring interpretation:<sup>a</sup>

In a sūtra such as the *Heart of Wisdom* the teachings, "Form does not exist," and so forth without clearly affixing the qualification "ultimately" or "truly" are not suitable to be held as literal by merely how they are taught; hence, since [these statements] must be interpreted otherwise, they are interpretable.

<sup>a</sup> In the section on the Autonomy School in a subsection titled "How Shāntarakṣhita and Kamalashīla explain the meaning of the *Sūtra Unraveling The Thought*." See also the translation in Robert A. F. Thurman, *Tsong Khapa's Speech of Gold in the Essence of True Eloquence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), .

Tsong-kha-pa goes on to say:

The mode of interpretation is that since eyes, ears, and so forth do not ultimately exist but do not not exist conventionally, it is necessary to affix the qualification “ultimately” or the like. In that case, those that affix the qualification “ultimately” and so forth to the object of negation, such as the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*, are established as of literal definitive meaning.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho summarizes these points:<sup>149</sup>

Therefore, in the system of the Autonomy School the *Heart of Wisdom*, for instance, is a sūtra that is wrought in terms of teaching the ultimate truth, but the literal reading is not endowed with valid cognition because although in its literal reading it indicates that the five aggregates are not inherently existent, they [in fact] inherently exist. The *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*, for instance, does have those two features because it says that all phenomena do not ultimately exist, and all phenomena abide that way.

By taking Kamalashīla’s call for “possessing valid cognition” as a criterion for a definitive sūtra not just as eliminating ultimate, or true, establishment, but as literality, the Autonomy School comes to be seen as viewing even the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra* as requiring interpretation.

## Issue #20: Does Kamalashīla’s statement about the means of positing a definitive sūtra also work in the Consequence School?

The Consequence School holds that even statements—such as “Form does not exist” in a sūtra that nowhere clearly qualifies the object of negation—must be seen as endowed with a qualification to the object of negation since it is to be brought over from another sūtra of similar type. As Tsong-kha-pa says about the Consequence School later in *The Essence of Eloquence*.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Cited by Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 24.3. The passage is from the chapter on the Consequence School, specifically in the section on “Dispelling contradiction with the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*” within the part on “How the Consequentialists dispel [the notion that] their uncommon mode of commenting on the thought of the Superior Nāgārjuna contradicts sūtra.”

Even though such [a qualification] is not [explicitly<sup>150</sup> affixed anywhere in a particular sūtra], since in the *Mother One Hundred Thousand [Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, for instance, the qualification “ultimately” is affixed, it should be understood in all sūtras of similar type, and hence it is affixed implicitly. It is like, for example, the fact that something occurring in one treatise of concordant topic composed by a single contemporary author should be carried over to places where it does not occur.

Therefore, the Consequence School asserts that *all* sūtras that treat the ultimate truth are necessarily literal. Hence, Kamalashīla’s way of positing a definitive sūtra also applies in the Consequence School. Nevertheless, since all such passages are literal, the criterion of literality does not have to be stated. As Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho puts it:<sup>151</sup>

In the Consequence School, any sūtra wrought in terms of teaching the ultimate truth<sup>a</sup> is necessarily literal;<sup>b</sup> therefore, the means of positing a sūtra of definitive meaning as in the explicit reading<sup>c</sup> of Kamalashīla’s *Illumination of the Middle* fits both the Autonomy School and the Consequence School. Nevertheless, [it is suitable in] the Consequence School to use just “wrought in terms of teaching the ultimate truth,” whereas such is not suitable for the system of the Autonomy School [where the criterion of literality is also needed].

## Issue #21: Does this distinction stem from a key point in the respective tenets of the Autonomy and Consequence Schools?

That a sūtra wrought in terms of teaching the ultimate truth is, according to the Autonomy School, not necessarily literal but according to the Consequence School is necessarily literal might lead one to think that this distinction derives from a key point in their respective tenets. If so, what is this key point?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho conveys this question to his readers by way of a challenge from “others” (which often is his way of referring to himself). Provocatively, at the end of this challenge the “others” announce

<sup>a</sup> *don dam bden pa ston pa'i dbang du byas pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa.*

<sup>c</sup> *dngos zin.*

that there is no such key point behind this difference between the Autonomy School and the Consequence School:<sup>152</sup>

*Others say:* Well then, because you assert [the above], it follows that such a differentiation meets back to a key point in their respective tenets. [However,] you cannot accept [that such a differentiation meets back to a key point in their respective tenets] because such an origin does not exist.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho adds “This should be analyzed,” and leaves the matter without further discussion. I take it that he is suggesting that the difference between the two schools on this issue does not point to or derive from an important principle in their systems.

Rather, the assertion that the Autonomy School does not carry over a qualification of the object of negation from another sūtra of similar type but the Consequence School does is just an outflow of taking Kamalashīla’s criterion of “possessing valid cognition” as being that the meaning of the literal reading is established by valid cognition. Nothing more.

## Issue #22: Could the statement “Forms do not exist” be literal if a qualification, such as “ultimately,” is not clearly affixed to the negation?

The opening section of the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*, which scholastic literature calls the “brief indication,” is:

At that time the Bodhisattva great being, the Superior Avalokiteshvara, also was observing the practice of the profound perfection of wisdom and was viewing even these five aggregates[—forms, feelings, discriminations, compositional factors, and consciousnesses—]as empty of **inherent** existence.

According to the Consequence School the qualification “ultimately” is explicitly affixed<sup>a</sup> to the object of negation, their thought being that through specifying “inherent existence” its synonym “ultimate existence” is indicated.<sup>153</sup> However, according to the Autonomy School these are not synonyms since for them forms inherently exist conventionally even if they do not inherently exist ultimately, and thus according to the Autonomy School the qualification “ultimately” is not explicitly affixed here in the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*.

<sup>a</sup> *ngos su sbyar ba.*

In addition, according to the Consequence School, in the simple statements in the longer section of the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*, called the “extensive explanation,” that “Forms do not exist,” the qualification “inherently” (or “ultimately”) though not affixed in the literal reading,<sup>a</sup> is affixed in the explicit reading<sup>b</sup> because when it says “Forms do not exist,” there is an *intention* to indicate<sup>c</sup> that forms do not inherently exist, and thus the passage is literal.<sup>d</sup> That in the statement “Forms do not exist” the qualification “inherently” (or “ultimately”) is not affixed in the literal reading<sup>e</sup> means that the words do not manifestly say “do not inherently exist.”

In the same vein, in the system of the Autonomy School, since the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* includes statements, such as “That also is in the conventions of the world and *is not ultimately*,” in which the qualification “ultimately” is affixed to the object of negation, other statements in the same sūtra in which this qualification is not clearly affixed to the object of negation as in “Forms do not exist,” do not require interpretation even though a qualification is not clearly affixed. For, the criterion is that “if such a qualification is not clearly affixed anywhere, earlier or later, in this sūtra, it would be interpretable, but since the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* has phrases that clearly affix a qualification to the object of negation, these become sūtra passages of definitive meaning.”<sup>154</sup> As Tsong-kha-pa says (41):

You should not hold that [statements of] no production and so forth in which, at that point, a qualification is not [explicitly]<sup>155</sup> affixed to the object of negation are not literal and hence are not of definitive meaning. When in the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, for example, [a qualification] is affixed on one occasion [to the object of negation] with respect to the production of phenomena and so forth—[such as when it says,] “That also is in the conventions of the world and is not ultimately”—it is implicitly affixed also on other occasions; therefore, even those in which [such a qualification] is not explicitly mentioned are also literal.

Though a qualification of the object of negation is not affixed in the literal

<sup>a</sup> *sgras zin.*

<sup>b</sup> *dn̄gos zin.*

<sup>c</sup> *ston bzhed yod pa.*

<sup>d</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa.*

<sup>e</sup> *sgras zin.*

reading<sup>a</sup> of “Forms do not exist,” the passage is literal<sup>b</sup> because it is affixed in the explicit reading.<sup>c</sup> Thus, a qualification of the object of negation is affixed even though not affixed in the literal reading.<sup>d</sup>

## Issue #23: How many permutations of being validly established and addressing the ultimate are there?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho concludes:<sup>156</sup>

Consequently:

1. The likes of the sūtra passage, “Having killed father and mother,” and so forth are both—the literal reading must be interpreted otherwise<sup>e</sup> and the mode of subsistence must be interpreted otherwise.<sup>f</sup>
2. The likes of a sūtra passage teaching actions and their fruits are the latter [that is, the mode of subsistence of actions and their fruits must be interpreted otherwise] but not the former [that is, the literal reading does not need to be interpreted otherwise].
3. In the Autonomy system the likes of the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra* are the former [that is, the literal reading needs to be interpreted otherwise] but not the latter [that is, the mode of subsistence of the phenomena discussed therein does not need to be interpreted otherwise].
4. In the Autonomy system the likes of the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra* are neither [that is, the literal reading does not need to be interpreted otherwise and the mode of subsistence does not need to be interpreted otherwise].

From these several points, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho frames definitions for a definitive sūtra and an interpretable sūtra that are appropriate for both the Autonomy School and the Consequence School:

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<sup>a</sup> *sgras zin.*

<sup>b</sup> *sgra ji bzhin pa.*

<sup>c</sup> *ngos zin.*

<sup>d</sup> *sgras zin.*

<sup>e</sup> *sgras zin gzhan du drang dgos pa.*

<sup>f</sup> *gnas lugs gzhan du drang dgos pa.*

Hence, in the system common to the Autonomy School and the Consequence School definitive sūtras must have two features. Thus, the definition of a definitive sūtra is:

a sūtra that delineates the ultimate truth within taking it as the principal topic of its explicit teaching in the manner of its literal reading being literal.<sup>a</sup>

and the definition of a sūtra of interpretable meaning is:

a sūtra that does not delineate the ultimate truth within taking it as the principal topic of expression in the manner of its literal reading being literal.<sup>b</sup>

In sum, resoundingly clear after all these distinctions is that Tsong-kha-pa takes Kamalashīla's two explicitly stated criteria for a sūtra of definitive meaning and creatively applies them to yield a robust picture of two types interpretable meanings such that:

- sūtras like the *Heart of Wisdom* are taken to be interpretable in the sense of addressing the ultimate but not being literal (for the Autonomy School), and
- sūtra passages such as “father and mother are to be killed” are taken to be interpretable both for not being literal and for not addressing the ultimate.

Kamalashīla himself, nor any other Indian of that era, ever wrote such. The willingness to creatively follow out perceived implications of his statements is a distinctive feature of this body of Tibetan literature.

<sup>a</sup> don dam bden pa sgras zin sgra ji bzhin pa'i tshul gyis dngos bstan bstan bya'i gtso bor byas nas gtan la 'bebs pa'i mdo de.

<sup>b</sup> don dam bden pa sgras zin sgra ji bzhin pa'i tshul gyis brjod bya'i gtso bor byas nas gtan la 'bebs pa ma yin pa'i mdo de.



## 4. Objects as Interpretable and Definitive

### Issue #24: Why are conventional objects called interpretable, and why is the ultimate called definitive?

Often the high sayings are what are divided into the interpretable and the definitive, but objects, veil truths and ultimate truths, are also considered to be interpretable and definitive, respectively.<sup>a</sup> The reason behind this is that Buddha's teachings are all aimed at attaining liberation, and liberation does not come from merely attending to conventionalities but comes from meditating on the ultimate truth. As Pal-jor-lhün-drub says:<sup>157</sup>

The meanings that are the objects expressed by high sayings also are twofold, interpretable and definitive, because veil truths are meanings requiring interpretation and ultimate truths are definitive meanings. Veil truths are meanings requiring interpretation because the diverse doctrines set forth by the Supramundane Victor are for the sake of attaining liberation, and liberation cannot be attained through familiarizing merely with veil truths but must be attained through the power of meditating on suchness upon having interpreted those [veil truths] in another way. Ultimate truths are definitive meanings because liberation can be attained only through directly seeing ultimate truths and familiarizing with them.

This reliance on the definitive is found in the often repeated four reliances:<sup>b</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 26.3) calls attention to a strange position found in an oral tradition of assertions in the Go-mang College of Dre-pung Monastery that claims that whatever exists is of definitive meaning (*gzhi grub na nges don yin pas khyab*). He reports that “others,” which most likely means he himself, show that this is not feasible in the Mind-Only School since Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* (see above, 40) speaks of meanings, that is, objects, as in being two classes, the interpretable and the definitive, and also the Middle Way School certainly does not assert whatever exists is necessarily an ultimate truth. He says that it seems that this tradition intends only to communicate that whatever exists is established by valid cognition. However, this leaves one wondering why they take the term “definitive meaning” so startlingly out of context and reduce it solely to meaning “being established by valid cognition.”

<sup>b</sup> For a thorough treatment of the four reliances, see William Magee, *Principles*

Rely on doctrine, but do not rely on persons.

Rely on meaning, but do not rely on words.

Rely on definitive meaning, but do not rely on interpretable meaning.

Rely on pristine wisdom, but do not rely on consciousness.

The commentary on Po-to-wa's<sup>a</sup> *Blue Teat for Calves* associates the four with hearing, thinking, meditating, and ascertaining:<sup>b</sup>

1. *On the occasion of hearing*, rather than relying on the person one should rely on the doctrine.
2. With respect to the doctrine on which one is to rely, from between the two, words and meanings, one should rely on the meaning since *on the occasion of thinking* one should mainly think about the meaning.
3. With respect to the meaning on which one is to rely, from between the two, the interpretable and the definitive, one should rely on the definitive since *on the occasion of meditation* one needs to abandon the apprehension of self upon mainly meditating on the definitive.
4. *On the occasion of placing the mind on the definitive meaning*,<sup>c</sup> one should not rely on sense consciousnesses but should rely on pristine wisdom.

To explain the last, Pal-jor-lhün-drub says:<sup>158</sup>

About the definitive, do not rely on consciousnesses that take mere

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for Practice: *Jam-yang-shay-pa on the Four Reliances with Ngag-wang-pal-dan's Annotations* (UMA Institute for Tibetan Studies, 2014: <http://www.uma-ti-bet.org>).

<sup>a</sup> *po to ba rin chen gsal*, 1027-1105. *bka' gdams kyi man ngag be'u bum sngon po'i rtsa 'grel*, TBRC W1KG15517 (Pe Cin: mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1991). In TBRC W20519 and W1KG12954 the author is listed as *dge bshes shes rab rgya mtsho*; see the next footnote.

<sup>b</sup> *be'u bum gyi tik ka*, as paraphrased in Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 175.1; Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching* (8.6), reversing the order of the third and the fourth, lists these as hearing, thinking, ascertaining (*nges pa*), and meditating. About the commentary, Dr. Amy Miller wrote in an email, "I am going to venture a guess that *Be'u bum tik ka* refers to Lha 'bri sgang pa's commentary on the *Be'u bum sngon po* by Potowa—which Sherab Gyatsho was so instrumental to arranging that he is sometimes referred to it as the root text's author."

About the title of the root text, *be'u bum sngon po* Ngag-wang-dar-gyay's translator renders it as "The Blue Cow's Nipple (Pamphlet) for Calf-like (Disciples)." Based on this, I suggest *Blue Teat for Calves*.

<sup>c</sup> *nges don la sems 'jog pa'i tshes*; Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 175.3.

conventionalities as their explicit objects but rely on pristine wisdom that takes emptiness as its explicit object.

**Issue #25: If Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* says that objects fall into the two classes of the interpretable and the definitive, then how can it be claimed that in the Mind-Only School the differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive is concerned only with high sayings and not with objects?**

Tsong-kha-pa (39) paraphrases the presentation in Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* on the four reliances:

When the interpretable and the definitive are posited in terms of the meaning of these [sūtras]<sup>159</sup> needing or not needing to be interpreted otherwise, the high sayings<sup>a</sup> themselves are held as illustrations of the interpretable and the definitive, but when meanings [that is to say, objects] that need or do not need to be interpreted otherwise are posited as the interpretable and the definitive, conventionalities and ultimates are treated as the interpretable and the definitive;<sup>b</sup> Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds*, for instance, says that:<sup>c</sup>

- with respect to the doctrine in “rely on the doctrine but do not rely on the person” there are two, words and meanings
- with respect to meanings there are two, the interpretable and the definitive
- and with respect to definitive meanings one should not rely on consciousness but should rely on pristine wisdom.

<sup>a</sup> *gsung rab, pravacana*; this term is often translated as “scriptures,” but “high sayings” conveys its literal connotation as speech (*vacana*), with *rab* (*pra-*) as an intensifier.

<sup>b</sup> See 157, Issue #24:.

<sup>c</sup> *sa'i dngos gzhi (bhūmivastu)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 4035)*, TBRC W23703.127:4-567 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); *sems tsam, tshi*, 130b.1. Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* is also known as *Grounds of Yogic Practice (yogācārabhūmi)*. Tsong-kha-pa gives a paraphrase, not a quotation; see 159, Issue #25:.

Tsong-kha-pa clearly says with regard to the Mind-Only School that conventionalities and ultimates are treated as the interpretable and the definitive, and similarly, when Jam-yang-shay-pa<sup>a</sup> details five strategies used in the Mind-Only and Middle Way Schools as analytical procedures to differentiate what requires interpretation and what is definitive,<sup>b</sup> he includes the four reliances, saying that **both** words and meanings are differentiated by the four reliances. Also, in his *Brief Decisive Analysis of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive"*<sup>160</sup> Jam-yang-shay-pa identifies not just texts but also objects of expression as definitive and as requiring interpretation. He does this by stating the principle that if something is definitive (that is, established by valid cognition), a sūtra that explicitly teaches it is a definitive sūtra and that if something requires interpretation, a sūtra that explicitly teaches it is an interpretable sūtra.

Thus, according to these presentations even in the Mind-Only School it is not just high sayings that are taken to require interpretation and to be definitive but also meanings, or phenomena, themselves. Phenomena are to be tested to determine whether they are definitive or require interpretation with regard to their final mode of being. Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me<sup>c</sup> calls this "differentiating the interpretable and the definitive on the level of the meaning expressed [in the high sayings],"<sup>d</sup> whereas he calls differentiation of high sayings into these two classes "differentiating the interpretable and the definitive on the level of the words that are the

<sup>a</sup> Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of Tenets*; see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 312-347, which in the Taipei reprint is 241.16ff.

<sup>b</sup> Gung-thang makes a critical difference between *gsung rab kyi drang nges 'byed pa* and *gsung rab la drang nges 'byed pa*; I translate the former as "differentiating the interpretable and definitive **within** the high sayings" and the latter as "differentiating the interpretable and definitive **with respect to** the high sayings." Admittedly, the English is no clearer than the Tibetan, but according to Gung-thang (*Difficult Points*, 38.4), the former, "differentiating the interpretable and definitive **within** the high sayings," means to identify what are interpretable and what are definitive high sayings from among the high sayings (*gsung rab kyi nang nas drang don gyi gsung rab dang nges don gyi gsung rab gang yin so sor ngos bzung ba la byed*) whereas the latter, "differentiating the interpretable and the definitive **with respect to** the high sayings," means to differentiate the interpretable and the definitive with respect to the **meaning** of the high sayings, this requiring extensive delineation of the presentation of the two truths, which itself requires realization of emptiness. Therefore, the latter cannot be required for realization of emptiness, whereas the former can. See Hopkins, *Reflections on Reality*, 99.

<sup>c</sup> *gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me*, 1762-1823.

<sup>d</sup> Gung-thang's *Difficult Points*, 37.7: *brjod bya don gyi drang nges 'byed pa*.

means of expression.”<sup>a</sup>

Thereby, Tsong-kha-pa, Jam-yang-shay-pa, and Gung-thang find that **both** words and meanings are differentiated by the four reliances. Then why do many Ge-lug-pa scholars assert that in the Mind-Only School there is only differentiation of high sayings into the interpretable and the definitive? For instance, Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan says:<sup>161</sup>

When Proponents of Cognition posit the interpretable and the definitive in terms of whether meanings need or do not need to be interpreted otherwise, they hold just high sayings, that is to say, doctrines taught, as illustrations of the interpretable and the definitive, but according to the Proponents of the Middle when meanings that need or do not need to be interpreted otherwise are posited as the interpretable and the definitive, the two truths must be posited as the interpretable and the definitive.

For him, only texts are posited as interpretable and definitive. In addition, when Ye-shay-thab-khay<sup>162</sup> cites as relevant here a passage from the Ground of Arisen-from-Hearing<sup>b</sup> in Asaṅga’s *Actuality of the Grounds*, the terms “interpretable meaning” and “definitive meaning” are used in connection not with objects but with sūtras:<sup>c</sup>

Rely on the doctrine, but not on the person; rely on the meaning, but not on the letters; rely on sūtras of definitive meaning, but not on sūtras of interpretable meaning; rely on pristine wisdom, but not on consciousness.

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<sup>a</sup> Gung-thang’s *Difficult Points*, 38.5: *rjod byed tshig gi drang nges ’byed pa. thos pa las byung ba’i sa.*

<sup>b</sup> *sa’i dngos gzhi (bhūmivastu)*, in *bstan ’gyur (sde dge 4035)*, TBRC W23703.127:4-567 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); *sems tsam, tshi*, 164a.4:

*chos la rton gyi gang zag la ma yin pa dang don la rton gyi yi ge la ma yin pa dang / nges pa’i don gyi mdo sde la rton gyi/ bkri ba’i don gyi mdo sde la ma yin pa dang / ye shes la rton gyi rnam par shes pa la ma yin pa*

Earlier in the same text (130b.1) the same fourfold formula is cited with minor variations:

*chos la brtan gyi gang zag la ma yin/ don la brten gyi tshig ’bru la ma yin nges pa’i don gyi mdo sde la brtan gyi drang ba’i don la ma yin pa/ ye shes la brtan gyi rnam par shes pa la ma yin pa*

The thrice repeated usage of *brtan* for *brten* is baffling; the absence of *rton* suggests a different translator.

However, when Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>163</sup> cites the lengthier passage from the Ground of Equipoise<sup>a</sup> in Asaṅga's *Actuality of the Grounds* that is Tsong-kha-pa's source here, it speaks both of objects of interpretable and definitive meaning and of sūtras of interpretable and definitive meaning. Let us cite it first as it is in Asaṅga's text:<sup>164</sup>

Rely only on doctrine, not on persons because explanations by country-folk are not to be adhered to. The doctrine also is twofold, words and meanings. Concerning those, rely on the meaning, not on the words: do not be devoted to hearing; rather, think about the meaning, comprehend it, analyze it. About this, in sūtras the Supramundane Victor set forth definitive meanings and also set forth interpretable meanings, but one who considers the meaning should rely on sūtras of definitive meaning and not on interpretable meaning. About this, the Supramundane Victor set forth meritorious consciousness and immovable consciousness for the sake of proceeding to happy transmigrations, and set forth consciousness of the four noble truths for the sake of passing beyond sorrow, concerning which one who practices doctrine concordant with the doctrine<sup>b</sup> should rely on pristine wisdom and not on consciousness.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho aligns that passage with Tsong-kha-pa's paraphrase to make the connections evident:<sup>165</sup>

[Asaṅga:] "Rely only on doctrine, not on persons...The doctrine also is twofold, words and meanings."

[Tsong-kha-pa:] "with respect to the doctrine in "rely on the doctrine but do not rely on the person" there are two, words and meanings"

[Asaṅga:] "Concerning those, rely on the meaning, not on the words...About this, in sūtras the Supramundane Victor set forth definitive meanings and also set forth interpretable meanings"

[Tsong-kha-pa:] "with respect to meanings there are two, the interpretable and the definitive,"

[Asaṅga:] "rely on sūtras of definitive meaning and not on interpretable meaning....concerning which one who practices doctrine concordant with the doctrine should rely on pristine wisdom and not on consciousness.

[Tsong-kha-pa:] "and with respect to definitive meanings one

<sup>a</sup> *mnyam par bzhag pa'i sa.*

<sup>b</sup> *chos dang rjes su mthun pa'i chos.*

should not rely on consciousness but should rely on pristine wisdom.”

About the last, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho adds, “This should be put together [as meaning] that for seeking the definitive meaning one should not rely on consciousness but should rely on pristine wisdom.”

The Second Dalai Lama’s condensation of the points made throughout this section contains a resolution of the issue on whether in the Mind-Only School it is only high sayings or both high sayings and objects that are divided into the interpretable and the definitive. He does this by specifying that in the Mind-Only School the *main* mode of positing the interpretable and the definitive is concerned with means of expression (high sayings):<sup>166</sup>

On the occasion of the Mind-Only School the interpretable and the definitive are differentiated *mainly* from the viewpoint of whether the words that are the means of expression themselves must or must not be interpreted as other than what is explicitly indicated, and on this occasion of the Middle Way School the interpretable and the definitive are individually differentiated *mainly* from the factor of whether the meanings that are the objects expressed themselves come to be either interpretable meanings or definitive meanings.<sup>a</sup> Therefore, on this occasion of the Middle Way School let us illustrate this with respect to form, for instance: since form’s emptiness of true existence is posited as the definitive meaning of form, and the three—form’s production, abiding, and cessation—and so forth are posited as interpretable meanings of form, sūtras that teach within taking as their main topics the explicit teaching of those are posited as sūtras of definitive meaning and sūtras of interpretable meaning.

The Second Dalai Lama saw the problem and found a way to resolve it.

## REASONING AS THE FUNDAMENTAL MEANS FOR DIFFERENTIATING THE INTERPRETABLE AND THE DEFINITIVE

This section in Tsong-kha-pa’s *The Essence of Eloquence*:

- has shown how in the Middle Way School the *Teachings of Akṣhaya-*

<sup>a</sup> *drang don and nges don gang du song ba’i cha nas.*

*mati Sūtra* serves as a scriptural source for differentiating the interpretable and the definitive either implicitly (as in the case of Nāgārjuna) or explicitly (as in the cases of Chandrakīrti, Avalokitavrata, and Kamalashīla)

- has explained the types of interpretation—(1) when the literal reading itself requires interpretation to determine what it is expressing and (2) when the literal meaning of the passage is suitable to be what the sūtra expresses but interpretation is required to determine the final reality of the phenomena discussed
- has addressed the criteria for interpretation, which in the Autonomy School are that (1) the passage is literal and (2) mainly sets forth the ultimate truth and which in Consequence School is sufficiently indicated through just the latter
- and finally has made the important point that not only high sayings but also phenomena are divided into the interpretable and the definitive.

Though this section begins with scriptural sources, we know from the opening section of Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* that it is reasoning that is the fundamental means for differentiating the interpretable and the definitive. As Tsong-kha-pa (*Emptiness in Mind-Only*, 69-71) says:<sup>a</sup>

...the Compassionate Teacher—perceiving that the thusness of phenomena is very difficult to realize and that, if it is not realized, one [can] not be released from cyclic existence—brings about the thorough understanding of that [suchness] through many modes of skillful means and many approaches of reasoning. Therefore, those having discrimination must work at a technique for thoroughly understanding how suchness is.

Moreover, this depends upon differentiating those meanings that require interpretation and those that are definitive within the high sayings of the Conqueror. Furthermore, the differentiation of those two cannot be done merely through high sayings that state, “This is a meaning to be interpreted; that is a meaning that is definitive.” For, [Buddha spoke variously in relation to the thoughts of trainees and] (1) otherwise the composition of commentaries on [Buddha's] thought differentiating the interpretable and definitive by the great openers of the chariot-ways [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga] would have been senseless; (2) also, high sayings [such as the

<sup>a</sup> For Gung-thang's brilliant unpacking of the points made in this quote, see Hopkins, *Reflections on Reality*, chapter 6.



*Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* and the *Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra*] set forth many conflicting modes of positing the interpretable and the definitive; and (3) through scriptural passages merely saying [about a topic], “This is so,” such cannot be posited, and if, then, **in general** it is not necessarily [suitable to accept whatever is indicated on the literal level in sūtras], mere statements [in sūtra] of, “This is [interpretable, and that is definitive],” also cannot establish **about specifics**, the interpretable and the definitive, [that such is necessarily so].

Therefore, one must seek [Buddha’s] thought, following the [two] great openers of the chariot-ways [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga], who were prophesied as differentiating the interpretable and the definitive in [Buddha’s] high sayings and who commented on the thought of the interpretable and the definitive and, moreover, settled it well through reasoning that damages the interpretation of the meaning of definitive high sayings as anything else and establishes that, within their being unfit to be interpreted otherwise, [the final mode of subsistence explained in them] is definite as [just] that meaning. Therefore, in the end, the differentiation [between the interpretable and the definitive] must be made just by stainless reasoning, because if a proponent asserts a tenet contradicting reason, [that person] is not suitable to be a valid being [with respect to that topic] and because the suchness of things also has reasoned proofs which are establishments by way of [logical] correctness.

It is from perceiving the import of this meaning [that differentiation of the interpretable and the definitive cannot be made by scripture alone and that reasoning is required, that Buddha] says:

Like gold [that is acquired] upon being scorched, cut, and  
 rubbed,  
 My word is to be adopted by monastics and scholars  
 Upon analyzing it well,  
 Not out of respect [for me].

With this as background, the next section explores how the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising.



*ANALYSIS OF ISSUES II:  
EMPTINESS AS THE MEANING  
OF DEPENDENT-ARISING*



## 5. Tsong-kha-pa's Explanation of How to Use Dependent-arising to Realize Emptiness

Tsong-kha-pa (above, 51) cites two stanzas from the twenty-fourth chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle* to demonstrate Nāgārjuna's insight into the compatibility of emptiness and dependent-arising. In the first stanza those who assert that phenomena are not empty of inherent existence object that if phenomena were empty in this way, then production and disintegration would not be feasible, in which case cyclic existence and nirvāṇa would not be feasible:

If all these were empty [of inherent existence],  
There would be no arising and no disintegration,  
And it would [absurdly] follow for you  
That the four noble truths would not exist.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho restates the objection in the format of an unwanted consequence:<sup>167</sup>

It [absurdly] follows that presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are not logically feasible because production and disintegration are not feasible, since [according to you] all phenomena do not inherently exist.

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama fleshes out the meaning:<sup>168</sup>

If, as you say, all phenomena are empty of true existence, then the four noble truths would be impossible. When the four truths are impossible, the Three Jewels—Buddha, doctrine, and spiritual community—are impossible. In that case, training in the path, entering the path, attaining the fruits of the path and so forth would be impossible. Not only that, but also if all phenomena were empty of inherent existence, no presentations of any of the phenomena of the world could be posited. If phenomena do not have inherent existence, their very entities would be nonexistent. Without any entity, no phenomenon could be posited as existing.

Nāgārjuna takes this reasoning and flings it back at the objector:

If all these were not empty [of inherent existence],  
There would be no arising and no disintegration,  
And it would [absurdly] follow for you  
That the four noble truths would not exist.

As before, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho rephrases the response in the format

of an unwanted consequence:<sup>169</sup>

It [absurdly] follows that presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are not logically feasible because production and disintegration are not feasible, since [according to you] all phenomena inherently exist.

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama explains:

Nāgārjuna answers that in a system in which things are *not* empty of inherent existence, everything would be impossible...Because the other systems do not assert an emptiness of inherent existence, they assert that phenomena inherently exist, in which case objects must be established under their own power, and hence it is contradictory for objects to depend upon conditions. Consequently, dependent-arising becomes impossible in their systems. Once dependent-arising is not feasible, all the presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, good and bad, are impossible. However, all of us assert the dependent-arising of the cause and effect of favorable and unfavorable phenomena; there is no way that this can be denied. Since this is the case, the absence of inherent existence also definitely should be asserted.

and:

The objector has not understood well the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence. What does a system that asserts an emptiness of inherent existence mean by this? Emptiness has the meaning of dependent-arising. To prove that things are empty of inherent existence, Nāgārjuna uses the reason that they are dependent-arising. He does not use as a reason that things are utterly devoid of the capacity to perform functions. Far from that, dependent-arising is asserted, and it is used as the reason proving that things are empty of inherent existence.

Here in *The Essence of Eloquence* (53) Tsong-kha-pa similarly adds:

Thereby [Nāgārjuna] speaks of the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence as the meaning of dependent-arising, saying that “Within a non-emptiness of inherent existence the dependent-arising of production and disintegration are not suitable, whereby all presentations are not feasible, but in the position of the emptiness of inherent existence all those are very feasible.”

Through this reasoned approach Nāgārjuna is taken as demonstrating that:

1. the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras can be taken literally in their presentation of all phenomena as lacking inherent existence, and, lacking any other reason why they might require interpretation, they are definitive,
2. texts speaking otherwise require interpretation.

In this vein Tsong-kha-pa, just after the above, says:

Through delineating with reasoning just this mode [of how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising] in his Middle Way treatises the master [Nāgārjuna] explains that there is not even the slightest damage by reasoning to the literality of high sayings that set out that production and so forth do not truly exist, and if there is not [any such damage], then since there also is no way from another viewpoint to comment on those [high sayings] as of interpretable meaning, those are very much established as of definitive meaning.

## Issue #26: How could the meaning of emptiness, a mere absence of inherent existence, be the meaning of dependent-arising, certainly not a mere absence?

To explore how the meaning of emptiness could be the meaning of dependent-arising, it is helpful first to understand how dependent-arising is used as a sign of the emptiness of inherent existence in meditative reasoning. Tsong-kha-pa lays out this process in detail in the Great Exposition of Special Insight in his *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* in a section explaining dependent-arising<sup>a</sup> as “the monarch of reasonings.” He begins by quoting Indian sources and then unravels the process of this reasoning in detail:<sup>b</sup>

When ascertainment that effective things are without inherent existence is found in dependence upon having refuted that these are inherently produced, it is easy to find ascertainment that noneffective phenomena also are without inherent existence, whereby the view of the middle realizing that all phenomena are empty of inherent existence is easily found. Furthermore, in accordance with the statements in the seventh chapter:<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *rten 'brel*.

<sup>b</sup> See also the translation in Tsong-kha-pa, *The Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 316-318.

<sup>c</sup> Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called "Wisdom,"*

That which arises dependent  
Is quiescent by nature.

and also in Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"*:<sup>a</sup>

Since things arise dependently,  
They cannot sustain analysis of these conceptions.  
Therefore, this reasoning of the arising in dependence  
Cuts through all the nets of bad views.

when ascertainment that sprouts and so forth are empty of inherent existence is found in dependence upon the sign of dependent-arising, the elimination of pitfalls<sup>170</sup> is very clear in aspect to your awareness. Hence, I will speak in brief.

Here an other-approved inference [or syllogistic statement] is made:

A sprout is without the nature of being established by way  
its own entity because of arising in dependence upon its  
own causes and conditions, like, for example, a reflection.

For example, when a reflection of a face appears to little children to be eyes, ears, and so forth, and the children do not apprehend them within thinking, "They are like that in the perspective of such an awareness, but the objects they appear to be are not their own mode of subsistence." Rather, they apprehend those objects within being the mode of subsistence, or the mode of abiding, of themselves.

Similarly, sentient beings also apprehend phenomena, experiencing and perceiving them not as posited by the power of awarenesses perceiving them in that way but as having a mode of abiding right with objects by way of their own entities in accordance with how those perceive objects. This is the way an inherent na-

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VII.16ab; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 5a.5; de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 9: *pratītya yad yad bhavati tat tac chāntaṃ svabhāvataḥ* /. Cited in *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 316.

<sup>a</sup> VI.115. Notice that Chandrakīrti speaks of cutting through the nets of *bad* views, not of all views in general.



ture is superimposed as existing. Such an inherent nature of objects is “its own entity,”<sup>a</sup> own being,”<sup>b</sup> and “own-powered fact.”<sup>c</sup>

Hence, if such an inherent nature existed, it would be contradictory to be contingent on other causes and conditions. If this were not contradictory, it would not be fitting to assert that an already established<sup>d</sup> pot did not have to be produced again from causes and conditions. Also, in this way Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* says:<sup>171</sup>

Those that arise dependently  
Are not under their own power.  
All these are not under their own power;  
Hence, they are selfless.

and Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* at this point also says:<sup>172</sup>

Here, that having its own entity,<sup>e</sup> its own being,<sup>f</sup> its own power,<sup>g</sup> and just not contingent on others would be self-established; therefore, it would not have a dependent arising. However, all compounded things are dependent-arising.

In this way, things that have a dependent arising do not come to be under their own power because of being produced contingent upon causes and conditions. All these are not their own power; hence, no things have self, an inherent nature.

“Own power” means that when appearing as established by way of its own entity, it *appears* to those consciousnesses as noncontingent on others and also that it *is established* in accordance with that appearance.

However, if you took this as not contingent on other causes and conditions and thereupon you refuted this, then it would not be necessary to prove it. And since it cannot be posited that the Middle view has been found through even this refutation, “own

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<sup>a</sup> *rang gi ngo.*

<sup>b</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang bzhin* as *rang bzhin gyis grub pa.*

<sup>c</sup> *rang dbang ba'i don*; or “autonomous fact.”

<sup>d</sup> That is, an already existent pot.

<sup>e</sup> *rang gi ngo.*

<sup>f</sup> *rang bzhin.*

<sup>g</sup> *rang dbang.*

power” should be taken as a mode of abiding able to set itself up by way of its own entity right with the object.

Therefore, the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is to be taken as a voidness of an entity under its own power. Still, it is not to be taken as a nothing in the sense of not being able to perform a function; therefore, own nature can be refuted by reason of being a dependent-arising. Right after the earlier passage, it says:

Therefore, here dependent-arisings are devoid of a self-powered entity, whereby the meaning of being devoid of a self-powered entity is the meaning of emptiness, but it is not the meaning of the absence of effective thingness.

Hence:

1. since the view of the nonexistence of the thingness of performing functions is a deprecation that the illusory-like dependent-arisings of thoroughly afflicted phenomena and completely pure phenomena do not exist, it is erroneous,

and:

2. also the view that inherently established things exist is erroneous because such a nature does not exist in anything.

In this way, immediately after that passage it also says:

Therefore, here:

(1) this is an erroneous view of nonexistence due to deprecating—as nonexistent—dependently arisen causes within the thoroughly afflicted, and within liberation, or the very pure, which are compounded and are like illusions,

and:

(2) a view of thingness also is erroneous because an inherent nature does not exist.

Hence, in this way those who propound that things have an inherent nature incur the fault that dependent-arisings do not exist and incur the faults of the views of permanence and of annihilation.

Therefore, those who wish to be devoid of views of permanence and annihilation should assert that with respect to thoroughly af-

flicted and very pure phenomena (1) an absence of inherent establishment and (2) illusion-like dependent-arising are not contradictory.

The *Four Interwoven Annotations*<sup>a</sup> add considerable explanation to this crucial passage; therefore, let us repeat it together along with material drawn from these annotations which often open up the meaning; I will also add explanatory asides at the margin:

When ascertainment that effective things are without inherent existence is found in dependence upon having refuted that these are inherently produced, it is very easy to find ascertainment that non-effective phenomena also are without inherent existence, whereby the view of the middle realizing that all phenomena are empty of inherent existence is easily found with little difficulty.

Tsong-kha-pa indicates that the realizations take place in series:

1. ascertainment that impermanent things are not inherently produced, in this case by the sign that they are dependent-arising;
2. the consequent ascertainment that impermanent things do not inherently exist because the impermanent must be produced and if they are not inherently produced, they cannot possibly inherently exist,
3. ascertainment that permanent phenomena do not inherently exist, this being by the impact of the same reasoning of dependent-arising,<sup>b</sup> whereby it is realized that all phenomena do not inherently exist, since there is nothing beyond the impermanent and the permanent.<sup>c</sup>

Having laid out the overall stages of the process of realization, Tsong-kha-pa cites Indian scriptures praising the power of the reasoning of dependent-arising and then presents the reasoning in the form of a syllogism. The *Four Interwoven Annotations* helpfully divides the exposition into nine phases which are in bold:

### **1. Citation of high sayings**

Furthermore, in accordance with the statements in the seventh chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle*

<sup>a</sup> *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 702.2-708.1/799.2 (399.2).

<sup>b</sup> For Tsong-kha-pa's explanation of how the reasoning of dependent-arising is applied to permanent phenomena, see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 95ff.

<sup>c</sup> As will be explained below (224), a non-affirming negative, such as the absence of inherently existent production, can project another non-affirming negative of the same type, such as the absence of inherent existence.

*Called “Wisdom”*.<sup>a</sup>

That which arises dependent upon causes and conditions  
Is empty and quiescent by its own nature.

and also in Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle”*.<sup>b</sup>

Since things arise dependent on causes and conditions,  
They cannot sustain analysis as being produced in the  
manner of these conceptions of production from self,  
other, and so forth.

Therefore, this reasoning of the arising of such-and-such  
an effect in dependence upon certain causes and con-  
ditions

Cuts through all the nets of bad views that things, for in-  
stance, are produced from self, other, and so forth.

when ascertainment that effective things such as sprouts and so forth are empty of inherent existence is found in dependence upon the sign of dependent-arising, the elimination of pitfalls<sup>173</sup> with regard to the view is very clear in aspect and easily dawns to your awareness. Hence, I will speak in brief here about the procedure of the reasoning of dependent-arising.

The “pitfalls” are the extremes of superimposition and deprecation. Respectively, these are to imagine what does not exist to exist, as in misapprehending phenomena to inherently exist, and to imagine what indeed does exist not to exist, as in misapprehending that phenomena do not exist at all. When dependent-arising is used as the reason for establishing that phenomena are empty of inherent existence, the two extremes are easily avoided. Now the reasoning itself:

<sup>a</sup> This and the following translation, repeated from Tsong-kha-pa’s text, also contain additional material from the *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 702.2-708.1/799.2 (399.2); the footnotes are repeated for convenience. VII.16ab; *dbu ma rtsa ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā)*, in *bstan ’gyur (sde dge 3824)*, TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 5a.5; de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 9: *pratītya yad yad bhavati tat tac chāntaṃ svabhāvataḥ* /. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 702.5. Cited in *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 316.

<sup>b</sup> VI.115. The bracketed additions are drawn from Tsong-kha-pa’s *Illumination of the Thought*, 91.2-.6. Notice that Chandrakīrti speaks of cutting through the nets of *bad* views, not of all views in general.

## 2. *Stating an other-renowned syllogism of dependent-arising*

Here an other-approved inference, or syllogistic statement, is made:

A sprout is without the nature of being established by way its own entity because of arising in dependence upon its own causes and conditions, like, for example, a reflection.

- subject: a sprout
- (predicate of) the thesis: is without the nature of being established by way its own entity
- sign, or reason: because of arising in dependence upon its own causes and conditions
- similar example: like, for example, a reflection.

## 3. *How to prove the entailment in the context of an example*

Let us explain the meaning of the syllogistic statement of the reason of dependent-arising together with its example. For example, when a reflection of a face appears in a mirror, and little children not knowing conventions, see that very appearance, those aspects themselves of eyes, ears, nose, and so forth of those appearances in the reflection appear as if established as actual eyes, ears, and so forth, and the children do not apprehend them within thinking, “They are like that in the perspective of such an awareness, but the objects they appear to be are not their own mode of subsistence, that is, are not their reality.”<sup>a</sup> Rather, they apprehend those very objects appearing from the side of the reflection to be actual eyes and so forth, apprehending them to be existent eyes and so forth within being the mode of subsistence, or the mode of abiding, of the reflection itself.

Similarly, sentient beings also apprehend phenomena in accordance with how they experience and perceive them not as just posited over there by the power of those very awarenesses experiencing and perceiving them in that way but as definitely having a mode of abiding right with those objects by way of their own entities in accordance with how those awarenesses perceive those very objects. This is the way a nature of establishment from the object’s own side is superimposed as existing. Such a nature that is a mode of abiding right with the objects is called “establishment

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<sup>a</sup> These children take the reflections to be the actual things and do not think that the reflections appear one way but exist another way.

by way of its own entity,”<sup>a</sup> “establishment by way of its own being,”<sup>b</sup> and “own-powered fact.”<sup>c</sup>

Hence, if such a nature existed, it would be contradictory for such a nature to be contingent on other causes and conditions. If this were not contradictory, it would not be fitting to assert that an already established<sup>d</sup> pot did not have to be produced again from causes and conditions over and over. That is to say, if what is established under its own power still had to be produced by causes and conditions, then it would be unavoidable that even though something is under its own power, causes and conditions would be even more powerful than it, due to which its merely being existent<sup>e</sup> would not be sufficient, and this (production of it by causes and conditions) would have to be repeated again.

#### 4. Sources proving such

Also, in this way Āryadeva’s *Four Hundred* says:<sup>174</sup>

Those things that arise dependent upon causes and conditions

Are not under their own power.

All these things are not established under their own power;

Since they are not established under their own power, all these things do not have self or nature, that is, establishment by way of their own entity.

and Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* at this point also says:<sup>175</sup>

Here, that thing—which is established by way of its own entity,<sup>f</sup> is established by way of its own being,”<sup>g</sup> is established under its own power,<sup>h</sup> and is just not contingent on

<sup>a</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang gi ngo* as *rang gi ngo bos grub pa*.

<sup>b</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang bzhin* as *rang bzhin gyis grub pa*.

<sup>c</sup> *rang dbang ba’i don*; or “autonomous fact.”

<sup>d</sup> That is, an already existent pot.

<sup>e</sup> That is, its merely being existent would not be sufficient, and its production by causes and conditions would have to be repeated, in which case the repetition would have to go on and on.

<sup>f</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang gi ngo* as *rang gi ngo bo nyid kyis grub pa*.

<sup>g</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang bzhin* as *rang bzhin gyis grub pa*.

<sup>h</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang dbang* as *rang dbang du grub pa*.

others, that is, is just not contingent on merely being posited by conceptuality—would be self-established without reliance on others; therefore, it would necessarily utterly not have a nature of arising dependent on causes and conditions. However, unlike this, all compounded things are established as entities arising dependent on causes and conditions.

### 5. *How the entailment is proven*

In this way, things that have a nature of arising dependent on causes and conditions do not come to be established under their own power because those things are produced contingent upon causes and conditions. All these things are not established under their own power; hence, no things have self, a nature of being established from their own side.

### 6. *Explaining the meaning of that scriptural passage*

“Own power” means that when a phenomenon appears as established by way of its own entity, it *appears* to those consciousnesses as noncontingent on others, that is, as nonreliant on merely being posited by conceptuality and also that it is established in accordance with that appearance.

### 7. *Since establishment from its own side means self-instituting,<sup>a</sup> the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is to be taken as nonestablishment as able to set itself up<sup>b</sup>*

However, if you took the meaning of “own power” here as only not contingent on other causes and conditions and thereupon you refuted that what is under its own power is contingent on causes and conditions, then since the refutation of this is also already established for Proponents of the Great Exposition, Proponents of Sūtra, and so forth, it would not be necessary to prove this for our schools. And since it cannot be posited that the Middle view has been found through even the mere refutation of being contingent on causes and conditions, “own power” should be understood as a mode of abiding able to set itself up by way of its own entity right with the object.

Therefore, the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence

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<sup>a</sup> *tshugs thub.*

<sup>b</sup> *tshugs thub tu grub pa.*

is to be taken as a voidness of an entity under its own power. Still, because the emptiness of inherent existence is not at all to be taken as a nothing in the sense of not being able to perform a function, establishment by way of the object's own nature can be refuted by reason of the object's dependent arising. Right after the earlier passage Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* says:

Therefore, on this occasion due to just this dependent-arising, all things are devoid of a self-powered entity, whereby the meaning of being devoid of a self-powered entity is the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence, but it does not mean that all compounded things are utterly without the thingness of performing functions.

Hence:

1. since the view of the nonexistence of the thingness of performing functions is only a deprecation that all the illusory-like dependent-arising of thoroughly afflicted phenomena and of completely pure phenomena do not exist, the view of the nonexistence of the thingness of performing functions is just an erroneous view,

and:

2. not only this but also the view that inherently established things exist is just an erroneous view because such inherent establishment does not exist in any phenomenon.

### ***8. How an emptiness of things' capacity to perform functions is unsuitable***

In this way, immediately after that passage Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* also says:

Therefore, on this occasion of the Middle Way School:

(1) this deprecation is an erroneous view of nonexistence due to deprecating—as nonexistent—dependently arisen things, that is, substrata and causes within the class of cyclic existence which are the thoroughly afflicted, and within liberation, or the very pure, which are compounded by causes and conditions and are like illusions in that although they appear to be established inherently, they are empty of inherent establishment, and

(2) a view of thingness that is to say, of inherent existence



also is an erroneous view because an inherent nature does not exist in anything.

Hence, in this way those who propound that things have a nature that is established from its own side incur the fault that it absurdly follows that dependent-arising does not exist and incur the faults of the views:

- (1) of permanence since inherently existent produced things could not be made to disintegrate by anything, and
- (2) of annihilation since if inherently existent things were to disintegrate upon having been produced, their continuums would be utterly severed.

### ***9. The way illusion-like dependent-arising exists***

Therefore, those who wish to be devoid of such views of permanence and annihilation should assert that with respect to thoroughly afflicted and very pure phenomena, that is, all things (1) an absence of inherent establishment and (2) also being illusion-like dependent-arising are not contradictory.

Tsong-kha-pa highlights two views that are the pitfalls mentioned above. The first is the view, called an extreme of annihilation, that impermanent dependent-arising does not perform the function of creating effects, for it is a deprecation of something that exists. The second is the view of the inherent existence of phenomena, called an extreme of permanence, for it is an exaggeration because inherent existence never did or will occur in anything, and thus the apprehension of inherent existence is an extreme of superimposition. The correct view being sought is a combination of a complete lack of inherent existence within the scope of dependent-arising. There is not the slightest paradox in seeing that all phenomena ranging from the thoroughly afflicted to the very pure are both dependently established and not established from their own side.

The next chapter elaborates on how this noncontradictory realization of the absence of inherent existence is accomplished through the reasoning of dependent-arising.



## 6. Jam-yang-shay-pa's Overview of Dependent-arising

In his *Explanation of Tenets: Sun of the Land of Samantabhadra Brilliantly Illuminating All of Our Own and Others' Tenets and the Meaning of the Profound [Emptiness], Ocean of Scripture and Reasoning Fulfilling All Hopes of All Beings* Jam-yang-shay-pa Ngag-wang-tsön-drü provides a helpful overview of many of the issues surrounding dependent-arising as it is presented in the Consequence School. His own root text *Presentation of Tenets: Lion's Roar Eradicating Error, Precious Lamp Illuminating the Genuine Path to Omniscience*, which serves as the basis for this lengthy presentation, succinctly says:

Because phenomena that are not dependent-arisings do not exist here, and dependent-arising is only established upon meeting, in reliance, and in dependence, all phenomena are not self-instituting and are not established from their own side. Profound and vast, eradicating the two extremes, this is the monarch of reasonings.

རྟེན་འབྱུང་མིན་པའི་ཆོས་ནི་འདིར་མེད་ལ། རྟེན་འབྱུང་ཤད་  
སྟོས་བརྟེན་ནས་བྱུང་ཅོམ་ཕྱིར། ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཚུགས་སྐྱབ་རང་ངོས་  
བྱུང་ནམས་མིན། ཟབ་རྒྱས་མཐའ་གཉིས་སེལ་འདི་རིགས་པའི་  
རྒྱལ། །

The Khalkha Mongolian scholar Ngag-wang-pal-dan's<sup>a</sup> *Word Commentary on (Jam-yang-shay-pa's) Root Text* fills out the meaning:

Because:

- phenomena that are not dependent-arisings do not exist in this system
- and dependent-arising is [that is, means] only established upon meeting, established in reliance, and established in dependence,

all external and internal phenomena—forms and so forth—are not self-instituting and are not established from their own side.

Because:

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<sup>a</sup> *ngag dbang dpal ldan*, b. 1797; also known as Pal-dan-chö-jay (*dpal ldan chos rje*).

- practice of the profound is fulfilled in taking to mind the meaning of what is being proven [that is, all external and internal phenomena—forms and so forth—are not self-instituting and are not established from their own side]
- practice of the vast is fulfilled in taking to mind the meaning of the reason [that is, phenomena that are not dependent-arising do not exist in this system and dependent-arising is only established upon meeting, established in reliance, and established in dependence]
- and respectively those two clear away the two extremes of permanence and annihilation,

this is the monarch of reasonings.

རྟེན་འབྱུང་མེན་པའི་ཆོས་ནི་ལྷགས་འདིར་མེད་ལ། རྟེན་འབྱུང་  
ནི་སྤང་ནས་གྲུབ་པ་དང་སྟོས་ནས་གྲུབ་པ་དང་རྟེན་ནས་གྲུབ་པ་  
ཅམ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་གཟུགས་སོགས་ཕྱི་ནང་གི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཚུགས་  
སྤུང་དང་རང་ངོས་ནས་གྲུབ་པ་རྣམས་མེན་ལོ་ཞེས་པ་ནི། བསྐྱུབ་  
བྱའི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དོན་ཡིད་ལ་བྱེད་པ་དེར་ཟབ་པའི་ཉམས་ལེན་དང་  
གཏན་ཆོགས་ཀྱི་དོན་ཡིད་ལ་བྱེད་པ་དེར་རྒྱ་ཆེ་བའི་ཉམས་ལེན་  
ཆང་ཞིང་། རིམ་བཞིན་རྟག་པ་དང་ཆད་པའི་མཐའ་གཉིས་སེལ་  
བའི་ཕྱིར་འདི་ནི་རིགས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཡིན་ནོ། །

Jam-yang-shay-pa himself comments in the *Great Exposition of Tenets* together with sources:<sup>176</sup>

Unlike the Proponents of [Truly Existent] Things, here [in the system of the Consequence School] phenomena that are not dependent-arising are not asserted because whatever exists must both be established in reliance<sup>a</sup> and lack inherent existence. Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle* says:<sup>177</sup>

Because there are no phenomena  
That are not dependent-arising,  
There are no phenomena that are not

<sup>a</sup> *ltoṣ grub*.

Empty [of inherent existence].

and also Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* says:<sup>178</sup>

There is not ever anywhere  
Anything's existence without dependence.  
Hence there is also not ever anywhere  
Any permanent [self].

Common beings think  
Space and so forth are permanent [realities].  
The wise do not see these as factualities  
Even with worldly [understanding].

and also [the *Questions of the King of Nāgas, Sāgara*,] *Sūtra*  
says:<sup>179</sup>

[The wise realize phenomena as dependent-arisings,  
They also rely not on extreme views.  
They know phenomena as having causes and conditions.]  
There are no phenomena<sup>a</sup> without causes and conditions.

and also Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* says:<sup>180</sup>

Thus, there are no phenomena that are not dependent-arisings,  
and dependent-arisings are also empty. Hence, there  
are no phenomena that are not empty.

and also Nāgārjuna's *Treatise* says:<sup>181</sup>

We explain "arising dependent [on causes and conditions]"  
As [the meaning of] the emptiness [of inherently existent  
production].  
That [emptiness of inherently existent production] is dependent  
imputation.  
Just this [emptiness of inherently existent production] is  
the middle path.

and Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* says:<sup>182</sup>

Due to lacking the two extremes of [inherent] existence  
and non-existence, just this emptiness that is character-

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<sup>a</sup> *chos nyid, dharmatā*; translated as "phenomena" in accordance with Chandrakīrti's commentary which follows.

ized as no inherently existent production is called the middle path, the middle trail. Therefore, emptiness, dependent imputation, and middle path are synonyms of dependent-arising [for those who have generated the view of the Middle Way in their continuum].

འདིར་དངོས་སྣ་བ་ལྟར་མ་ཡིན་པར་རྟེན་འབྱུང་མིན་པའི་ཆོས་  
 མི་འདོད་དེ། ཡོད་ན་སྟོས་གྲུབ་དང་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པ་གཉིས་ཀ་  
 ཡིན་དགོས་པའི་ཕྱིར་ཏེ། དབུ་མ་ལས། གང་ཕྱིར་རྟེན་འབྱུང་མ་  
 ཡིན་པའི། ཆོས་འགའ་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་པ། །དེ་ཕྱིར་སྟོང་པ་མ་  
 ཡིན་པའི། ཆོས་འགའ་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་དང་། བརྒྱ་པ་  
 ལས་ཀྱང་། གང་ཞིག་གང་ན་ནམ་གྱི་ཆེའང་། །མ་བརྟེན་པར་ནི་  
 ཡོད་ཉིད། །སོགས་དང་། མདོ་ལས་ཀྱང་། རྒྱ་མེད་རྒྱུན་མེད་ཆོས་  
 ཉིད་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན། །ཞེས་དང་། ཆོག་གསལ་ལས། དེ་ལྟར་རྟེན་ཅིང་  
 འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བ་མ་ཡིན་པའི་ཆོས་འགའ་ཡང་ཡོད་པ་མ་  
 ཡིན་ལ། རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བ་ཡང་སྟོང་པ་ཡིན་པ་དེའི་  
 ཕྱིར། སྟོང་པ་མ་ཡིན་པའི་ཆོས་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་དང་།  
 དབུ་མ་ལས། རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བ་གང་། །དེ་ནི་སྟོང་པ་  
 ཉིད་དུ་བཤད། །དེ་ནི་རྟེན་ནས་གདགས་པ་སྟེ། །དེ་ཉིད་དབུ་མའི་  
 ལམ་ཡིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་དང་ཆོག་གསལ་ལས། ཡོད་པ་དང་མེད་པའི་  
 མཐའ་གཉིས་དང་བྲལ་བའི་ཕྱིར། རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་མ་སྐྱེས་པའི་  
 མཆོན་ཉིད་ཅན་གྱི་སྟོང་ཉིད་དེ་ཉིད་དབུ་མའི་ལམ་སྟེ་དབུ་མའི་  
 རྒྱལ་ཞེས་བྱའོ། །དེའི་ཕྱིར་དེ་ལྟར་ན་སྟོང་ཉིད་དང་བརྟེན་ནས་  
 གདགས་པ་དང་དབུ་མའི་ལམ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་འདི་དག་ནི་རྟེན་ཅིང་  
 འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་མིང་གི་བྱེ་བྲག་ཡིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་

# གཞུངས་སོ།

Jam-yang-shay-pa turns to a discussion of the term “dependent-arising”:

With respect to the term “dependent-arising”<sup>a</sup> (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and its meaning, the [non-Buddhist philosophical school called] Grammarians<sup>b</sup> say that if what depend and meet are cause and effect, then because effect would exist at the time of cause, “arising” would be impossible. Also, it would contradict the non-assertion of the existence of the effect at the time of its causes. Thus, they do not accept either the term *pratītyasamutpāda* or its meaning.

Moreover, [Buddhist]<sup>183</sup> Proponents of [Truly Existent] Things assert that dependent-arisings are necessarily truly established and are compounded. Therefore, [an attempt] to prove a selflessness [that means no true existence] through the reason of dependent-arising proves just the opposite for them. [A sample syllogism is: The subject, a stalk, is not inherently produced because of being a dependent-arising. About this]<sup>184</sup> Tsong-kha-pa's *Praise of Dependent-Arising* says:<sup>185</sup>

How can those who see the opposite [proved] and those who see [the reason] as non-established understand your [that is, Buddha's] system [of emptiness as no inherent existence]?”

In [Chandrakīrti's commentary on] Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* [a qualm is raised by an objector about whether dependent-arising can serve as a sign of no inherently existent production]:<sup>186</sup>

Here some say, “Your way of speaking is one that never existed before. It is not reasonable that the term “dependent-arising” indicates no production and no cessation. Just as your saying “A child was born,” would not mean you were saying “A child was not born,” this [usage of dependent-arising to prove no production and no cessation] is just inadmissible.

<sup>a</sup> *rten 'byung*.

<sup>b</sup> *vaiyākaraṇa*.

For extensive [discussion concerning the Grammarians' non-acceptance of others' faulty explanations of dependent-arising] see Vasubandhu's own explanation of his *Treasury of Knowledge* and its *Commentary* by Rājaputra Yashomitra<sup>187</sup> and also Vasubandhu's *Commentary on the "Sūtra on Dependent-Arising"* and its *Explanation* by Guṇamati.

Because there are also different ways of forming the term *pratītyasamutpāda*, having arranged the handprints [that is, results of the work] of the former great translators and having arranged [linguistic references] to Sarvarvarman's *Kalāpasūtra* and Chandragomin's *Grammar (cāndravyākaraṇasūtra)*, [I] will explain a little the thought of Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words*.

རྟེན་འབྱུང་གི་སྐྱེ་དོན་ལ་བརྟེན་སྟོན་པ་དག་གིས་བརྟེན་པ་དང་  
 སྐྱེ་པ་རྟེན་དང་འབྱས་བྱ་ཡིན་ན་རྟེན་དུས་ནས་གྲུབ་པས་འབྱུང་བ་  
 ཞེས་པ་མི་འཐད་པར་འགྱུར་ལ། རྟེན་དུས་ན་ཡོད་པར་མི་འདོད་  
 པ་དང་འགལ་ཞེས་རྟེན་འབྱུང་གི་སྐྱེ་དོན་གང་ཡང་མི་འདོད།  
 དདོས་སྐྱེ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་རྟེན་འབྱུང་ལ་བདེན་གྲུབ་དང་འདུས་བྱས་  
 ཀྱིས་བྱུབ་པས་རྟེན་འབྱུང་གིས་བདག་མེད་སྐྱབ་པ་འགལ་བྱུབ་ཏུ་  
 འདོད་དེ། རྟེན་འབྲེལ་བསྟོན་པ་ལས། འགལ་བ་དང་ནི་མ་གྲུབ་  
 པར། །མཐོང་བ་འདི་ཡིས་བྱོད་ཀྱི་ལྷགས། །རི་ལྟར་ཁོང་དུ་ཆུད་  
 པར་རུས། །ཞེས་དང་། རིགས་པ་དུག་ཅུ་བ་[འི་འབྲེལ་བ]་ལས།  
 འདིར་སྐྱས་པ། བྱོད་ཀྱི་ཆོག་གི་ཚུལ་འདི་ནི་སྟོན་མེད་པ་ཞིག་  
 གོ། རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བ་གསུངས་པ་འདི་ནི་སྐྱེ་བ་དང་  
 འགག་པ་མེད་པར་སྟོན་པར་བྱེད་པ་མི་རུང་སྟེ། བྱོད་ཀྱི་བྱ་སྐྱེས་  
 སོ་ཞེས་སྐྱས་པས་ནི་བྱོད་ཀྱིས་བྱ་མ་སྐྱེས་སོ་ཞེས་སྐྱས་པར་འགྱུར་  
 བ་མ་ཡིན་པ་དེ་བཞིན་དུ་འདི་ཡང་མི་རིགས་པ་ཉིད་དོ། །ཞེས་  
 སོ། །རྟེན་པར་མཐོང་འབྲེལ་འབྲེལ་བཤད་དང་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་མདོ་



འགྲེལ་འགྲེལ་བཤད་སྟོན་སྟེ་བཟླ་ལ། སྒྲ་སྒྲུབ་ལུགས་ཀྱང་མི་  
 འདྲ་བས་སྡོན་གྱི་ལ་ཆེན་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་རྒྱེས་དང་ཀ་ཙན་  
 བསྒྲིགས་ནས་ཆོག་གསལ་གྱི་དགོངས་བ་ཅུང་ཟད་བཤད་ན།

Jam-yang-shay-pa speaks of three contrary opinions on the meaning and/or formation of the term *pratītyasamutpāda*:

1. the presence among Indian Buddhist scholars of ways of forming the term *pratītyasamutpāda* different from how Chandrakīrti treats the term
2. the complaint by the non-Buddhist philosophical school called Grammarians that since *pratītya* involves depending and meeting, then if what depend and meet are cause and effect, effect would exist at the time of cause, in which case a further “arising” (*samutpāda*) would be impossible. Also, the simultaneous existence of cause and effect would contradict the Buddhist non-assertion of the existence of the effect at the time of its causes. Therefore, the Grammarians do not accept either the term *pratītyasamutpāda* or its meaning.
3. the complaint by certain Buddhist schools that dependent-arising cannot be used as a sign proving the absence of inherent existence since it proves the exact opposite, namely, it proves that impermanent objects inherently exist.

Concerning the first, the presence among Indian Buddhist scholars of ways of forming the term *pratītyasamutpāda* that are different from how Chandrakīrti treats the term, first let us consider how Chandrakīrti views (1) the formation of *pratītya* as an indeclinable continuative from the verbal root *i* which means “going” and (2) the formation of the term *samutpāda* as an action noun from the verbal route *pad* which with the prefix *samut* means “arising.” Jam-yang-shay-pa cites Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words*.<sup>a</sup>

*Prati* has the meaning of “meeting.”<sup>b</sup> [The verbal root] *i* has the meaning of “going.” Here the term *pratītya*, a continuative, is used for “meeting” or “relying” because of the modification of the

<sup>a</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 3.2.8ff; Poussin, 5.1-4. See the notes in Poussin (5ff.) throughout.

<sup>b</sup> *phrad pa, prāpti*.

meaning of the verbal root by the modifier [prefix]. It is explained, “The meaning of the verbal root is led forcefully elsewhere by a modifier [prefix], like the sweetness of the waters of the Ganges [being changed] by ocean water.” [The verbal root] *pad* preceded by *samut* means “arise”;<sup>a</sup> therefore, the term *samutpāda* is used for “arising.” Hence, the meaning of *pratītyasamutpāda* is “the arising of things in reliance on causes and conditions.”

ཚིག་གསལ་ལས། དེ་ལ་བྱ་དྲི་ནི་སྤང་བའི་དོན་དོ། །ཨི་དྲི་ནི་འགྲོ་  
བའི་དོན་དོ། །ལྷུང་གྱི་མཐའ་ཅན་བྱ་དྲི་བྱའི་སྤང་བ་སྟེ་སྟོས་  
བ་ལ་འབྱུག་ཅེས་བ་ནས། ས་ལྷུང་གོང་ན་ཡོད་པའི་སྤང་བའི་  
འབྱུང་བའི་དོན་ཅན་ཡིན་པས་ས་ལྷུང་དའི་སྤང་བའི་འབྱུང་བ་ལ་  
འབྱུག་གོ། དེའི་ཕྱིར་དངོས་པོ་རྣམས་གྱི་འབྱུང་བ་རྒྱ་དང་རྒྱུན་ལ་  
སྟོས་བ་ནི་རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བའི་དོན་དོ། །ཞེས་  
གསུངས་སོ། །

Chandrakīrti etymologizes the Sanskrit term for “dependent-arising,” *pratītyasamutpāda*, as (1) the indeclinable continuative *pratītya* meaning “having depended” and (2) an action noun *samutpāda* meaning “arising,” and Jam-yang-shay-pa uses this etymology along with other information to explicate the connection between dependent-arising and dependent imputation.

Chandrakīrti’s brief etymology does not provide the detail of just how the two terms are built from verbal roots. Jam-yang-shay-pa, however, expanding on Chandrakīrti’s brief explanation, provides a very detailed exposition (which I have translated elsewhere<sup>b</sup>) of how the two parts of the term *pratītyasamutpāda* are formed from their verbal roots, replete with comparative citations from the Sanskrit grammarians Chandragomin and Sarvarvarman. To give a glimpse of this process here, let me reduce his complex formations to simple formulas followed by brief explanations. The formula for *pratītya* is:

*iṇ* minus *ṇ* plus *prati* plus *su* minus *su* plus *ktvā* which changes to

<sup>a</sup> 'byung ba, *prādurbhāva*.

<sup>b</sup> For the detail see Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 850-853; and Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 662-664.

*lyap* minus *l* minus *p* plus *tuk* (between *i* and *ya*) minus *k* minus *u* plus *su* minus *su* equals *pratītya*.

Spelled out: the verbal root *iṇ*, meaning “going,” loses its indicative letter *ṇ*, leaving *i*. To this, *prati* is affixed, and the nominative case ending *su* is affixed to *prati* but is immediately erased because *prati* is an indeclinable prefix. The continuative ending *ktvā* is added to *i* in the form of *lyap*, of which the accent letter *l* and the *p* that indicates the addition of the augment *tuk* are dropped. This leaves *prati i ya*. *Tuk* is added between *i* and *ya*, and the indicative *k* and pronunciation letter *u* are dropped, leaving *t*. The *i* of *prati* and the *i* of the verbal root are combined, making *pratītya*. The nominative case ending *su* is added but is immediately dropped because the continuative *pratītya* is an indeclinable.

The formula for *samutpāda* is:

*pada* plus *ut* (before *pada*) plus *sam* (before *utpada*) plus *su* (after *ut*) plus *su* (after *sam*) minus *su* minus *su* plus *ghañ* (which is a strengthening [vrddhi-ing] of *a*) plus *su* minus *u* (with the *s* changing to) *ru* minus *u* (with the *r* changing to) *ḥ* equals *samutpādaḥ*. Spelled out: the prefixes *ut* and *sam* are added to *pada* which means “going.” The nominative case ending is added to these two and then is immediately dropped because they are indeclinables, making *samutpada*. The vowel of *pad* is strengthened for the sake of denoting an action noun, making *samutpāda*. The nominative case ending *su* is added; the *u* is erased; the *s* changes into *ru*; the *u* is erased, and the *r* changes into visarga, making *samutpādaḥ*.

Jam-yang-shay-pa shows that through this route Chandrakīrti holds that *pratītya* is an indeclinable continuative meaning “having depended,” and *samutpāda* is an action noun meaning “arising,” and thus put together, these mean “having depended, arising” or “dependent-arising.”

Chandrakīrti's formation and etymology stands in marked contrast to other treatments of the term. For some, *pratītya* is viewed not as an indeclinable continuative but as a noun which in the compound *pratītya-samutpāda* has lost a genitive plural case ending that they hold should be added when taken out of compound, making *pratītyānām* meaning “of those that go, depart, or disintegrate diversely.” The etymological meaning of *pratītyasamutpāda* is thereby taken by them to mean “the composition and arising of effects disintegrating in each diverse moment and having definite, diverse causes and conditions.” In this way it can be seen that they would describe the formation of *pratītya* differently:

The *t* of *itya* is added because the root *i* is being used to form an action noun, and *ya* is affixed to form a secondary derivative noun.

Thus, for them *itya* means “that which goes,” and “*prati*” means “multiple,” or “diverse,” or “this and that.” With *samutpāda* meaning “arising,” *pratītyasamutpāda* means “the arising of those that go, depart, or disintegrate diversely.”

Chandrakīrti objects that although the meaning of multiplicity would apply to a general usage of *pratītyasamutpāda* as in, “O monastics, I will teach you *pratītyasamutpāda*,” or “One who sees *pratītyasamutpāda* sees suchness,” it would not apply when *pratītyasamutpāda* refers to a specific arising of a single effect from a single cause, as in, “Dependent on an eye sense and forms an eye consciousness is produced,” when a particular object of dependence has been openly accepted—“dependent on an eye sense.” Chandrakīrti says:

When the production of one consciousness, which has as its cause one eye sense, has been asserted, how could the term *pratītya* have the meaning of multiplicity?

However, taken Chandrakīrti’s way as “having depended, arising” or “dependent-arising,” the meaning applies easily to both general and specific references. Chandrakīrti’s point is that there is an alternative to taking *pratītya* as a secondary derivative noun—it can be taken as an indeclinable continuative on a valid etymological basis.

Non-Buddhist Grammarians object, however, to both the term and its meaning, saying that since *pratītya* is a continuative, the act of depending must precede the act of arising. If that which depends or meets its causes exists before its arising, it would contradict the Buddhists’ own dictum that an effect does not exist at the time of the cause. Therefore, the Grammarians reject both the grammatical correctness of the term and the philosophical correctness of its meaning.

Apparently taking a different approach, Bhāvaviveka does not provide a detailed formation of the term, thereby suggesting that *pratītyasamutpāda* attains its meaning through conventional usage and is not bound to an etymological meaning. Chandrakīrti speculates that Bhāvaviveka compares it to the compound *aranyetilaka* (*dgon pa’i thig le*) which literally means “sesame in the forest” and is used to indicate anything that does not answer to one’s expectations. Just as wild sesame yields no oil, so events that do not yield one’s expectations are called “sesame in the forest.” Such an etymology, though loosely connected to the meaning, is much narrower than the meaning gained through common convention since, as is obvious,

everything that does not live up to one's expectations is not actually sesame in the forest. Chandrakīrti speculates that for Bhāvaviveka the etymology of the term *pratītyasamutpāda* likewise does not bear this kind of close scrutiny and that by common convention it just means "conditionality" as in, "When this is, that arises." Chandrakīrti says:<sup>188</sup>

What then is [the meaning of *pratītyasamutpāda* according to Bhāvaviveka? He] presents his own system as, "The meaning of conditionality is the meaning of *pratītyasamutpāda*—when this is, that arises; due to the production of this, that is produced." This also is incorrect because he did not state a particular meaning for each of the two terms, *pratītya* and *samutpāda*, and because he asserted that he would give an etymology.

Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* does indeed present dependent-arising the way Bhāvaviveka does:<sup>a</sup>

When this is, that arises,  
Like short when there is long.  
Due to the production of this, that is produced,  
Like light from the production of a flame.  
  
When there is long, there is short.  
They do not exist through their own nature,  
Just as due to the nonproduction  
Of a flame, light also does not arise.

However, Chandrakīrti's has a potent reference to two lines in Nāgārjuna's own *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* where the master himself obviously etymologizes *pratītyasamutpāda* in terms of its two parts:

That which is produced having met this and that [collection of causes and conditions] is not inherently produced. (*tat tat prāpya yad utpannam notpannam tat svabhāvataḥ*)

The word substituted for *pratītya* is another continuative *prāpya* (*phradnas*), which means "having attained" in the sense of having gotten its collection of causes and conditions or "having met" in the sense of having met up with or having encountered its collection of causes and conditions. Chandrakīrti's citation of Nāgārjuna's lines thereby resoundingly refutes Bhāvaviveka's contention that Buddhapālita erred in taking *prāpya* as the meaning of *pratītya*. Bhāvaviveka's contention, as is made clear by his commentator Avalokitavrata,<sup>189</sup> is like that of the Grammarians. Namely,

<sup>a</sup> Stanzas 48-49; Hopkins, *Nāgārjuna's Precious Garland*, 100.

if an eye consciousness, for example, were existent, it could meet with the eye sense and form that are its causes; however, if it were existent at the time of its causes, it would be senseless for the causes to produce it. According to Avalokitavrata, Bhāvaviveka's objection is based on the principle that phenomena that meet must be simultaneously existent, but Bhāvaviveka himself does not make clear the reasons for his objection. Chandrakīrti surmises that perhaps Bhāvaviveka means that only physical things can meet, whereas Avalokitavrata's explanation is broader, but the requirement of simultaneous existence is also present for a physical meeting.

Chandrakīrti's response to Bhāvaviveka's objection is twofold: First, Buddha made statements such as, "This monk has met with [that is, attained] the fruit [of practice]." Second, Nāgārjuna himself used the word *prāpya* as a substitute for *pratītya*. The first responds to the supposed problem of the simultaneity of cause and effect, and the second, as indicated above, provides the authenticity of taking *pratītya* as *prāpya*.

In Nāgārjuna's verse etymology, *prati* may seem to be etymologized as "this and that" (*tat tat*); this would affirm the view that *prati* is to be taken as meaning "multiplicity," or "diverse," or "this and that," contradicting Chandrakīrti's contention on this point. Chandrakīrti might answer, however, that Nāgārjuna is giving an example of things relied upon, not an etymology of *prati*. For, *prati* itself means *prāpti*, "meeting" or "attainment," and by modifying *i*, which usually means "go," it cause it to mean *prāpti*. *Prāpti* means *apekṣa*, "reliance," and thus the compound *pratītyasamutpāda* means "arising in reliance" and "arising in dependence," or "dependent-arising." It means the arising of things in dependence on causes and conditions, a sign itself of their absence of inherent existence.

## 7. Gyal-tshab's Notes on Tsong-kha-pa's Teaching

### Issue #27: But how could emptiness be the meaning of dependent-arising?

When Tsong-kha-pa taught his student Gyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, he considered, or played with, five approaches to try to uncover how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, all of which revolve around how to read the Tibetan word for “meaning,” *don*. Gyal-tshab's encapsulation of these instructions is found in a concluding section of his *Notes (on Tsong-kha-pa's Teachings) on Eight Difficult Topics*. Tsong-kha-pa's teaching explores the topic in three phases—first by presenting the general context, then by rejecting these five approaches to reading the statement, and finally by uncovering how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising:<sup>a</sup>

#### **[I. The general context]**

One should become skilled in the dual combination of realizing:

- emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising and thereupon destroying all the fixations of the apprehension of signs<sup>b</sup> with wisdom realizing that even only a particle of inherent establishment does not exist, and
- the feasibility of all actions and agents in just that [emptiness of inherent existence].

#### **[II. Rejecting five approaches to reading the statement]**

1. It is not feasible that the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising” (*stong pa rten 'byung gi don*) [indicates that dependent-arising] is the name (*ming*) [and emptiness] is the

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<sup>a</sup> Gyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen's *Notes [on Tsong-kha-pa's Teachings] on the Eight Difficult Topics*, in *gsung 'bum (tsong kha pa)*, TBRC, W29193 (bkras lhun par rnying, dha sar bskyar par brgyab pa), vol. *ba*, 602.4; also in *gsung 'bum (rgyal tshab rje)*, TBRC W29194-5150 (bkra shis lhun po par rnying), vol. *ja*, 15b.4; cited also in Dön-drub-gyal-tshan's *Extensive Explanation of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Treatise Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence," Unique to Ge-lug-pa: Four Intertwined Commentaries*, 50a.2/299.3

<sup>b</sup> That is, destroying the status falsely imagined by the apprehension of inherent existence.

meaning (*don*) because then one could not realize dependent-arising without having realized emptiness.

2. Also, it does not mean [that emptiness is] the object (*yul*) [and dependent-arising is] the subject (*yul can*)<sup>a</sup> [that is, the consciousness realizing it] because dependent-arising is not suitable to be its subject [that is, the consciousness realizing it].

3. Also, it does not mean [that emptiness is] the object verbalized (*brjod bya*) [and dependent-arising is] the means of verbalization (*rjod byed*) because dependent-arising is not its means of verbalization.

4. Also, it is not suitable for it to mean [that dependent-arising is] explicitly realized (*dngos su rtogs pa*)<sup>b</sup> [and emptiness is] implicitly realized (*shugs la rtogs pa*) because emptiness cannot be implicitly realized through explicitly realizing dependent-arising.

5. Also, it does not mean exclusionary delineation (*rnam bcad*) and inclusionary delineation (*yongs gcod*) because although dependent-arising is inclusionarily delineated (*yongs su bcad*), emptiness cannot be exclusionarily delineated (*rnam par bcad*).<sup>c</sup>

### [III. Uncovering how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising]

*Question:* Hence, is it not that the phrase “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising”<sup>d</sup> is devoid of anything expressed [that is to say, is senseless]?

*Response:* We do not propound that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising relative to persons prior to understanding the view [of the emptiness of inherent existence], but is for those who,

<sup>a</sup> Literally, “object-possessor.”

<sup>b</sup> The text reads *dngos shugs*, which the reason clause spells out as *dngos su rtogs pa* and *shugs la rtogs pa*.

<sup>c</sup> The translation follows the reading in Gyal-tshab’s Collected Works, in *gsung ’bum* (*rgyal tshab rje*), TBRC W29194-5150 (bkra shis lhun po par rnying); the reading in Tsong-kha-pa’s Collected Works, in *gsung ’bum* (*tsong kha pa*), TBRC W29193, 18a.1, differs slightly:

Also, it does not mean exclusionary delineation (*rnam bcad*) and inclusionary delineation (*yongs gcod*) because although dependent-arising is explicitly excluded (*dngos su bcad*), emptiness cannot be inclusionarily delineated (*rnam par bcad*).

Dön-drub-gyal-tshan’s *Four Intertwined Commentaries* reads similarly except that the final term is *rnam par bcad* (50a.6/299.6).

<sup>d</sup> *stong pa rten ’byung gi don*.



when they have generated the wisdom realizing that even merely a particle of inherent establishment does not exist, realize that the existence of phenomena is not positable—even in the slightest—from [the object's] own side and see the existence of phenomena as only existing dependent on another. If:

- when they **explicitly ascertain** the meaning of the term “dependent” (*ltos pa zhes pa'i sgra'i don dngos su nges pa na*),
- they **implicitly ascertain** the emptiness that is [the object's] nonexistence from its own side (*rang ngos nas med pa'i stong pa shugs la nges shing*)
- and thereupon an **awareness explicitly ascertaining** emptiness is immediately induced (*stong pa dngos su nges pa'i blo de ma thag 'dren par byed pa la*),

in this case it is stated that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising (*stong pa rten 'byung gi don du gsungs pa yin no*).

As preparation for considering this provocative conclusion, let us first consider the five possibilities that are rejected. The Tibetan word for “meaning,” *don* (Sanskrit, *artha*), is taken:

1. as “meaning” in name and meaning
2. as “object” in subject and object
3. as “object verbalized” in means of verbalization (or verbalizing term) and object verbalized
4. as “object implicitly realized” in object explicitly realized and object implicitly realized
5. as “import” or “what is included” in what is excluded and what is included.

Gyal-tshab's brief listing of these five and laconic disposal of them are teasingly provocative. Although the five are rejected, they are especially important because elements of the fourth are retained in the solution; thus, rather than being disposed of, at least one of them is put on the shelf to influence the solution, becoming context and food for the shift of perspective that constitutes the resolution.

## Issue #28: Gyal-tshab treats only “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising.”

In Gyal-tshab's depiction of Tsong-kha-pa's teaching to him, the concern

is only with the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising.”<sup>a</sup> Even in the conclusion he speaks just of how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, whereas, as we will see below, Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me (204 and 212), Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, and other commentators also explain how dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness both in their examination of these five approaches and in their conclusions; in this sense their analyses appear to be broader than Gyal-tshab’s.

## Issue #29: The first of the five possibilities: Could emptiness be the meaning and dependent-arising be the name?

Perhaps the most frequent usage of both “meaning” in English and *don* in Tibetan is found in “name and meaning” (*ming dang don*), and thus is likely why this sense of “meaning” is considered first. Looked at this way, the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising” is that emptiness is the meaning of the name “dependent-arising.” Just as momentary<sup>b</sup> is the meaning of the name “impermanent”<sup>c</sup> and just as that which is bulbous, flat-based, and able to hold fluid<sup>d</sup> is the meaning of the name “pot,”<sup>e</sup> so emptiness would be what the name “dependent-arising” means. However, this approach is fraught with difficulty. The problem is that:

- Since impermanence is the name for momentariness, in order to know what impermanence is, you have to first understand momentariness and then associate momentariness with the name “impermanence.” And similarly, since pot is the name for that which is bulbous, flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid, in order to understand what a pot is, it is necessary first to understand that which is bulbous, flat-based, and able to hold fluid and then associate that which is bulbous and so on with the name “pot.”
- However, if in the same fashion “dependent-arising” is the name for emptiness, in order to understand what dependent-arising is it absurdly

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<sup>a</sup> *stong pa rten 'byung gi don.*

<sup>b</sup> *skad cig ma.*

<sup>c</sup> *mi rtag pa.*

<sup>d</sup> *lto ldir zhabs zhum chu skyor gyi don byed nus pa.*

<sup>e</sup> *bum pa.*

would be necessary to first understand emptiness, the absence of inherent existence.

In that case, as Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* says:<sup>190</sup>

Since it is frequently said that the meaning of the emptiness of inherent establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising, what does this mean? It would be unreasonable if it were like the import of positing, for instance, that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, for the very awareness ascertaining that effects arise in dependence upon causes and conditions would [absurdly] also ascertain the meaning of emptiness.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho paraphrases Tsong-kha-pa's statement:<sup>191</sup>

If that the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising were like positing that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, this would be unreasonable since the very awareness ascertaining dependent-arising would [absurdly] also ascertain emptiness.

If that the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising is like positing "that which is bulbous, flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid" as the meaning of pot, then a consciousness realizing dependent-arising would absurdly have to know emptiness. However, it is clearly not necessary to ascertain emptiness, the absence of inherent existence, to realize dependent-arising, which in its simplest meaning is the arising effects in dependence upon causes and conditions.

Also, it is well known that it is easier to realize dependent-arising than to realize emptiness. Dependent-arising is used as a chief means to prove emptiness as in, "A body does not inherently exist because of being a dependent-arising;" hence, for this reasoning to work it is necessary to understand that a body is a dependent-arising *before* it can be realized that it is empty of inherent existence.

In conclusion, if "dependent-arising" were a name for emptiness, it absurdly would be necessary to first realize a particular thing's emptiness of inherent existence prior to understanding that it arises in dependence upon causes and conditions, whereas the opposite is the case.

## Issue #30: Could emptiness be the object and dependent-arising be the subject, the consciousness realizing it?

In the second of the five approaches to reading the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising,” “meaning” is taken to be “object” (*yul*) in the context of “object and subject” (*yul dang yul can*). Here, Tsong-kha-pa reads the phrase “object and subject” the same way as it is usually taken in English in “object of awareness and awareness of that object.”

Before we consider this approach, let us place the terminology of “object and subject” in a wider Buddhist context. The literal translation for the Tibetan term for “subject” (*yul can*; Sanskrit *dharmin*) is “object-possessor.” Tibetan books on psychology and philosophy speak of three types of object-possessors:

1. sounds, or terms (*sgra, śabda*)
2. awarenesses (*blo, mati*)
3. persons (*gang zag, pudgala*).

Terms possess, in a sense, the objects to which they refer; awarenesses possess, in a sense, the objects that they apprehend; and persons possess objects.

Since terms are means of verbalization, the first meaning of “object-possessor” as “term” is the referent of the third of Tsong-kha-pa’s five approaches for exposing the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising” listed in Gyal-tshab’s *Notes* above, “object verbalized and means of verbalization” (*brjod bya dang rjod byed*); hence, it is not considered here in this second approach. The last of the three meanings of “object-possessor,” person, could not even vaguely be taken to be relevant here; so it is not even mentioned. Therefore, the referent of “object-possessor” that Tsong-kha-pa considers here is “awareness,” consciousness.

Looked at this way, the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising” is that “emptiness is the object, and dependent-arising is the subject, the awareness realizing emptiness.” In his *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* Tsong-kha-pa does not even mention this approach most likely because it obviously is too silly for him to write about it although he asked his student Gyal-tshab to consider it. However, let me speculate so as to bring why Tsong-kha-pa neglected it in his own book to

the fore. One damage is that although any awareness is necessarily a dependent-arising, it cannot be said that dependent-arising (in general) is an awareness, or that all dependent-arisings are awarenesses, since mountains and fences are also dependent-arisings. Also, emptiness itself is a dependent-arising. Hence, this reading of “meaning” (*don*) as “object” in “object and subject” also has to be discarded as an avenue for exposing the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising.”

## Issue #31: Could emptiness be the object verbalized and dependent-arising be the means of verbalization?

A frequent usage of both “meaning” in English and *don* in Tibetan is found in “meaning of a term,” here called “object verbalized” (*brjod bya*), that is, the object expressed by a term. Looked at this way, the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising” would be that “emptiness is the object verbalized (*brjod bya*), and dependent-arising is the means of verbalization (*rjod byed*), the term expressing emptiness.” However, this suffers the same damage as that leveled against the first possibility, which is that if the term “dependent-arising” expressed “the emptiness of inherent existence,” then, by extension, the very awareness ascertaining that effects arise in dependence upon causes and conditions would absurdly also ascertain the meaning of emptiness. As Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* says:

However, even if it is asserted that the very meaning of the term expressing dependent-arising is the meaning of the emptiness, there is that same damage.

The term “dependent-arising” expresses arising in dependence upon causes and conditions; it does not express a mere absence of inherent existence. As Jam-yang-shay-pa's student Ngag-wang-tra-shi (see below, 356) puts it:<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Cited in Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry* (vol. 2, 35.2) from Ngag-wang-tra-shi's *Great Exposition of Dependent-Arising*. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho points out that Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho's *Lamp Illuminating the Profound Thought, Set Forth to Purify Forgetfulness of the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) “Great Exposition of Special Insight”* (TBRC W2993, 23b.3) is similar to Ngag-wang-tra-shi's in its literal reading, as distinct from Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me's dual rendering, given just below.

The phrase expressing that a pot is a dependent-arising does not express either explicitly or implicitly a pot's emptiness of true existence.

Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me in his autocommentary on the *Praise of Tsong-kha-pa* says the same but within addressing both how the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising and how the meaning of dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness by using the term “mutually”:<sup>a</sup>

Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* says that the way these two mutually go as the meaning of each other is not that the term explicitly expressing the one meaningly suggests<sup>b</sup> [or carries the import of] the other...

Hence, this third approach reading “meaning” as “object verbalized” in the pair “object verbalized and means of verbalization” does not withstand being employed as an avenue for exposing the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising” simply because the terms could not, either explicitly or implicitly, express each other.

## Issue #32: Could emptiness be what is implicitly realized, and dependent-arising be what is explicitly realized?

This possibility may seem redundant after the last one, but the switch here is from expression to realization. In both English and Tibetan, “meaning” (*don*) can refer to implicit impact as distinct from what is explicitly realized. Looked at this way, the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising” would be that dependent-arising is explicitly realized (*dnegos rtogs*) while emptiness is implicitly realized (*shugs*

<sup>a</sup> This is Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me's *Extensive Commentary on the “Meaningful Praise of the Gentle Protector [Tsong-kha-pa], the Second Conqueror, Composed by Way of His Clarifying the Essence of the Teaching: Illuminating the Suchness of the Teaching* (*'jam mgon rgyal ba gnyis pa la bstan pa'i snying po gsal bar mdzad pa'i tshul las brtsams te bstod pa don dang ldan pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa bstan pa'i de nyid snang ba*), in *gsung 'bum* (*dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me/ bla brang par ma*), TBRC W22185.1:7-14 (*bla brang bkra shis 'khyil: bla brang dgon pa*, 199-) and TBRC, W7027-11CZ994, 52b.2. For a much longer citation see 345.

<sup>b</sup> *don gyis 'phangs pa.*

*rtogs*); an explicit realization of dependent-arising would convey realization of emptiness. However, this seems to be what Gyal-tshab had in mind in the conclusion as he stated it above (198):

We do not propound that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising relative to persons prior to understanding the view [of the emptiness of inherent existence], but is for those who, when they have generated the wisdom realizing that even merely a particle of inherent establishment does not exist, realize that the existence of phenomena is not positable—even in the slightest—from [the object's] own side and see the existence of phenomena as only existing dependent on another. In this case:

- when they **explicitly ascertain** the meaning of the term “dependent,” (*ltos pa zhes pa'i sgra'i don dngos su nges pa na*)
- they **implicitly ascertain** the emptiness that is [the object's] nonexistence from its own side, (*rang ngos nas med pa'i stong pa shugs la nges shing*)
- and thereupon an **awareness explicitly ascertaining** emptiness is immediately induced (*stong pa dngos su nges pa'i blo de ma thag 'dren par byed pa la*)

it is stated that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising (*stong pa rten 'byung gi don du gsungs pa yin no*).

What distinguishes explicit and implicit realization is that in explicit realization the aspect of the object appears to consciousness, whereas in implicit realization the aspect of the object does not appear to that same consciousness. Since this distinction is of utmost concern to the mutual realization of dependent-arising and emptiness, in the next chapter we will put it in context by exploring the wider topic of realization as found in a textbook on structural psychology, but before that we need to consider the last of the five rejected possibilities.

### Issue #33: Could emptiness be what is exclusionarily delineated when dependent-arising is inclusionarily delineated?

This vocabulary is usually employed with dichotomies as in the case of realizing that something is impermanent and thereby excluding that it is permanent; or realizing that something is an ultimate truth and thereby excluding that it is veil truth. Similarly, true existence and the absence of true

existence are such that the establishment of the one eliminates the possibility of the other. Therefore, this avenue for understanding how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising is utterly absurd, since realizing that something is a dependent-arising must somehow promote realization that it is empty of inherent existence, not eliminate that it is empty of inherent existence. Likewise, realizing that something is empty of inherent existence must somehow promote realization that it is a dependent-arising. It is likely that the rank absurdity of this approach is the reason why Tsong-kha-pa himself does not list it among the three approaches that he rejects (see below, 253).



## 8. Jam-yang-shay-pa on Explicit and Implicit Realization

Jam-yang-shay-pa's textbook on structural psychology, titled *Illuminating a Little the Presentation of Awareness and Knowledge: Beautiful Golden Garland of Eloquence*,<sup>a</sup> first explains that realization in general involves the *capacity* to induce ascertainment of an object by making it impossible to take that object to be anything else than it is. Typical to the genre of monastic textbooks, he provides definitions and illustrations:<sup>192</sup>

Definition of a realizing awareness

**That which is able to induce ascertainment with respect to that phenomenon in dependence upon the functioning of this awareness** (*blo de'i byed pa la brten nas chos de la nges pa 'dren nus pa*) is the definition of realizing that phenomenon by this awareness,

- because when this awareness ascertains that phenomenon, it eliminates superimpositions that are its opposite,<sup>b</sup>
- because, for example, an inferential cognition ascertaining that sound is impermanent eliminates superimpositions apprehending permanence with respect to sound.

Since realization in general has to include both explicit and implicit realization, it cannot have to be ascertainment itself at that time; at minimum it has to be the *capacity* to induce ascertainment, through which—while the functioning of this consciousness continues—any idea to the contrary of what is to be ascertained is eliminated. This is why Jam-yang-shay-pa describes realization as a *capacity to induce* ascertainment and not as ascertainment itself.

The difference between explicit and implicit realization is whether the aspect of the object dawns to the consciousness or not:

When realizational awarenesses are divided, there are two—explicit realizers (*dngos rtogs*) and implicit realizers (*shugs rtogs*). From between those two, **realization by way of the aspect of that object dawning to this awareness** (*blo de la yul de'i rnam pa shar ba'i sgo nas rtogs pa de*) is the definition of explicit realization of that object by this awareness. Illustrations are, for instance,

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<sup>a</sup> *blo rig gi rnam bzhag nyung gsal legs bshad gser gyi 'phreng mdzes.*

<sup>b</sup> *rang gi bzlog zla'i sgro 'dogs.*

the realization of blue by a direct perception apprehending blue<sup>a</sup> and the realization of sound as a product by an inferential cognition explicitly realizing sound as a product.<sup>b</sup>

An eye consciousness apprehending blue realizes its object within the context of the aspect, or representation, of blue appearing to the eye consciousness. The same is so for a conceptual mental consciousness that is an inference explicitly realizing sound as impermanent; the aspect of impermanent sound appears to the mental consciousness. Whereas implicit realization requires a further attending to that object, explicit realization does the entire task of ascertainment itself:

The meaning of explicit realization of that object by this valid cognition is **inducing ascertainment by its own force—without depending on another subsequent awareness—through the force of (1) this valid cognition’s mentally attending to that object and (2) the aspect [of that object] dawning [to it].**

The meaning of implicit realization of that object by this valid cognition is **despite not presently mentally attending to that object, merely by later mentally attending to that object this valid cognition induces ascertainment of it—without depending on another valid cognition—through the force of its explicitly comprehending its [present] object of comprehension and due to having finished elimination of superimpositions with respect to its [present] object at this time in accordance with the context.**<sup>c</sup>

In implicit realization you see an empty table, for example, and later when considering whether a pot is on the table, you know without the aid of further investigation that a pot is not on the table. That this is possible depends upon the fact that the original sight of the empty table eliminated any possibility of there being a pot on the table even though the aspect of the absence of a pot on the table did not appear to that consciousness. In this way, the original perception eliminates any superimposition contrary to the absence of a pot on the table, such as that there is a golden pot on the table. As Jam-yang-shay-pa says:

**That which eliminates superimpositions also with respect to**

<sup>a</sup> *sngon 'dzin dbang mngon gyis sngon po rtogs pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *sgra byas par dngos su rtogs pa'i rjes dpag gis sgra byas pa rtogs pa.*

<sup>c</sup> The meaning of “in accordance with the context” (*skabs dang mthun par*) is not apparent to me.

**another phenomenon—whose aspect does not dawn to it—through the force of having explicitly eliminated superimpositions with respect to its [present] object of comprehension by way of the aspect of that [present] object of comprehension explicitly having dawned [to it]** is the definition of implicit realization of another phenomenon by this direct valid cognition. An illustration, for example, is that which through the force of having induced ascertainment—upon the explicit dawning of the aspect of a place that is devoid of a pot—has eliminated superimpositions with respect to the existence of a pot and comes to ascertain the nonexistence of pot by mentally merely attending to it even though the aspect of the nonexistence of pot in that place did not dawn [to it].

Implicit realization means that superimpositions about another phenomenon whose aspect does not dawn to this consciousness are eliminated through the force of the fact that this consciousness has eliminated superimpositions with respect to its own explicit object of comprehension, the aspect of that object having dawned to it. More simply stated, when an eye consciousness notices a place that is devoid of a pot, the aspect of the place (such as an empty table) appears to it, whereby the eye consciousness has eliminated any idea that there is a pot (on the table), and subsequently the nonexistence of a pot on the table is ascertained merely by mentally turning to that topic.

The crucial point is that the nonexistence of pot in that place is realized despite the fact that the aspect of the nonexistence of pot in that place does not dawn to this consciousness; the original consciousness of the empty table is itself the implicitly realizing consciousness because it eliminates superimpositions that a pot is there, the elimination of superimpositions being the fundamental meaning of realization. Later, when attention is directed to this topic, the absence of a pot is immediately ascertained;<sup>a</sup> nothing is mulled over, such as drawing the conclusion that there is no pot on the table because an empty table was seen.

As Jam-yang-shay-pa adds,<sup>193</sup> in the case of implicit realization of an object does not (necessarily) mean that ascertainment of that phenomenon is induced right at that time; rather, ascertainment is induced subsequently; nevertheless, superimpositions to the contrary have been eliminated when the original consciousness ascertains its object, and thus the removal of superimpositions is the bottom-line of realization. Hence, realization can occur without ascertainment.

<sup>a</sup> *nges pa*.

Concerning other details about explicit and implicit realization, Jam-yang-shay-pa considers the visual perception of a color that is an explicit realization by *direct* valid cognition:

**That which eliminates superimpositions with respect to an object of comprehension upon the aspect of its object of comprehension actually dawning to that direct perception** is the definition of explicit realization of an object of comprehension by a direct valid cognition. An illustration, for example, is the elimination of superimpositions with respect to blue upon the aspect of blue clearly dawning to a direct valid cognition apprehending blue.

A direct valid cognition such as an eye consciousness correctly apprehending a patch of blue eliminates superimpositions such as the possibility of its being red. That the aspect of blue dawns to the eye consciousness means that the eye consciousness is generated in the aspect, or representation, of blue due to the presence of the blue patch.

In explicit realization by *inferential* valid cognition the role of the aspect of the object dawning to consciousness is fulfilled by the dawning of a conceptual image, called a “meaning-generalality.”<sup>a</sup> Using this vocabulary, Jam-yang-shay-pa gives definitions for explicit and implicit realizations by inference:

**That which eliminates superimpositions with respect to an object of comprehension by way of the meaning-generality of that object of comprehension dawning to this inferential cognition** is the definition of explicit comprehension by an inferential cognition. An illustration, for example, is that which eliminates the superimpositions of apprehending sound to be permanent by way of the meaning-generality of impermanent sound explicitly appearing to an inferential cognition realizing sound to be impermanent.

**That which eliminates superimpositions even with respect to another phenomenon—whose meaning-generality does not dawn to that inferential cognition—through the force of having eliminated superimpositions with respect to the meaning-generality of its own object of comprehension having dawned to it** is the definition of realizing another phenomenon by the force of that inferential cognition.<sup>b</sup> An illustration, for example, is that

<sup>a</sup> *don spyi, arthasāmānya.*

<sup>b</sup> *rjes dpag de'i shugs kyis.*

which (1) eliminates superimpositions of permanent existence with respect to sound—even though the meaning-generalty of the nonexistence of permanent sound does not dawn [to it]—through the force of that inferential cognition having eliminated superimpositions with respect to the meaning-generalty of its own [present] object of comprehension that has dawned to it and (2) will ascertain, without depending on another valid cognition, the nonexistence of permanence with respect to sound by merely mentally turning to it.

In both direct cognition and inferential cognition, explicit realization involves the aspect (or meaning-generalty in the case of inference) of the object dawning to the consciousness, whereas in implicit realization the aspect of this other object does not dawn to the initial consciousness. Nevertheless, further ascertainment is accomplished by the fact that through the aspect of the original object having dawned to the consciousness, the possibility of superimpositions—false notions—with regard to this further object has been eliminated.

## APPLYING THESE DISTINCTIONS TO ASCERTAINING EMPTINESS AND DEPENDENT- ARISING

Here regarding Tsong-kha-pa's statement "emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising" the way he has framed the concern is with regard to conceptual realization, which is not just thinking about the topic or mulling over a syllogism but is powerful inferential realization, a decisive conclusion such that all false ideas to the contrary have been removed as long as the functionality of that consciousness remains.

When we apply the distinctions presented in Jam-yang-shay-pa's textbook as laid out above, we are left with the beckoning proposition that when dependent-arising is explicitly realized, emptiness is implicitly realized. This would mean that an explicit realization of dependent-arising would implicitly convey ascertainment of emptiness upon merely turning the mind to that topic. However, this is subject to the same fallacy incurred with the earlier possibility: the very awareness ascertaining that effects arise in dependence upon causes and conditions would absurdly also realize the meaning of emptiness in that all superimpositions contrary to emptiness would be removed by an awareness realizing dependent-arising. Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental*

*Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom*” rejects this with a very brief statement:

Even if it is asserted that [emptiness] is the implicit meaning of explicitly ascertaining dependent-arising, this is not feasible, as before.

His point is that explicit realization of dependent-arising is not sufficient to convey with it realization of emptiness, for merely realizing that a body, for instance, is produced in dependence upon causes and conditions—such as nutrients and so forth or in dependence upon elements from the parents—does not of itself convey realization of its absence of inherent existence. As Ngag-wang-tra-shi’s *Great Exposition of Dependent-Arising* (see below, 356) puts it:<sup>a</sup>

an awareness ascertaining a pot as a dependent-arising is not an awareness ascertaining a pot’s emptiness of true establishment either explicitly or implicitly,

In commentary on his *Praise of Tsong-kha-pa* Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me takes the point as working both ways,<sup>194</sup> “it also is not that when the one is explicitly realized, the other is implicitly realized,” that is to say, emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising and dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness.

Despite the fact that Tsong-kha-pa, Ngag-wang-tra-shi, Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me, and others reject taking the avenue of explicit/implicit realization as a way to uncover the import of the statement “emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising,” Gyal-tshab, as we saw earlier, uses this vocabulary in his rendering of what Tsong-kha-pa taught him about the import of this very statement, nevertheless doing this by limiting the applicability of explicit/implicit realization to those who have realized the emptiness of inherent existence, thereby not including all explicit realizations of dependent-arising. Let us cite Gyal-tshab’s passage (198) again:

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<sup>a</sup> *rten 'brel mtha' dpyod sogs / zab mo rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba'i mtha' dpyod legs par bshad pa'i rgya mtsho*, in *gsung 'bum* (ngag dbang bkra shis), TBRC W1KG12177:1-493 (sgo mang skal bzang thabs mkhas, 1973-1974). Also cited in Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 35.2. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho points out that Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho’s *Lamp Illuminating the Profound Thought, Set Forth to Purify Forgetfulness of the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa’s) “Great Exposition of Special Insight”* (see TBRC, W2993, 23b.3) presents this point similarly.

We do not propound that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising relative to persons prior to understanding the view [of the emptiness of inherent existence], but is for those who, when they have generated the wisdom realizing that even merely a particle of inherent establishment does not exist, realize that the existence of phenomena is not positable—even in the slightest—from [the object's] own side and see the existence of phenomena as only existing dependent on another. In this case:

- when they **explicitly ascertain** the meaning of the term “dependent,” (*ltos pa zhes pa'i sgra'i don dngos su nges pa na*)
- they **implicitly ascertain** the emptiness that is [the object's] nonexistence from its own side, (*rang ngos nas med pa'i stong pa shugs la nges shing*)
- and thereupon an **awareness explicitly ascertaining** emptiness is immediately induced (*stong pa dngos su nges pa'i blo de ma thag 'dren par byed pa la*)

it is stated that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising (*stong pa rten 'byung gi don du gsungs pa yin no*).

For such a person, explicit ascertainment of the meaning of the term “dependent” conveys implicit ascertainment of emptiness, which itself induces explicit ascertainment of emptiness.

Gyal-tshab seems to be adapting and modifying the fourth (explicit and implicit realization) of the five above-considered avenues in this representation. Let me venture to render this explanation in the language of Jam-yang-shay-pa's textbook on structural psychology as:

For a person who has found the view of the Middle, when the aspect of dependence dawns to the mind and superimpositions contrary to it are eliminated, (1) superimpositions contrary to emptiness are also eliminated even though the aspect of emptiness does not dawn to this consciousness and (2) thereby emptiness is implicitly realized. This implicit realization of emptiness immediately induces explicit realization of emptiness in which the aspect of emptiness dawns to the mind.

Taken this way, the statement that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising requires the profound perspective of a developed practitioner. Mere realization that a phenomenon is a dependent-arising is not sufficient; prior realization of emptiness is required.

In this refinement, only for those who properly understand the view of the Middle could explicit realization of dependent-arising convey implicit

realization of emptiness. Pal-jor-lhün-drub makes this very point that a specific type of person is required, but notice that he does not use the vocabulary of explicit and implicit realization.<sup>195</sup>

The meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is the meaning of dependent-arising because all functionality, such as the arising of an effect empty of inherent existence, is feasible in a cause empty of inherent existence. Moreover, a person for whom dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness<sup>a</sup> and emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising<sup>b</sup> must be able to posit cause and effect in things upon realizing that things are not established by way of their own character, but such is not said in terms of just any person.

Notice also that in the last sentence he uses the format of mutuality (“dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness and emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising”) when he describes the type of perspective in the face of which this profundity can be known. Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me does the same:<sup>c</sup>

With respect to how these two mutually go as the meaning of each other,<sup>d</sup> Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* says that it is not like positing that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, and it also is not that the term explicitly expressing the one meaningfully projects<sup>e</sup> the other, and it also is not that when the one is explicitly realized, the other is implicitly realized, but is a way in which the one bestows understanding of the other<sup>f</sup> in the perspective of the awareness of a Proponent of the Middle who knows the absence of inherent existence.

By using the looser phrase “the one bestows understanding of the other” Gung-thang avoids using the vocabulary of explicit and implicit realization.

<sup>a</sup> *stong pa’i don yin pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *rten ’byung gi don du song ba.*

<sup>c</sup> Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me’s *Extensive Commentary on the “Meaningful Praise of Tsong-kha-pa,”* TBRC, W7027-I1CZ994, 52b.2; for a longer citation see 345.

<sup>d</sup> *phan tshun gcig gcig gi don du ’gro tshul.*

<sup>e</sup> *don gyis ’phangs pa;* perhaps also “meaningfully suggests.”

<sup>f</sup> *gcig gis gcig la go ba ster lugs.*



## 9. Pur-bu-jog and Ngag-wang-tra-shi on Positive and Negative Phenomena

### Issue #34: Why drop the vocabulary of explicit and implicit realization?

The reasonings proving emptiness establish a mere absence of true existence, which is a nonaffirming negative; hence, nothing positive is projected in place of what is negated, not even an absence with an affirmative twist, called an affirming negative. In a system that refuses to resort to paradox as a way out of quandaries, any attempt to explain how realization of emptiness promotes further realization of dependent-arising is fraught with difficulties. Rather than taking the easy route of claiming paradox, the dilemma gives rise to inspired and inspiring expeditions into resolving conflict. These excursions yield intellectual delight that can spur insight, even if, at times, they seem to turn into word-games that command so much attention that the larger purpose of insight is blurred.

With this in mind, let us proceed, following several intrepid Tibetan scholar-practitioners who have probed these topics while not losing sight of the forest for the many trees they are pruning. As will become evident below, the differences between explicit and implicit realization figure prominently in the presentation of positives and negatives; therefore, it is crucial to explore the layout of these two additional categories.

Phenomena (*chos*, *dharma*) themselves are divided into the positive (*sgrub pa*, *vidhi*) and the negative (*dgag pa*, *pratiṣedha*), that is to say, positive phenomena and negative phenomena.<sup>a</sup> The two Tibetan terms also are used for affirmations and negations and thus refer to actions and statements, but here they refer to types of phenomena and not just statements, propositions, and acts of logic.

This is a division of objects, or existents, into those that are positive

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<sup>a</sup> The overall source for this material is the late nineteenth-century Pur-bu-jog's (*phur bu lcog byams pa rgya mtsho*, 1825-1901) *Presentation of Collected Topics of Prime Cognition, Revealing the Meaning of the Texts on Prime Cognition: Magical Key to the Path of Reasoning* (*tshad ma'i gzhung don 'byed pa'i bsdus grva'i rnam bzhag rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig*), specifically the section on *The Greater Path of Reasoning* (*rigs lam che ba*) [modern blockprint, no publication data], 23a.6-36a.4. For a similar presentation see Appendix 4 of Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 721-728; however, here I am diverging and utilizing other materials as indicated below.

and those that are negative. Since the divisions are exhaustive, anything that exists is either a positive or a negative phenomenon; there is no third category, and nothing is both. Also, every instance of a positive or negative phenomenon is an existent.

Here is a table of equivalents of “existent” with their respective definitions:

- existent (*yod pa*) : that which is observed by valid cognition
- established base (*gzhi grub*) : that which is established by valid cognition
- object of knowledge (*shes bya*) : that which is fit to be taken as an object of an awareness
- phenomenon (*chos*) : that which holds its own entity
- object of comprehension (*gzhal bya*) : that which is realized by valid cognition
- object (*yul*) : that which is known by an awareness
- object of comprehension by an omniscient consciousness (*rnam mkhyen gyi gzhal bya*) : that which is realized by an omniscient consciousness.

That the above are equivalents means that whatever is a negative or a positive phenomenon is necessarily an existent, an established base, an object of knowledge, a phenomenon, an object of comprehension, an object, and an object of comprehension by an omniscient consciousness as well as that which is observed by valid cognition, and so forth. Hence, the mere fact that an emptiness is a negative means that it is an existent, an object, and so forth.

A positive phenomenon is defined as:

**a phenomenon that is not an object realized by the conceptual consciousness apprehending it in the manner of an explicit elimination of its object of negation.**

First of all, a positive phenomenon is an existent; a nonexistent such as the horns of a rabbit or a cloak made of turtle hairs could never be a positive phenomenon. Second, the division into positive and negative phenomena is made by way of how objects appear to conceptual consciousnesses; if a conceptual consciousness must realize the object by way of explicitly eliminating an object of negation, the object is not a positive but a negative. For instance, to realize non-cow, cow must be explicitly eliminated, but to realize cow, non-cow does not have to be explicitly eliminated though indeed it is implicitly eliminated.

Tsong-kha-pa addresses these points in a short presentation of negatives in the section on the Consequence School in *The Essence of Eloquence*; I will cite his presentation stage by stage and juxtapose it with the textbook presentation by Jam-yang-shay-pa's prime student Ngag-wang-tra-shi in the section on negatives and positives in his debate manual titled *Great Eloquent Explanation Demonstrating for the Three Levels of Intelligence—Low, Medium, and High—the Meanings of (Dharmakīrti's) "Commentary," the Great Treatise Commenting on the Thought of Valid Cognition, Collated into a Single Text: Necklace for Scholars, Fulfilling All Hopes of the Fortunate*.<sup>a</sup>

## Issue #35: Is a negative phenomenon always expressed by a negative term?

Tsong-kha-pa begins by pointing out that a negative phenomenon is not necessarily expressed by a term that has a negative element within it because there are two types, one containing a negative term and another that, despite not having a negative term, appears to the mind through the negative route of eliminating an object of negation:<sup>196</sup>

Concerning that, a negative<sup>b</sup> is **an object of realization (1) that when it is expressed by a term, an object of negation is eliminated in its verbal reading or (2) that explicitly appears in a manner having the aspect of negating an object of negation**

<sup>a</sup> *tshad ma'i dgongs 'grel gyi bcos chen po rnam 'grel gyi don gcig tu dril ba blo rab 'bring tha ma gsum ston pa legs bshad chen po mkhas pa'i mgul brgyan skal bzang re ba kun skong*; TBRC W1KG1940-I1KG1942-3-384 edition which is a reproduction from the *bkra shis 'khyil blocks* in 1984, 131b.5-136b.2; this corresponds to the (error laden) green codex edition in India, *The Collected Topics by a Spiritual Son of Jam-yang-shay-pa Sras bsodus grwa* (n.p., n.d.), 451.18ff. I am adapting an earlier translation done under my guidance in a Ph.D. dissertation by Anne C. Klein and published in *Knowing, Naming, and Negation* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1988), 88-113. My translation includes oral comments by the late Jam-pal-shan-pan (1919-1988) drawn from Klein's translation; Jam-pal-shan-pan received his ge-she degree from Gan-den Jang-tse College, entered the Tantric College of Lower Lhasa, became its Abbot, and eventually became the ninety-eighth Throneholder of Ganden, the head of the Ge-lug-pa order. See also Anne C. Klein, *Knowledge and Liberation: A Buddhist Epistemological Analysis in Support of Transformative Religious Experience* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1986).

<sup>b</sup> *dgag pa, pratiṣedha*.

**when its aspect appears to an awareness.** The first is, for instance, selflessness (*bdag med*, *anātman*). The second is, for instance, the noumenon (*chos nyid*, *dharmatā*); regarding this there is no elimination of an object of negation in the verbal reading, but when its meaning appears, there is an appearance in a manner having the aspect of an elimination of the proliferations [of inherent existence].

དེ་ལ་དགག་པ་ནི་སྒྲུབ་བརྗོད་པ་ན་ཚིག་གིས་ཟིན་པར་དགག་བྱ་  
བཅད་པའམ་དེའི་རྣམ་པ་སྟོང་ལ་འཆར་བ་ན་དགག་བྱ་བཀག་  
པའི་རྣམ་པ་ཅན་དུ་དངོས་སུ་ཤར་ནས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་ཞིག་  
ཟླེ། དང་པོ་ནི་བདག་མེད་ལྟ་བུའོ། །གཉིས་པ་ནི། ཚེས་ཉིད་ལྟ་བུ་  
ཟླེ་འདི་ལ་ཚིག་གིས་ཟིན་པར་དགག་བྱ་བཅད་པ་མེད་ཀྱང་དེའི་  
དོན་འཆར་བ་ན་སྟོང་པ་བཅད་པའི་རྣམ་པ་ཅན་དུ་འཆར་བ་  
ཡོད་དོ། །

To include both of these Ngag-wang-tra-shi carefully frames the definition of a negative as:

**a phenomenon that must be realized upon the explicit elimination of its object of negation by the awareness explicitly realizing it.**

རང་དངོས་རྟོགས་པའི་སྟོང་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་  
བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཚེས་དེ་

He adds:

The four—negative (*dgag pa*, *pratiṣedha*), exclusion (*sel ba*, *apoha*), other-exclusion (*gzhan sel*, *anyāpoha*), and isolate (*ldog pa*, *vyatireka*)—are equivalent.

དགག་པ་དང་། སེལ་བ་དང་། གཞན་སེལ་དང་། ལྷོག་པ་  
བཞི་དོན་གཅིག་

To make clear that the term expressing a negative need not include a negative term within it, he frames a debate to expose examples of negatives

whose expressions lack any such negative terms, these being space (*nam mkha'*, *ākāśa*) and noumenon (*chos nyid*, *dharmatā*), the meaning of the latter in this Buddhist context being its basic English dictionary meaning of “reality.”<sup>a</sup> Here is the debate:<sup>197</sup> (incorrect statements are in red; correct statements are in blue)

**Someone says:** Whatever is a negative necessarily is a phenomenon in whose actual name a negative word is affixed.

ཁ་ཅིག་ན་རེ། དགག་པ་ཡིན་ན་རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་ལ་  
དགག་ཆོག་སྒྱུར་བའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པས་བྱུང་བཟེན་ན།

**Our response:** It [absurdly] follows that the subject, space,<sup>b</sup> is a phenomenon in whose actual name a negative word is affixed because of being a negative. You have asserted the entailment [that a negative necessarily is a phenomenon in whose actual name a negative word is affixed].

ནམ་མཁའ་ཆོས་ཅན། རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་ལ་དགག་ཆོག་སྒྱུར་  
བའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། དགག་པ་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར། [དགག་པ་  
ཡིན་ན་རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་ལ་དགག་ཆོག་སྒྱུར་བའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པས་]བྱུང་པ་  
ཁས།

If you say [that the reason which is that space is a negative] is not established, it follows that the subject, space, is a negative because of being a nonaffirming negative.

If you say [that the reason which is that space is a nonaffirming negative] is not established, it follows that the subject, space, is a nonaffirming negative because of being a nonaffirming negative that is a mere lack of obstructive contact. It follows [that the subject, space, is a nonaffirming negative that is a mere lack of obstructive contact] because of being uncompound space.

[ནམ་མཁའ་དགག་པ་ཡིན་པ་]མ་གྱུར་ན། ནམ་མཁའ་ཆོས་ཅན།

<sup>a</sup> As I mentioned earlier, because *chos nyid* (*dharmatā*) is paired with *chos* (*dharma*) “phenomenon,” I prefer to translate the former as “noumenon” despite the inappropriate reverberations with particular usages of the term by Kant and so forth.

<sup>b</sup> *nam mkha'*, *ākāśa*.

དགག་པ་ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། མེད་དགག་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [ནམ་  
མཁའ་མེད་དགག་ཡིན་པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། ནམ་མཁའ་ཆོས་ཅན། མེད་  
དགག་ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། ཐོགས་རིག་བཅད་ཅམ་གྱི་མེད་དགག་  
ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [ནམ་མཁའ་ཐོགས་རིག་བཅད་ཅམ་གྱི་མེད་དགག་ཡིན་  
པ་]དེར་ཐལ། འདུས་མ་བྱས་ཀྱི་ནམ་མཁའ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

If you accept the root [consequence that **space is a phenomenon in whose actual name a negative word is affixed**], it follows that the subject, space, is not a phenomenon in whose actual name a negative word is affixed because there is no negative word that is affixed as part of its actual name.

If you say [that the reason which is that there is no negative word that is affixed as part of its actual name] is not established, it follows with respect to the subject, space, that there is no negative word that is affixed as part of its actual name because (1) the term *nam mkha'* ("space") is its actual name and (2) the two, *nam* and *mkha'*, are neither a negative word.

[ནམ་མཁའ་རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་ལ་དགག་ཆོག་སྒྱུར་བའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པ་]རྩ་བར་  
འདོད་ན། ནམ་མཁའ་ཆོས་ཅན། རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་ལ་  
དགག་ཆོག་སྒྱུར་བའི་ཆོས་མ་ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་དངོས་  
མིང་གི་བྱར་དུ་དགག་ཆོག་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར། [ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་དངོས་མིང་གི་  
བྱར་དུ་དགག་ཆོག་མེད་པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། ནམ་མཁའ་ཆོས་ཅན། ཁྱོད་  
ཀྱི་དངོས་མིང་གི་བྱར་དུ་དགག་ཆོག་མེད་པར་ཐལ། ནམ་  
མཁའ་ཞེས་པའི་སྒྲ་དེ་ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་དངོས་མིང་ཡིན་པ་གང་ཞིག  
ནམ་དང་མཁའ་ཞེས་པ་གཉིས་གང་ཡང་དགག་ཆོག་མ་ཡིན་  
པའི་ཕྱིར།

Furthermore, it [absurdly] follows that **the subject, the noumenon,<sup>a</sup> is a phenomenon at the end of whose actual name a negative word is affixed<sup>b</sup>** because of being a negative. You have asserted the entailment [that **whatever is a negative necessarily is a phenomenon at the end of whose actual name a negative word is affixed**].

The reason [that is, that **the noumenon is a negative**] is established because of **being a nonaffirming negative**.

གཞན་ཡང་། ཚེས་ཉིད་ཚེས་ཅན། རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་གི་  
མཐར་དགག་ཚིག་སྐྱར་བའི་ཚེས་ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། དགག་པ་  
ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [དགག་པ་ཡིན་ན་རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་གི་མཐར་དགག་ཚིག་  
སྐྱར་བའི་ཚེས་ཡིན་པས།] བྱུང་བ་ལས། [ཚེས་ཉིད་དགག་པ་ཡིན་  
པ་] ཉམས་གྲུབ་སྟེ། མིང་དགག་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

You cannot accept the root [consequence, that is, that **the noumenon is not a negative**] because even though a negative word is not affixed at the end of its actual name, it is a phenomenon that must be realized through an explicit elimination of its object of negation by an awareness explicitly realizing it.

There is entailment [that whatever is a phenomenon that must be realized through an explicit elimination of its object of negation by an awareness explicitly realizing it even though a negative word is not affixed at the end of its actual name necessarily is a negative] because any phenomenon that must be realized by way of the explicit elimination of its object of negation by the awareness explicitly realizing it necessarily is a negative.

[ཚེས་ཉིད་དགག་པ་མ་ཡིན་པ་] ཅུ་བར་འདོད་མི་བྱས་ཏེ། རང་གི་  
དངོས་མིང་གི་མཐར་དགག་ཚིག་མ་སྐྱར་གྱང་། རང་དངོས་  
སྟེན་གས་པའི་སྒོས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སྟེན་བཅད་ནས་

<sup>a</sup> *chos nyid, dharmatā*; the basic dictionary meaning of “noumenon” is “reality.”

<sup>b</sup> The vocabulary has switched either intentionally or unintentionally from “as part of its actual name” (*dnegos ming gi zur du*) to “at the end of whose actual name” (*dnegos ming gi mthar*).

རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་གི་  
མཐར་དགག་ཆོག་མ་སྒྱུར་ཀྱང་། རང་དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་སྒྲོས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་  
དངོས་སུ་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་ན་དགག་པ་ཡིན་པས་]ཁྱུ་  
ཞེ། རང་དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་སྒྲོས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་  
སུ་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་ན་དགག་པ་ཡིན་  
པས་ཁྱུ་པའི་ཕྱིར།

## THE TWO TYPES OF NEGATIVES

Tsong-kha-pa proceeds to explain that there are two types of negatives, affirming negatives<sup>a</sup> and nonaffirming negatives.<sup>b</sup> In brief, the difference between the two is that the term expressing an affirming negative projects a positive (or at least another affirming negative) in place of what it negates; for instance, the sentence, “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day,” does not merely eliminate eating during the day since the mention of “fat” projects eating at night. On the other hand, when a nonaffirming negative appears to the mind neither a positive nor an affirming negative is projected in place of what it negates. Tsong-kha-pa briefly describes the two types and cites passages from *Bhāvaviveka* as sources:

Objects that are realized through an explicit elimination of an object of negation in that way are twofold:

1. an affirming negative,<sup>c</sup> upon explicitly eliminating an object of negation, projects another phenomenon. *Bhāvaviveka*’s *Blaze of Reasoning* says:<sup>198</sup>

An affirming negative negates the entity of a thing, through which the entity of a thing like this and other than this is affirmed. For example, through the negation, “This

<sup>a</sup> *ma yin dgag, paryudāsapratiṣedha.*

<sup>b</sup> *med dgag, prasajyapratiṣedha.*

<sup>c</sup> The two types of negations seem to have their origin among the *Mīmāṃsakas*, who used the terms to refer to types of injunctions—when something was just forbidden and when something positive was implied in place of what was forbidden. See J.F. Staal, “Negation and the Law of Contradiction in Indian Thought,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* XXV, Part 1 (1962): especially 56-66.



is not a brahmin,” it is affirmed that [the person] is a non-brahmin, like a brahmin but other than this, [such as] a menial<sup>a</sup> who is lower in terms of asceticism, hearing,<sup>b</sup> and so forth.

དེ་ལྟར་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་བཅད་པས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བའི་  
 དོན་དེ་ལ་གཉིས་ལས་མ་ཡིན་དགག་ནི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་  
 བཅད་ནས་ཆོས་གཞན་འཕེན་པ་སྟེ། རྟོག་གི་འབར་བ་  
 ལས། མ་ཡིན་པར་དགག་པ་ནི་དངོས་པོའི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་དགག་  
 པས་དེ་དང་འདྲ་བ་དེ་ལས་གཞན་པའི་དངོས་པོའི་ངོ་བོ་  
 ཉིད་སྐྱབ་པར་བྱེད་པ་སྟེ། དཔེར་ན་འདི་བྲམ་ཟེ་མ་ཡིན་ནོ་  
 ཞེས་དགག་པས་བྲམ་ཟེ་འདྲ་བ་དེ་ལས་གཞན་པ་བྲམ་ཟེ་མ་  
 ཡིན་པ་དཀའ་ལྟར་དང་ཐོས་པ་ལ་སོགས་པས་དམན་པའི་  
 དམངས་རིགས་ཡིན་པར་སྐྱབ་པ་ལྟ་བུའོ་ཞེས་སོ། །

2. a nonaffirming negative,<sup>c</sup> upon explicitly eliminating an object of negation, does not project another phenomenon. Bhāvaviveka’s *Blaze of Reasoning* says:<sup>199</sup>

A nonaffirming negative simply refutes the mere entity of a thing and does not affirm another thing like this and other than this. For example, the statement “Brahmins do not drink beer” simply refutes [or forbids] only this and does not express that [brahmins] drink or do not drink a beverage other than this.

In those [statements] “affirming” (*sgrub*) and “not affirming” (*mi sgrub*) have the same meaning as “projecting” (*’phen*) and “not projecting” (*mi ’phen*); “other than this” [refers to] what are not just negations of objects of negations.

མེད་དགག་ནི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་བཅད་ནས་ཆོས་གཞན་མི་

<sup>a</sup> *dmangs rigs, śūdra*.

<sup>b</sup> That is, learning.

<sup>c</sup> *med dgag, prasajyapratishedha*.

འཕེན་པ་སྟེ། རྟོག་གི་འབར་བ་ལས། མེད་པར་དགག་པ་ནི་  
 དངོས་པོའི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཙམ་ཞིག་འགོག་པར་ཟད་ཀྱི་དེ་དང་  
 འདྲ་བ་དེ་མ་ཡིན་པ་གཞན་གྱི་དངོས་པོ་སྐྱབ་པར་མི་བྱེད་པ་  
 རྟེན་དཔེར་ན་བྲམ་ཟེས་ཆང་བཏུང་བར་མི་བྱེད། །ཞེས་བྱ་བ་དེ་  
 ཙམ་ཞིག་འགོག་པར་ཟད་ཀྱི་དེ་ལས་གཞན་པའི་<sup>[109a]</sup>བཏུང་  
 བ་བཏུང་ངོ་ཞེའམ་མི་བཏུང་ངོ་ཞེས་མི་བརྗོད་པ་སྟེ་བྱེད་  
 ཞེས་སོ། །དེ་ལ་སྐྱབ་མི་སྐྱབ་ནི་འཕེན་མི་འཕེན་དང་དོན་  
 གཅིག་ལ་དེ་ལས་གཞན་པ་ནི་དགག་བྱ་བཀག་ཙམ་མིན་  
 པའོ། །

Ngag-wang-tra-shi frames definitions for the two types of negatives:

The definition of an affirming negative exists because **a negative whose term expressing it projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—in place of the negation of its object of negation** is it. An illustration exists because impermanent sound is that. The definition of a nonaffirming negative exists because **a negative whose term expressing it does not project another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—in place of the negation of its object of negation** is it. An illustration exists because a selflessness of persons is that.

མ་ཡིན་དགག་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཡོད་དེ། རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་  
 པའི་སྐྱས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་བཀག་ཤུལ་དུ་ཆོས་གཞན་མ་  
 ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་  
 དེ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། མཚན་གཞི་ནི་ཡོད་དེ། སྐྱ་མི་རྟག་པ་  
 དེ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། མེད་དགག་གི་མཚན་ཉིན་ཡོད་དེ།  
 རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་བཀག་ཤུལ་

དུ་ཚེས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་མི་  
 འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་དེ་ཡིན་པའི་སྟེར། མཚན་གཞི་ནི་  
 ཡོད་དེ། གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་དེ་ཡིན་པའི་སྟེར།

The object of negation of the expression “impermanent sound” is permanent sound, and impermanent sound is projected in its place, whereas “selflessness of persons” merely eliminates self with respect to persons and does not project anything in its place. (More examples are given below.)

Tsong-kha-pa proceeds to point out that even though the Tibetan terms for affirming negative and non-affirming negative, *ma yin dgag* and *med dgag* respectively, use the copulative *ma yin* and existential *med*, these do not describe the difference the difference between these two types of negatives since the presence of these terms cannot serve to identify the two types:

Negations through the words “is not” (*ma yin*) and “does not exist”<sup>a</sup> (*med*) do not constitute the difference between those two because both Bhāvaviveka and Chandrakīrti explain that the negation “is not from itself” (*bdag las ma yin, na svataḥ*) is a non-affirming negative and because Measureless Life (*tshe dpag med, amitāyus*) must be taken as an affirming negative.

མ་ཡིན་ཞེས་པ་དང་མེད་ཅེས་པའི་ཚིག་གིས་བཀག་པ་ནི་དེ་  
 གཉིས་ཀྱི་བྱུང་པར་མིན་ཏེ། བདག་ལས་མ་ཡིན་ཞེས་བཀག་པ་  
 མེད་དགག་ཏུ་ལེགས་ལྡན་དང་ཟླ་བ་གཉིས་ཀས་བཤད་པའི་སྟེར་  
 དང་ཆོ་དཔག་མེད་ཅེས་པ་མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཏུ་བྱ་དགོས་པའི་སྟེར་  
 རོ།།

The reference of “is not from itself” is to the first stanza of Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle*:

*Not from self, not from others,  
 Not from both, not causelessly  
 Are any things*

<sup>a</sup> Or “less” as in “measureless.”

Ever produced anywhere.

*na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāṃ nāpyahetutaḥ/  
utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kvacana kecana//*

*bdag las ma yin gzhan las min/  
gnyis las ma yin rgyu med min/  
dngos po gang dag gang na yang/  
skye ba nam yang yod ma yin//*

These four are nonaffirming negatives;<sup>a</sup> they do not affirm anything positive in place of what they negate, not even implicitly projecting something positive, like fat Devadatta's not eating during the day, which projects eating at night.

Tsong-kha-pa's point is that even though "is not from itself" (*bdag las ma yin*) is expressed by the copulative *ma yin*, it is not an affirming negative (*ma yin dgag*) but is a nonaffirming negative (*med dgag*), and even though the name of the Buddha Amitāyus (*tshe dpag med*) is expressed by the existential *med*, it is not a nonaffirming negative (*med dgag*) but is an affirming negative (*ma yin dgag*).

## Issue #36: Can a nonaffirming negative prove something?

A nonaffirming negative can prove something. Explicitly, the thesis that these four prove is not indicated here in the first stanza of the first chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle*, but implicitly affirm another nonaffirming negative, the absence of inherently existent production. So these nonaffirming negatives do affirm, or prove, something. As Jang-kya Röl-pay-dor-jay<sup>b</sup> says:<sup>200</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The controversy between Buddhapālita, Bhāvaviveka, and Chandrakīrti on how production from self is refuted is the locus classicus for the Middle Way School's discussion about nonaffirming and affirming negatives, and for our knowing that in their versions of the Middle Way School these four theses are just nonaffirming negatives. This does not mean that, even for them, any and all Middle Way reasonings, such as dependent-arising are nonaffirming negatives, but these four (not from self and so forth) as well as many other negative reasonings (such as Chandrakīrti's sevenfold reasoning) are nonaffirming negatives.

<sup>b</sup> *lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje*, 1717-1786, born in the Am-do Province of Tibet, currently the Qinghai Province of China, he is also known as the Second Jang-kya Hu-tok-tu (*hu thog thu*). He was born in the Western Lotus District (*nub pad mo'i sde*) of the four districts of Lang-dru (*lang gru'u sde bzhi*) north of Tsong-kha and

*Objection:* If, when production of the four extreme types is refuted, a negation of inherently existent production is implicitly established, then it follows that these theses are not non-affirming negatives.

*Response:* There is no such fallacy. For something to be an affirming negative it must prove or imply an other, positive phenomenon.

Thus, it is permissible for a nonaffirming negative to imply another nonaffirming negative *of the same variety*; this reasoning could not be used to prove uncompounded space, for example; that which is proved must be the lack of inherently existent, or truly existent, production. In addition, the lack of inherently existent production also proves that things do not inherently exist.

Why is it important that these four theses are nonaffirming negatives? In Ge-lug-pa circles it is held that in meditative equipoise on reality what one is perceiving is just emptiness. If these four reasons were proving something else, like, for example, that production exists conventionally, then because you use these reasons to realize reality in meditative equipoise, you would have to be realizing conventionally existent production within meditative equipoise.

About this initial line, not from self (or “is not from self” as the Tibetan renders it) Bhāvaviveka says:

This negation, “not from self” (*bdag las ma yin, na svataḥ*), is to be viewed as meaning a nonaffirming negation because of principally being a negation and because of intending<sup>a</sup> to establish “non-conceptual pristine wisdom” endowed with the entirety of objects through refuting the entirety of the net of conceptions. When an affirming negation is employed, due to its principally being an affirmation, it is being affirmed that “phenomena are not produced,” whereby nonproduction is indicated, and hence one would separate from a tenet because scripture says, “If one courses in the nonproduction of form, one is not coursing in the perfection of wisdom.” Here it is to be delimited that “Things are only not pro-

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eventually became preceptor to the Qianlong Emperor. (According to the late Geshe Thupten Gyatso, *lang gru'u* is not to be confused with *lan gru*, present-day Lanzhou in Gansu Province.) For a short biography and references to Tibetan biographies see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga: The Middle Way Consequence School* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1983), Chapter One.

<sup>a</sup> *dgongs pa*.

duced from self.” If it is delimited otherwise, then it would be determined as, “[Things] are not produced from only self. Well, what then? They are produced from other,” and likewise it would be determined as, “[Things] are not produced from only self. Well, what then? They are produced from self and other.” Hence, those also are not asserted because of separating from a tenet.

Similarly, Chandrakīrti, speaking about the first stanza, says:<sup>201</sup>

In that, *jātu* (*nam yang*; ever) means *kadā cit* (*gzhar yang*; when). The term *kvacana* (*gang na yang*; anywhere) is a word for a support (*rten*, *ādhāra*), a synonym of *kvacit* (*'ga' zhiḡ na yang*; somewhere). The term *kecana* (*gang dag*; whatever/any) is a word for the supported (*rten pa*, *ādheya*), a synonym of *kecit* (*su dag*; whatever).<sup>a</sup> Hence, it is to be put together thusly:

Not from self are whatsoever things ever produced anywhere.<sup>b</sup>

*naiva svata utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kva cana ke-*  
*cana/*

*bdag las dngos po gang dag gang na yang skye ba nam*  
*yang yod pa ma yin no//*

It is to be put together similarly for the [other] three theses too.<sup>c</sup>

*Question:* When it is delimited that “[things] are just not produced from self,” is it not that it would just be asserted that

<sup>a</sup> The translation follows the order of the Sanskrit of Chandrakīrti’s text; in the order of the Tibetan translation, it reads:

In that, the term *kecana* (*gang dag*; whatever/any) is a word for the supported (*rten pa*, *ādheya*), a synonym of *kecit* (*su dag*; whatever). The term *kvacana* (*gang na yang*; anywhere) is a word for a support (*rten*, *ādhāra*), a synonym of *kvacit* (*'ga' zhiḡ na yang*; somewhere). *Jātu* (*nam yang*; ever) means *kadā cit* (*gzhar yang*; when).

<sup>b</sup> That is to say: Whatsoever things are not ever produced anywhere from self.

<sup>c</sup> That is to say:

Not from others are whatsoever things ever produced anywhere.  
*gzhan las dngos po gang dag gang na yang skye ba nam yang yod pa*  
*ma yin no*

Not from both are whatsoever things ever produced anywhere.  
*gnyis las dngos po gang dag gang na yang skye ba nam yang yod pa*  
*ma yin no*

Not causelessly are whatsoever things ever produced anywhere.  
*rgyu med las dngos po gang dag gang na yang skye ba nam yang yod*  
*pa ma yin no*

“[things] are produced from other”?

*Response:* It is not, because of wishing to express a nonaffirming negation<sup>a</sup> and because production from other is also refuted.

Ngag-wang-tra-shi cites, not this but the other example that Tsong-kha-pa does, Measureless Life (*tshe dpag med, amitāyus*). He frames a debate to highlight that the meaning of these two types of negatives is not tied to the Tibetan translations of their names:<sup>202</sup>

*Someone says:* Whatever is a phenomenon whose actual name<sup>b</sup> ends in the [Tibetan] word “*med*”<sup>c</sup> is necessarily a nonaffirming negative.<sup>d</sup>

ཁ་ཅིག་ན་རེ། རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་གི་མཐར་མེད་ཚིག་སྤྱར་  
བའི་ཚོས་ཡིན་ན། མེད་དགག་ཡིན་པས་བྱབ་ཟེར་ན།

*Our response:* It [absurdly] follows that the subject, Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Measureless<sup>e</sup> is a nonaffirming negative because of being a phenomenon whose own actual name ends in the syllable “less.” You have asserted the entailment [that whatever is a phenomenon whose own actual name ends in the syllable “less” is necessarily a nonaffirming negative].

If you say [that the reason which is that the Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Measureless is a phenomenon whose actual name ends in the syllable “less,”] is not established, it follows [that the subject, the Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Limitless, is a phenomenon whose actual name ends in the syllable “less”] because (1) the term expressing “Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Measureless” is his actual name and (2) it is manifestly established that the syllable “less” is affixed at the end of that term.

སངས་རྒྱས་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་ཚོས་ཅན། [མེད་དགག་ཡིན་པ་]དེར་

<sup>a</sup> *med par dgag pa, prasajyapratishedha*. In the Varanasi 1978 edition, 10.6, read *med par dgag par* for *med par yang dag par* in accordance with the Sanskrit (La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 13.5) and Golden Reprint, vol. 112, 12.6.

<sup>b</sup> *ngos ming* as opposed to imputed name (*btags name*) as when a dog is called “lion.”

<sup>c</sup> Analogous with “nonexistent” in English or “less” in the English words “selfless” or “hatless.”

<sup>d</sup> *med dgag, prasajyapratishedha*.

<sup>e</sup> *sangs rgyas tshe dpag med, amitāyus buddha*.

ཐལ། [རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་གི་མཐར་མེད་ཚིག་སྒྱུར་བའི་ཚོས་ཡིན་པ་]དེའི་  
 བྱིར། [རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་གི་མཐར་མེད་ཚིག་སྒྱུར་བའི་ཚོས་ཡིན་ན། མེད་  
 དགག་ཡིན་པས་]ཁྱབ་པ་ཁས། [སངས་རྒྱས་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་རང་གི་དངོས་  
 མིང་གི་མཐར་མེད་ཚིག་སྒྱུར་བའི་ཚོས་ཡིན་པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། སངས་རྒྱས་  
 ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་ཚོས་ཅན། [རང་གི་དངོས་མིང་གི་མཐར་མེད་ཚིག་སྒྱུར་  
 བའི་ཚོས་ཡིན་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། སངས་རྒྱས་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་ཅེས་  
 བརྗོད་པའི་སྒྲ་དེ་ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་དངོས་མིང་ཡིན་པ་གང་ཞིག་དེའི་  
 མཐར་མེད་ཚིག་སྒྱུར་བ་མངོན་སུམ་དུ་གྲུབ་པ་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར།

If you accept [the root consequence] that **the Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Measureless is a nonaffirming negative**, it follows that the subject, the Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Limitless, is not a nonaffirming negative because of being an effective thing.

[སངས་རྒྱས་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་མེད་དགག་ཡིན་པ་]ཙུ་བར་འདོད་ན།  
 སངས་རྒྱས་ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་ཚོས་ཅན། མེད་དགག་མ་ཡིན་པར་  
 ཐལ། དངོས་པོ་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར།

If you say that **there is no entailment** [that whatever is an effective thing is necessarily not a nonaffirming negative], it follows that there is entailment [that whatever is an effective thing is necessarily not a nonaffirming negative] because whatever is a nonaffirming negative is necessarily permanent.

[དངོས་པོ་ཡིན་ན་མེད་དགག་མ་ཡིན་པས་]མ་ཁྱབ་ན་[དངོས་པོ་ཡིན་ན་  
 མེད་དགག་མ་ཡིན་པས་]ཁྱབ་པ་ཡོད་པར་ཐལ། མེད་དགག་ཡིན་  
 ན་རྟག་པ་ཡིན་པས་ཁྱབ་པའི་བྱིར།

The late Jam-pal-shan-pan, from Gan-dan Jang-tse College and thus a follower of the textbooks of Jay-tsun Chö-kyi-gyal-tshan, in oral commentary says:<sup>203</sup>

The Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Measureless is an affirming negative, not a nonaffirming negative. Even though in general Buddhas, like



other persons, are positive phenomena, the Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Measureless is a negative phenomenon because when one understands Buddha-Whose-Life-Is-Measureless, one understands a person qualified by a lifetime that has no limit—not a hundred years, six hundred, or a million years. That his life-span has a limit is explicitly negated; by way of this negation one understands a person whose life is measureless. Thus, this person of limitless life appears by way of a negation of limited life and a projection of a person of limitless life in its place. Because a positive phenomenon—a Buddha—is implied in place of the object negated, this is an affirming negative, not a nonaffirming negative which would not project any positive in place of what is negated.

Similarly, an empty wallet is an affirming negative because the statement “empty wallet” projects a wallet—a positive phenomenon—which is qualified by being empty. However, “There is no money in an empty wallet” expresses a nonaffirming negative because nothing is projected in place of the money that is negated.

## EXPLICIT ELIMINATION OF AN OBJECT OF NEGATION

### Issue #37: Is a pot a negative phenomenon?

Tsong-kha-pa next opposes the opinion held by many Tibetan scholars that even a pot is a negative phenomenon because it must appear to an awareness by way of a negative route, that is, by way of eliminating non-pot:

Therefore, with respect to negative phenomena, since all phenomena negate what is not themselves [in the sense that they are not what is not themselves], it is not sufficient that an object of negation be eliminated with respect to the thing; rather, either the term expressing it must eliminate [an object of negation] or it must appear—to an awareness realizing it—as having the aspect of explicitly eliminating an object of negation.

དེས་ན་དགག་པ་ལ་ཚེས་ཀྱི་རང་མ་ཡིན་བཞག་པས་  
 དངོས་པོ་ལ་དགག་བྱ་བཅད་པས་མི་ཚོག་གི་རང་བཟློང་པའི་  
 སྒྲུབ་བཅད་པ་དང་རང་རྟོགས་པའི་སྒྲོལ་དངོས་སུ་དགག་བྱ་

བཅད་པའི་རྣམ་པ་ཅན་དུ་འཆར་བ་གང་རུང་དགོས་སོ།

Ngag-wang-tra-shi similarly shows in the course of a short debate that although a pot appears to the mind by way of eliminating non-pot, it is not by way of *explicitly* eliminating non-pot, and hence he holds that a pot is a positive phenomenon and not a negative phenomenon. In the debate he presents the opposing opinion together with the opponent's defenses of it, after which Ngag-wang-tra-shi responds with his own stance.<sup>204</sup>

**Someone says:** It follows that the subject, a form, is a negative because of being a phenomenon that must be realized by way of an explicit elimination of its own object of negation by an awareness explicitly realizing it.

If you say that [the reason which is that a form is a phenomenon that must be realized by way of an explicit elimination of its own object of negation by an awareness explicitly realizing it,] is not established, it follows that the subject, a form, is [a phenomenon that must be realized by way of an explicit elimination of its own object of negation by an awareness explicitly realizing it] because of being a phenomenon that must be realized by way of an explicit elimination of its own object of negation by the conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing it.

དེ་ལ་ཁ་ཅིག་ན་རེ། གཟུགས་ཆོས་ཅན། དགག་པ་ཡིན་པར་  
ཐལ། རང་དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་སྒོས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་  
སུ་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར། [རང་  
དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་སྒོས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་  
པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། གཟུགས་ཆོས་ཅན། [རང་དངོས་སུ་  
རྟོགས་པའི་སྒོས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་  
ཡིན་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། རང་དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་རྟོག་པས་རང་  
གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་  
ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར།

If you say that [the reason which is that a form is a phenomenon that must be realized by way of an explicit elimination of its own object of negation by the conceptual consciousness explicitly

realizing it,] is not established, it follows that the subject, a form, is [a phenomenon that must be realized by way of an explicit elimination of its own object of negation by the conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing it] because of being a phenomenon that must be realized by way of the elimination of what is not itself by the conceptual consciousness apprehending it.

[རང་དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་རྟོག་པས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་བཅད་ནས་  
 རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། གཟུགས་ཆོས་ཅན། [རང་  
 དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་རྟོག་པས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་  
 དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། རང་འཛིན་པའི་རྟོག་པས་  
 རང་མ་ཡིན་པ་རྣམ་པར་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་  
 ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་ཟེར་ན་

*Our response:* There is no entailment [that whatever is a phenomenon that must be realized by way of the elimination of what is not itself by the conceptual consciousness apprehending it necessarily is a phenomenon that must be realized by way of an explicit elimination of its own object of negation by the conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing it].

If someone says that the reason [that is, that a form is a phenomenon that must be realized by way of the elimination of what is not itself by the conceptual consciousness apprehending it,] is not established, it follows that the subject, a form, is a phenomenon that must be realized by way of the elimination of what is not itself by the conceptual consciousness apprehending it because of being an established base.

[རང་འཛིན་པའི་རྟོག་པས་རང་མ་ཡིན་པ་རྣམ་པར་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་  
 པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་ན་ རང་དངོས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་རྟོག་པས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་དངོས་སུ་  
 བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་པས་]མ་གྲུབ། [གཟུགས་རང་འཛིན་  
 པའི་རྟོག་པས་རང་མ་ཡིན་པ་རྣམ་པར་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་ཡིན་  
 པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། གཟུགས་ཆོས་ཅན། ཁྱོད་འཛིན་པའི་རྟོག་པས་  
 ཁྱོད་མ་ཡིན་པ་རྣམ་པར་བཅད་ནས་རྟོགས་དགོས་པའི་ཆོས་

ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། ཁྱེད་གཞི་གྲུབ་པའི་ཕྱིར།

As we saw above, “established base” is equivalent to “existent,” and thus the late Jam-pal-shan-pan in oral commentary on this says:<sup>205</sup>

All established bases—all phenomena that exist—are realized through the elimination of what is *not* that phenomenon by the respective conceptual consciousnesses realizing them. Although what is not that thing is eliminated, it is not necessarily *explicitly* eliminated. For example, a conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing the presence of money implicitly realizes the nonexistence of a lack of money and implicitly eliminates a lack of money, but this implicit elimination does not mean that money is a negative phenomenon. For although there is no conceptual consciousness that is an explicit realizer of something without also being an implicit realizer of something else, this does not mean that whatever is realized by a conceptual consciousness is a negative phenomenon.

Thus, a pot is a positive phenomenon, and non-pot is a negative phenomenon.

Like positives, negatives must be objects, existents, phenomena, and so forth, but they must also must be conceptually realized through the explicit negation of an object of negation. Instances of negatives are non-pot (*bum pa ma yin pa*), non-non-pot (*bum pa ma yin pa ma yin pa*), opposite from non-pot (*bum pa ma yin pa las log pa*), and nonexistence of pot (*bum pa med pa*). Although non-non-pot means just pot, it must be realized by way of explicitly eliminating non-pot and hence is a negative phenomenon; it does not exist as a different entity from pot, which is a positive phenomenon, but it is merely different from pot and is a negative.

### Issue #38: What is the difference between the basis of negation and something projected in place of the object of negation?

Tsong-kha-pa considers two cases that he takes to be non-affirming negatives but others consider to be affirming negatives. His point is that they are confusing the basis of negation<sup>a</sup> with something projected in place of the elimination of the object of negation. Consider “Brahmins do not drink

<sup>a</sup> *bkag gzhi*.

beer”; here Brahmins are the basis, or substratum, of the negation of drinking beer and are not projected in place of drinking beer; thus, for Tsong-kha-pa “Brahmins do not drink beer” expresses a phenomenon that is nonaffirming negative:

One [scholar] asserts that selflessness, for instance, is a nonaffirming negative, but when there is a composite with a basis that is a positive as in the case of “selflessness with respect to persons,”<sup>a</sup> asserts that this is not a nonaffirming negative. Others propound that when there is a composite with a basis, then since another phenomenon is projected, it is not a nonaffirming negative. These are not reasonable because the difference between the two negatives occurs also in other texts only as explained earlier, and in that case although there is a composite with a basis that is a positive in “Brahmins do not drink beer” for instance, the defining characteristic of a nonaffirming negative remains [there] and because brahmins in this case are the basis with respect to which it is being determined whether another phenomenon is projected or not upon the elimination of the object of negation [namely, drinking beer] and are not another phenomenon projected [in place of drinking beer].

ཁ་ཅིག་བདག་མེད་ལྟ་བུ་མེད་དགག་ཡིན་གྱི་གང་ཟག་ལ་  
 བདག་མེད་ཅེས་པ་ལྟ་བུ་གཞི་སྒྲུབ་པ་དང་ཚྲིགས་ན་མེད་  
 དགག་མིན་ཞེས་འདོད་ལ་གཞན་དགག་གཞི་དང་ཚྲིགས་ན་  
 ཚྲིགས་གཞན་འཕངས་པས་མེད་དགག་མིན་ཞེས་སྒྲུབ་པ་ནི་མི་  
 དེགས་ཏེ་དགག་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་བྱང་པར་ནི་སྒྲུབ་བཤད་པ་ཁོ་ན་  
 བཞིན་གཞུང་གཞན་ལས་ཀྱང་འབྱུང་ལ་དེའི་ཚེ་བྲམ་ཟེས་  
 ཆང་མི་བཟུང་ངོ་ཞེས་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ལ་གཞི་སྒྲུབ་པ་དང་ཚྲིགས་  
 ཀྱང་མེད་དགག་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་གནས་པའི་ཕྱིར་དང་། བྲམ་  
 ཟེ་ལྟ་བུ་དེ་དགག་བྱ་བཅད་ནས་ཚྲིགས་གཞན་འཕེན་མི་འཕེན་  
 ཅི་བའི་གཞི་ཡིན་གྱི་འཕངས་པའི་ཚྲིགས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་པའི་

<sup>a</sup> *gang zag la bdag med.*

ཐུང་རྒྱ།

In “selflessness with respect to persons” or “selflessness of persons”<sup>a</sup> persons are the basis of negation of an object of negation, self (which according to context means inherent existence, true existence, substantial existence in the sense of self-sufficiency, or the like). Although persons are projected by such statements, they are not projected in place of the negated object of negation.

## FOUR TYPES OF AFFIRMING NEGATIVES AND FIVE TYPES OF NEGATIVES

With these distinctions as a backdrop, Tsong-kha-pa draws on a standard Indian division of affirming negatives into four types and gives instances for each of them:

Therefore, with respect to how another phenomenon is projected there are four [types]: those of implicit projection, explicit projection, projection both [implicitly and explicitly], and projection by way of context. Avalokitavrata’s *Commentarial Explanation of (Bhāvaviveka’s) “Lamp for (Nāgārjuna’s) ‘Wisdom’”* cites:<sup>b</sup>

Negations that indicate through import,  
That establish through a phrase,  
That possess those, and that do not indicate through their  
own words  
Are affirming [negations]; others are other [that is, non-

<sup>a</sup> gang zag gi bdag med.

<sup>b</sup> shes rab sgron ma rgya cher ’grel pa (prajñāpradīpaṭīkā), in *bstan ’gyur* (*sde dge* 3859), TBRC W23703.99:4-575, *dbu ma*, vol. wa, 63b.6-63b.7 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). Jamyang-shay-pa’s *Great Exposition of Tenets* (Taipei, 216.3) identifies the passage as from *ldog pa bsdus pa*, which is Navidharma’s *Stanzas Demonstrating a Condensation of Exclusions*, *ldog pa bsdus pa bstan pa’i tshig le’ur byas pa* (piṇḍanivartananirdeśakārikā), in *bstan ’gyur* (*sde dge* 4293), TBRC W23703.196:502-509 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5782. The *sde dge* edition reads: *don gyis go bar byed pa dang //tshig gcig sgrub par byed pa dang // de dang ldan pa’i dgrab pa dang //rang gi tshig gis mi ston pa’o//*. There is a commentary by Navidharma, *ldog pa bsdus pa bstan pa’i rnam ’grel* (piṇḍanivartananirdeśavārttika), in *bstan ’gyur* (*sde dge* 4294), TBRC W23703.196:509-555 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5783.

affirming negations].

དེས་ན་ཆོས་གཞན་འཕངས་ཚུལ་ལ་ཤུགས་དང་དངོས་དང་  
 དེ་གཉིས་ཀ་དང་སྐབས་ཀྱིས་འཕངས་པ་བཞི་<sup>[109b]</sup>ཡོད་དེ་  
 ཤེས་རབ་སྒྲོན་མའི་འགྲེལ་བཤད་དུ་བྲངས་པ་ལས། དགག་པ་  
 འོན་ཀྱིས་བསྟན་པ་དང་། ཆོག་གཅིག་སྐྱབ་པར་བྱེད་པ་  
 དང་། དེ་ལྟར་རང་ཆོག་མི་སྟོན་པ། ཁ་ཡིན་གཞན་པ་གཞན་  
 ཡིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་སོ། །

In this:

- That which indicates through its import is, for instance, “Fat Yajñadatta’s not eating in the day.”
- That which establishes a thing through one phrase is a case of one phrase’s containing both the elimination of an object of negation and an explicit projection of another phenomenon—for instance, “Nonproduction from self exists.”
- That which possesses those is a phrase that has both explicit and implicit projection of other phenomena—for instance, “The non-emaciated fat Yajñadatta who does not eat during the day exists.”<sup>a</sup>
- That which does not indicate through its own words is, for instance, “This is not a brahmin,” in a context when it has been ascertained that a person is either of the royal caste or is a brahmin and the specific has not ascertained.

Whenever any of those four modes of projection occur, [the phenomenon] is an affirming negative, whereas negatives other than those—that do not project any of those four—are other than affirming negatives, that is to say, nonaffirming negatives.

དེ་ལ་དོན་གྱིས་བསྟན་པ་ནི་མཆོད་སྦྱོན་ཆོན་པོ་ཉིན་པར་མི་  
 ཟ་བ་ཞེས་པ་ལྟ་བུའོ། ཆོག་གཅིག་གིས་དངོས་པོ་སྐྱབ་པ་ནི་  
 བདག་ལས་མ་སྐྱེས་པ་ཡོད་ཅེས་པ་ལྟ་བུ་དགག་བྱ་གཅོད་པ་

<sup>a</sup> This could also be translated as “the existence of the non-emaciated fat Yajñadatta who does not eat during the day.”

དང་ཚེས་གཞན་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པ་གཉིས་ཀ་ཚིག་གཅིག་  
 གིས་ཟིན་པའོ། །དེ་ལྟར་ནི་དངོས་ཤུགས་ལ་ཚེས་གཞན་  
 འཕངས་པ་དེ་གཉིས་ཀ་ཡོད་པའི་ཚིག་སྟེ་མཚོད་སྟེན་ཚོན་པོ་  
 ཉིན་པར་མི་བཟ་བ་འདྲ་བ་མིན་པ་ཡོད་ཅིས་པ་ལྟ་བུའོ། །རང་  
 གི་ཚིག་གིས་མི་སྟོན་པ་ནི་སྟེས་བྱ་གཅིག་རྒྱལ་རིགས་དང་  
 བྲམ་བེ་གང་རུང་གཅིག་ཏུ་ངེས་ཤིང་བྱུང་པར་མ་ངེས་པའི་  
 སྐབས་སུ་འདི་བྲམ་བེ་མ་ཡིན་ཞེས་པ་ལྟ་བུའོ། །འཕེན་ཚུལ་  
 བཞི་པོ་དེ་གང་བྱུང་ཡང་མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་ལ་དེ་ལས་  
 གཞན་པ་དེ་བཞི་གང་ཡང་མ་འཕངས་པ་ནི་མ་ཡིན་དགག་  
 ལས་གཞན་མེད་དགག་གོ།

Ngag-wang-tra-shi takes this list of four affirming negatives and the mention of non-affirming negatives and turns it into a list of five:

When negatives are divided, there are five because there are the five consisting of:

1. that whose verbalizing term explicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading
2. that whose verbalizing term implicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading
3. that whose verbalizing term both explicitly and implicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading
4. that whose verbalizing term contextually projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading



5. that whose verbalizing term does not project another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the negation<sup>a</sup> of its object of negation in its verbal reading.

དགག་པ་ལ་དབྱེ་ན་ལྟ་ཡོད་དེ། རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་  
 སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟིན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་  
 ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་  
 སུ་འཕེན་པ་དང་། རྒྱགས་ལ་འཕེན་པ་དང་། དངོས་  
 རྒྱགས་གཉིས་ཀར་འཕེན་པ་དང་། སྐབས་ཐོབ་ཀྱིས་  
 འཕེན་པ་དང་། རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་  
 དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟིན་ལ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་  
 དང་དགག་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་མི་འཕེན་པ་དང་ལྟ་ཡོད་  
 པའི་བྱིར།

The first four are affirming negatives, and the last is a nonaffirming negative. Ngag-wang-tra-shi gives examples for each and backs up the choice of example in the context of debate, one by one:

1. A negative whose verbalizing term explicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading exists because the existence of a pot’s selflessness of persons<sup>b</sup> (*bum pa gang zag gi bdag med yod pa*) is that.

If you say that it is not established [that the existence of a pot’s selflessness of persons is a negative whose verbalizing term explicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading], it follows that the subject, the existence of a pot’s selflessness of persons, is a negative whose verbal-

<sup>a</sup> The text here (135a.4) simply reads *bkaḡ nas* and not *dnḡos su bkaḡ nas*, but below (136a.4) reads *dnḡos su bkaḡ nas*, “upon the explicit negation.” I assume the latter to be correct.

<sup>b</sup> A pot’s selflessness of persons is a pot’s nonexistence as an object of use by a substantially existent, or self-sufficient, person.

izing term explicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading because the term expressing it (1) explicitly negates its object of negation in its verbal reading and (2) explicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive.

The first reason [that is, that the term expressing the existence of a pot's selflessness of persons explicitly negates its object of negation in its verbal reading.] is established because the phrase expressing "A pot's selflessness of persons exists" negates the self of persons of a pot in its verbal reading.

དང་པོ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་  
 ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་  
 དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་  
 ཡོད་དེ། བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་དེ་ཡིན་  
 པའི་ཕྱིར། [བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་  
 པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་  
 མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་ཡིན་  
 པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། [བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་]དེ་ཚོས་  
 ཅན་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་  
 ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་  
 དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་  
 ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་  
 བྱ་ཚིག་ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་པ་གང་ཞིག་ཚོས་གཞན་  
 མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པ་  
 ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་རང་ཞེས་  
 བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་  
 པ་]རྟགས་དང་པོ་གྲུབ་ཤི། བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་

མེད་ཡོད་པ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྒྲ་འདིས་བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་  
གི་བདག་ཚོག་ཟེན་ལ་འགོག་པར་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

The second reason [that is, that the term expressing the existence of a pot's selflessness of persons explicitly projects another phenomenon, either an affirming negative or a positive,] is established because (1) the phrase expressing "A pot's selflessness of persons exists" explicitly projects the existence of a pot's selflessness of persons and (2) the existence of a pot's selflessness of persons is an affirming negative.

The first reason [that is, that the phrase expressing "A pot's selflessness of persons exists" explicitly projects the existence of a pot's selflessness of persons,] is easy [to establish].

If you say that the second reason [that is, that the existence of a pot's selflessness of persons is an affirming negative,] is not established, it follows with respect to the subject, a pot's selflessness of persons, that its existence is an affirming negative because it is an established base.

[བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྒྲུབ་པ་  
གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པ་]རྟགས་གཉིས་པ་གྲུབ་ཤེ། བྱམ་པ་གང་  
ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྒྲ་འདིས་བྱམ་པ་  
གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་དངོས་སུ་འཕངས་པ་གང་  
ཞིག་བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་དགག་  
ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྒྲ་  
འདིས་བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་དངོས་སུ་འཕངས་པ་]རྟགས་  
དང་པོ་སྒྲ་[བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་  
པ་]གཉིས་པ་མ་གྲུབ་ན། བྱམ་པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཚོས་  
ཅན། ཁྱོད་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་པར་ཐལ། ཁྱོད་གཞི་  
གྲུབ་པའི་ཕྱིར།

(*ri med pa'i thang*). The expression “mountainless plain” eliminates mountains but openly speaks of a plain; thus, a mountainless plain is an affirming negative explicitly projecting, or indicating, a positive phenomenon in place of the object of negation, mountain. The same is true regarding the existence of the absence of inherent establishment (*rang bzhin gyis grub pa yod pa*), since the term expressing it “The absence of inherent establishment exists,” or “The existence of the absence of inherent establishment” eliminates inherent establishment but openly speaks of the *existence* of its absence. Thus, although the absence of inherent establishment is a nonaffirming negative, its *existence* is an affirming negative of the explicitly projective variety.

This bears on meditation on emptiness which means to meditate on a nonaffirming negative, in that the object of meditation is not the *existence* of an emptiness but emptiness itself.

2. A negative whose verbalizing term implicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading is positable because fat Devadatta who does not eat during the day (*lhas sbyin tshon po nyin par zas mi za ba*) is that.

It follows [that fat Devadatta who does not eat during the day is a negative whose verbalizing term implicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading] because (1) the phrase “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day” upon explicitly negating its object of negation—eating during the day—implicitly projects eating at night, and (2) eating at night is a positive. It follows [that eating at night is a positive] because eating food is a positive.

གཉིས་པ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་  
 ཚོག་ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་  
 དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་ཤུགས་ལ་འཕེན་པའི་  
 དགག་པ་བཞག་དུ་ཡོད་དེ། ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚོན་པོ་ཉིན་པར་  
 ཟས་མི་བ་བ་དེ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚོན་པོ་ཉིན་པར་  
 ཟས་མི་བ་བ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚོག་ཟེན་ལ་  
 དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་

གྲགས་ལ་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚཱ་པོ་  
 ཉེན་པར་བས་མི་བ་བ་ཞེས་པའི་ཚིག་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་  
 ཉེན་པར་བས་བ་བ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་མཚན་མོ་བ་  
 བ་གྲགས་ལ་འཕངས་པ་གང་ཞིག་མཚན་མོ་བ་བ་སྦྱབ་  
 པ་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར། [མཚན་མོ་བ་བ་སྦྱབ་པ་ཡིན་པ་]དེར་ཐལ།  
 བས་བ་བ་སྦྱབ་པ་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར།

Ngag-wang-tra-shi provides a debate to illustrate that the projection of something in place of what is negated can be done implicitly:<sup>206</sup>

*Someone says:* Whatever is an affirming negative necessarily is a phenomenon expressed by a term explicitly projecting another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—in place of the negation of its object of negation.

ཁ་ཅིག་ན་རེ། མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་ན། རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་  
 ལྷས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་བཀག་གྲུལ་དུ་ཚཱ་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་  
 དགག་དང་སྦྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པའི་ཚཱ་ཡིན་  
 པས་བྱབ་ཟེར་ན།

*Our response:* It [absurdly] follows that fat Devadatta's not eating during the day is expressed by a term explicitly projecting another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—in place of the negation of its object of negation because of being an affirming negative. You have accepted the entailment [that whatever is an affirming negative necessarily is expressed by a term explicitly projecting another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—in place of the negation of its object of negation].

If you say [that the reason which is that fat Devadatta's not eating during the day is an affirming negative,] is not established, it follows that the subject, fat Devadatta's not eating during the day, is an affirming negative because the term expressing it projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon explicitly negating its own object of negation in its verbal reading. It follows [that the term expressing fat Devadatta's

not eating during the day projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon explicitly negating its own object of negation in its verbal reading] because (1) the term expressing it, upon explicitly negating eating during the day, implicitly projects eating at night and (2) eating at night is a positive.

ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚཱ་པོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་བ་བ་ཚས་ཅན། [རང་ཞེས་  
བརྗོད་པའི་སྦྱས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་བཀག་ཤུལ་དུ་ཚས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་  
སྦྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པའི་ཚས་ཡིན་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། [མ་ཡིན་  
དགག་ཡིན་པ་]དེའི་ཕྱིར། [མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་ན། རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྦྱས་  
རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་བཀག་ཤུལ་དུ་ཚས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྦྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་  
དངོས་སུ་འཕེན་པའི་ཚས་ཡིན་པས་]བྱབ་པ་ཁས། [ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚཱ་པོ་ཉིན་  
པར་ཟས་མི་བ་བ་མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་པ་]མ་གྲུབ་ན། ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚཱ་པོ་  
ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་བ་བ་ཚས་ཅན། མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་པར་  
ཐལ། རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྦྱས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟིན་  
ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྦྱབ་  
པ་གང་རུང་འཕེན་པར་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་  
པའི་སྦྱས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟིན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་  
དགག་དང་སྦྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་འཕེན་པར་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། རང་  
ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྦྱས་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་བ་བ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་  
ནས་མཚན་མོ་བ་བ་ཤུགས་ལ་འཕངས་པ་གང་ཞིག་མཚན་  
མོ་བ་བ་སྦྱབ་པ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

You cannot accept the root [consequence that **fat Devadatta's** not eating during the day is expressed by a term explicitly projecting another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—in place of the negation of its object of negation] because even though this phrase “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day” does not explicitly project another phenomenon that is either

an affirming negative or a positive upon explicitly negating its object of negation in its verbal reading, it does implicitly project such. It follows [that even though this phrase “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day” does not explicitly project another phenomenon that is either an affirming negative or a positive upon explicitly negating its object of negation in its verbal reading, it does implicitly project such] because the phrase “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day,” upon explicitly negating eating during the day, implicitly projects eating at night.

[ལྷས་སྤྱན་ཚཱ་པོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་བྲ་བ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྤྱན་རང་གི་དགག་  
བྱ་བཀག་ཤུལ་དུ་ཚེས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་  
འཕེན་པའི་ཚེས་ཡིན་པ་]ཚུ་བར་འདོད་མི་རུས་ཏེ། ལྷས་སྤྱན་  
ཚཱ་པོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་བྲ་བ་ཞེས་པའི་སྤྱན་འདིས་རང་གི་  
དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟིན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚེས་གཞན་མ་  
ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་མི་འཕེན་ཀྱང་  
ཤུགས་ལ་འཕེན་པར་བྱེད་པ་དེ་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར། [ལྷས་སྤྱན་ཚཱ་  
པོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་བྲ་བ་ཞེས་པའི་སྤྱན་འདིས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟིན་ལ་དངོས་  
སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚེས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་མི་  
འཕེན་ཀྱང་ཤུགས་ལ་འཕེན་པར་བྱེད་པ་དེ་ཡིན་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། ལྷས་སྤྱན་  
ཚཱ་པོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་བྲ་བ་ཞེས་པའི་སྤྱན་འདིས་ཉིན་པར་  
ཟས་བྲ་བ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་མཚན་མོ་བྲ་བ་ཤུགས་ལ་  
འཕེན་པ་ཡིན་པའི་བྱིར།

As the late Jam-pal-shan-pan in oral commentary says:<sup>207</sup>

An affirming negative or a positive is projected *in place of* what is negated, like a person’s getting up from a chair and someone else’s sitting down on the same chair. Here, the object of negation is Devadatta’s eating during the day. The locus of this non-eating during the day is Devadatta. For example, if someone says, “I have no money,” the locus of the lack of money is that person. In the same way, Devadatta here is the basis of the negation. In place of

the eating during the day that is negated, it is projected that Devadatta eats at night. The implication arises because Devadatta is described as fat. If it were not specified that Devadatta is fat, his eating at night would not be implied. For example, if Diana is very busy and declines to eat when invited by others, and if a friend of hers reports that “Diana didn’t eat during the day,” only non-eating is projected. There is no implication that she eats at night. Thus, this latter statement expresses a nonaffirming negative.

Context can alter whether a phrase expresses an affirming or a nonaffirming negative. For example, if someone says, “I have no money,” one way to understand this is as a nonaffirming negative but in certain contexts it could also be understood to mean, “Do *you* have any money?” Or even, “Do you have any money to loan me?” How much a given phrase projects depends to some extent on circumstances. Therefore, under certain conditions, the phrase “Devadatta does not eat during the day” could project that he eats at night. When it does so project, the phrase expresses an affirming negative. In general, however, without the specification that he is fat, “Devadatta does not eat during the day” expresses a nonaffirming negative.

Thus, fat Devadatta’s not eating during the day is an affirming negative; it is an object, an existent, a phenomenon, and an object of knowledge that is a negative, the expression of which projects something in place of what it negates. Though the determination that it is a negative depends on how it is expressed, it is the phenomenon itself that is thereby determined to be a negative. The sentence, “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day,” is itself—as a sentence or group of sounds—a positive phenomenon; hence, it is not the statement, but the object of reference of the statement that is the negative.

Another example of an affirming negative is non-non-pot; since it eliminates non-pot but does not *explicitly* project pot, it is an affirming negative of the implicitly projective type. Another example is non-pot, which implicitly projects whatever is not a pot.

3. A negative whose verbalizing term both explicitly and implicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading is positable because fat Devadatta who does not eat during the day and has a nonemaciated body (*lhas sbyin tshon po nyin par zas mi za ba lus rid pa ma yin pa yod pa*) is that. It follows [that fat Devadatta who does not eat during the day and



has a nonemaciated body is a negative whose verbalizing term both explicitly and implicitly projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading] because the phrase “fat Devadatta does not eat during the day and has a nonemaciated body” (1) upon explicitly negating eating during the day implicitly projects eating at night and explicitly projects the existence of a non-emaciated body and (2) eating at night is a positive phenomenon and (4) the existence of a non-emaciated body is an affirming negative.

གསུམ་པ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྤྲུམ་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་  
 ཚོག་ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚས་གཞན་ཡིན་  
 དགག་དང་སྦྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་ཤུགས་ཉིས་ཀར་  
 འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་བཞག་ཏུ་ཡོད་དེ། ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚོན་  
 བོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་ཟ་བ་ལུས་རིད་པ་མ་ཡིན་པ་ཡོད་པ་  
 དེ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། ] ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚོན་བོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་ཟ་བ་ལུས་  
 རིད་པ་མ་ཡིན་པ་ཡོད་པ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྤྲུམ་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་  
 ཚོག་ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚས་གཞན་ཡིན་དགག་དང་སྦྱབ་པ་  
 གང་རུང་དངོས་ཤུགས་ཉིས་ཀར་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་[དེར་ཐལ།  
 ལྷས་སྦྱིན་ཚོན་བོ་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་མི་ཟ་བ་ལུས་རིད་པ་མ་  
 ཡིན་པ་ཡོད་པ་ཞེས་པའི་སྤྲུམ་འདིས་ཉིན་པར་ཟས་ཟ་བ་  
 དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་མཚན་མོ་ཟ་བ་ཤུགས་ལ་འཕངས།  
 ལུས་རིད་པ་མ་ཡིན་པ་ཡོད་པ་དངོས་སུ་འཕངས་པ་  
 གང་ཞིག་མཚན་མོ་ཟ་བ་སྦྱབ་པ་དང་། ལུས་རིད་པ་མ་  
 ཡིན་པ་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཡིན་དགག་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

The late Jam-pal-shan-pan in oral commentary on this says:<sup>208</sup>

These two modes of projection, implicit and explicit, are not simultaneous but serial. They are projected by sub-phrases that occur

serially in the statement. It can be said that as each part of the phrase is spoken, the corresponding mental image appears to thought. Another explanation is that the words together add up to a single meaning-generalality [that is, a single image]. The two explanations are not contradictory because it is possible to build up to a complex mental image gradually, adding qualities serially.

The sentence that expresses fat Devadatta who does not eat during the day and has a nonemaciated body (*lhas sbyin tshon po nyin par zas mi za ba lus rid pa ma yin pa yod pa*) explicitly eliminates eating during the day, implicitly projects eating during the night, and explicitly speaks of the existence of his body. Hence, the phenomenon that it expresses is an affirming negative whose verbalizing term both explicitly and implicitly projects other phenomena.

4. A negative whose verbalizing term contextually projects another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading is positable because at a time when one has ascertained that a person is either of royal or brahmin caste but has not ascertained the particular one, upon the explicit negation of being a brahmin by the phrase, “This one is not a brahmin,” being of the royal caste should be understood by contextual projection.

བཞི་པ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་  
 ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་  
 དང་སྐྱབ་པ་གང་རུང་སྐབས་ཐོབ་ཀྱིས་འཕེན་པའི་  
 དགག་པ་བཞག་ཏུ་ཡོད་དེ། གང་ཟག་གཅིག་རྒྱལ་རིགས་  
 དང་བྲམ་ཟེའི་རིགས་གང་རུང་དུ་ངེས་ནས་བྱད་པར་མ་  
 ངེས་པའི་ཚེ་འདི་ནི་བྲམ་ཟེ་མ་ཡིན་པ་ཞེས་པའི་སྐྱ་  
 འདིས་བྲམ་ཟེ་ཡིན་པ་ཚིག་ཟེན་ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་  
 རྒྱལ་རིགས་ཡིན་པ་སྐབས་ཐོབ་ཀྱིས་འཕངས་པ་དེས་  
 ཤེས་དགོས་པ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར།

For example, in the context of knowing that Siddhārtha is either of the royal or brahmin class, the statement that he is not of the brahmin class

eliminates that he is of the brahmin class and, due to context, projects that he is of the royal class. As Jam-pal-shan-pan in oral commentary says:<sup>209</sup>

In general the statement “He is not a brahmin” does not indicate that someone is of the royal lineage, but in this particular context it does.

The last type of negation is a nonaffirming negative:

[5.] A negative whose verbalizing term does not project another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading is positable because brahmins’ not drinking beer is that. It follows [that brahmins’ not drinking beer is a negative whose verbalizing term does not project another phenomenon—either an affirming negative or a positive—upon the explicit negation of its object of negation in its verbal reading] because the phrase expressing “brahmins do not drink beer,” upon explicitly negating brahmins’ drinking beer in its verbal reading neither explicitly, implicitly, nor contextually projects another phenomenon—neither an affirming negative nor a positive phenomenon.

རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟེན་ལ་  
 དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་  
 རྒྱུ་བ་པ་གང་རུང་མི་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་བཞག་ཏུ་ཡོད་  
 དེ། བྱམ་ཟེ་ཆང་མི་འཐུང་བ་དེ་ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར། [བྱམ་ཟེ་  
 ཆང་མི་འཐུང་བ་རང་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པའི་སྐྱེས་རང་གི་དགག་བྱ་ཚིག་ཟེན་  
 ལ་དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་རྒྱུ་བ་པ་གང་རུང་  
 མི་འཕེན་པའི་དགག་པ་]དེར་ཐལ། བྱམ་ཟེ་ཆང་མི་འཐུང་བ་  
 ཞེས་པའི་སྐྱེ་འདིས་བྱམ་ཟེ་ཆང་འཐུང་བ་ཚིག་ཟེན་ལ་  
 དངོས་སུ་བཀག་ནས་ཚོས་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་དགག་དང་  
 རྒྱུ་བ་པ་གང་རུང་དངོས་སུ་ཡང་མི་འཕེན་ཤུགས་ལ་ཡང་  
 མི་འཕེན། སྐབས་ཐོབ་ཀྱིས་ཡང་མི་འཕེན་པ་ཡིན་པའི་  
 ཕྱིར།

The late Jam-pal-shan-pan in oral commentary makes an interesting distinction:<sup>210</sup>

The statement, “brahmins do not drink beer,” does project brahmins which are positive phenomenon but does not project them in place of the explicit negation of its object of negation, brahmins’ drinking beer.

Also, for example, the nonexistence of the horns of a rabbit is expressed by the sentence, “The horns of a rabbit do not exist,” which does not project anything positive in place of the horns of a rabbit, but it can project another nonaffirming negative such as the nonexistence of the beauty of the horns of a rabbit. Nevertheless, it does not project any positive phenomenon or even an affirming negative *in place of its object of negation*.

In this same vein, an emptiness merely eliminates its object of negation, which in our context is true existence or inherent existence; it does not imply anything positive in its place. Though emptiness is compatible with conventional existence, it does not project conventional existence in place of its object of negation. An emptiness is the mere elimination of inherent existence and thus is a mere negative, a nonaffirming negative, a mere absence of its object of negation. Even the emptiness of inherent existence of a table does not project a positive phenomenon even though the phrase “the emptiness of inherent existence of a table,” or the sentence, “A table is empty of inherent existence,” openly and explicitly speaks of a table. For, a table is not projected in place of the negated object of negation, inherent existence; the table is merely the base of the negation.

Still, it is stressed that a proper *understanding* of emptiness acts to assist an *understanding* of conventional existence and vice versa. We can see how fraught with difficulty the attempt at describing this mutually reinforcing understanding is, for it seems to turn the further understanding into something implicit, and it seems to turn emptiness into an affirming negative. But one more brief distinction before returning to this, our topic.

## *TWO TYPES OF NON-AFFIRMING NEGATIVES*

Nonaffirming negatives are divided into two classes—those whose object of negation exists and those whose object of negation does not exist. For example, the nonexistence of the horns of a rabbit negates the horns of a rabbit which do not exist anywhere, and similarly the absence of inherent existence eliminates inherent existence which never has nor will occur anywhere. These two are nonaffirming negatives whose object of negation

does not occur among objects of knowledge, that is to say, among existents. On the other hand, the nonexistence of a pot, such as on a certain table, eliminates the existence of a pot there, but pot does occur among existents at some other place, and thus nonexistence of a pot is a non-affirming negative whose object of negation does occur among objects of knowledge, among existents.

Through making this division in terms of whether the object negated is, in general, an existent or not, it is stressed that an emptiness is a lack of something—inherent existence—that never did nor will exist. Though an emptiness exists, its object of negation never does. Realization of an emptiness, therefore, is not a case of destroying something that once existed or of realizing the passing away of something that did exist; rather, it means to realize a quality of objects, a negative attribute, that is the mere absence of something that never existed but nevertheless was imagined to occur.

Beings conceive the opposite of the actual status of phenomena and through this totally unfounded misapprehension have been drawn beginninglessly into cyclic existence. Extrication from that misconception can happen only through realizing the absence of such reified existence, becoming accustomed to it in intense meditation, realizing it directly in meditative equipoise in which nothing but emptiness appears and the mind is merged with it like fresh water poured into fresh water, and by over and over again re-entering that direct realization. Meditation on emptiness is the medicine that, when accompanied by compassionate method, can clear away all obstructions such that unimpeded altruistic activity is manifested. Thus, though emptiness is a mere negative, it is a doctrine neither of nihilism nor of agnosticism, but a confident affirmation of a basic nature, the realization of which yields powerful, beneficial results.

Let us return to how a succession of scholar-yogis in Tibet attempt to describe this process of realizing a negative that has such positive repercussions.



## 10. Tsong-kha-pa's Own Explanation of How the Meaning of Emptiness is the Meaning of Dependent-arising

When in his *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* Tsong-kha-pa considers the doctrine that the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, he mentions only three of the five possibilities that Gyal-tshab lists from Tsong-kha-pa's oral teaching. He rejects all three, but, unlike Gyal-tshab, in his conclusion he does not employ the language of implicit realization. Here is the passage (including the parts cited above):<sup>211</sup>

Since it is frequently said that the meaning of the emptiness of inherent establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising, what does this mean? It would be unreasonable if it were like the import of positing, for instance, that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, for the very awareness ascertaining that effects arise in dependence upon causes and conditions would [absurdly] also ascertain the meaning of emptiness. However, even if it is asserted that the very meaning of the term expressing dependent-arising is the meaning of the emptiness, there is the same damage. Even if it is asserted that [emptiness] is the implicit meaning of explicitly ascertaining dependent-arising, this is not feasible, as before.

Therefore, what is the meaning of this? It is not asserted those ways. Well then, how is it posited? That the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others. For such Proponents of the Middle, when they explicitly ascertain that internal and external things are dependent-arising contingent on causes, they—in dependence upon the power of just that awareness—will ascertain this as meaning that [things] are empty of inherent existence because they have realized that what is inherently established does not rely on another and have realized with valid cognition that the two, this [nonreliant inherent existence] and dependent-arising are contradictory.

For Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent existence with valid cognition, the explicit ascertainment that things are dependent-arising

ings relying on causes itself—without needing any other intervening cognition—brings about ascertainment that things are empty of inherent existence. This is because these persons are fully prepared (1) by having realized that what inherently exists does not rely on anything else and (2) by having realized that inherent existence and dependent-arising are contradictory. Tsong-kha-pa goes on to say that they become so accustomed to this sequence that when in a future life they become aware of an effect's dependence on causes, this awareness itself awakens their predispositions for the view of the emptiness of inherent existence:

Hence, through dependent-arising itself they gain ascertainment of the emptiness that negates inherent existence, and therefore they become accustomed—immediately upon seeing, hearing, or being mindful that sprouts and so forth rely on causes and conditions—to contemplating the principle of the absence of inherent existence through just that fact. This being the case, although in another lifetime the emptiness of inherent existence is not explicitly explained, predispositions for the view of emptiness are awakened through just an explanation of the doctrine of dependent-arising, like when Upatishya<sup>a</sup> realized suchness through Ashvajit's merely explaining the dependent-arising of the four truths.

True sufferings arise in dependence upon true sources, which are afflictive emotions and contaminated actions; and the attainment of the true cessation of suffering and its sources arises in dependence upon true paths; this is dependent-arising in the sense of dependent production, the arising of effects in reliance upon their respective causes. Tsong-kha-pa then shifts to calling this “dependent imputation,” which is imputation, or designation, in dependence upon parts, thereby widening the scope of dependent-arising to include all phenomena, including the permanent. Through this move, he provides a framework for the declaration that emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path are synonyms:

This emptiness of inherent existence is posited as dependent imputation; a chariot is imputed in dependence upon the components<sup>b</sup> of a chariot such as wheels and so forth, and what is imputed in dependence upon its components is empty in the sense

<sup>a</sup> *nye rgyal*; another name for Shāriputra. Jay Garfield (*Ocean of Reasoning*, 505 n. 17) notes, “This story can be found in at least two places: *Vinaya-Vastu*, 'dul ba ka 32b, *Abhiṣkramaṇasūtra* [*mDo sde sa* 88a].”

<sup>b</sup> *yan lag*; branches, limbs.



that it is not inherently produced. Since this emptiness, the absence of being inherently produced, has abandoned all extremes of existence and nonexistence, it is the middle and the middle path—the trail<sup>a</sup> travelled by Proponents of the Middle. In this way, Nāgārjuna's *Refutation of Objections* says that those three [emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path] are synonyms:<sup>b</sup>

Supreme [by] speaking  
Of emptiness, dependent-arising,  
And the middle path as having the same meaning,<sup>c</sup>  
To the unequalled Buddha, homage.

Because there are no phenomena that are not dependent-arisings and also dependent-arisings are empty of inherent establishment, there are no phenomena that are not empty of inherent existence. The *Questions of Anavatapta King of Nāgas Sūtra* says:<sup>212</sup>

The wise realize phenomena as dependent-arisings,  
They also rely not on extreme views.  
They know phenomena as having causes and conditions.  
There are no phenomena that are without causes and conditions.

## Issue #39: How does dependent-arising come to mean dependent imputation?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho expands on how the meaning of emptiness comes to be the meaning of dependent-arising and vice versa and touches on how dependent-arising comes to mean dependent imputation:<sup>213</sup>

The meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is taken not as utter nonexistence but as the emptiness of [the object's] being under its own power.<sup>d</sup> In “dependent-arising” (*rten 'byung*) “dependent” (*rten*) is taken to be “in reliance” (*ltos pa*), and “arising” (*'byung ba*) is taken with respect to compounded phenomena to mean “production” (*skye ba*), and with respect to unproduced phenomena to mean “established” (*grub pa*); thus, [“dependent-arising” in this latter sense] means “established in reliance upon—or

<sup>a</sup> *shul*.

<sup>b</sup> *rnam grangs*.

<sup>c</sup> *don gcig pa*.

<sup>d</sup> *rang dbang*.

in dependence upon—term and conceptual consciousness, upon parts, and upon a basis of imputation. Hence:

- That “a phenomenon is empty of being inherently established” comes to be “it is dependently established;” this is emptiness meaning dependent-arising.
- And when something arises in dependence upon causes and conditions, and so forth, aside from being established in reliance upon others it must not be established under its own power, and therefore that “a phenomenon is dependently established” comes to be “it is empty of being self-powered;” this is dependent-arising meaning emptiness.

Concerning how emptiness comes to mean dependent-arising, Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho’s *Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa’s) “Great Exposition of Special Insight”* says:<sup>a</sup>

Therefore, through the power of explicit ascertainment that a phenomenon is a dependent-arising, ascertainment—without relying on another valid cognition—that it is empty of inherent existence is posited as ascertaining dependent-arising as meaning emptiness; and in dependence upon just the functioning of ascertaining that a phenomenon is empty of inherent existence and without relying on another [valid cognition], ascertainment that it is a dependent-arising is posited as realizing emptiness as meaning dependent-arising. Hence, “realizing the meaning of dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness”<sup>b</sup> is not said about realizing emptiness within taking dependent-arising as the basis of emptiness<sup>c</sup> [and realizing it to be empty of inherent existence by way of reasoning] but is said about ascertaining the meaning of emptiness by the very functioning of ascertaining the meaning of dependent-arising.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *zhwa dmar dge bdun btan 'dzin rgya mtsho* (1852-1910), *lhag mthong chen mo'i dka' gnad rnams brjed byang du bkod pa dgongs zab snang ba'i sgron me*; TBRC W2993 (Lha sa: sman rtsis khang gi par khang, no publication data), 24a.3-24a.6.

<sup>b</sup> *rten 'brel gyi don stong pa'i don du rtogs pa.*

<sup>c</sup> *rten 'brel stong gzhi byas pa'i stong pa rtogs pa.*

<sup>d</sup> *rten 'brel gyi nges pa'i byed pa nyid kyis stong pa'i don nges pa.*

Accordingly, Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* says that aside from Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, this is not for others.

From Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's citation of his near contemporary Shamar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho (1852-1910), we can see that he is elaborating on Shamar's nuanced expansion of Tsong-kha-pa's statement. To appreciate the significance of their explanations, let us turn to several issues that were considered in the period between Tsong-kha-pa and them.

## RETURNING TO JAM-YANG-SHAY-PA ON THE ETYMOLOGY OF *PRATĪTYASAMUTPĀDA*

As we saw earlier (186), in his *Great Exposition of Tenets* Jam-yang-shay-pa builds the case for taking "dependent-arising" also as "dependent imputation" first by citing scriptural passages and then by explaining Chandrakīrti's etymology of *pratītyasamutpāda* in his *Clear Words*. Jam-yang-shay-pa starts with authoritative passages that identify all phenomena as dependent-arisings and then identify all dependent-arisings as empty. It is worth repeating here:<sup>214</sup>

Unlike the Proponents of [Truly Existent] Things, here [in the system of the Consequence School] phenomena that are not dependent-arisings are not asserted because whatever exists must both be established in reliance<sup>a</sup> and lack inherent existence. Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle* says:<sup>215</sup>

Because there are no phenomena  
That are not dependent-arisings,  
There are no phenomena that are not  
Empty [of inherent existence].

and also Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* says:<sup>216</sup>

There is not ever anywhere  
Anything's existence without dependence.  
Hence there is also not ever anywhere  
Any permanent [self].

Common beings think  
Space and so forth are permanent [realities].

<sup>a</sup> *ltoṣ grub*.

The wise do not see these as factualities  
Even with worldly [understanding].

and also the [*Questions of Anavatapta King of Nāgas*] *Sūtra*  
says:<sup>217</sup>

The wise realize phenomena as dependent-arisings,  
They also rely not on extreme views.  
They know phenomena as having causes and conditions.  
There are no phenomena without causes and conditions.

and also Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* says:<sup>218</sup>

Thus, there are no phenomena that are not dependent-arisings,  
and dependent-arisings are also empty. Hence, there  
are no phenomena that are not empty.

and also Nāgārjuna's *Treatise* says:<sup>219</sup>

We describe "arising dependent [on causes and conditions]"  
As [the meaning of] the emptiness [of inherently existent production].  
That [emptiness of inherently existent production] is dependent imputation.<sup>a</sup>  
Just this [emptiness of inherently existent production] is  
the middle path.

and Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* says:<sup>220</sup>

Due to lacking the two extremes of existence and nonexistence,  
just this emptiness characterized as no inherently existent production  
is called the middle path, the middle passage. Therefore, emptiness,  
dependent imputation,<sup>b</sup> and middle path are different names<sup>c</sup> for dependent-arising.

In the last two quotes Nāgārjuna and Chandrakīrti both connect dependent-arising (*rten nas 'byung ba, pratītyasamutpāda*) and dependent imputation (*brten nas gdags pa, upādāyaprajñapti*). Jam-yang-shay-pa concludes:<sup>221</sup>

Hence, *pratītyasamutpāda* means the dependent-arising of products—their arising in reliance on their own causes and conditions.

<sup>a</sup> *brten nas gdags pa, prajñaptirupādāya.*

<sup>b</sup> *brten nas gdags pa, upādāyaprajñapti.*

<sup>c</sup> *ming gi bye brag, viśeṣasamjñā.*

It also means the dependent-arising [of all phenomena, products and non-products]—their existence meeting to or in reliance on their own parts, their own bases of imputation, or their own components because:

- with regard to the Sanskrit original of “arising” (*samutpāda*), Vasubandhu’s *Commentary on the “Sūtra on Dependent-Arising”* explains *sam* as “coming together,” “aggregating,” and so forth, and
- Rājaputra Yashomitra<sup>222</sup> explains *pāda* as “existing” and so forth.

Also, because all phenomena are just established in dependence upon, in reliance upon, or meeting to [causes and conditions, their parts, and their basis of imputation], they are not self-instituting and do not exist under their own power.

“Arising” (*’byung, samūtpāda*) is usually taken to mean “production,” which would limit the meaning of *pratītyasamutpāda* to impermanent phenomena, but the meaning of “arising” (*’byung, samūtpāda*) is stretched to include “existing,” the source here being not Chandrakīrti or another Proponent of the Middle but Rājaputra Yashomitra’s gloss of *pāda* as “existing” in commentary on Vasubandhu’s *Treasury of Knowledge*. By taking *samūtpāda* this way, all phenomena come under the province of dependent-arising,<sup>a</sup> that is to say, dependent existence or dependent establishment. Jam-yang-shay-pa then stretches dependent establishment and dependent existence to include dependent imputation since phenomena exist, or are established, in dependence upon their parts or basis of imputation.

<sup>a</sup> Rājaputra Yashomitra himself does not make the extension to all phenomena, but Jam-yang-shay-pa does, his point being that this meaning of *pāda* as “existing” is in the cultural milieu of Chandrakīrti’s presentation of this wider reading of the term *samūtpāda*.



# 11. Jang-kya Röl-pay-dor-jay on the Three Meanings of Dependent-arising

## Issue #40: But can dependent-establishment really be stretched to include dependent imputation?

As just mentioned, Jam-yang-shay-pa stretches dependent establishment and dependent existence to include dependent imputation since phenomena exist, or are established, in dependence upon their parts or basis of imputation. It is perhaps the apparent thinness of this stretch that led the Tibetanized Mongolian scholar Jang-kya Röl-pay-dor-jay to expand on this issue in considerable detail within synopsizing what Jam-yang-shay-pa had already addressed. Jang-kya—whom Jam-yang-shay-pa in old age helped to find as the reincarnation of the Second Jang-kya, Ngag-wang-lo-sang-chö-dan,<sup>a</sup> who himself had tutored Jam-yang-shay-pa—composed a book about tenets titled *Clear Exposition of the Presentations of Tenets: Beautiful Ornament for the Meru of the Subduer's Teaching*,<sup>223</sup> sometimes drawing on Jam-yang-shay-pa's text but often seeking to clarify and make more accessible many issues, as well as to indicate his own stances. Since his presentation of the topic of dependent-arising and emptiness and the related issue of dependent imputation opens an avenue for appreciating the complex issues with which they and others after them wrestle, I will cite his lengthy explanation as a way to take us farther into this excursion.<sup>224</sup>

The *Questions of Sāgaramati* says that inherent establishment is refuted through the sign of dependent-arising:<sup>225</sup>

Those which arise dependently  
Are quiescent of inherent existence.

and the *Questions of Anavatapta King of Nāgas Sūtra* also says:<sup>b</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan, 1642-1714.

<sup>b</sup> The sūtra is *klu'i rgyal po ma dros pas zhus pa'i mdo, anavataptanāgarājapariprcchāsūtra*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 156), TBRC W22084.58:413-508, vol. pha, 224a.1 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), cited in *Prasannapadā*, in commentary on stanza XIII.2; sde dge 3860, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 81b.3-81b.4; ; La Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhyamikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā*, 239.10-239.13; J.W. de Jong, "Text-critical Notes on the Prasannapadā," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 20, nos. 1/2 (1978): 55: *yah pratayayair jāyati sa hy ajāto na tasya utpādu svabhāvato sti / yah pratayayādhīnu sa śūnyu ukto yah*

Those which are produced from conditions are not produced;

They have no inherent nature of production.

[Therefore] those that rely on conditions are said [by the Conqueror] to be empty.

[A person] who knows the emptiness [of inherent existence] is conscientious [overcoming the unpeacefulness of the afflictive emotions].

In that, “produced from conditions” is the reason. “Not produced” is being proven. The meaning of not being produced is indicated by the second line: it is not that mere production is being eliminated; inherently established production is being eliminated. Moreover, it is as the Teacher [Buddha] himself puts forth his thought in the *Descent Into Laṅkā Sūtra*, “Mahāmati, thinking of no inherently existent production, I said that all phenomena are not produced.” Due to the relation of [the relative] “which” and [the correlative] “those,” the subjects that are the substrata [of an absence of inherently existent production] are indicated—external things such as sprouts and so forth and internal things such as compositional activity and so forth. The statement in the third line that dependence and reliance on conditions itself is the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence indicates that the emptiness of inherent existence is the meaning of dependent-arising but not an absence of the capacity to perform functions, which would be a negation of mere production.

The glorious protector, the Superior Nāgārjuna—seeing that just this proclamation by the Teacher refuting all extremes by this reasoning is an unsurpassed distinctive feature elevating his teacher, the Supramundane Victor, above all other teachers—was mentally captivated by this and in his *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called “Wisdom,”* his *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, his *Collection of Praises*, and so forth praises the Supramundane Victor from the viewpoint of just this discourse on dependent-arising. Also, our own excellent leader, the Foremost Great Being [Tsong-kha-pa] says [in his *Praise of the Supramundane Victor Buddha from the Approach of his Teaching the Profound Dependent-Arising: The Essence of Eloquence*]:<sup>226</sup>

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*śūnyatām jānāti sā prasamanta iti //* Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 368.2. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 188.



Homage to the Victor who perceived  
 And gave instruction on dependent-arising,  
 Which through perceiving and setting forth  
 He has unsurpassed wisdom and is the unsurpassed  
 teacher.

and so forth. Praising Buddha in this way is pure speech of praise prompted by genuine faith induced by the path of reasoning, not artifice or flattery.

Concerning the Sanskrit original of dependent-arising *pratītyasamutpāda*<sup>a</sup> most earlier masters said:

*Prati* is a distributive, [meaning] diversely, and [the noun] *iti* [meaning] going is used [to denote] departing and dis-integrating. Through adding the affix *ya* to it, *itya* is taken as a secondary derivative noun, which comes to mean

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<sup>a</sup> The translators into Tibetan adopted a code for handling this three-part discussion of the formation of *pratītyasamutpāda*:

*prati* = *rten cing*  
*i/itya* = 'brel bar  
*samutpāda* = 'byung ba

Their over-riding concern was with having a three-part translation equivalent that, when strung together, makes sense in Tibetan, *rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba*. As a result, unless a reader of Tibetan knows the code, the individual Tibetan equivalents often appear to make no sense in Tibetan translations of passages presenting Indian scholars' various ways of forming the Sanskrit term *pratītyasamutpāda*.

Some Tibetan scholars claim that *rten cing* and 'brel bar have different meanings; however, since Chandrakīrti, as will be cited below, says that *prati* (*rten cing*), which itself means *prāpti* (*phrad pa*), modifies the meaning of *itya* ('brel ba) into meaning *prāpti* (*phrad pa*), the two components (*prati* and *itya*, or *rten cing* and 'brel ba) come to have just one meaning, and thus the two were separated out in Tibetan merely in order to convey, albeit not very well, this discussion of the meaning of the individual parts. Perhaps a better alternative would have been to transliterate the individual parts in Tibetan script rather than attempt a translation code.

In Chandrakīrti's exposition, *pratītya* has just one connotation as a continuous meaning "having depended" which in Tibetan is *rten nas* as in the commonly used *rten nas 'byung ba*, which is abbreviated as *rten 'byung*. Strictly speaking, therefore, in the Consequence School *rten nas 'byung ba* or *rten 'byung* is the most appropriate general term, with *rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba* suitable only as a code equivalent for the three-part discussion; *rten 'brel* is a common usage that is neither. However, in Tibet *rten 'brel* has come to have its own significance as is evidenced in Ngag-wang-tra-shi's *Great Exposition of Dependent-Arising*.

“conducive to going.” Hence, the arising of what possesses going and disintegration diversely is dependent-arising.<sup>a</sup>

In that case, except for the general dependent-arising, which is the arising of effects from causes, the meaning of *prati* is not suitable when particular cases are specified as in “A consciousness arises in dependence upon an eye [sense power],” because within one [eye sense power] there is no way to explain the term “diversely.” Taking [*pratītya*] as a secondary derivative noun is not feasible also because, in that case, it would be wrong [for what are indeed attested passages] to read “Having depended on an eye sense power and forms [an eye consciousness arises],”<sup>b</sup> which would instead [absurdly] have to read on all occasions, “A consciousness that departs diversely to an eye sense and to forms [arises].”<sup>c</sup> Since no case ending is to be seen between *pratītya* and *caḥṣu* [in *caḥṣuśca rūpaṃ pratītya caḥṣurvijñānaṃ*],<sup>d</sup> it is reasonable for

<sup>a</sup> Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* (*dbu ma rtsa ba’i ’grel pa tshig gsal ba* (*mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapādā*), in *bstan ’gyur* (*sde dge* 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. ’a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 3.3.3ff; Poussin, 5.7-5.8) says:

Others say that [the noun] *iti* means going, disintegrating. *Itya* means that which is conducive to going. \* *Prati* has the sense of multiplicity. Having explained that the term *itya* has an ending for a secondary derivative noun, they say [*pratītyasamutpāda* means] the arising of those that go or disintegrate diversely, diversely (*prati prati ityānāṃ vināśināṃ samutpāda*).

\* See *Pāṇini*, IV.iv.98.

<sup>b</sup> *mig dang gzugs la brten nas* [*mig gi rnam par shes pa ’byung*], *caḥṣuḥ pratītya rūpāṇi ca utpadyate caḥṣurvijñānaṃ*; the Sanskrit is from Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words*; see Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 668, and Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 856-857.

<sup>c</sup> *mig dang gzugs la brten pa* [*rnam par shes pa ’byung*], *caḥṣuḥ pratītyaṃ vijñānaṃ rūpāṇi ca*; the Sanskrit is from Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words*; *ibid*.

<sup>d</sup> *brten pa dang mig gi bar du*; it is apparent that when Jang-kya says “no case ending is to be seen between *pratītya* and *caḥṣu*,” he is taking the Sanskrit from the way Jam-yang-shay-pa cites it in his conclusion to this section, including the unusual placement of *ca*; see Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 668, and Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 856-857. Jam-yang-shay-pa may have had a different edition of the Sanskrit of Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words*, or this may be his reconstruction of the Sanskrit from the Tibetan. In either case, it is evident that Jang-

*pratītya* to only be a continuative, an indeclinable.

Also, the master Bhāvaviveka does not make individual explanations of the meanings of *prati* and so forth but asserts that it is only a term used to mean “When this is, that arises,” or “Due to having this condition, that arises,”<sup>a</sup> like *araṇyetilaka* [“wild sesame”].<sup>b</sup> For Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* says:

*Objection:* [Bhāvaviveka] says such asserting that *pratītyasamutpāda* is a term the meaning of which is determined by conventional usage and does not have the character set forth in its etymological explanation, like *araṇyetilaka*<sup>c</sup> and so forth.

That also is not feasible because the master, the Superior Nāgārjuna spoke within dividing [the term *pratītyasamutpāda*] into its individual components, *pratītya* (*bṛten*) and *samutpāda* (*’byung*) [in his *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* as *prāpya* and *utpannam*]:<sup>d</sup>

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kya is drawing from Jam-yang-shay-pa’s reading.

<sup>a</sup> Bhāvaviveka’s *Lamp for (Nāgārjuna’s) “Wisdom”* (Peking 5253, vol. 95, 154.2.1) says:

The meaning of “conditionality” is the meaning of *pratītyasamutpāda*—  
“When this is, that arises; due to the production of this, that is produced.”

<sup>b</sup> *dgon pa’i thig le*; this term literally means “sesame in the forest” but is conventionally used to mean anything not answering to one’s expectations (Poussin refers to *Pāṇini*, II.i.44). Bhāvaviveka himself does not make this analogy; it is Chandrakīrti’s speculation as indicated in Jang-kya’s following citation of Chandrakīrti.

<sup>c</sup> *dgon pa’i thig le*.

<sup>d</sup> Though the Tibetan here is *phrad pa*, “meeting,” I have rendered it to accord with Nāgārjuna’s *prāpya*, “having met.” The alternation in the use of forms is due to Chandrakīrti’s and Jam-yang-shay-pa’s using the general term outside of this particular usage for the more specific term within this usage as a continuative (Peking 5225, vol. 95, 11.4.1). Jang-kya paraphrases Chandrakīrti’s argument. The significance of Chandrakīrti’s citation of Nāgārjuna’s *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* is partially lost in the Tibetan translation as *de dang de bṛten gang ’byung ba/ rang gi dngos por de ma skyes*. Although in general the Tibetan translation conveys the meaning, to convey the points here the passage would benefit from being translated more literally into Tibetan as *de dang de phrad gang ’byung ba/ rang gi dngos por de ma skyes*. By using *bṛten* instead of *phrad* for *prāpya* one of the purposes of Chandrakīrti’s stunning citation is lost in the Tibetan, which does indeed convey the main point that Nāgārjuna takes *pratītya* in *pratītyasamutpāda* as a continuative and not as a noun but does not convey that Nāgārjuna treats *pratītya* and *prāpya* as synonyms.

That which is produced having met this and that [collection of causes and conditions]  
 Is not inherently produced. (*tat tat prāpya yad utpannaṃ notpannaṃ tat svabhāvataḥ*)

Even if [Bhāvaviveka] wants to set forth [this position] as the meaning of the passage in Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*:<sup>227</sup>

When this<sup>228</sup> is, that arises,  
 Like long when there is short.

he has to explain [*pratītya*] as meaning “meeting” (*’phrad pa, prāpya*) because<sup>229</sup> he has to assert just that long comes to be upon meeting (*’phrad cing, prāpya*) to short and upon having depended (*brten te, pratītya*) on short, or in reliance (*ltos nas, apekṣya*) upon short.

Therefore, the honorable master Chandrakīrti's own system is: Because *prati* is used for “meeting” and *i* is used for “going,” *pratītya*—which has the continuative affix<sup>a</sup> [*ya*] on that [*i* root]—through being modified by the modifier [*prati*] is used for “meeting,” that is to say, “relying” or “depending.” [The verbal root] *i* alone is generally used for “going,” but when it is combined with *prati*,<sup>230</sup> it comes to mean “meeting” and so forth, like, for example, the fact that the water of the Ganges is indeed extremely sweet, but when it mixes with the ocean, it comes to have a salty taste. Moreover, in that way Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* says:<sup>231</sup>

*Prati* has the meaning of meeting.<sup>b</sup> [The verbal root] *i* has the meaning of going. Here the term *pratītya*, a continuative, is used for “meeting” or “relying” because of the modification of the meaning of the verbal root by the modifier [prefix]. It is explained:

The meaning of the verbal root  
 Is led forcefully elsewhere by a modifier [prefix],  
 Like the sweetness of the waters of the Ganges  
 [Being changed] by ocean water.

<sup>a</sup> The Varanasi codex edition (445.-3), the Nam-gyal edition (489.6), and the Gomang/Taipei edition (370.7) misread *ya yab*, whereas they should read *lyap* in accordance with TBRC W2DB4591-I1PD28072, 30a.6, and Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* (Poussin, 5.4) and as is well attested in Sanskrit grammars (see *Meditation on Emptiness*, 662 last line and following).

<sup>b</sup> *’phrad pa, prāpti*.

The term *pāda*, with *samut* before it, is used for “arising,” and it is also suitable to be explained as “existing” (*yod pa, sat*) and “established” (*grub pa, siddha*). Therefore, in brief, our own system is: The existence, establishment, or arising of things in reliance upon causes and conditions is the meaning of dependent-arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*). Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* says:

Hence, the arising of things in reliance on causes and conditions is the meaning of dependent-arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*).<sup>232</sup>

In that way, it is very important to know well the many different ways that [those great scholar-adepts called] great chariots etymologized dependent-arising because in dependence upon these etymologies there are many essential points regarding different ways of generating ascertainment in terms of the extent of the meaning of the reasoning of dependent-arising and in terms of the penetration of the depth of suchness.

Moreover, I will express [here] just a little about the assertions of the glorious Chandrakīrti since I wish to extensively explain this topic elsewhere. The reason why the meaning of dependent-arising is explained in that way as meeting, relying, and depending is as follows. In general, meet, rely, and depend indeed are even said to be synonymous,<sup>a</sup> but let us treat them separately to facilitate understanding.

1. “Meeting” (*phrad pa, prāpya*) bears within it the meaning of a reason that is the dependent-arising of the production of things by their own causes; this is in common also with lower tenet systems. Moreover, since [the Middle Way School and the lower tenet systems] are similar in their assertions of the meaning of dependent-arising just to that point, this is said to be “in common,” but [Proponents of the Middle Way] do not assert the truly existent dependent-arising that those [lower systems] assert, and also those [lower tenet systems] do not assert that the absence of true existence is what is proved [by dependent-arising]. “Meeting” is to be taken as the meeting of the actions of (1) the cessation of the cause and (2) the production of the effect; it is not that cause and effect meet.

“Arising-upon-meeting” (*phrad nas ’byung ba, prāpyasamutpāda*) is

<sup>a</sup> *rnam grangs par.*

taken as referring to the dependent-arising that is the production of things by their causes. This is a meaning of dependent-arising that both Proponents of the Middle (the Autonomists and the Consequentialists) share with the Proponents of the Great Exposition, Proponents of Sūtra, and the Proponents of Mind-Only; nevertheless, for the latter schools dependent-arising is a sign of things' true establishment, not a sign of their absence of true existence. About this, Jam-yang-shay-pa (see above, 189) says:<sup>233</sup>

[Buddhist]<sup>234</sup> Proponents of [Truly Existent] Things assert that all dependent-arisings are truly established and are products. Therefore, [an attempt] to prove a selflessness [that means no true establishment] through the reason of dependent-arising proves just the opposite for them. [A sample syllogism is: The subject, a shoot, is not inherently produced because of being a dependent-arising. About this]<sup>235</sup> Tsong-kha-pa's *Praise of Dependent-Arising* says:<sup>236</sup>

How can those who see the opposite [proved] and those who see [the reason] as non-established understand your [that is, Buddha's] system [of emptiness as no inherent existence]?"

In [Chandrakīrti's commentary on] Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* [a qualm is raised by an objector about whether dependent-arising can serve as a sign of no inherently existent production].<sup>237</sup>

Here some say, "Your way of speaking is one that never existed before. It is not reasonable that the term "dependent-arising" indicates no production and no cessation. Just as your saying "A child was born," would not mean you were saying "A child was not born," this is just inadmissible.

For the other schools the very existence of an object means that it must exist from its own side; given this, to prove that something does not inherently exist because of being a dependent-arising seems counterintuitive to them, like claiming that the statement "A child was born" means that "A child was not born," totally impossible.

With respect to the meaning of "meeting" (*'phrad pa*, *prāpya*) some object that if cause and effect meet, they must be simultaneous, in which case there would be no need for an effect to depend on its causes for its production. As Jam-yang-shay-pa (see above, 190) frames this objection:

With respect to the term “dependent-arising” (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and its meaning, the Grammarians say that if what depend and meet are cause and effect, then because the effect would exist at the time of the cause, “arising” would be impossible. Also, it would contradict the non-assertion of the existence of the effect at the time of its causes. Thus, they do not accept either the term *pratītyasamutpāda* or its meaning.

The Buddhist response is that “meeting” can even be taken literally in the sense that a cause’s approaching cessation and its effect’s approaching production are simultaneous. Still, it might seem that since it is the cause that is approaching cessation and it is the effect that is approaching production, then cause and effect would still have to exist simultaneously and thus the same unwanted consequence of their existing at the same time would be incurred. Nevertheless, this is not held to be case when cause and effect are asserted merely conventionally and not ultimately. As I explain in *Meditation on Emptiness*.<sup>238</sup>

Once production is accepted, the cause’s approaching cessation and the effect’s approaching production are simultaneous, as it is even in the Consequentialists’ own presentation of conventionally existent production. The activity of approaching production depends on the effect because it is the effect that is approaching production, and thus if production were ultimately existent and hence findable under analysis, then, whenever the activity of approaching production existed, the base of this activity, the sprout, would have to exist. For, the two are in a relation of supported and supporter, and since this is their nature, it cannot change if the sprout inherently exists.

The activity of the effect’s approaching production exists at the same time as the cause’s approaching cessation, and since even conventionally the cause does indeed exist along with its activity of approaching cessation, the seed and the sprout would have to exist simultaneously if cause and effect inherently exist. However, this is impossible since simultaneity would rule out that the one produced the other. If the sprout were already existent, what could a seed do to produce it?

Still, if a seed produces something, this something that is growing forth must exist, but if it already exists, how can it be said that the seed produces it?

If they do not exist simultaneously, how can it be said that

production exists inherently? For, the activity of approaching production and that thing which is approaching production would have to exist simultaneously if production were findable under analysis. How could there be growing without the thing that is growing? Someone might object:

It is seen that one end of a scale moves downward at the same time that the other end moves upward. Just as these activities exist simultaneously, the activities of approaching cessation and of approaching production exist simultaneously. Thereby, it is shown that seed and sprout exist simultaneously.

Response:

Even if the activities of the rising and the lowering of the two ends of a scale exist simultaneously, a seed and a sprout are not similar because they do not exist simultaneously, and thus their activities do not exist simultaneously. A sprout's state of presently being produced is its approaching production; therefore, it does not exist at that time. A seed's present ceasing is its approaching cessation, and even though the seed exists at that time, in the next moment it will not exist. Therefore, a sprout and its seed do not exist simultaneously and are not similar to the two ends of a scale.

Buddha used the example of the scale in the *Rice Seedling Sutra* (*śālistambasūtra*) to show that these two actions exist simultaneously as dependent-arisings, when there is no analysis, like a magician's illusions.

In this way, the "meeting" or "coming together" of cause and effect, are taken to be the coming together of the cause's approaching cessation and the effect's approaching production. The import is that the production of an effect requires the presence of its causes.

Jang-kya proceeds to the second and deeper meaning of dependent-arising:

2. "Relying" (*ltoṣ pa, apekṣya*) indicates a reason that is the attainment by compounded and uncompounded phenomena of their own entities in reliance upon their respective parts; this is in terms of explaining *samutpāda* as "established" (*grub pa, siddha*). This is wider than the former [in that it applies to all



phenomena, both the permanent and impermanent], and the mere meaning that is explicitly indicated [by “establishment-upon-reliance”] is in common with other Proponents of the Middle [that is, the Autonomists].

“Establishment-in-reliance” (*bltos nas grub pa*) or “existing-upon-reliance” (*bltos nas yod pa*) is taken as referring to the dependent-arising that is the attainment by products and nonproducts of their own entities in reliance on their parts. This meaning of dependent-arising is a distinguishing feature of the Middle Way School and is said to be the Autonomists’ favored means of proving no true existence, perhaps in dependence upon Āryadeva’s *Length of a Forearm*<sup>239</sup> although Āryadeva is a common source for both branches of the Middle Way School.

Jang-kya continues:

3. “Dependence” (*brten pa, pratītya*) indicates a reason that is the dependent imputation of all phenomena—establishment as mere imputations in dependence upon their respective bases of imputation. This is a distinctive feature of only this supreme system [the Consequence School]; it is not in common with the Autonomy School and below.

“Dependent-establishment” (*rten nas ’byung ba*) or “dependent-existence” (*rten nas yod pa*) is taken as referring to the dependent-arising that is the imputation of all phenomena in dependence upon their bases of imputation or even in dependence upon the conceptuality that designates them, as Jang-kya says just below. Without conceptuality to designate the existence of phenomena, the arising of phenomena does not occur. However, phenomena undeniably appear to common beings as if they exist in and of themselves, appearing from the object’s side toward the subject rather than appearing to be imputed by the subject toward the object. “Establishment in dependence upon a basis imputation” or “establishment in dependence upon an imputing consciousness” is the special meaning of dependent-arising in the Consequence School. The other two meanings are also wholeheartedly accepted by the Consequentialists, but their own special meaning is to take dependent-arising as referring to the imputation of phenomena dependent upon their bases of imputation as well as dependent upon conceptuality that imputes them.

Using these three meanings Jang-kya nuances Chandrakīrti’s earlier summary statement by saying:

Accordingly, if you take the meaning of “arising” in the phrase “the arising of things” from that passage in Chandrakīrti’s *Clear*

*Words* [namely, “Hence, the arising of things in reliance upon causes and conditions is the meaning of dependent-arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*),”] to be mere production, it then indicates the first reason, and if you take it as establishment or existence, then it also indicates the two latter reasons. If you take “causes and conditions” as merely the seed that is the substantial cause of a sprout and the water, manure, and so forth that are its cooperative conditions, then it indicates the former reason, and if you take “causes and conditions” to mean the cause for something’s achieving its own entity—its basis of imputation or parts—then it indicates the middle reason, and if you take “causes and conditions” to be the respective conceptual consciousness that imputes a phenomenon, then it indicates the last reason.

Therefore, that the “causes and conditions” in Chandrakīrti’s phrase “in reliance upon causes and conditions” is not to be taken only as the causes and conditions of compounded phenomena such as seeds, water, manure, and so forth, but must also refer to conceptual consciousnesses that are the means of imputation is the special thought of the glorious Chandrakīrti and the Foremost Great Being [Tsong-kha-pa]. Nevertheless, most of those discriminating persons whose heads are adorned with paṇḍita hats with very sharp points have still not drawn out<sup>240</sup> [this fact]. There also is a mode of explanation—that others have not drawn out<sup>241</sup>—of meeting, relying, and depending as only the third reason from the viewpoint of treating them as synonyms, but I will not elaborate on it here.

I would add that Chandrakīrti himself speaks of “causes and conditions” as mere conditionality (*rkyen nyid ’di pa tsam, idaṃ pratyayatāmātra*) in his *Clear Words*:<sup>242</sup>

The establishment of conventional phenomena is asserted by way of mere conditionality, not by way of asserting [any of] the four positions... Since when mere conditionality is asserted, both cause and effect are reliant the one on the other, [their] establishment is not inherently existent.<sup>a</sup>

Since Chandrakīrti speaks of the mutual dependence of causes and effects and since causes are not *produced* in dependence upon their own effects, the meaning of “mere conditionality” cannot be limited to just the usual

<sup>a</sup> *nāsti svābhāvakī siddhir*: Poussin, 55.1; *ngo bo nyid kyis grub pa yod pa ma yin pa*: Taipei, 527.17, “[their] inherent establishment does not exist.”

sense of *pratyaya*, condition assisting in production of an object, but refers to the condition or situation that allows the positing of an object, whether that be its own basis of imputation or that in relation to which it is posited. A seed is imputed in dependence upon its basis of imputation, such as the two halves of the seed, as well as in dependence upon its presumed effect, a shoot. Hence, when Chandrakīrti says that dependent-arising is the arising of things dependent on causes and conditions, the words “causes and conditions” do not refer just to usual causes and conditions such as seeds or ignorance; “causes and conditions” also refer to the parts of an object—an object’s basis of imputation—and to the conceptuality that imputes the object.<sup>3</sup> Seen in this light, the term “arising” means not just “production”

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<sup>aaa</sup> The Fourteenth Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso draws out implications of this extension of the meaning of dependence in his *How to See Yourself As You Really Are*, 191-194:

How are we to understand the consistent insistence of great Indians and Tibetans on how crucial conceptual thought is? It would be most uncomfortable to hold that before each and every object comes into our ken we must have a thought constructing it right at that moment. No matter how fast thought operates, there would not be enough time for all the thoughts that would be needed in a single moment of visual perception.

Indeed, external objects are part of the process of generating consciousness of them, as in the case of seeing a tree and its surroundings, but if dependence on thought meant that a conceptual thought is needed to construct everything we see, this would be absurd. Therefore, it seems to me that in the end the meaning of the world’s being established by conceptual thought is that objects, without depending on a consciousness, cannot establish their existence right within themselves. From this viewpoint it is said that the world—all phenomena, both persons and things—are set up by conceptual thought.

For instance, it is obvious that effects depend upon causes, but causes also, in a subtle sense, depend upon effects. Every cause itself is an effect of its own cause that preceded it, and therefore arises in dependence upon its causes. All Buddhist systems assert that effects arise in dependence upon causes. Here cause and effect are in a temporal sequence, an effect occurring after its cause. This is dependent-arising in the sense of *dependent production*.

Only the highest philosophical perspective within Buddhism contains an additional consideration that because the designation of something as a “cause” depends upon consideration of its effect, in this sense a cause *depends* upon its effect. Something is not a cause in and of itself; it is named a “cause” in relation to its effect. Here the effect does not occur prior to its cause, and its cause does not come into being after its effect; it is in thinking of its future effect that we designate something as a cause. This is dependent-arising in the sense of *dependent designation*.

As Nagarjuna says in his *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle*

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*Called "Wisdom":*

A doer is dependent on a doing,  
 And a doing also exists dependent on just that doer.  
 Except for dependently arising, we do not see  
 A cause for their establishment.

Agent and action depend upon each other. An action is posited in dependence upon an agent, and an agent is posited in dependence upon an action. An action arises in dependence upon an agent, and an agent arises in dependence upon an action. Nevertheless, they are not related in the same way as cause and effect, since the one is not produced before the other.

How is it that, in general, things are relative? How is it that a cause is relative to its effect? It is because it is not established in and of itself. If that were the case, a cause would not need to depend on its effect. But there is no self-sufficient cause, which is why we do not find anything in and of itself when we analytically examine a cause, despite its appearance to our everyday mind that each thing has its own self-contained being. Because things are under the influence of something other than themselves, the designation of something as a cause necessarily depends upon consideration of its effect. This is the route through which we come to realize that this more subtle understanding of dependent-arising as dependent designation is correct.

Recently, while in south India after making a pilgrimage to Mount Shrī Parvata, where Nagarjuna lived near the end of his life, I bestowed an initiation on a large audience in a Buddhist tradition called Kālachakra (Wheel of Time). During it, I imparted a transmission of explanation on Tsong-kha-pa's *Praise of Dependent-Arising* in conjunction with teaching Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called "Wisdom."* I arrived at the point where Tsong-kha-pa says:

When Buddha said, "Whatever depends on conditions  
 Is empty of its own inherent existence,"  
 What is more amazing  
 Than this marvelous advice!

I thought "This is really so!" What I was thinking is this: Indeed, there might be some animals who know the dependent-arising of cause and effect, but for us humans the dependent-arising of cause and effect is undeniable. But then when you take it further, the dependent-arising of cause and effect comes because of dependent designation, which itself indicates that cause and effect do not have their own being; if they did have their own being, they would not have to be dependently designated. As Nagarjuna's follower Buddhapālita says in commentary on the twenty-second chapter of the *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called "Wisdom"* [*dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa buddha pā li ta (bud-dhapālita-mūlamadhyamakavṛtti)*], in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3842)*, TBRC W23703.96:318-563 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae

but also “existence” and “establishment,” and in this way all phenomena are dependent existents.<sup>a</sup>

Jang-kya continues:

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sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985)]:

If something exists by way of its own entity, what would be the need for being posited dependently?

Indeed, if a thing existed in itself, that alone would be sufficient. You could just say, “It is this,” without needing to relate it to anything else. Because it is not established in and of itself, there is no alternative but to posit it in relation to something else. I have continued to find this thought helpful.

In the same way, Tsong-kha-pa says in his *Three Principal Aspects of the Path to Enlightenment*:

When without alternation and simultaneously  
 From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
 An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode of apprehension of the object,  
 That time is completion of analysis of the view.

Reflecting on the dependent latticework at the heart of the dependent-arising of cause and effect confirms the understanding that phenomena are merely nominal, merely imputed and no more than that. When you understand that this alone undermines the concept that phenomena exist in and of themselves, your task of figuring out the Buddhist view of reality is complete. I have hopes that I am approaching this point.

If you understand that no matter what appears, whether to your senses or to your thinking mind, those objects are established in dependence upon thought, you will get over the sense that phenomena exist in their own right. You will understand that there is no truth in their being set up from their own side. You will realize emptiness, the absence of inherent existence, which exists beyond the proliferations of problems born from seeing phenomena as existing in themselves and provides the medicine for removing delusion.

<sup>a</sup> Phenomena cannot withstand ultimate analysis, investigation into their mode of being, such as investigation into whether the object is one with its basis of imputation or a different entity from its basis of imputation, or produced from self, other, both, or neither, and the like. Nevertheless, that appearances are posited from the viewpoint of such conditionality “when there is no analysis and no investigation” does not mean that conventionalities are beyond the sphere of analysis in the sense of the usual worldly investigation of an object to make sure it is there. In other words, conventional phenomenon are not just figments of the imagination or even beyond the sphere of logical reasoning in the sense of undergoing investigation by reason, for this is how a permanent self and so forth are refuted.

Also, regarding those, the Foremost Great Being [Tsong-kha-pa] says in his *Small Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*:<sup>a</sup>

Therefore, external things such as sprouts and internal things such as compositional activity<sup>b</sup> arise in dependence, respectively, on seeds and so forth, and on ignorance<sup>c</sup> and so forth.

This indicates the first reason [the dependent-arising of the production of things by their own causes]. Also, that same work says:

[Whatever is established by way of its own nature] must be inherently established—that is, be able to set itself up under its own power—due to which it is contradictory for it to rely on causes and conditions.

This indicates the middle reason [the attainment by compounded and uncompounded phenomena of their own entities in reliance upon their respective parts]. Also, that work says:

Through this you should understand that persons, pots, and so forth also are without inherent establishment because of being imputed in dependence on their own collection.

This indicates the third reason [the dependent imputation of all phenomena—establishment as mere imputations in dependence upon their respective bases of imputation]. However, gathering them into the two, the common and the uncommon, [Tsong-kha-pa] says in that same work, “Those are two presentations of the reasoning of dependent-arising.”

Not only there, but also in his *Great Explanation of (Chandrakīrti’s) “Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) ‘Treatise on the Middle’”* Tsong-kha-pa says:

<sup>a</sup> *lam rim chung ngu*, in *gsung ’bum (tsong kha pa, bla brang par ma)*, TBRC W22273.14:5-474 (bla brang: bla brang bkra shis ’khyil, 199?). This is also called the *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*; for these quotes see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa’s Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 91; for Robert Thurman’s translation of this passage, see “The Middle Transcendent Insight” in *Life and Teachings of Tsong Khapa*, 144-145.

<sup>b</sup> The second of the twelve links of dependent-arising.

<sup>c</sup> The first of the twelve links of dependent-arising.

The Supramundane Victor says, “The message of the doctrine<sup>a</sup> is: When this is, that arises; because this is produced, that is produced. Due to the condition of ignorance, there are compositional activities,” and so forth, and Nāgārjuna’s *Precious Garland* says:<sup>243</sup>

When this is, that arises,  
Like short when there is long.  
Due to the production of this, that is produced,  
Like light from the production of a flame.

and Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called “Wisdom”* also says:<sup>b</sup>

A doer arises in dependence on a doing  
And a doing arises in dependence upon just that doer.  
Except for that, we do not see  
A cause for their establishment.

It is obvious that Nāgārjuna does not mean that doer and doing cause each other with each one arising after the other one; such would be impossible. Rather, doer and doing are mutually dependent in terms of the attainment of their entities through conceptual imputation. Jang-kya continues:

Although even each of these three passages, cited in series, are suitable to indicate all three presentations [of dependent-arising], in terms of what they mainly indicate and in terms of sequence they set forth the three different presentations of the reasoning [of dependent-arising].

<sup>a</sup> *chos kyi brda*.

<sup>b</sup> VIII.12; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyal-wae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). It is sometimes difficult to determine whether the term *karma* (*las*) means action or object as it is used both ways depending on context. The eighth chapter of Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle* can be read either way, but Tsong-kha-pa’s *Explanation of (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle”*: *Ocean of Reasoning* glosses *las* (*karma*) with *bya ba*, “action” or “doing,” and at the very end of his commentary on the second chapter he adapts VIII.12 to the examination of going, reading *las* (*karma*) as *'gro ba*, “going” (*gamanam*); thus, I have taken it as action and hence “doing.” For the reference to the second chapter, see “Analysis of Going and Coming,” trans. Jeffrey Hopkins (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1976), 34.

This [threefold exposition of dependent-arising] is also the assertion of the glorious Chandrakīrti, whose *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* says:<sup>244</sup>

Here, that which has its own entity,<sup>a</sup> its own being<sup>b</sup> [that is, inherent existence], its own power,<sup>c</sup> or is just not contingent on others<sup>d</sup> would be self-established; therefore, it would not have a dependent arising. However, all compounded things are dependent-arising. In that way, things that have a dependent arising do not come to be self-powered because they are produced contingent upon causes and conditions. All these are not self-powered; hence, no things whatsoever have self, that is, inherent existence.

If you know in detail [Tsong-kha-pa's] mode of exegesis of the meaning of this citation in his Great Exposition of Special Insight, you will understand.<sup>e</sup>

In dependence upon such special points, the definitive great scholar Nor-sang-gya-tsho<sup>f</sup> is renowned to have said, "Whatever is an established base [that is to say, whatever exists] is a compounded phenomenon," about which many skilled and unskilled have said, "The subject, uncompounded space,"<sup>g</sup> and so forth. These neophytes at the Collected Topics of Epistemology<sup>h</sup> demonstrate many commonly proclaimed points of damage and scornfully laugh, but how could this great scholar and adept, who penetrated all of Sūtra and Tantra, not know this little bit of reasoning! Though he said such within hoping that, in dependence on his

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<sup>a</sup> *rang gi ngo bo.*

<sup>b</sup> *rang bzhin.*

<sup>c</sup> *rang dbang.*

<sup>d</sup> *gzhan la rag ma las pa nyid.*

<sup>e</sup> We will turn to Tsong-kha-pa's two citations of this passage in his Great Exposition of Special Insight after concluding this section of Jang-kya's explanation.  
<sup>f</sup> *nor bzang rgya mtsho*, 1423-1543.

<sup>g</sup> The statement of the subject "uncompounded space" announces an unwanted consequence: "It [absurdly] follows that the subject, uncompounded space, is a compounded phenomenon because of being an established base." "And so forth" indicates other such subjects.

<sup>h</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (449.-2) for *bsdus chad pa* read *bsdus tshad pa* in accordance with TBRC, W28833-4834-eBook, 33b.1, and Gomang/Taipei reprint, 373.14.



words, people would have an effective way of forming understanding of the meaning of dependent-arising, it appears that they have become examples of:

For persons pained by karma  
Even medicine given becomes poison.

The above explanations of the meaning of the reasoning of dependent-arising indeed are the unsurpassed thought of Chandrakīrti's etymological explanation of *pratītyasamutpāda* and also the final thought of the Foremost Great Being [Tsong-kha-pa], but since it appears that others have not explained them clearly, I have explained a little.<sup>a</sup>

Because, as Jang-kya says, all three types of dependent-arising can be seen to have the same profound import, the Se-ra Jey scholar Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog<sup>245</sup> criticizes Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa for positing in his *Commentary on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Praise of Dependent-arising"* "the subtle one, the likes of the dependent-arising that is the mere positing by name and conceptuality," as the dependent-arising that goes as the meaning of emptiness. For, he thinks it is taken to be the dependent-arising that is production in dependence upon causes and conditions. Ser-shül points to the facts that:

1. Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* (253) says:

For such Proponents of the Middle, when they explicitly ascertain that internal and external things are dependent-arisings **contingent on causes**, they—in dependence upon the power of just that awareness—will ascertain this as meaning that [things] are empty of inherent existence because they have realized that what is inherently established does not rely on another and have realized with valid cognition that the two, this [nonreliant inherent existence] and dependent-arising are contradictory.

and:

also because of asserting in accordance with the explanation of arising in dependence upon causes and conditions as the meaning of the emptiness of inherently existent production.

<sup>a</sup> For the continuation of Jang-kya's exposition, see below 289.

2. Also, when Tsong-kha-pa in the Great Exposition of Special Insight in the *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* cites the *Questions of Anavatapta King of Nāgas Sūtra*:<sup>a</sup>

Those which are produced from conditions are not produced;

They have no inherent nature of production.

Those which rely on conditions are said [by the Conqueror] to be empty.

[A person] who knows the emptiness [of inherent existence] is conscientious [at overcoming the unpeacefulness of the afflictive emotions].

he says:

The third line speaks of the meaning of contingency on<sup>b</sup> conditions as the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence[.]

## TSONG-KHA-PA'S CITATIONS IN THE GREAT EXPOSITION OF SPECIAL INSIGHT

Above, Jang-kya cited a passage from Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas"* and declared that from reading Tsong-kha-pa's commentary on it in his Great Exposition of Special Insight we would understand how the three-fold exposition of dependent-arising "is also the assertion of the glorious Chandrakīrti." Let us look into this.

Tsong-kha-pa cites this passage twice; in the first he speaks to how to

<sup>a</sup> For more context see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 79-80. The sūtra is *klu'i rgyal po ma dros pas zhus pa'i mdo, anavataptanāgarājapariprcchāsūtra*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 156), TBRC W22084.58:413-508, vol. pha, 224a.1 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), cited in *Prasannapadā*, in commentary on stanza XIII.2; sde dge 3860, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 81b.3-81b.4; La Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhyamikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā*, 239.10-239.13; J.W. de Jong, "Text-critical Notes on the Prasannapadā," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 20, nos. 1/2 (1978): 55: *yaḥ pratyayair jāyati sa hy ajāto na tasya utpādu svabhāvato sti / yaḥ pratyayādhiṇu sa śūnyu ukto yaḥ śūnyatām jānāti sā prasamanta iti //*. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 368.2. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 188.

<sup>b</sup> *rag las*.

understand the meaning of dependence. His explanation is cryptically brief, and thus to facilitate understanding I have added bracketed material drawn from the *Four Interwoven Annotations* into the translation, which admittedly is turgid, but if read slowly, it yields considerable meaning:<sup>a</sup>

[*Qualm:*] Well, what is the way ignorance superimposes inherent existence (*rang bzhin, svabhāva*)?

[*Response clearing away that qualm:*] Even if in general in the texts of this master [Chandrakīrti] there appear many usages of conventions such as “nature” (*rang bzhin, svabhāva*) or “own entity” (*rang gi ngo bo, svarūpa*) and so forth even for objects established as mere conventionalities [when indicating the conventional mode of abiding of things as in “the nature of a thing” (*dngos po 'i rang bzhin*) and “the entity of a thing” (*dngos po 'i ngo bo*)], here [on the occasion of the object of negation the mention of “nature” (*rang bzhin, svabhāva*) and so forth are not like this. Rather] the existence—in objects whether persons or phenomena<sup>b</sup>—of a mode of subsistence, or a mode of abiding, from their own side in those [very] phenomena without being posited [and imputed] through the force of an awareness [is a nature that is superimposed. And] this [superimposition and] apprehension [of such as existing] is [the mode of superimposing a nature.<sup>c</sup> Such] a mode of subsistence of those respective phenomena—the conceived object apprehended thus by that [awareness] is hypothetically identified as “self” or “nature/inherent existence.” This accords with Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* where the *Four Hundred* says:<sup>d</sup>

All these [things] are not [established under] their own power [because of being contingent on other conventions or awarenesses];

Since [they are not established under their own power, they] do not have self [that is, establishment by way of

<sup>a</sup> *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 436.1-440.3 /163a.1ff. (487.1ff.). See also the translation of Tsong-kha-pa’s text in Tsong-kha-pa, *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, vol. 3, trans. and ed. Joshua W. C. Cutler and Guy Newland (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2004), 212-213.

<sup>b</sup> “Phenomena” in this context means objects other than persons, since in general persons also are phenomena.

<sup>c</sup> That is, inherent existence.

<sup>d</sup> XIV23cd; the discrepancies in translation between this and the citation below are due to differences in the *Four Interwoven Annotations*.

their own entity].

and Chandrakīrti states that these [four<sup>a</sup>] are synonyms:<sup>b</sup>

Here [in the world], that [thing which is established by way of] its own entity,<sup>c</sup> [exists by way of] its own being,”<sup>d</sup> [is established under] its own power,<sup>e</sup> and is just [established as] not contingent on others<sup>f</sup>...

In this [explanation in Chandrakīrti's *Commentary*] “not contingent on others” does not mean that [things] are not contingent on causes and conditions [producing them]. Rather, this is a case of calling subjects,<sup>g</sup> that is to say, conventional consciousnesses, “others.” [If things had such a nature, they would necessarily be established] without being posited through the force of those [conventional consciousnesses] and hence not contingent others [that is, not posited through the force of awarenesses].

Therefore, [such a nature] is [also] called “self-powered” [due to being established as] an entity of objects that is their own respective uncommon mode of subsistence, or mode of abiding. Just that [mode of abiding] is [also] called “[establishment by way of] its own entity” or “[establishment by way of] its own being.”<sup>h</sup>

Concerning this, if, for example, [when an awareness] has imputed a snake to a rope, you leave aside [analysis considering] how it is imputed from the side of the awareness apprehending the snake and analyze how [the mode of abiding of the mentally imputed] snake is from the viewpoint of its own entity, a snake is just not established in terms of that object [the rope], and hence the

<sup>a</sup> The four, without the annotations, are: own entity (*rang gi ngo bo*), own being/nature/inherent existence (*rang bzhin*), own power (*rang dbang*), and noncontingence on others (*gzhan la rag ma las pa*).

<sup>b</sup> Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, commenting on XIV.23. For the full context see the three serial citations in the passage from a later part of Tsong-kha-pa's text just below.

<sup>c</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang gi ngo* as *rang gi ngo bo nyid kyis grub pa*.

<sup>d</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang bzhin* as *rang bzhin gyis yod pa*.

<sup>e</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang dbang* as *rang dbang du grub pa*.

<sup>f</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *gzhan la rag ma las pa nyid* as *gzhan la rag ma las par grub pa nyid*.

<sup>g</sup> *yul can*; literally “object-possessors.”

<sup>h</sup> Or to use other translation equivalents, “establishment by way of its own nature” or “inherent establishment.”

attributes of that [snake] are unanalyzable.<sup>a</sup> Similarly, with regard to these phenomena also, if you leave aside analysis with regard to their mode of appearance—how they appear in the perspective of the conventional awarenesses [apprehending them]—and analyze in terms of the [individual] objects within considering how the mode of subsistence of those [appearing] phenomena's own mode of subsistence is, it is not established in any way [as the parts or the collection (of the parts) of those appearing phenomena]. Whereas [this nonestablishment is the nature that is the mode of abiding of phenomena, this mode of nonestablishment] is not apprehended, but [opposite to this, a nature that is utterly nonexistent in the mode of abiding of phenomena] is apprehended as existing. It is apprehended that those phenomena each have a mode of abiding comprised<sup>b</sup> from their own side without being posited through the force of a conventional consciousness. In this way Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* sets forth the way in which [phenomena] are not established by way of their own entities:<sup>246</sup>

Those which exist only when the conceptuality [apprehending them] exists and do not exist when conceptuality does not exist are without question ascertained as not established by way of their own entities, like a snake [mistakenly] imputed to a coiled rope.

Therefore, establishment right with an object by way of [the phenomenon's] own entity without being posited [upon imputation] through the force of an internal awareness is called the "self" [that is the object of negation], or "inherent existence." The nonexistence of this with the person as the substratum is said to be the selflessness of the person and the nonexistence of this in terms of phenomena such as eyes, ears, and so forth is said to be the selflessness of phenomena. Hence, one can perforce realize that apprehensions of this inherent existence as existing in terms of persons and of phenomena are apprehensions of the two selves. It is as Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* says:<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> That is to say, also cannot bear analysis. If the snake is not established from the side of the rope, the attributes of the snake are, of course, also not established from the side of the rope.

<sup>b</sup> *gzhal ba*.

Concerning this, “self” is inherent existence, an entity of things that is not contingent [and does not rely] on [being posited by] another [that is, conceptuality]. The nonexistence of this [inherent existence] is [called] selflessness. Through the division of [its substrata,] phenomena and persons, it is understood as twofold, “selflessness of phenomena and selflessness of persons.”

That is the first passage in Tsong-kha-pa’s Great Exposition of Special Insight Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas”* in which he treats this statement by Chandrakīrti’s in his *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”*:

Here, that which has its own entity,<sup>a</sup> its own being<sup>b</sup> [that is, inherent existence], its own power,<sup>c</sup> or is just not contingent on others<sup>d</sup> would be self-established; therefore, it would not have a dependent arising. However, all compounded things are dependent-arising. In that way, things that have a dependent arising do not come to be self-powered because they are produced contingent upon causes and conditions. All these are not self-powered; hence, no things whatsoever have self, that is, inherent existence.

Let us consider how Tsong-kha-pa explains its import. He first points out the equivalency of the four:

- own entity (*rang gi ngo bo*)
- own being/nature/inherent existence (*rang bzhin*)
- own power (*rang dbang*)
- noncontingence on others (*gzhan la rag ma las pa*).

Then he immediately indicates that here “noncontingence on others” does not just mean that [things] are not contingent on causes and conditions. He does this despite the fact that, as he himself quotes in the second treatment of this passage in the Great Exposition of Special Insight, Chandrakīrti says that “things that have a dependent arising do not come to be self-powered because they are *produced contingent upon causes and conditions*,” which clearly puts contingency in the context of production by causes and conditions, the first level of reason of dependent-arising, the production of things by their own causes. Rather, Tsong-kha-pa refuses to

<sup>a</sup> *rang gi ngo bo.*

<sup>b</sup> *rang bzhin.*

<sup>c</sup> *rang dbang.*

<sup>d</sup> *gzhan la rag ma las pa nyid.*

limit the meaning of “noncontingence on others” to this because realization of such is not sufficient in the Middle Way School, since as he says in his second treatment (cited below):<sup>a</sup>

However, if you took [the meaning of “own power” here] as [only] not contingent on other causes and conditions and then you refuted [that what is under its own power is contingent on causes and conditions], then [since the refutation of this is also already established for Proponents of the Great Exposition, Proponents of Sūtra, and so forth, it would] not be necessary to prove [this for our own schools]. And since [through] even the [mere] refutation [of being contingent on causes and conditions] it cannot be posited that the Middle view has been found, “own power” is to be [understood] as a mode of abiding able to set itself up by way of its own entity right with the object.

Tsong-kha-pa thereupon takes on the task of making the case that Chandrakīrti himself takes “contingent on causes and conditions” to mean more than “being produced in dependence upon causes and conditions,” which he does by showing that Chandrakīrti himself includes the third level of dependent-arising “establishment of all phenomena as mere imputations in dependence upon their respective bases of imputation and imputing consciousnesses.” Tsong-kha-pa accomplishes this by weaving together material from chapters eight and thirteen of Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* and applying it here in chapter twelve.

He first turns to Chandrakīrti’s explanation in chapter eight where Chandrakīrti explains the meaning of “own entity” (*rang gi ngo bo*), or “being established by way of its own entity” (*rang gi ngo bo nyid kyis grub pa*):<sup>248</sup>

Those which exist only when the conceptuality [apprehending them] exists and do not exist when conceptuality does not exist are without question ascertained as not established by way of their own entities, like a snake [mistakenly] imputed to a coiled rope.

This passage obliquely indicates that conceptuality is the “other” on which phenomena are contingent, not in the sense that conceptuality produces them, which would be absurd since then thinking gold would produce gold, but in the sense that conceptuality imputes or designates phenomena. In this way, chapter eight provides a context for Tsong-kha-pa to say that in chapter twelve:

<sup>a</sup> Brackets are from the *Four Interwoven Annotations*.

...“not contingent on others” does not mean that [things] are not contingent on causes and conditions [producing them]; rather, this is a case of calling subjects,<sup>a</sup> that is to say, conventional consciousnesses, “others.” [If things had such a nature, they would necessarily be established] without being posited through the force of those [conventional consciousnesses] and hence not contingent others [that is, not posited through the force of awarenesses].

Tsong-kha-pa proceeds to tie this meaning to another of the four equivalents, own power (*rang dbang*):

Therefore, [such a nature] is [also] called “self-powered” [due to being established as] an entity of objects that is their own respective uncommon mode of subsistence, or mode of abiding.

and then he extends it to the other two equivalents, own entity (*rang gi ngo bo*) and own being/nature/inherent existence (*rang bzhin*):

Just that [mode of abiding] is [also] called “[establishment by way of] its own entity” or “[establishment by way of] its own being.”

To summarize: in Tsong-kha-pa’s second treatment of this passage from Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* Chandrakīrti himself at this point limits his explanation of contingency to the context of production from causes and conditions, but Tsong-kha-pa makes a cogent case for not limiting the scope of Chandrakīrti’s thought to the first level of dependent-arising by extending it to the third.

But what about the second level of dependent-arising? Does, as Jangkya suggests, Tsong-kha-pa’s commentary in the Great Exposition of Special Insight also speak of this level, that is, the attainment by compounded and uncompounded phenomena of their own entities in reliance upon their respective parts? It seems to me that with the help of the *Four Interwoven Annotations* we can indeed find this in his application of the example of the analysis of the absence of a snake that is imagined in a rope:

Similarly, with regard to these phenomena also, if you leave aside analysis with regard to their mode of appearance—how they appear in the perspective of the conventional awarenesses [apprehending them]—and analyze in terms of the [individual] objects within considering how the mode of subsistence of those [appearing] phenomena’s own mode of subsistence is, it is not established in any way [as the parts or the collection (of the parts) of those

<sup>a</sup> *yul can*; literally “object-possessors.”



appearing phenomena].

When the *Four Interwoven Annotations* makes clear that ultimate analysis is to be done into whether an object is one of its parts or the collection of those parts and does not find it as any of those—or anything separate from those—the point is that although an object is imputed in dependence upon its parts or the collection of its parts, it is not its parts or the collection of them. And this indeed is the impact of the second level of dependent-arising, the attainment by compounded and uncompounded phenomena of their own entities in reliance upon their respective parts.

Hence, as Jang-kya says, Tsong-kha-pa's commentary in his Great Exposition of Special Insight on that passage from Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas"* can be shown to reveal how the threefold exposition of dependent-arising "is also the assertion of the glorious Chandrakīrti." Thus, we can conclude that Tsong-kha-pa's first treatment of Chandrakīrti's quote is Jang-kya's referent.

## RELEVANCE OF THE SECOND CITATION

Still, the second citation is highly relevant to our topic in that it occurs in the section explaining dependent-arising as "the monarch of reasonings" quoted at length above in chapter 5, 180. I will merely cite Tsong-kha-pa's quotation here as a reminder:<sup>a</sup>

### 4. Sources proving such

Also, in this way Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* says:<sup>249</sup>

Those things that arise dependent upon causes and conditions

Are not under their own power.

All these things are not established under their own power;

Since they are not established under their own power, all these things do not have self or nature, that is, establishment by way of their own entity.

and Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred"* at this point also says:<sup>250</sup>

Here, that thing—which is established by way of its own

<sup>a</sup> In this citation the *Four Annotations* are taken out of brackets for easier reading; Tsong-kha-pa's bare text appears above this in chapter 5.

entity,<sup>a</sup> is established by way of its own being,”<sup>b</sup> is established under its own power,<sup>c</sup> and is just not contingent on others, that is, is just not contingent on merely being posited by conceptuality—would be self-established without reliance on others; therefore, it would necessarily utterly not have a nature of arising dependent on causes and conditions. However, unlike this, all compounded things are established as entities arising dependent on causes and conditions.

### 5. *How the entailment is proven*

In this way, things that have a nature of arising dependent on causes and conditions do not come to be established under their own power because those things are produced contingent upon causes and conditions. All these things are not established under their own power; hence, no things have self, a nature of being established from their own side.

### 6. *Explaining the meaning of that scriptural passage*

“Own power” means that when a phenomenon appears as established by way of its own entity, it *appears* to those consciousnesses as noncontingent on others, that is, as nonreliant on merely being posited by conceptuality and also that it is established in accordance with that appearance.

### 7. *Since establishment from its own side means self-instituting,<sup>d</sup> the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is to be taken as nonestablishment as able to set itself up<sup>e</sup>*

However, if you took the meaning of “own power” here as only not contingent on other causes and conditions and thereupon you refuted that what is under its own power is contingent on causes and conditions, then since the refutation of this is also already established for Proponents of the Great Exposition, Proponents of Sūtra, and so forth, it would not be necessary to prove this for our schools. And since it cannot be posited that the Middle view

<sup>a</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang gi ngo as rang gi ngo bo nyid kyis grub pa*.

<sup>b</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang bzhin as rang bzhin gyis grub pa*.

<sup>c</sup> The *Annotations* rephrases *rang dbang as rang dbang du grub pa*.  
<sup>d</sup> *tshugs thub*.

<sup>e</sup> *tshugs thub tu grub pa*.

has been found through even the mere refutation of being contingent on causes and conditions, “own power” should be understood as a mode of abiding able to set itself up by way of its own entity right with the object.

Therefore, the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is to be taken as a voidness of an entity under its own power. Still, because the emptiness of inherent existence is not at all to be taken as a nothing in the sense of not being able to perform a function, establishment by way of the object’s own nature can be refuted by reason of the object’s dependent arising. Right after the earlier passage Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Āryadeva’s) “Four Hundred”* says:

Therefore, on this occasion due to just this dependent-arising, all things are devoid of a self-powered entity, whereby the meaning of being devoid of a self-powered entity is the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence, but it does not mean that all compounded things are utterly without the thingness of performing functions.

Hence:

1. since the view of the nonexistence of the thingness of performing functions is only a deprecation that all the illusory-like dependent-arising of thoroughly afflicted phenomena and of completely pure phenomena do not exist, the view of the nonexistence of the thingness of performing functions is just an erroneous view,

and:

2. not only this but also the view that inherently established things exist is just an erroneous view because such inherent establishment does not exist in any phenomenon.

How this noncontradictory realization is accomplished through the reasoning of dependent-arising is furthered elaborated in the next chapter.



## 12. Jang-kya Röl-pay-dor-jay on Avoiding the Two Extremes

Having examined Jang-kya Rol-pay-dor-je's references to Tsong-kha-pa's Great Exposition of Special Insight, let us return to his *Clear Exposition of the Presentations of Tenets* and his detailed but somewhat dense treatment of how the reasoning of dependent-arising avoids the extremes of permanence and annihilation:<sup>a</sup>

Now, [I] will say a little about the way that the two extremes are avoided in dependence upon this reasoning [of dependent-arising]. The main places for going wrong with respect to realizing the pure view here [in the Consequence School] are of two types. One is the view of permanence, or the view of superimposition, that has a process of apprehension conceiving true existence, that is, apprehending that phenomena truly exist. The second is the view of annihilation, or deprecation, when the measure of the object of negation is not grasped and, instead, is taken too far, whereby you come not to be able in your own perspective<sup>251</sup> to induce ascertainment with respect to all the causes and effects in the classes of purification and of thorough affliction.

Even both of these [extremes] can be refuted without residue in dependence on just this reasoning of dependent-arising. Through ascertaining the reason, you avoid the extreme of nihilism and find ascertainment with regard to the dependent-arising of cause and effect, and through ascertaining the proposition, you avoid the extreme of permanence and gain ascertainment with regard to absence of inherent existence.

With respect to gaining such ascertainment, that which has very strong force is just the reasoning of dependent imputation. This also is the incomparable lion's roar of the eloquent explanations by the Foremost Lama [Tsong-kha-pa], and moreover in dependence upon the secret essentials of the speech of this Foremost One you should know the distinctive way that the statements that:

- both extremes are avoided even individually through ascertainment of the reason and through the proposition, and

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<sup>a</sup> This continues from the above quotation 259-277; W28833-4834-eBook, 33b.5-40a.2; Gomang/Taipei reprint, 374.1-380.14. The translation here is adapted from that in my *Emptiness Yoga: The Middle Way Consequence School*, 418-428.

- in general the extreme of existence is avoided through appearance and the extreme of nonexistence is avoided through emptiness

become distinguishing features<sup>252</sup> of the Middle Way Consequence School that are not just what is explicitly indicated. For otherwise, even in each of the four schools of tenets, there are explanations that (1) both the extreme of existence and the extreme of nonexistence are avoided through appearance and (2) both extremes are also avoided through emptiness.

In general, there is the way that the two extremes are avoided with respect to things because they are dependent-arising, and in particular:

- for the awareness of a person at the time of hearing and thinking about the texts of the Middle Way School there are ways that the two extremes are avoided in dependence on reasoning, and
- regarding when realization arisen from meditation has been generated there are also ways that the two extremes are avoided for one's awareness on the two levels of an ordinary being and a Superior, and
- even among Superiors due to the gradual increase of the force of higher awareness there are many differences of subtlety in how, for one's awareness, the two extremes are avoided as it becomes more<sup>253</sup> profound than on lower levels. For, Shāntideva says:<sup>a</sup>

Yogis also are harmed

By the higher and higher through enhanced awareness.

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<sup>a</sup> Shāntideva's *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*, IX.4ab; with stanza 3 it reads:

Among those, two aspects of the world are seen,

Yogis and the ordinary.

Among those, the ordinary world

Is harmed by the yogic world.

Yogis also are harmed

By the higher and higher through enhanced awareness.

See three citations by Jam-yang-shay-pa with commentary in Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 86, 582, and 603. For the Sanskrit, see Shāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, ed. by Vidhushekara Bhattacharya, Bibliotheca Indica, vol. 280 (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1960), 185.

Therefore, all the presentations of the two truths in the Middle Way Consequence School are raised up from within the sphere of this reasoning of dependent-arising, and there are also many important reasons regarding many uncommon features on the occasions of the path and the fruit. Furthermore, these can be known well by persons who have decisive understanding (1) that identifies the factor of emptiness by reason of having ascertained<sup>254</sup> the factor of appearance and (2) that induces ascertainment with respect to the factor of appearance through having taken the factor of emptiness as the reason. However, it is not possible that all these could be complete in the mode of initial dawning [of rough ideas to someone] who has not found well an understanding of the view. Moreover, these are also seen to rely upon knowing well the meaning of how all presentations of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are only imputedly established and, within that, knowing well what is eliminated and what is included within the term “mere nominality, only imputedly existent.”

Jang-kya breaks into poetry before elaborating on these points:

Wow! Not low merit! I wonder whether  
 Lo-sang-drag-pa's eloquence endowed with an array of ambrosia-lights  
 Come to the peak of the eastern mountain to increase manifest joy  
 Is glorious only for my own awareness!

May the rainbow form of the fine body<sup>a</sup> of a hundred texts'  
 good meanings,  
 Written with the brush<sup>255</sup> of pure reasoning,  
 Through dawning inside the mirror of my mind  
 Bestow joy through thousands of elegant movements.

The sage dwelling in the grove of Nāgārjuna's ten million textual systems  
 Skilled at summoning the beautiful woman of emptiness and dependent-arising  
 Through the messenger, the meditative stabilization of stainless reasoning,  
 Is called a Proponent of the Middle.

Those who have abandoned afar the bliss of setting the mind in

<sup>a</sup> *lus phra*, a metaphor for a woman.

reality

And who proceed crookedly with the pace of explanation and  
debate about verbal generalities

Speak from their mouths about dependent-arising hundreds of  
times,

But such is empty of meaning like a butter lamp in a paint-  
ing.<sup>256</sup>

If those who study parts of texts here and there and—though  
lacking the force of awareness

To discriminate what requires interpretation and what is defini-  
tive—

Nonetheless take up the burden of distinguishing between the  
head and the nape of the neck

As to just what “is” and “is not” did not speak, how could it  
not be nice!

Even though I have not experienced the supreme taste of reali-  
zation arisen from meditation,

The fruit of toiling at the stainless texts,

How marvelous it is that the Foremost Father Lo-sang has born  
in me

A share of the fortune to propound dependent-arising just as it  
is!

Those are stanzas between sections.

## HOW THE OTHER REASONINGS MEET BACK TO DE- PENDENT-ARISING

The essentials of all the reasonings proving selflessness that are  
cases of nonobservation of something inextricably related [with  
inherent existence] meet back to just this reasoning of dependent-  
arising (1) because the main purpose of all those reasonings is just  
to generate in the [mental] continuum the view of the middle upon  
simultaneously avoiding the two extremes, and just this reasoning  
of dependent-arising explicitly accomplishes this and (2) because  
those reasonings also meet back to just this mode [of dependent-  
arising] when pursued back.

Furthermore, with respect to how this is so, the main reason-  
ings that this system uses for delineating the two selflessnesses  
must be taken to be the two, the refutation of production from the



four extremes and the sevenfold reasoning, as was established earlier.<sup>a</sup>

Earlier Jang-kya presented the reasoning refuting production from the four extremes—self, other, both, and causelessly. As was brought up earlier (225) Nāgārjuna mentions this reasoning in the first stanza of the first chapter of his *Treatise on the Middle*:

Not from self, not from others,  
Not from both, not causelessly  
Are any things  
Ever produced anywhere.

In his earlier explanation Jang-kya poses a question and gives a response:

*Question:* Why are only four theses stated?

*Response:* If things were inherently produced, then [this production] would necessarily be one of the four extreme types of production. Due to this, if these four theses are established, it is easily established that there is no inherently existent production. Therefore, the reasoning refuting the four extremes is a decisive reasoning.

Inherently existent production necessitates findability in at least one of these four ways. Since these are inextricably related with such findability, if none of these four is possible, inherently existent production is impossible. Hence, the nonobservation of these that are necessarily related with inherently existent production can serve as a means of proving, or as a sign of, the absence of inherently existent production.<sup>b</sup>

Jang-kya also earlier explained the sevenfold reasoning presented by Chandrakīrti in his *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"*.<sup>257</sup>

A chariot is not asserted to be other than its parts,  
Nor non-other. It also does not possess them.  
It is not in the parts, nor are the parts in it.  
It is not the mere collection [of its parts], nor is it [their] shape.  
[The self and the aggregates are] similar.  
...

That [chariot] is not established in these seven ways

<sup>a</sup> See Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 123-155, 373-382.

<sup>b</sup> For Jang-kya's extensive exposition of the reasoning see Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 156-203 and 383-390.

Either as [its own] suchness or in the world,  
 But without analysis it is imputed here  
 From [the viewpoint of] the world in dependence upon its parts.

When the sevenfold reasoning is applied to the self, or person, the seven possibilities inextricably related with inherent existence are that:<sup>a</sup>

1. the object imputed (the “I”) and the basis of imputation (mind and body) are inherently the same
2. the object imputed (the “I”) and the basis of imputation (mind and body) are inherently different
3. the object imputed (the “I”) inherently depends on the basis of imputation (mind and body)
4. the basis of imputation (mind and body) inherently depends on the object imputed (the “I”)
5. the object imputed (the “I”) possesses the basis of imputation (mind and body) either as a different entity in the way a person owns a cow or as one entity in the way a tree possesses its core
6. the object imputed (the “I”) is the special shape of the basis of imputation (body)
7. the object imputed (the “I”) is the collection of the bases of imputation (mind and body).

Each of these is shown to be impossible, and thereby the inherent existence of the person is impossible. The inherently existent must be findable upon analysis in these seven ways, and something, not just a person but any phenomenon, that is not findable in any of the seven ways does not inherently exist.

This nonfinding of an object in any of the seven ways is a *nonobservation* that serves as a sign of an absence of inherent existence. The other way to prove emptiness is to *observe something contradictory* to inherent existence, such as dependent-arising. The observation that a phenomenon is a dependent-arising is sufficient to prove that it lacks inherent existence since inherent, or self-powered, existence is impossible within dependent-arising. Here Jang-kya points out that all reasons that are nonobservations of a related object meet back to, or derive from, the reasoning of dependent-arising, which is an observation of a contradictory object.

The way that the essentials of those two meet back to dependent-arising is set forth clearly in Chandrakīrti’s *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna’s) “Treatise on the Middle”* because:

<sup>a</sup> The order differs from that in Chandrakīrti’s stanza.

(1) in that text [Chandrakīrti] clearly speaks of how the reasoning of the refutation of production from the four extremes meets back to the reasoning of dependent-arising:<sup>258</sup>

Because things are not produced causelessly,  
Or from Īshvara and so forth as causes,  
Or from self, from other, or both,  
They are dependently produced.

and (2) in that same text [Chandrakīrti] clearly speaks of how the sevenfold reasoning meets back to dependent-arising:

That [chariot] is not established in the seven ways  
Either as [its own] suchness or in the world,  
But without analysis it is imputed here  
From [the viewpoint of] the world in dependence upon its  
parts.

Moreover, when, having sought for the object imputed in the imputation of, for instance, the convention, “A sprout is growing,” you find ascertainment that [a sprout] is not produced from self, from other, from both, or causelessly, this—through its own force—induces ascertainment that the growing of the sprout, and so forth, is just an imputation, and also when you find ascertainment that the convention “growing” [or “production”] is just an imputation, this—through its own force—induces ascertainment with respect to non-finding when the object imputed in the imputation of the convention of growing is sought. This way [in which ascertainment of the one induces ascertainment of the other] is how the essentials of the reasoning refuting production from the four extremes meet back to dependent-arising; Tsong-kha-pa’s *The Essence of Eloquence* says:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> From a section in the part on Consequence School titled “Identifying the main reasonings” (*rigs pa'i gtso bo ngos bzung ba*). The Tibetan is:

ཐུ་གྲུ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཕྱི་དང་འདྲ་བྱེད་ལ་སོགས་པ་ནང་གི་དངོས་པོ་རྣམས་ས་བོན་དང་  
མ་རིག་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་འབྱུང་བ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས། དེ་དག་སྐྱེ་བ་ལ་  
སོགས་པ་རང་གི་མཆན་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ་པའི་རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་སྣང་བ་དང་བདག་གཞན་  
གཉིས་ཀ་རྒྱ་མེད་ལས་སྐྱེ་བ་མིན་ནི་ཞེས་འགོག་བས་ལྟ་བུ་བྱི་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་གཙོད་  
བྱེད་རིགས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྟེན་འབྱུང་གི་རིགས་<sup>[103b]</sup>པ་ཉིད་ལ་གཏུགས་ནས་འགོག་གོ།

For Robert Thurman’s translation of this passage, see *Tsong Khapa’s Speech of*

Through [the reasoning that] external things, such as sprouts, and internal things, such as compositional activity, arise *in dependence upon* causes and conditions—such as a seed and ignorance [respectively]—their production and so forth are empty of an inherent nature in the sense of being established by way of their own character and are not produced from self, other, both, or causelessly. Since [Chandrakīrti] refutes [the four extreme types of production] in this way, [the object of negation] is refuted in a manner that meets back to just the reasoning of dependent-arising, the monarch of reasonings cutting all the nets of bad views.

This mainly is the reasoning of [things] being dependently produced, but when [considered] finely, it must also meet back to the reasoning that things are dependently imputed, this being more difficult to understand than the former.

Also, the way in which the essentials of the sevenfold reasoning meet back to dependent-arising is that (1) the non-finding in seven ways itself induces ascertainment with respect to the person's being merely imputed in dependence upon the [mental and physical] aggregates and (2) the realization [that the person is] only imputedly existent itself induces ascertainment with respect to the other [that is, induces ascertainment that phenomena are not found in these seven ways]; Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* says:<sup>a</sup>

This also meets back to the reasoning of dependent-arising since the non-finding of the person as those seven due to being just imputed in dependence upon the aggregates is the meaning of the selflessness of persons.

Thus, you should know that even the other reasonings proving selflessness that are nonobservations of related factors contain all

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*Gold in the Essence of True Eloquence*, 365.

<sup>a</sup> A little after the previous citation from a section in the part on Consequence School titled "Identifying the main reasonings." The Tibetan is:

འདི་ཡང་མུང་པོ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་བཏགས་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་བདུན་པོ་དར་གང་ཟག་མི་རྟེན་  
པ་གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་མེད་ཀྱི་དོན་ཡིན་པས་རྟེན་འབྱུང་གི་རིགས་པ་ལ་ཐུག་གོ།

For Robert Thurman's translation of this passage, see *Tsong Khapa's Speech of Gold in the Essence of True Eloquence*, 366.

these features and that even each of those reasonings has two imprints in dependence upon individual functions:

- refuting the view of permanence through the conceptually isolatable function of the reasoning itself, which is its negating findability at the end of searching for the object imputed—this findability being something that is necessarily related with inherent establishment, the object of negation, and
- refuting the extreme of annihilation through the conceptually isolatable function of the fact that being merely dependently imputed—the opposite of the object of negation, inherent establishment—becomes the reason.

Jang-kya speaks of two imprints:

1. Non-finding has one imprint—refutation of the extreme of permanence, that is to say, inherent existence.
2. Ascertainment of its counterpart, dependent imputation, has another imprint—refutation of the extreme of annihilation, nothingness.

Analytic findability whether in any of the four or seven ways mentioned above is something that is necessarily related with inherent existence because if something inherently exists, it must be findable in one of these ways. Therefore, not finding something in these ways is called a reasoning that is a nonobservation of something that is necessarily related with the object of negation, inherent existence.

On the other hand, dependent imputation is opposite to inherent existence, and thus when it is stated as a reason for the absence of inherent existence, it is called an observation of something opposite to the object of negation. Jang-kya is saying that even those reasonings, such as (1) not finding production in the four ways or (2) examining the object imputed and the basis of imputation in seven ways, which are nonobservations of something necessarily related with inherent existence, end up also involving an observation of something opposite to inherent existence becoming the reason. This is because being dependently imputed also *becomes* the reason even when only nonfinding is explicitly stated. One imprint, or result, is the refutation of the extreme of permanence, and the other is the refutation of the extreme of annihilation.

Nevertheless, you also must differentiate well how, in dependence on the way [the reason] is explicitly stated, it is an observation of

what is opposite<sup>a</sup> or a nonobservation of what is necessarily related.<sup>b</sup>

The likes of the very great ability of this reasoning of dependent-arising explicitly to avoid the two extremes do not exist in other reasonings that state factors of emptiness [such as not being produced from self, from other, from both, or causelessly] as the reason, and also the reasoning of dependent imputation itself is very powerful within the reasoning of dependent-arising itself.

[The Middle Autonomists] Bhāvaviveka—the father, and his spiritual son [Jñānagarbha]—and Shāntarakṣita—and his spiritual son [Kamalaśīla]—also indeed assert that the root of the reasonings refuting true existence meets back to having parts and that having parts is the meaning of dependent-arising, but the way that these [Consequentialists] have the essentials of the other reasonings meet back to dependent-arising is utterly different, and also the way that the reasoning of dependent-arising explicitly eliminates the two extremes differs from those systems. The masters of the Autonomy School and their students also say that emptiness and dependent-arising have the same meaning, but the way that they have the same meaning is not like this system [of the Consequence School]; furthermore, just the Consequentialists mainly use the convention “monarch of reasonings” for this reasoning [of dependent-arising]. Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* says:<sup>c</sup>

When other sentient beings apprehend that [a phenomenon] is produced in dependence on causes and conditions, based on this they apprehend [this phenomenon] as having an inherent nature in the sense of being intrinsically established, due to which they are bound [in cyclic existence], whereas the wise, in dependence on this fact [of being produced in dependence on causes and conditions], refute that the phenomenon has an inherent nature and induce ascertainment with respect to its absence of inherent existence, [thereby] cutting the bonds of views conceiving extremes. Therefore, this establishment of the absence of inherent existence through the sign of dependent-arising is a wondrous, great skillfulness in method.

<sup>a</sup> 'gal zla dmigs pa.

<sup>b</sup> 'brel zla ma dmigs pa.

<sup>c</sup> See also the translation in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 319.

and Tsong-kha-pa's *Praise of the Supramundane Buddha from the Viewpoint of Dependent-Arising* says:<sup>a</sup>

Just that which through being apprehended  
Makes, for children, the bonds of extreme conceptions  
more firm,  
For the wise is the door to cutting  
All the nets of proliferations [of the apprehension of in-  
herent existence].

His saying that just the reasoning of dependent-arising is, for the wise, the door to cutting all the bonds of extreme conceptions is in consideration that emptiness and dependent-arising come to have the same meaning.

Furthermore, that Nāgārjuna and his [spiritual] children as well as the Foremost Omniscient [Tsong-kha-pa] say that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising is not like positing that which is bulbous, [flat-based, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, and it also is not merely that an awareness realizing the one also realizes the other. Therefore, that emptiness goes to mean dependent-arising is not just for any person but is posited as so in the perspective of one who has ascertained the pure view and has not forgotten it. Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* says:

That the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others.

Therefore, even though among our own [Ge-lug-pa] scholars some assert that this is for persons ranging from other parties [in a debate] whose continuums have been ripened<sup>b</sup> on up and some others assert that it is [just] for those whose analysis of the view is complete, I think that just what was described above is correct.

<sup>a</sup> See also the translations of this text by Geshe Wangyal in *The Door of Liberation* (New York: Maurice Girodias Associates, 1973; reprint, New York: Lotus, 1978; rev. ed., Boston: Wisdom, 1995), 175-186; and by Robert Thurman in *Life and Teachings of Tsong Khapa* (Dharmasala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1982), 99-107.

<sup>b</sup> This likely refers to those who are ready to realize emptiness but have not yet realized it.

Jang-kya's comment brings to the fore an issue that has drawn the attention of many of Tsong-kha-pa's followers. Namely, when Tsong-kha-pa says that this insight into how "the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others," just when does this occur? Jang-kya says that "just what was described above is correct," which is his own description that this is for "those who have ascertained the pure view and have not forgotten it."

I read his description as placing this profound experience some time after realizing emptiness but within still being affected by this realization. Such timing militates against those who say that it can occur in the process leading to and just prior to ascertainment, this being when all superimpositions to the contrary have been removed as one is about to realize emptiness, this being the technical meaning of having become a person in a debate whose continuum has been ripened for realization.

The other opinion Jang-kya cites that this timing militates against is at the other end of spectrum—namely, that "it is [just] for those whose analysis of the view is complete." This profound insight surely occurs for them, but, as I read Jang-kya's criticism, it can also occur prior to this level, since he indicates a distinction between having ascertained the pure view and having completed analysis of the view. He immediately cites Tsong-kha-pa's opinion on the measure of having completed analysis of the view and makes observations about it in order to set the stage for explaining that there is a range of understandings before arriving at this level:

The Foremost Omniscient [Tsong-kha-pa] says [in the *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*]:<sup>a</sup>

When without alternation and simultaneously  
From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode  
of apprehension of the object,

<sup>a</sup> *lam gyi gtso bo rnam gsum*, in *bka' 'bum thor bu (tsong kha pa)*, TBRC W486.1:356-369 (Zi Ling: mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1987); Stanza 13. For commentary by the Dalai Lama, see his *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1984), 148-153. See also the Fourth Panchen Lama's placement of this and the next stanza in the context of instructions for practice in Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Cutting through Appearances: The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1990), 95-102, as well as in Geshe Wangyal, *Door of Liberation* (New York: Lotsawa, 1978), 126-160, and also Robert Thurman, *Life and Teachings of Tsong Khapa* (Dharmasala, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1982), 57-58.



That time is completion of analysis of the view.

and after that, he says:

Moreover, if you know how the extreme of existence is  
avoided by appearances,

And the extreme of nonexistence is avoided by emptiness,

And emptiness dawns as cause and [conventionalities as]  
effects,

You will not be captivated by extreme views.

Through those statements [Tsong-kha-pa] indeed clearly speaks of how emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising, but the meaning of those statements is very difficult to realize. I do not think that it is feasible to assert that the meaning of the former passage is a mere capacity for the simultaneous dawning, with respect to one phenomenon, of the two—being a dependent-arising arisen from causes and conditions and its absence of inherent existence. The Foremost Ren-da-wa<sup>a</sup> also says something quite similar to that statement:

When the two wisdoms of belief in nondelusive cause and  
effect

And the realization that dependent-arisings are empty

Are understood in inseparable union,

You have entered the middle path free of extremes.

and:

At the very time they appear, [phenomena] are realized as  
empty

And when<sup>259</sup> emptiness is realized, appearance is not  
stopped.

When ascertainment is found with respect to how these  
two are unified,

Then the thought of the Conqueror has been realized.

Therefore, just as much as when you thoroughly analyze with stainless reasoning, you generate greater ascertainment with respect to the fact that these and those phenomena lack inherent existence, to that extent the inducement of ascertainment with respect to the fact that those phenomena are also merely dependently

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<sup>a</sup> *red mda' ba*, 1349-1412. The Sa-kya master Ren-da-wa was a principal teacher of Tsong-kha-pa especially for the view of the Middle Way School.

imputed develops in very greater force, and just as much as inducement of ascertainment with regard to fact that phenomena are only dependently imputed increases in greater force, to that extent inducement of ascertainment of the other one [the emptiness of inherent existence] arises in greater force. Furthermore, once an ascertaining consciousness—induced by inferential realization that a sprout is without inherent existence through the sign of its being a dependent-arising—has been generated and has not deteriorated, it is evident that there are many different levels of capacity with respect to how these two ascertaining consciousnesses assist each other due to gradual progress higher and higher.

Since this topic [of how the two realizations assist each other] is extremely difficult to understand and, when understood, is amazing, the Protector Nāgārjuna says [in the *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*]:

This reliant cultivation of actions and effects  
 Within knowing this emptiness of phenomena  
 Is even more amazing than the amazing  
 And even more fantastic than the fantastic.

and the Foremost Great Being [Tsong-kha-pa] says:

What is more amazing  
 And what is more fantastic  
 Than that the two ascertainments —  
 That all these are empty of inherent existence  
 And that this effect arises from that [cause] —  
 Assist each other without impediment!

There are many imports of the sameness in meaning of emptiness and dependent-arising that should be understood in still more detail than what [I] have explained above. The likes of what comes forth in the Foremost Omniscient [Tsong-kha-pa's] high sayings—his Great Exposition of Special Insight, Middle-length Exposition of Special Insight, and *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called 'Wisdom'"*—do not emerge in any of the essays of instruction on the view composed by later scholars, reputed to be very clear, or in the General Meaning Texts, Final Analysis Texts, and so forth. Hence, it is evident that when those high sayings of the Foremost Lama are explained by someone who knows how to explain them and heard by someone who knows how to listen, there are many

sources that generate joy.

Notice that just as Tsong-kha-pa (253) avoided the language of implicit realization by saying:

For such Proponents of the Middle, when they explicitly ascertain that internal and external things are dependent-arising contingent on causes, they—in *dependence upon the power of just that awareness*—will ascertain this as meaning that [things] are empty of inherent existence because they have realized that what is inherently established does not rely on another and have realized with valid cognition that the two, this [nonreliant inherent existence] and dependent-arising are contradictory.

and Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me (214, 347) avoided the same by saying:

*the one bestows understanding of the other* in the perspective of the awareness of a Proponent of the Middle who knows the absence of inherent existence

Jang-kya speaks of the two ascertainments as mutually serving to induce greater forms of the other ascertainment:

Therefore, just as much as when you thoroughly analyze with stainless reasoning, you generate greater ascertainment with respect to the fact that these and those phenomena lack inherent existence, to that extent the inducement of ascertainment with respect to the fact that those phenomena are also merely dependently imputed develops in very greater force, and just as much as inducement of ascertainment with regard to fact that phenomena are only dependently imputed increases in greater force, to that extent inducement of ascertainment of the other one [that is, the emptiness of inherent existence] arises in greater force. Furthermore, once an ascertaining consciousness—induced by inferential realization that a sprout is without inherent existence through the sign of its being a dependent-arising—has been generated and has not deteriorated, it is evident that there are many different levels of capacity with respect to how these two ascertaining consciousnesses assist each other due to gradual progress higher and higher.

As Tsong-kha-pa and Jang-kya explain, this ascertainment is inferential realization based on the reasoning such as, “The subject, a sprout, is not inherently existent because of being a dependent-arising,” which is:

- A sprout is a dependent arising because of arising from its causes—seed, water, earth, and so forth.
- Whatever is a dependent-arising is necessarily not inherently existent.
- Therefore, a sprout is not inherently existent.

When the thesis is realized, this inferential realization induces a further ascertaining consciousness,<sup>a</sup> and from that point on, there are different levels of ability with respect to how the understanding of dependent-arising assists realization of emptiness and the understanding of emptiness assists realization of dependent-arising. Understanding of how these two work together changes as progress on the path ensues. In the next chapter we will consider further issues about such reinforcement.

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<sup>a</sup> In the Consequentialist system, the ascertaining consciousness that is induced by an inferential cognition is no longer called an inference but is a direct perception (*mngon sum*, *pratyakṣa*) even though it is still conceptual. The reason why it is called a *direct* perception is that it no longer relies on a reason; the first moment of inferential realization induces the second, and thus the second moment no longer relies on the reason but relies on the power of experience. As Kōn-chog-jig-may-wang-po says:

All subsequent cognitions are necessarily direct valid cognitions. For, the second moment of an inferring consciousness that realizes that a sound is impermanent is a conceptual direct valid cognition and the second moment of a sense direct perception apprehending a form is a non-conceptual direct valid cognition.

Eventually, the conceptual direct perception turns into a nonconceptual direct perception, provided that it is teamed with powerful one-pointed concentration and then alternated with analytical meditation to the point where analysis induces more stability and stability induces more analysis; the imagistic, conceptual part of the cognition gradually disappears, resulting in nonconceptual direct realization of emptiness. See Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Cutting through Appearances: The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1990), 310.

## 13. Tsong-kha-pa on Mutual Reinforcement

To summarize the material on mutual reinforcement of the realizations of emptiness and dependent-arising thus far: Even though emptiness is a non-affirming negative, for a person who has reached a certain level:

- realization of it will induce greater realization of cause and effect—more broadly, dependent-arising—
- and similarly realization of dependent-arising will induce greater understanding of emptiness.

Nevertheless, that a realization of emptiness induces ascertainment of dependent-arising does not mean that a consciousness realizing an emptiness of inherent existence either explicitly or implicitly understands dependent-arising. Emptiness is a nonaffirming negative, and it is to be realized with nothing appearing but a vacuity of inherent existence. Still, understanding emptiness assists in deepening understanding dependent-arising, for emptiness means a lack of independence and therefore has the import of dependence. Emptiness must remain a nonaffirming negative, but just as ascertainment of dependent-arising assists in realizing emptiness, so realization of emptiness can aid in the ascertainment of dependent-arising. This is the mutually assistive understanding that is being sought.

As quoted in the previous chapter, Tsong-kha-pa addresses the topic of the mutual reinforcing understandings of emptiness and dependent-arising in his *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*,<sup>260</sup> written before<sup>261</sup> his *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom,"* which was cited and discussed above (253). The *Three Principal Aspects* is a letter of advice written in the form of a poem to his student Tsha-kho-pön-po Ngag-wang-drag-pa,<sup>a</sup> to whom he affectionately calls “child” or “son” (*bu*) in the last word of the poem. The guidance is structured around the three principal aspects of the path: the attitude definitely to leave cyclic existence, the altruistic aspiration to highest enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings, and the correct view of dependent-arising and emptiness. Our concern is with the last, the correct view.

## TAN-DAR-LHA-RAM-PA'S EXPANSIVE COMMENTARY

I will cite Tsong-kha-pa's text along with the commentary by the Inner

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<sup>a</sup> *tsha kho dpon po ngag dbang grags pa.*

Mongolian scholar Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa,<sup>a</sup> who organizes the stanzas into sections, explains each stanza briefly, and then provides a detailed discussion of the fundamental issues. Tsong-kha-pa's poem is in bold; the brackets in the poem are drawn from Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's commentary. Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's reframing of Tsong-kha-pa's poem is necessarily packed with clarifying material that makes the reading awkward, so please bear with the translation of his unpacking of the poem; I have deliberately left his long sentences so that the structure of the poem remains intact.

### *Explanation of the correct view*

This section has five parts: why realization of the profound dependent-arising is needed, how to realize the profound view of dependent-arising, how the profound dependent-arising is not realized, measure of having realized the profound dependent-arising, and the general meaning of those.

#### *1. Why realization of the profound dependent-arising is needed*

**If you are not endowed with the wisdom realizing the  
mode of subsistence,  
Even though you have familiarized with the thought  
definitely to leave cyclic existence and the altruistic  
mind,  
You cannot cut the root of cyclic existence.  
Therefore strive at the means for realizing dependent-  
arising.**

[Tsong-kha-pa] advises: If any persons are not endowed with the wisdom realizing how the mode of subsistence of phenomena is, then even though they have familiarized with the thought definitely to leave cyclic existence and the altruistic mind up to the point of generating experience of them, they cannot cut the root of cyclic existence, the ignorance apprehending self [that is, inherent existence]. Therefore, they must strive at the means for realizing dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness.

Notice that among the many ways of framing the topics—emptiness as the

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<sup>a</sup> *bstan dar lha ram pa*, 1759-1831; *Commentary on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Three Principal Aspects of the Path": Wish-Fulfilling Cow (lam gyi gtso bo rnam gsum gyi 'grel pa 'dod 'jo 'i dpag bsam)*, in *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang bstan dar)*, TBRC W29009.1:331-378 (Zi Ling: sku 'bum byams pa gling, 199?). The part translated here is 362.2-375.5/ 16b.2-23a.5.

meaning dependent-arising, dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness, or a combination of both of these—Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa in the final sentence uses the second, “realizing dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness,” which indeed is prompted by Tsong-kha-pa’s framing the correct view not as the view of emptiness but as “realizing dependent-arising.”

## 2. *How to realize the profound view of dependent-arising*

**Whoever, seeing the cause and effect of all phenomena  
Of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as never delusive,  
Destroy all the targets of apprehension of objects [as  
truly existent]  
Have entered on a path pleasing the Conqueror.**

[Tsong-kha-pa] advises: When whatever trainees see that the phenomena included within cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are never delusive—because these are solely established in reliance<sup>a</sup> and hence the presentations of all of them exist in the manner of the arising of effects in dependence upon causes—and from that point all the targets of apprehension of objects have been destroyed, that is to say, the conceived objects of the apprehension of true existence have become utterly nonexistent in the perspective of a rational consciousness analyzing the ultimate, those persons have found the final thought of the Conqueror, whereby they have entered the middle path pleasing the Conqueror.

## 3. *How the profound dependent-arising is not realized*

**As long as the two, understanding of appearances<sup>b</sup>—  
that dependent-arisings are nondelusive—  
And understanding of emptiness—that it is devoid of  
assertion—**

<sup>a</sup> *lto nas grub pa*, in other words, dependently established.

<sup>b</sup> It is interesting that Jam-yang-shay-pa in his *Great Exposition of Tenets* (Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 912, and Taipei reprint, 583.4) misquotes this line, substituting “conventionalities as nondelusive cause and effect” (*kun rdzob rgyu ’bras slu ba med pa dang*) for Tsong-kha-pa’s “appearances as nondelusive dependent-arisings” (*snang ba rten ’brel slu ba med pa dang*). Perhaps unconsciously, he is mixing up lines in order to make the point that the ultimate does indeed *appear* to a consciousness realizing it. Nevertheless, later (*Maps of the Profound*, 946) he uses the dyad of appearance and emptiness and refers back to his explanation and citation here. Tsong-kha-pa’s meaning undoubtedly is “conventional appearances.”

## Seem to be separate, there still is no realization Of the thought of the Subduer.<sup>a</sup>

[Tsong-kha-pa] advises: As long as these two understandings,

- this understanding ascertaining that dependently arisen objects and agents appearing to conventional valid cognitions are nondelusive, and
- the understanding ascertaining that the emptiness of inherent establishment—the meaning found by ultimate valid cognition—is, just as it is,<sup>b</sup> devoid of assertion by terms, that is,

<sup>a</sup> Buddhaguhya (*sangs rgyas gsang ba*) explains that the term muni (*thub pa*) means that the person has **restrained** body, speech, and mind (*lus la sogs pa sdams pa ni thub pa zhes bya 'o*); see his *Commentary on the "Concentration Continuation Tantra," bsam gtan phyi ma rim par phyed ba rgya cher bshad pa (dhyānottarapaṭalaṭīkā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 2670)*, TBRC W23703.71:3-77 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 3495, vol. 78, 70.1.5. Tibetan oral traditions also take *thub pa* as referring to one who has **overcome** the enemy that is the afflictive emotions. Many translators nicely render *muni* as "sage," but I choose "subduer" because it conveys the sense of conquest that the term has in Tibetan, for *thub pa* means "able," with a sense of being able to overcome someone else or something. (Shākya, the name of this Buddha's clan, also means "able" or "potent," this probably being the reason why the name Shākyamuni was translated into Tibetan as *shā kya thub pa*, with the first part of the compound in transliterated Sanskrit and the second in Tibetan, for otherwise it might have to be translated as *thub pa thub pa*.)

<sup>b</sup> *ji lta ba bzhin*, that is to say, in its exact nature as it perceived nondualistically in meditative equipoise. As Tsong-kha-pa says in his commentary on Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* titled *Illumination of the Thought*:

The *Sūtra on the Ten Grounds* says:

Just as the wise cannot express or see  
The trail of any bird across the sky,  
So none of the grounds of Conqueror Children  
Can be expressed. Then how can one listen?

Though a bird crosses the sky, the wise of the world cannot describe its trail in speech or see it with their minds. In the same way, though the ultimate grounds—like birds—progress through the sky of the noumenon, even expositors who are Superiors cannot describe the mode of progress *in the way that Superiors themselves experience it*. Thus, listeners cannot hear about the grounds the way they are perceived.



inexpressible by terms,

seem to be separate such that when the one appears, the other does not appear in the perspective of that awareness since their modes of apprehension are different, there still is no realization of the thought of the Subduer, in which case therefore it is appropriate to strive at methods for finding the thought of the Subduer.

#### *4. Measure of having realized the profound dependent-arising*

This section has two parts: measure of having realized the profound dependent-arising in the manner of the dawning of a composite of the two, appearance and emptiness, and a measure of having realized the profound dependent-arising that is not that one.

*Measure of having realized the profound dependent-arising in the manner of the dawning of a composite of the two, appearance and emptiness*

**When without alternation and simultaneously  
From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the  
mode of apprehension of the object,  
That time is completion of analysis of the view.**

[Tsong-kha-pa] advises: When the consciousness of that person—for whom the two, appearances (dependent-arising) and emptiness (the absence of inherent establishment), are such that when the one appears, it is difficult for the other to appear—

- can induce ascertainment with respect to emptiness in dependence upon the power of the awareness itself only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive, being able to posit appearance and emptiness simultaneously even in terms of any substratum without alternation between the two, the appearance of dependent-arising and the appearance of emptiness,
- and destroys (1) the full measure of inherent establishment, which is the chief object of the apprehension of true existence, and (2) all its mode of apprehension,

that time is the measure of this person's having completed analysis

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The import is that although nondualistically perceived reality cannot be explained exactly as it is directly perceived, it nevertheless can be explained.

of the view.<sup>a</sup>

*A measure of having realized the profound dependent-arising that is not that one*

**Moreover, if you know how the extreme of existence is avoided by appearances**

**And the extreme of nonexistence is avoided by emptiness,**

**And emptiness dawns as cause and [conventionalities as its] effects,**

**You will not be captivated by extreme views.**

[Tsong-kha-pa] advises: Moreover, there is a measure of realizing the profound dependent-arising other than that measure of realizing the profound dependent-arising by way of the simultaneous dawning of the two, appearances and emptiness. If you know well how

- by reason of appearances, that is to say, dependent-arising, the extreme of inherent existence is avoided, and
- by reason of the emptiness of inherent existence the extreme of utter nonexistence is avoided,

and that:

- emptiness abides in the manner of the cause of conventional phenomena, and
- conventional phenomena, due to being manifestations of that emptiness, also dawn as [its] effects,

you will not be captivated away from the middle path by views holding to extremes of permanence and extremes of annihilation.

### *5. The general meaning of those*

In accordance with the description in Chandrakīrti's *Commentary on (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas"* (above, 278, 282, 284) of the following as synonyms:<sup>b</sup>

Here, that which has its own entity,<sup>c</sup> its own being,<sup>d</sup> or its

<sup>a</sup> Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa will explain this at length below.

<sup>b</sup> *rnam grangs*.

<sup>c</sup> *rang gi ngo bo*.

<sup>d</sup> *rang bzhin*; that is, inherent existence.

own power,<sup>a</sup> or is just not contingent on others<sup>b</sup>  
 “inherent establishment”<sup>c</sup> [that is, “its own entity” in the citation]  
 means own-powered<sup>d</sup> because Tsong-kha-pa’s Great Exposition  
 of Special Insight (above, **Error! Bookmark not defined.**) says:

“Own power” means that when [whatsoever phenomenon] appears as established by way of its own entity, it *appears* to those consciousnesses as noncontingent on others [that is, as nonreliant on merely being posited by conceptuality] and also that it *is established* in accordance with that appearance.

and (above, **Error! Bookmark not defined.**):

“own power” is to be [understood] as a mode of abiding able to set itself up by way of its own entity right with the object.

Hence, whatever is inherently established must be able to set itself up by way of its own entity right with the object; however, the [actual] mode of abiding of phenomena, unlike this, is their existence in a manner of not being able to set themselves up from the side of the object.

For example, when three long poles are brought together and raised as rafters, they are newly established as merely posited by conceptuality thinking “This is a yurt-house,”<sup>e</sup> and since prior to being imputed this way by conceptuality a yurt-house does not exist in the individual poles, this is the meaning of its not being established from the side of the object itself. It also does not exist as able to set itself up because an awareness of a yurt-house is cancelled when the poles are separated out individually.

The Autonomists [assert] that at this time there must exist a yurt-house right with the object, for they have the qualm that if it did not, a yurt-house would not be found, due to which when the object imputed is sought, there would be no way to posit it. According to them, when the object imputed is sought, nothing other is suitable than that the yurt-house is found as the collection, or

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<sup>a</sup> *rang dbang.*

<sup>b</sup> *gzhan la rag ma las pa nyid.*

<sup>c</sup> *rang bzhin gyis grub pa.*

<sup>d</sup> *rang dbang ba.*

<sup>e</sup> *gdung khyim*; or “yurt-frame,” or more loosely perhaps “teepee.”

the shape, or as individual poles. And therefore at this juncture [the Consequentialists respond that]:

- it is not logically feasible that the collection is the yurt-house because when upon separating the poles individually, they are put in a pile, the collection exists without deteriorating, but the yurt-house does not exist, and
- it is not logically feasible that even the shape of the three poles raised together is a yurt-house because since this shape is imputed to the collection and the collection that is basis of imputation is not substantially established, an imputed existent that is imputed to it [that is, to the shape of the three poles raised together,] is not logically feasible [to be a substantially established yurt-house].

Hence, in the systems of both the Autonomists and the Consequentialists all phenomena are similarly posited through the force of appearing to nondefective awareness, but the way they are posited differs:

- The Consequentialists assert that although a snake does not exist in a mottled rope, it is posited as a snake by an awareness apprehending a mottled rope as a snake, and similarly although all phenomena do not exist within the object, they exist as merely posited there by awareness.
- The Autonomists say that since [a consciousness] apprehending a mottled rope as a snake is mistaken, a snake as posited by it is not established by way of its own character, but in general since a sense consciousness perceiving a snake is unmistaken, a snake as posited by it must be established by way of its own character because if it were not, a snake would be unfindable, but when the object imputed is sought, an illustration of a snake<sup>a</sup> is found from within its aggregates.
- [In response] to this the Consequentialists assert that although the two—[a consciousness] apprehending a mottled rope as a snake and [a consciousness] apprehending a live snake as a snake—indeed do not differ with respect to being mistaken or unmistaken,<sup>b</sup> nevertheless [a consciousness] apprehending a mottled rope as a snake has no valid cognition backing it up

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<sup>a</sup> That is to say, something that is a snake.

<sup>b</sup> Both are mistaken with respect to their appearing-objects, since their appearing-objects seem to inherently exist.

and such is not renowned as a snake in the world, due to which [such a snake] is nonexistent, whereas a live snake is renowned as a snake in the world and also is established by conventional valid cognition and furthermore is not damaged by a rational consciousness [analyzing the ultimate], due to which it is existent. Hence, it is asserted that all whatsoever conventional phenomena must rely on a full complement of all three of these features.

As the Fourteenth Dalai Lama says in *Key to Middle Way* about the position of the Consequence School:

For something to exist conventionally, it must satisfy three criteria:

1. The object must be generally renowned to a conventional consciousness. Yet, if merely being renowned were sufficient [to establish the conventional existence of an object], then even the commonly cited “child of a barren woman” would exist. Therefore, for any object to exist conventionally,
2. it must not be possible for a conventional valid cognition to contradict it. Yet, since a conventional valid cognition cannot refute inherent existence [which otherwise would exist conventionally by merely the above two criteria],
3. it must not be possible for a reasoning that analyzes the ultimate to refute it either.<sup>a</sup>

***What does it mean to be damaged by a rational consciousness?*** Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa turns to considering what being damaged by rational consciousness analyzing the ultimate means. In brief, when a rational consciousness examines inherent existence, it damages inherent existence in the sense that it proves that inherent existence does not exist, and by proving this it also damages a consciousness apprehending inherent existence in the sense that it undermines the capacity of that type of consciousness to continue to exist.

Unlike inherent existence, a consciousness apprehending inherent existence itself exists and thus, like every other existent, is established by valid cognition—that is to say, is confirmed as existing by valid cogni-

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<sup>a</sup> See H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, *The Buddhism of Tibet and the Key to the Middle Way*, translated by Jeffrey Hopkins (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1975), 74.

tion—even if its object, inherent existence, is not established by valid cognition. Therefore, a rational consciousness analyzing the ultimate does not reveal that a consciousness apprehending inherent existence does not exist; rather, a rational consciousness gradually undermines and causes such an ignorant consciousness to weaken and stop because it shows that the object that a consciousness apprehending inherent existence is conceiving has no validity. To indicate these points Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa continues:

Thus, if someone says, “It follows that [a consciousness] apprehending true existence does not exist in conventional terms because of being damaged by a rational consciousness analyzing the ultimate,” [my response is that being damaged by a rational consciousness analyzing the ultimate does not necessitate not existing in conventional terms] because the wisdom realizing the absence of true existence (1) merely damages the stable abiding of the later continuum of [a consciousness] apprehending true existence (2) but does not damage the fact that [a consciousness] apprehending true existence is established by conventional valid cognition.

The first part of the reason [which is that the wisdom realizing the absence of true existence merely damages the stable abiding of the later continuum of a consciousness apprehending true existence] is established because Tsong-kha-pa’s *Introduction to the Seven Treatises on Prime Cognition: Clearing Away the Mental Darkness of Seekers* says,<sup>262</sup> “Valid cognition stops the generation of a continuation of a similar type of that awareness.” And the second part of the reason [which is that the wisdom realizing the absence of true existence does not damage the fact that a consciousness apprehending true existence is established by conventional valid cognition] also [is established] because that very text says:

With regard to valid cognition refuting that terms or awarenesses are factually concordant, it is not, for instance, being said that valid cognition stops<sup>a</sup> those terms or awarenesses; consequently, what is disproved by valid cognition is an unestablished basis [that is, something that is nonexistent].

Therefore, the statement in Dharmakīrti’s *Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compilation of Prime Cognition”*:

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<sup>a</sup> *bkag pa*.

Because ascertaining and superimposing minds  
Are entities of what damages and what is damaged...

requires the drawing out of a distinction.

The distinction is that when a statement is refuted, the statement itself exists, whereas the meaning expressed by the statement is shown to be something that simply does not exist. The same is true for an awareness that misapprehends true existence, for instance; such an awareness exists, but true, or inherent, existence does not, and thus valid cognition refutes not the awareness but its object, true existence, which never did or will exist. By refuting its object, such an awareness gradually weakens and stops. Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa now wraps up the topic as a way to set the stage for a penetrating question:

Hence, the emptiness of [an object's] being able to set itself up from its own side, or the emptiness of noncontingency on another, is the system of the emptiness of inherent establishment on this occasion [of the Consequence School], and the mode of the feasibility of the presentation of the objects and the agents of causes, effects, and so forth in that emptiness is just this renowned as the topic most difficult to realize in this system. For, Tsong-kha-pa's Great Exposition of Special Insight says:<sup>263</sup>

The difficult point is that a combination of the two in which ascertainment is induced from the depths with respect to:

- refuting without residue an inherent nature—establishment by way of the [object's] own entity—and
- positing those very persons and so forth lacking inherent existence as the accumulators of karmas, experiencers of effects, and so forth,

such that one is able to posit [persons empty of inherent existence as accumulators of karma and so forth], hardly occurs; hence the Middle view is very difficult to find.<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> In the Medium-length Special Insight Tsong-kha-pa similarly says in speaking about the composite of two, an absence of inherent existence and the existence of merely nominal objects:

When the measure of the object of negation explained above is not grasped well and an object is analyzed with reasoning, breaking it down:

- Initially the thought arises, "This object does not exist."

That combination of these two is called “emptiness [as] the meaning of dependent-arising,” and moreover, when Tsong-kha-pa in his *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path* [quotes] the statement in the *Questions of Anavatapta King of Nāgas Sūtra*.<sup>a</sup>

Those which are produced from [causes and] conditions  
are not produced;

- 
- Then, seeing the same also with respect to the analyzer, there is even no ascertainer of nonexistence.
  - Thereby it comes that there is nothing to ascertain as, “It is this, not that.”

The dawning, thereupon, of shimmering ephemeral appearances arises in dependence on not differentiating **inherent** existence from **mere** existence and the absence of **inherent** existence from non-existence. Hence, such an emptiness is an emptiness destroying dependent-arising. Therefore, even the dawning of shimmering ephemeral appearances, induced by realizing those, is not at all the meaning of being like an illusion.

Therefore, it is not difficult, when analyzing with reasoning to think, “Persons and so forth do not in the least have an objective mode of abiding which is their being established by way of their own nature,” and in dependence on this, for these appearances to shine forth ephemerally. Such happens to all who are interested in Middle Way tenets and have heard a few scattered doctrines teaching the mode of the absence of inherent existence. However, the difficult point is that you must, from the depths, be able to induce ascertainment with respect to the negation, without residue, of an inherent nature—establishment by way of [the object’s] own nature—and be able to posit those very persons and so forth, lacking inherent existence, as the accumulators of actions, experiencers of effects, and so forth. A composite of these two hardly occurs; hence, the Middle Way view is very difficult to find.

See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa’s Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 79-80.

<sup>a</sup> For more context see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa’s Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 79-80. The sūtra is *klu’i rgyal po ma dros pas zhus pa’i mdo, anavataptanāgarājapariprcchāsūtra*, in *bka’ ’gyur (sde dge par phud*, 156), TBRC W22084.58:413-508, vol. pha, 224a.1 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), cited in *Prasannapadā*, in commentary on stanza XIII.2; sde dge 3860, *dbu ma*, vol. ’a, 81b.3-81b.4; La Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhyamikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā*, 239.10-239.13; J.W. de Jong, “Text-critical Notes on the Prasannapadā,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 20, nos. 1/2 (1978): 55: *yaḥ pratyayair jāyati sa hy ajāto na tasya utpādu svabhāvato sti / yaḥ pratyayādhiṇu sa śūnyu ukto yaḥ śūnyatām jānāti sā prasamanta iti //*. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 368.2. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 188.



They have no inherent nature of production.

[Therefore] those which rely on [causes and] conditions are said [by the Conqueror] to be empty.

[A person] who knows the emptiness [of inherent existence] is conscientious [at overcoming the unpeacefulness of the afflictive emotions].

and explains the third line he says:

Then, since the third line speaks of contingent on<sup>a</sup> and relying on conditions as the meaning of the emptiness of establishment by way of its own entity,<sup>b</sup> the emptiness of inherent establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising<sup>c</sup>

In accordance with that statement, [this combination] must be understood in one essential without being commented upon individually in a twofold way as “Emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, and dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness.” Therefore, in what way does emptiness go as the meaning of dependent-arising?

***Emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising.*** Earlier Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa framed the issue as “dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness” following Tsong-kha-pa’s call to “strive at the means for realizing dependent-arising,” but here he frames it as “emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising.” Thus, when he calls for avoiding using a twofold formula as in, “Emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, and dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness,” I take this to mean that his contribution will provide an explanation uniting the two perspectives in one realization, and this is just what he now does.

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa proceeds to offer a profoundly complex response to his own rhetorical question, laying out the psychological structure of this realization—the crown jewel to which his commentary has been leading, a demonstration of how realization engendered by consequences differs from realization produced from syllogistic reasoning. He begins with source quotes:

<sup>a</sup> *rag las.*

<sup>b</sup> *ngo bo nyid kyis grub pas stong pa.*

<sup>c</sup> *rang bzhin gyis grub pas stong pa rten 'byung gi don yin.* The remainder of the sentence is: “and not an emptiness of the capacity to perform a function, which is a negative of mere production.”

Tsong-kha-pa's *Lesser Essence of Eloquence* [that is, his *Praise of Dependent-Arising*] says:

You [said] that when emptiness  
Is seen as the meaning of dependent-arising,  
In the emptiness of inherent existence  
Even the feasibility of objects and agents is not contradictory.

and his *Great Commentary: Ocean of Reasoning* on the twenty-fourth chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom* says:<sup>264</sup>

Since it is frequently said that the meaning of the emptiness of inherent establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising, what does this mean? It would be unreasonable if it were like the import of positing, for instance, that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, for the very awareness ascertaining that effects arise in dependence upon causes and conditions would [absurdly] also ascertain the meaning of emptiness. However, even if it is asserted that the very meaning of the term expressing dependent-arising is the meaning of the emptiness, there is the same damage. Even if it is asserted that [emptiness] is the implicit meaning of explicitly ascertaining dependent-arising, this is not feasible, as before.

Therefore, what is the meaning of this? It is not asserted those ways. Well then, how is it posited? That the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others. For such Proponents of the Middle, when they explicitly ascertain that internal and external things are dependent-arising contingent on causes, they—in dependence upon the power of just that awareness—will ascertain this as meaning that [things] are empty of inherent existence because they have realized that what is inherently established does not rely on another and have realized with valid cognition that the two, this [nonreliant inherent existence] and dependent-arising are contradictory.

Hence, through dependent-arising itself they gain as-

certainment of the emptiness that negates inherent existence, and therefore they become accustomed—immediately upon seeing, hearing, or being mindful that sprouts and so forth rely on causes and conditions—to contemplating the principle of the absence of inherent existence through just that fact.

Let me explain this in the style of making additions to the words in accordance with what I can figure out.<sup>a</sup>

This must be explained as meaning a way that [understandings of] the two, emptiness and dependent-arising, mutually bestow understanding, the one on the other. Hence, when another party—to whom it is being proven by the sign of dependent-arising that a sprout does not inherently exist—generates an inference realizing that a sprout does not inherently exist, in the perspective of this person a sprout's absence of inherent establishment goes, from this point, as meaning a sprout's dependent-arising, but not before this.

The sequence is:

1. A person generates an inferential consciousness realizing that a sprout does not inherently exist because of being a dependent-arising.
2. Upon having realized the sprout's emptiness of inherent existence, the person can understand that a sprout's absence of inherent establishment serves to mean a sprout's dependent-arising.

This second realization occurs only upon attainment of the first, realization of emptiness, not before. Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa cites a source in Tsong-kha-pa's statement that this can happen for those who have refuted inherent existence with valid cognition, that is to say, for those who have ascertained emptiness:

To explain this [Tsong-kha-pa] says:<sup>b</sup>

Since it is frequently said that the meaning of the emptiness of inherent establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising, what does this mean? It would be unreasonable if it were like the import of positing, for instance, that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid]

<sup>a</sup> Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa is assuming a humble posture.

<sup>b</sup> Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa gives the beginning and the end of the quote, which I have provided in full.

as the meaning of pot, for the very awareness ascertaining that effects arise in dependence upon causes and conditions would [absurdly] also ascertain the meaning of emptiness. However, even if it is asserted that the very meaning of the term expressing dependent-arising is the meaning of the emptiness, there is the same damage. Even if it is asserted that [emptiness] is the implicit meaning of explicitly ascertaining dependent-arising, this is not feasible, as before.

Therefore, what is the meaning of this? It is not asserted those ways. Well then, how is it posited? That the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others.

Now, in a fascinating commentary Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa explains how an inferential realization of emptiness is produced according to the Autonomy branch of the Middle Way School and then contrasts this with how an inferential realization of emptiness is produced according to the Consequence branch of the Middle Way School:

Moreover, unlike in the Autonomy School and so forth in which it is asserted that other valid cognitions must be involved—such as that initially the property of the subject is established, and after that in order to establish the entailment a common locus of the sign and the predicate of negandum is refuted, and so forth—in this [Consequentialist] system the proposition is realized while the functioning of just the awareness ascertaining the property of the subject in the proof of this—that is to say, that a sprout is a dependent-arising—has not deteriorated. Thereby, the dawning, to such an inference, of a combination of the two, a sprout's emptiness of inherent existence and a sprout's dependent-arising, arises from the power of ascertaining a sprout as a dependent-arising. To explain this [Tsong-kha-pa] says:<sup>a</sup>

For such Proponents of the Middle, when they explicitly ascertain that internal and external things are dependent-arisings contingent on causes, they—in dependence upon

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<sup>a</sup> Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa gives the beginning and the end of the quote, which I have provided in full; he inserts a full stop at the end of the quote, which is not in the source text.

the power of just that awareness—will ascertain this as meaning that [things] are empty of inherent existence<sup>a</sup>

To unpack Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's profound and complex reading of Tsong-kha-pa's statement, we need first to examine the process of the generation of inferential realization in the "Autonomy School and so forth," that is to say, also in at least the Sūtra School Following Reasoning and the Mind Only School.

In the Dignāga-Dharmakīrti traditions utilized by those schools, the full process of debate is as follows for proving, for instance, that a sprout is empty of true existence because of being a dependent-arising:<sup>b</sup>

1. *Statement of a consequence implying a proof of the opposite*

It follows that the subject, a sprout, is not a dependent-arising because of being truly existent.

This type of unwanted consequence is stated for the sake of breaking down the pointedness, or vibrancy,<sup>c</sup> of the opponent's adherence to a wrong view. Through having been demonstrated inner contradictions in his or her own system—namely, that a sprout is truly existent, that a sprout is a dependent-arising, and that whatever is a dependent-arising is truly existent—the opponent becomes doubtful about her or his own view. This prepares the opponent for the statement of the reasoning proving that a sprout is empty of true existence, thereby becoming a suitable vessel for the second step.

2. *Statement of reasonings that establish the presence of the reason in the subject, the entailment, and the counter-entailment*

a. *Statement of reasoning that establishes the presence of the sign in the subject*

The subject, a sprout, is a dependent-arising because of being produced from causes and conditions such as a seed, earth, and water.

The reason of this syllogism need not be further established because it is obvious from common experience. If it were necessary to establish every reason—if there were not an appeal to obvious experience—the number

<sup>a</sup> The remainder of the sentence is in the next citation.

<sup>b</sup> In this brief form the entailment is stated first, but in the longer form, given below, it is not. This material on the two procedures is adapted from oral teachings of the late Geshe Gedün Lodrö of Gomang College and, later, Hamburg University, where he became a Professor.

<sup>c</sup> Various treated as *rtse*, pointedness, or *rtsal*, vibrancy.

of reasons required to establish the presence of the original reason in the subject would be limitless, and there would be no opportunity to realize the basic thesis. This is why it is said that all reasoning meets back to obvious experience. Still, if the opponent is not yet satisfied, it is not the proper occasion for proving to this person that a sprout is empty of true existence. Other indirect means are required to bring the person to the point of recognizing the obvious dependence of a sprout on causes and conditions.

*b. Statement of reasoning that establishes the entailment*

The subject, a dependent-arising, is empty of true existence because inherent, or independent, existence is opposite to dependent-arising.

The usual case is that the mind that explicitly realizes the entailment also implicitly realizes the counter-entailment and vice versa; therefore, only either the entailment or the counter-entailment needs to be established. This is because explicitly realizing that the sign exists in only similar cases implies realization that the sign is only nonexistent in dissimilar cases. Similarly, if the sign is explicitly realized as only nonexistent in dissimilar cases, it is implicitly realized as existent only in similar cases. However, here there is no dissimilar class since there is nothing that is not a dependent-arising.

*3. Correct statement of proof for similar instances*

Whatever is a dependent-arising is necessarily empty of true existence, as in the case, for example, of a reflection; a sprout is also a dependent-arising.

A person of very sharp intellect would also grasp the opposite, and, therefore, for this person the next step would not have to be stated; or the fourth step might be stated and not the third. The choice of whether to state a proof for similar or dissimilar instances is determined by the type of opponent. If the party is dominated by indecision, not being able to decide whether a sprout is a dependent-arising or not, a proof for similar instances is stated. If dominated by the opposite view that a sprout is not a dependent-arising, a proof for dissimilar instances is stated. However, to all except the very sharp, both must be proved. The stater bases the decision of what is necessary on the opponent's responses during step two and to questions asked.

*4. Correct statement of proof for dissimilar instances*

Whatever is a non-dependent-arising is necessarily not contingent on another.

No example can be stated because a non-dependent-arising does not exist and the same is so for something that is noncontingent on another.

### *5. Restatement of the correct statement of proof for either similar or dissimilar instances*

This is done for the sake of generating in the opponent a simultaneous awareness of the three modes of the reason which is its presence in the subject, the entailment, and the counterentailment. This awareness is also called “a mind apprehending the reason” and is the direct cause of the inferring consciousness realizing that a sprout is empty of true existence. At this moment the opponent becomes a correct, or proper, or full-fledged second party<sup>a</sup> of a debate in that this person is prepared for the basic reasoning that a sprout is empty of true existence because of being a dependent-arising.

### *5. Statement of the basic syllogism*

The subject, a sprout, is empty of true existence because of being a dependent-arising.

The now full-fledged second party realizes that a sound is empty of true existence, after which this person ceases to be a second party—that is to say, a party to this debate—because of having finished realizing the thesis.

In this way, the prescribed mode of debate in the Dignāga-Dharmakīrti traditions is played out over many steps. However, Consequentialists hold that for sharp opponents the mere statement of a consequence, “It follows that the subject, a sprout, does not rely on anything because of being inherently established,” can generate in a proper second party a consciousness inferring that a sprout is empty of inherent existence.<sup>b</sup> Tan-dar-lham-pa’s point is that according to the Consequence School the thesis, or proposition, that a sprout is empty of inherent existence is realized while the functioning of just the awareness ascertaining that a sprout is a dependent-arising remains active.

He holds that from the force itself of ascertaining that the reason (dependent-arising) is a property of the subject (a sprout), a combination of

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<sup>a</sup> The first party is the stater.

<sup>b</sup> Since Autonomists and others use consequences as the first step in a long process of reasoning, it is not the usage of consequences that singles out Consequentialists but their assertion that the statement of a consequence alone is sufficient to generate in another a consciousness realizing a thesis.

the two, a sprout's emptiness of inherent existence and a sprout's dependent-arising, dawns to an inference realizing that a sprout is empty of inherent existence. He shows how Tsong-kha-pa's statements indicate that this is accomplished through reasoning by way of a consequence, not a syllogism, even though Tsong-kha-pa does not explicitly speak of consequences. As Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa says:

The reason why a combination of the two, appearance and emptiness, dawns to that inference<sup>a</sup> is that this party has already realized that inherent establishment entails noncontingency on another through the functioning of the consequence, "It follows that the subject, a sprout, does not rely on anything because of being inherently established." To explain this [Tsong-kha-pa] says:<sup>b</sup>

because they have realized that what is inherently established does not rely on another and have realized with valid cognition that the two, this [nonreliant inherent existence] and dependent-arising are contradictory.

When faced with the unwanted consequence, "It follows that the subject, a sprout, does not rely on anything because of being inherently established," an appropriate other party puts it together that inherent establishment entails nonreliance on another and realizes that inherent establishment and dependent-arising just cannot go together. Thus, realization of the entailment occurs first, and this forms a context for the subsequent understanding that a sprout is a dependent-arising to immediately prompt realization that a sprout is empty of inherent establishment. In the process of syllogistic reasoning as laid out above, however, establishment of the presence of a reason in the subject occurred before establishment of the entailment, this being the order of Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's description of syllogistic reasoning when he said, "unlike in the Autonomy School and so forth in which it is asserted that other valid cognitions must be involved—such as that *initially* the property of the subject is established, and *after that* in order to establish the entailment a common locus of the sign and the predicate of negandum is refuted, and so forth." This was Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's clue for framing Tsong-kha-pa's exposition as a special feature of consequential reasoning.<sup>c</sup> Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa continues:

<sup>a</sup> That is, inferential consciousness.

<sup>b</sup> Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa gives the beginning and the end of the quote, which I have provided in full.

<sup>c</sup> A possible qualm could be raised against Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's magnificent



Hence, to this inference realizing—through the sign of dependent-arising—that a sprout is empty of inherent establishment both a sprout’s emptiness of inherent establishment and a sprout’s dependent-arising appear, and moreover, the appearance [of the sprout] as empty of inherent establishment is from the force of ascertaining it as a dependent-arising, and the appearance of it as a dependent-arising<sup>a</sup> is from the force of realizing it as empty of inherent establishment, whereby when the party sees sprouts and so forth, this person sees them as dependent-arisings, and due to this also induces ascertainment that they are empty of inherent establishment.

The sequence is that:

1. From the statement of the unwanted consequence, “It follows that the subject, a sprout, does not rely on anything because of being inherently established,” an appropriate party understands that inherent establishment entails nonreliance on another and realizes that inherent establishment and dependent-arising are just at odds.
2. Then, this allows for understanding that a sprout is a dependent-arising

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exposition. It is that in a more formal way the Autonomy School uses a two-membered statement of proof commonly found in the Dignāga-Dharmakīrti traditions of logic. In these traditions a correct proof statement has two members in which the expression of entailment comes first:

1. *Expression of entailment*: Whatever is a dependent-arising is necessarily empty of true existence, as in the case, for example, of a reflection.
2. *Expression of the presence of the sign in the subject*: A sprout is also a dependent-arising.

(The thesis—that a sprout is empty of true existence—is considered to be implicit and thus is not explicitly stated.) Since, when done this way, the syllogism calls for the expression of entailment to be made first, explicit or implicit realization of the counter-entailment would precede realization of the presence of the sign in the subject, and thus this order might seem to fulfill the type of sequence that Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa requires for a dual combination to appear to the mind of the other party. Still, it might be objected that strict requirements for formal statements might interfere. Nevertheless, I wonder whether it is likely that for those used to the process such formalities do not get in the way of realization. In any case, it is clear that this shorter sequence of syllogistic reasoning is not what Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa had in mind.

<sup>a</sup> This latter statement of “the appearance of it as a dependent-arising” must refer to subsequent perception of the sprout under the influence of realization of its emptiness; however, Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa does not seem to openly discuss this except for this extremely brief reference.

to immediately prompt realization that a sprout is empty of inherent establishment.

3. That realization of the emptiness of inherent establishment affects subsequent perception of phenomena such that they appear to be dependent-arisings.
4. And this appearance of phenomena as dependent-arisings in turn induces ascertainment of those phenomena as empty of inherent establishment.

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa cites his source:

To explain this [Tsong-kha-pa] says:<sup>a</sup>

Hence, through dependent-arising itself they gain ascertainment of the emptiness that negates inherent existence, and therefore they become accustomed—immediately upon seeing, hearing, or being mindful that sprouts and so forth rely on causes and conditions—to contemplating the principle of the absence of inherent existence through just that fact.

At that time this called “the combination of the two—appearance and emptiness—occurs for that person, whereby these called “emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising” and “realizing the profound dependent-arising” also are just this.

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa has completed his profoundly complex presentation of how realization engendered by consequences can differ from realization produced from syllogistic reasoning, whereby he has avoided using the twofold formula of, “Emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, and dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness,” and instead of this has given an explanation uniting these two perspectives in one realization. He has laid before us the crown jewel to which his commentary has been leading; the crescendo has been reached. The remainder of his presentation turns to fending off possible objections, and thus the reader may want to stop here and read, re-read, and contemplate his presentation to the point for the impact to sink in. This is the ground, foundation, and platform on which his insight stands. The further points deal with how it is embedded in surrounding cultural concepts and approaches, this location firming its stance.

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<sup>a</sup> Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa gives the beginning and the end of the quote, which I have provided in full.

## DEFENDING THE PRESENTATION

### Issue #41: Could this be a realization of an affirming negative?

To hold that there is a combination of appearance and emptiness seems to turn realization of emptiness into realization of an affirming negative, and so Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa immediately turns to this accusation:

*Possible thought [objecting] to this:* To an inference realizing that a sprout is empty of inherent establishment a sprout's appearance as a dependent-arising does not dawn; it is contradictory for an appearance of an affirming negative or an appearance of a positive to dawn to a conceptual consciousness that takes a nonaffirming negative as its explicit object (*ngos yul*).

*Response:* That is a misunderstanding. A sprout indeed appears to an inference realizing that a sprout is empty of inherent establishment, but this appearance is not an appearance that dawns in place of the negation of the object of negation but is an appearance that dawns as the substratum with respect to which an emptiness of inherent establishment is being delineated, and hence there is not even the slightest contradiction in the dawning of the appearances of both the qualificand substratum<sup>a</sup> [which in this case is the sprout] and the quality<sup>b</sup> [which is the sprout's emptiness] because Tsong-kha-pa's Great Exposition of Special Insight says:<sup>c</sup>

In that way, the emptiness of inherent establishment—in which even a speck of establishment by way [the object's] own entity is delineated as nonexistent with respect to phenomena—exists as an attribute<sup>d</sup> in the context of taking these phenomena of forms and so forth substrata, and hence it is not contradictory for those two [that is, (1)

<sup>a</sup> *gzhi chos can*.

<sup>b</sup> *chos nyid*; I usually translate this term as “noumenon” in its basic meaning as “reality,” but here it is clear that it means quality, because it is equivalent with “attribute” (*khyad chos*) in the citation from Tsong-kha-pa just below.

<sup>c</sup> See also the translation in the Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 200; the brackets in the latter part of the sentence are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 401.6.

<sup>d</sup> *khyad chos*.

forms and so forth as the substrata and (2) emptiness as the attribute] to exist as objects of one awareness.

and because the Go-mang *Decisive Analysis of (Dharmakīrti's) "Commentary on (Dignāga's) 'Compilation of Prime Cognition'"* [by Jam-yang-shay-pa] also says:

To a conceptual consciousness explicitly apprehending that a brahmin does not drink beer, a brahmin must appear as the substratum, and not drinking beer must appear as the attribute, and hence a brahmin indeed appears, but he is not another, positive phenomenon projected, or affirmed,<sup>a</sup> by that conceptual consciousness either explicitly or implicitly.

Earlier (234) we saw Tsong-kha-pa's consideration of two cases where other scholars confused the basis of negation with the object of negation; one of them was the nonaffirming negative expressed by "brahmins do not drink beer," which, as Bhāvaviveka says (223) "simply refutes [or forbids] only this and does not express that [brahmins] drink or do not drink a beverage other than this," and as Tsong-kha-pa adds, "brahmins in this case are the basis with respect to which it is being determined whether another phenomenon is projected or not upon the elimination of the object of negation [namely, drinking beer] and are not another phenomenon projected [in place of drinking beer]."

Here, Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa uses the example of a conceptual consciousness apprehending the nonaffirming negative expressed by "a brahmin does not drink beer." To this consciousness, two objects appear, or are perceived, at the same time—a brahmin (the basis of negation) and not drinking beer (a nonaffirming negative). His point is that, similarly, to an inferential consciousness realizing that a sprout is empty of inherent existence by reason of being a dependent-arising, the sprout (the basis of negation) appears as a dependent-arising, and the emptiness of inherent existence (a nonaffirming negative) appears. Since the dependently arisen sprout does not appear (or is not perceived) in place of the inherent existence that is negated, there is no problem.

The concern in what these scholars are considering is not with a consciousness of meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness, since Gelug-pa scholars agree that when emptiness is directly realized, except by a

<sup>a</sup> 'phangs pa 'am sgrub pa 'i chos.

Buddha, all types of dualistic appearance vanish. A consciousness of meditative equipoise is devoid of the five types of dualistic appearance:<sup>a</sup>

1. There is no conceptual appearance.
2. There is no sense of subject and object; rather, subject and object are like fresh water poured into fresh water, indistinguishable.
3. There is no appearance of inherent existence.
4. There is no appearance of conventional phenomena; only emptiness appears.
5. There is no appearance of difference; although the emptinesses of all phenomena in all world systems appear, they do not appear to be different.

For a conceptual, inferential consciousness realizing emptiness, however, all five of these types of dualistic appearance occur, and thus some Ge-lug-pa scholars speak of this inferential consciousness in terms of two perspectives—an appearance perspective to which the basis of emptiness (the sprout, for instance) appears and an ascertainment perspective that ascertains the emptiness of the sprout. However, other Ge-lug-pa scholars hold that even regarding an inferential consciousness realizing emptiness, only an immaculate vacuity that is the absence of inherent existence of the sprout appears to the appearance perspective, and the sprout itself does not appear, but it is clear that this is not Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's opinion.

## Issue #42: Do the two ascertainments occur simultaneously?

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa could be asked whether the two ascertainments—of dependent-arising and of emptiness—occur simultaneously, but it seems that he answers that question when he says, “in this [Consequentialist] system the proposition is realized while the functioning of just the awareness ascertaining the property of the subject in the proof of this—that is to say, that a sprout is a dependent-arising—has not deteriorated, whereby the dawning, to such an inference, of a combination of the two, a sprout's emptiness of inherent existence and a sprout's dependent-arising, arises from the power of ascertaining a sprout as a dependent-arising.” For, by specifying “the functioning...has not deteriorated” he indicates that the

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<sup>a</sup> The source for this list is the late Ye-shay-thub-tan (*ye shes thub bstan*), abbot emeritus of Lo-sel-ling College of Dre-pung Monastery, re-established in Mundgod, Karnataka State, South India. The contents of the list are common knowledge among Ge-lug-pa scholars.

force of the previous ascertainment carries over during the present ascertainment of emptiness. I see this as his way of avoiding the fault of one consciousness having two different simultaneous modes of apprehension.

To make this very point, Ngag-wang-pal-dan, in explaining how the two extremes are avoided, uses the word “person” instead of “consciousness” to emphasize that the very consciousness itself that realizes dependent-arising does not realize emptiness, and the very consciousness itself that realizes emptiness does not realize dependent-arising; rather, realization of the one merely reinforces realization of the other. As Ngag-wang-pal-dan says in his *Annotations to Jam-yang-shay-pa’s Great Exposition of Tenets*:<sup>265</sup>

Tsong-kha-pa’s *Three Principal Aspects of the Path* says:

When without alternation and simultaneously  
From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode  
of apprehension of the object,  
That time is completion of analysis of the view.

Accordingly,

- for persons who have completed analysis of the view in this way the way the extreme of existence is avoided through appearance is that as much as they take to mind the meaning of dependent-arising, which is merely posited by name and terminology, to that same degree does the force of their awareness conceiving inherent existence diminish, and
- for such persons the way the extreme of nonexistence is avoided through emptiness is that as much as they take to mind the emptiness of inherent existence, to that same degree does the force of their awarenesses not believing in the cause and effect of karma and apprehending the cause and effect of karma to be nonexistent diminish;

a sūtra says:<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> This is the *Questions of Anavatapta King of Nāgas Sūtra* (*klu'i rgyal po ma dros pas zhus pa'i mdo, anavataptanāgarājaparipṛcchāsūtra*); sde dge 156, *mdo sde*, vol. *pha*, 224a.1; cited in *Prasannapadā*, in commentary on stanza XIII.2; sde dge 3860, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 81b.3-81b.4; La Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhymikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā*, 239.10-239.13; J.W. de Jong, “Text-critical Notes on the Prasannapadā,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 20, nos. 1/2 (1978): 55: *yaḥ pratyayair jāyati sa hy ajāto na tasya*

Those which are produced from [causes and] conditions  
are not produced;

They have no inherent nature of production.

[Therefore] those which rely on [causes and] conditions  
are said [by the Conqueror] to be empty.

[A person] who knows the emptiness [of inherent existence] is conscientious [at overcoming the unpeacefulness of the afflictive emotions].

and Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* says:<sup>a</sup>

Whoever has generated doubt

Toward what is not obvious in Buddha's word

Will believe that only Buddha [is omniscient]

Based on [his profound teaching of] emptiness.

and the Great Foremost Being [Tsong-kha-pa] says [in the *Praise of Dependent-Arising*]:

Also through this [compatibility of dependent-arising and emptiness]

The statements are understood well

That no disputants find a proper opportunity

To censure what you [Buddha] have taught.

Then, Ngag-wang-pal-dan adds a comment to distance himself from the type of statement we saw above by Jang-kya (292) that “even in each of the four schools of tenets, there are explanations that (1) both the extreme of existence and the extreme of nonexistence are avoided through appearance and (2) both extremes are also avoided through emptiness.” He calls for research on whether there actually are such sources:

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*utpādu svabhāvato sti / yaḥ pratyayādhīnu sa śūnyu ukto yaḥ śūnyatām jānāti sā prasamanta iti //*. Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 368.2. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 188.

<sup>a</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa (catuḥśa-takaśāstrakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3846), TBRC W23703.97:3-37 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5246, vol. 95; stanza 280 which occurs in Chapter 12; parenthetical additions are from Gyal-tshab's commentary, 90b.3-91a.2; see *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas: Gyal-tshab on Āryadeva's Four Hundred*, commentary by Geshe Sonam Rinchen, translated and edited by Ruth Sonam (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1994), 241-242.

Although nowadays it is widely renowned that “The mere assertion that the extreme of existence is avoided through appearance and the extreme of nonexistence is avoided through emptiness” is not unique, but the way they are avoided is unique [in the Consequence School],” I think it probably needs to be researched whether or not there are sources explaining such in texts of the Autonomy School and below.

His suggestion is that only the Consequence School has this feature.

### Issue #43: Could it be that Tsong-kha-pa holds that an inference realizes an affirming negative in place of the negated inherent existence?

Next Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa turns to handling a qualm based on a misreading of Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Exposition of Special Insight* in his *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*. The passage actually is about the state *after* meditation on emptiness during which the meditator views an affirming negative, a combination of the appearance of the object and an emptiness of inherent existence, called “mere illusion” or “illusory-like appearance.” The misreader, however, takes the passage as meaning that Tsong-kha-pa sees such an affirming negative as what is being projected, or affirmed, in place of the negation of inherent existence, which would violate the rule that only a nonaffirming negative is established by the reasoning proving emptiness. Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa first states the qualm and then his response:

*A qualm also concerning this:* Even if this inference realizing that a sprout is not inherently established perceives an affirming negative in place of the negation of the object of negation, there would be no fallacy because Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Exposition of Special Insight* says:<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> With brackets added from *Four Interwoven Annotations* (vol. 2, 660.2-660.4) to make Tsong-kha-pa’s intention clearer, the passage reads:

Hence, if a rational consciousness examining whether an inherent nature exists or does not exist apprehended the meaning of mere illusion as existing [in the perspective of analysis by reasoning], it would be a fallacy, but since apprehension that—with respect to things—the meaning of mere illusion exists in place of the negation of an inherent nature definitely must be generated [by way of another awareness (in the subsequent state of meditating on mere illusion)] upon having done analysis



Hence, if a rational consciousness examining whether an inherent nature exists or does not exist apprehended the meaning of mere illusion as existing, it would be a fallacy, but since apprehension that—with respect to things—the meaning of mere illusion exists in place of the negation of an inherent nature definitely must be generated upon having done analysis by that reasoning, this is not a fallacy.

*Response:* Though the words of that passage are clear, at this point there is no entailment [that if this inference realizing that a sprout is not inherently established perceives an affirming negative in place of the negation of the object of negation, there would be no fallacy, for this passage is describing] the mode of the dawning of illusory-like subsequent attainment following upon space-like meditative equipoise and not the mode of the dawning of the combination of the two—appearance and emptiness—of this occasion.

Tsong-kha-pa does indeed use the vocabulary of “the meaning of mere illusion exists *in place of the negation of an inherent nature*” which suggests that mere illusion, or an affirming negative that is a combination of appearance and emptiness, is projected in place of the negation of inherent existence, seeming to jar against his own tenets. However, Tan-dar-lham-pa puts Tsong-kha-pa’s statement in context by pointing out that he is speaking about a state following spacelike meditative equipoise, and indeed just prior to this discussion Tsong-kha-pa clearly indicates that he is describing an experience subsequent to meditative equipoise:<sup>a</sup>

If you understand [such] points about this [mode of the dawning of (phenomena) as like illusions], you will understand well how in the state subsequent to meditative equipoise illusory-like emptiness [which is a combination of the two, appearance and emptiness] dawns through the force of having meditated on space-like emptiness [which is a mere emptiness of inherent existence] in meditative equipoise.

Tsong-kha-pa in the above passage is addressing a state subsequent to space-like meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness, whereas Tan-

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by that reasoning, [such an apprehension] is not a fallacy.

See also the translation in the Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 301-302.

<sup>a</sup> See also the translation in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 301; the brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 658.3.

dar-lha-ram-pa is speaking about a different type of “dawning of the combination of the two—appearance and emptiness,” namely, a phenomenon as a dependent-arising and its emptiness to an inferential consciousness, as is Tsong-kha-pa and the other scholars in the type of passages we have been considering. In short, the misreader has confused the context.

## Issue #44: Are you going to say the same about other inferences not concerned with emptiness?

With the context of our concern narrowed to inferential realization, Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa turns to complications that naturally arise about other, more mundane inferences, such as realizing that a sound is impermanent. He considers whether in this context the reason remains appearing to the inferential consciousness realizing the thesis that sound is impermanent:

*Objection:* Well then, sound’s [being] a product also would appear to an inference realizing that a sound is impermanent by the sign of [its being] a product because [according to you] such is the case in the proof that a sprout is without true establishment by the sign of [its being] a dependent-arising.

*Response:* Analyze whether a distinction is to be made since the sign of [something’s being] a dependent-arising has the capacity of avoiding the two extremes, whereas the sign of [something’s being] a product does not.

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa provocatively calls on the reader to examine whether the case of dependent-arising is in a different category, since it is capable of avoiding the two extremes. That he leaves the matter in the hands of the reader tells us that he has walked this topic back to a hard spot. Nevertheless, he returns to this intriguing topic below after the next point.

## Issue #45: Could this sort of induced realization be quite common?

In turning to explain how realization of the emptiness of inherent establishment affects subsequent perception of phenomena such that they appear to be dependent-arisings (number 3 in the sequence above), Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa offers an explanation embedded in the study of *Signs and Reasonings*, the final phase of Ge-lug-pa education preliminary to study of the *Five Great Books*. In *Signs and Reasonings* logical reasons, or signs, are divided into three types—effect signs, nature signs, and nonobservation signs. The nineteenth-century Tibetan scholar, Pur-bu-jog Jam-pa-gya-

tsho, for instance,<sup>a</sup>

discusses the division of correct effect signs into five types, correct effect signs that:

- (1) prove an actual cause (*dn gos rgyu*; *sākṣat-kāraṇa*),
- (2) prove a preceding cause (*rgyu sngon song*; *\*samanantara-hetu*),
- (3) prove a general cause (*rgyu spyi*; *\*sāmānya-hetu*),<sup>b</sup>
- (4) prove a particular cause (*rgyu khyad par*; *asādhāraṇa-kāraṇa*), and
- (5) provide a means of inferring causal attributes (*rgyu chos rjes dpog*).

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa uses the last of these as an avenue to show that this kind of induced realization is not unusual. Due to the turgid vocabulary of such a textbook, his actually rather simple explanation seems excessively complicated but is easily unpacked:

Moreover, when an inference realizing that a sprout does not inherently exist is generated by the sign of dependent-arising, it is generated having the capacity also of inferring another attribute of that predicate of the proposition, and hence although at its own time [an inference realizing that a sprout does not inherently exist] does not ascertain that a sprout is produced from a seed, it is generated in a manner allowing for inducing ascertainment of such production [that is, inducing ascertainment that a sprout is produced from a seed].

For example, the inference generated in dependence upon the sign, “With respect to the subject, on a smoky pass, there exists the capacity for fire to produce changes in fuel because smoke exists,”<sup>c</sup> not only infers fire, the predicate of the proposition in the

<sup>a</sup> As presented by Katherine Manchester Rogers in her translation and multifaceted analysis of Pur-bu-jog Jam-pa-gya-tsho’s (*phur bu ldog byams ba rgya mtsho*, 1825–1901) contribution to this genre, *The Topic of Signs and Reasonings from the “Great Path of Reasoning” in the Magic Key to the Path of Reasoning, Explanation of the Collected Topics Revealing the Meaning of the Texts on Prime Cognition*; see Katherine Manchester Rogers, *Tibetan Logic* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2009), 159.

<sup>b</sup> This type is also called an effect sign proving the self-isolate (*rang ldog*) of the cause.

<sup>c</sup> *du ldan gyi la la chos can/ mes bud shing gi ’gyur ba bskyed pa’i nus pa yod de/ du ba yod pa’i phyir.*

proof of that, but also infers its [that is, fire's] attribute, the capacity to produce changes in fuel, and hence this sign is called "an effect sign inferring a causal attribute,"<sup>a</sup> and also ascertainment is induced in which this party thinks that such a mode of blazing fire, without question, changes fuel to ash.

Similarly, within depths of the mind<sup>b</sup> of a party—for whom a sprout is proven to be without inherent existence through the sign of dependent-arising—there is ascertainment, in the sense of being very much able to be induced, thinking, "Such a mode of a sprout's emptiness of self-power has, without question, the attribute of contingency on another." It is due to this that dependent-arising is praised as "the monarch of reasonings avoiding the two extremes." This is what [I] think.

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa uses an example to show that when a proposition is realized, something further can also be ascertained. The example is an inferential consciousness generated from the statement: "With respect to the subject, on a smoky pass, there exists the capacity for fire to produce changes in fuel because smoke exists." One infers fire and its attribute, the capacity to produce changes in fuel, but also a further ascertainment can be induced, namely, that this blazing fire undoubtedly transforms fuel to ash. His point is that, similarly, when a properly prepared party is faced with the statement, "The subject, a sprout, does not inherently exist because of being a dependent-arising," the person not only infers that a sprout does not inherently exist but also is capable of inferring another attribute of the absence of inherent existence, which the person does not ascertain right then—that a sprout is produced from a seed, or, worded another way, that a sprout's emptiness of self-power undoubtedly has the attribute of reliance on another, that it is a dependent-arising. This is how realization of the emptiness of inherent establishment affects subsequent perception of phenomena such that they appear to be dependent-arising.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *rgyu'i chos rjes su dpog pa'i 'bras rtags*. For a thorough discussion of this type of reasoning see Rogers, *Tibetan Logic*, 168-174.

<sup>b</sup> *zhe phug*.

<sup>c</sup> It seems to me that the reasoning of dependent-arising breaks down ascent to appearance of inherent existence such that the emptiness of inherent existence can be realized, and the very realization of the emptiness of inherent existence itself must bring home the stark absence of inherent existence to such an extent that its power undermines the influence of the subsequent appearance of the inherent existence of phenomena, thereby inducing perception that phenomena are depend-

## Issue #46: Could dependent-arising itself avoid the two extremes?

That the reasoning of dependent-arising has this feature makes it “the monarch of reasonings avoiding the two extremes.” Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa discusses what this means:

Regarding the way dependent-arising avoids the two extremes earlier scholars said:

When one states, “The subject, a sprout, does not inherently exist because of arising dependently,”

- due to the capacity of having affixed to the predicate of the proposition a qualification of the object of negation, “does not inherently exist,” [a sprout] is not understood as utterly nonexistent but can be understood as meaning relying on another or being contingent on another, by reason of which emptiness avoids the extreme of nonexistence, and
- due to the capacity of mentioning in the sign a combination of the two, dependence and arising, “because of arising dependently” [a sprout] is not understood as just arising but can be understood as empty of having nonreliant own-power, by reason of which appearance avoids the extreme of existence.

They said that this is the way appearance avoids the extreme of existence and the way emptiness avoids the extreme of nonexistence.

One would expect emptiness to avoid the extreme of exaggerated existence since it is the negative of inherent existence, and dependent-arising to avoid the extreme of nonexistence since it affirms the arising, or establishment, of phenomena, and indeed these are true. However, since this is an emptiness of *inherent existence*, emptiness comes to mean reliance on another, whereby it avoids the extreme of nonexistence, and the reason, dependent-arising, by containing the word “dependent” comes to mean empty of nonreliant own-power, whereby it avoids the extreme of exaggerated

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ent-arisings, and this appearance of phenomena as dependent-arisings further induces ascertainment of emptiness.

gerated existence. Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa provides confirmation for this explanation from a slightly differently worded statement by Tsong-kha-pa:

And the statement in Tsong-kha-pa's *Lesser Stages of the Path*:<sup>a</sup>

Here, the principal places of possible error that serve as obstacles to the pure view are two. One is the view of permanence, or superimposition, which has the target of apprehensions by a consciousness apprehending true establishment, this being to apprehend phenomena as truly established. The second is the view of annihilation, or deprecation, in which the measure of the object of negation has not been delimited and one has gone too far, whereby it is impossible to induce ascertainment in one's own system with respect to the dependent-arising of cause and effect, without any way of identifying, "It is this, not that."

Those two are abandoned without residue when inherent establishment is refuted based on a reason in which ascertainment has been induced with respect to the arising of such-and-such an effect from such-and-such causes and conditions. For through ascertaining the reason, the view of annihilation is eradicated, and through ascertaining the meaning of the thesis, the view of permanence is eradicated.

appears to be the way appearance avoids the extreme of nonexistence and the way emptiness avoids the extreme of existence. Hence, no matter how scholars explain this, aside from saying the likes of "That is true," it is difficult to analyze what is logically feasible and what is not logically feasible.

Still, those modes of explanation are ways of avoiding the two extremes by combining both the predicate of the proposition and the reason, but I wonder whether there is a way of avoiding the two extremes even through solely the sign of dependent-arising.

Instead of using the predicate of the proposition to avoid one extreme, and the reason to avoid the other extreme, Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa wants to use only the reason, dependent-arising, to avoid both extremes:

I think that it would be good if it is also explained that:

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<sup>a</sup> This is Tsong-kha-pa's *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment Practiced by Persons of Three Capacities*; the translation is from Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 90-91.

When “because of dependently arising” is stated, through the capacity of “dependently” the extreme of permanence is avoided since one can understand that [the phenomenon] is empty of [being under its] own-power, and through the capacity of “arising” the extreme of annihilation is avoided since one can understand that [the phenomenon] is not utterly nonexistent.

Even within the reason—dependent-arising—itself, understanding that a phenomenon is dependent avoids the extreme of superimposition because it is being realized that the phenomenon does not exist in and of itself; and understanding that a phenomenon arises avoids the extreme of nihilism.

As was mentioned above, the more usual way is for ascertainment of appearance to keep one from deprecation, the extreme of nihilism, and for ascertainment of emptiness to keep one from reification, the extreme of superimposition; in his final step Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa makes it clear that the Consequence School also asserts this:

In general, it is not at all the case that Consequentialists do not assert a way in which appearance avoids the extreme of nonexistence and emptiness avoids the extreme of existence since there are many passages such as those in Tsong-kha-pa’s *Lesser Exposition of the Stages of the Path* as cited above and also as Tsong-kha-pa says in the *Greater Exposition of the Stages of the Path*:<sup>a</sup>

Moreover, since the meaning of dependent-arising is explained as the absence of inherent production, it avoids the [extreme] proposition that an inherent nature exists,<sup>b</sup> and since the arising of effects that are like illusions and so forth [although not inherently produced] is indicated to be the meaning of dependent-arising, it avoids the [extreme] proposition that things do not exist.<sup>c</sup>

and so forth.

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa has taken us on a stimulating journey through a word commentary on the view section of Tsong-kha-pa’s *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*, leading to his profoundly complex presentation of how

<sup>a</sup> See also the translation in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 145; the brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 252.4.

<sup>b</sup> *dnegos po yod par sel la*.

<sup>c</sup> *dnegos po med par smra ba sel ba*.

realization engendered by consequences can differ from realization produced from syllogistic reasoning. Through this, he has provided a fascinating explanation uniting the two perspectives of “Emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, and dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness” in a single realization.

The next chapter probes details on just how and when the two realizations promote each other.



## 14. Intriguing Details on the Timing

### KÖN-CHOG-JIG-MAY-WANG-PO'S COMMENTARY ON JANG-KYA'S *SONG OF THE VIEW*

#### Issue #47: At what point does such mutually supportive ascertainment occur?

Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po,<sup>a</sup> born twenty-one years before Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa, addresses the intriguing question of whether mutually supportive ascertainment occurs simultaneously with finding the view of the emptiness of inherent existence at the point of initial inferential realization or after finding the view upon further development. In his *Commentary on (Jang-kya Röl-pay-dor-je's) "Song of the View": Lamp for the Words*<sup>266</sup> Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po forcefully presents the opinion that it is realized after finding the view when analysis of the view is complete.

Jang-kya, in the section of his *Song of the View, Identifying Mother*<sup>267</sup> relevant to our topic, uses the metaphor of “mother” for emptiness and “father” for the phenomena that have the quality of emptiness. In commentary, Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po, titles this section “Identifying the union of appearance and emptiness.” Following a citation from Jang-kya's *Song of the View*, Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po illuminates the somewhat cryptic poetry:<sup>268</sup>

There is something to understand in just this mutual inter-  
dependence—

The inexpressible mother not established as anything  
And posing in all sorts of ways.

The non-finding of the father by searching for him

Is the finding of the aged mother,

Whereby the aged father is found from the lap of the  
mother.

Hence I, the child, call for protection by the kind parents.

*The meaning:* There is something auspicious to understand in just  
this reliant establishment, the mutual interdependence of the two,

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<sup>a</sup> 1728-1791; Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa's (1759-1831) opinions are, of course, not cited by Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po.

dependent-arising and emptiness, in which this emptiness of inherent existence—the inexpressible mother that is the nonestablishment of anything ultimately—poses, or dawns, as all sorts of varieties of dependent-arisings conventionally.

That which is to be understood here is to be taken as the dawning of emptiness as dependent-arising and the dawning of dependent-arising as emptiness. That this consciousness realizing external and internal dependent-arisings as without inherent existence ascertains—without relying on another awareness—all presentations of cause and effect, definition and definiendum, agent and object, and so on, as feasible in the context of mere nominal imputation is the meaning of emptiness dawning as dependent-arising. That this awareness ascertaining external and internal things as dependent-arisings—as dependent imputations—is able to induce a strong consciousness ascertaining the emptiness of inherent existence without needing to rely upon another awareness is the dawning of dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness.

Such dawning is for one who has identified the pure view and not forgotten it; it is not for others. It is even said that when emptiness dawns thus as the meaning of dependent-arising, “analysis of the view is complete.” From the mouth of the Foremost Precious [Tsong-kha-pa in the *Three Principal Aspects of the Path to Highest Enlightenment*]:

When without alternation and simultaneously  
 From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
 An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode  
     of apprehension of the object,  
 That time is completion of analysis of the view.

and also the scholar-adept Nor-sang-gya-tsho<sup>a</sup> says:

When the analysis of the view is thoroughly complete,  
 The mere dawning of the appearance of their respective  
     objects  
 To [mental] consciousnesses and sense consciousnesses  
 Induces definite knowledge ascertaining their objects as  
     empty  
 Without relying upon other factors of reasoning.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *mkhas grub nor bzang gyia mtsho*, 1423-1513; for another citation without the first line, see below, 373.

<sup>b</sup> Correcting *rigs pa 'am rgyu mtshan* (“reasonings or facts”) in TBRC 000587,

Just as, for example, through the force of previous  
 knowledge that a double moon does not exist  
 Just the appearance of a double moon to a being whose  
 eye sense is faulty  
 Induces ascertainment of the nonexistence of the double  
 moon,  
 So, when ascertainment of emptiness is generated,  
 Then when one thinks on how the mode of existence  
 Of all conventional phenomena such as actions and their  
 effects and so forth is,  
 One posits these as imputedly existent, merely only nominal.

and our Supreme Leader, the Great Seventh [Dalai Lama Kalsang-gya-tsho]<sup>a</sup> Victorious Lord, says in his *Songs*:

Look at this wonder  
 Utterly nonexistent yet dawning in all sorts  
 On the surface of the empty clear sky  
 As rainbow figures that are collections  
 Of many arisings in dependence upon causes and conditions  
 Despite not being truly self-instituting.  
 See these illusions,  
 These mere nominalities in which  
 All agents, actions, and objects are feasibly  
 Imputed to multitudes of causes, conditions, and parts  
 Though when analyzed  
 There is nothing to be identified as “this.”

In dependence upon these elegant explanations, find ascertainment regarding how to posit the two, emptiness and dependent-arising, as method and that arisen from method, in terms of a single substratum. The statement by some that “When the view is found, the analysis of the view is necessarily complete” appears to be random guesswork lacking understanding of this essential.

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5a.4, which has ten syllables in nine-syllable poetry, to *rigs pa'i rgyu mtshan* in accordance with Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 39a.1, which cites the last four lines in another context.

<sup>a</sup> *bskal bzang rgya mtsho*, 1708-1757.

The aged father is to be taken as the phenomenon<sup>a</sup> that is the basis of emptiness, and

- the statement “By searching for this imputed object, [the phenomenon,] the non-finding of it is itself the finding of the aged mother, the emptiness of inherent existence” indicates the way that the noumenon<sup>b</sup> [emptiness] is found from the phenomenon, and
- the statement “From the lap, or expanse,<sup>c</sup> of the emptiness of inherent existence (the mother), the phenomenon that is the basis of emptiness (the aged father) comes to be found” indicates the way that the phenomenon is found from the noumenon.

Thus, in dependence upon the dawning of the two—the aged father that is dependent-arising and the aged mother that is emptiness—as mutually noncontradictory, I, the small child, am protected from the two extremes of permanence and annihilation.

In lectures on Jang-kya’s text at Dre-pung Monastery in Mundgod, India, in 1980 the Fourteenth Dalai Lama commented:

The emptiness that is the mode of subsistence is not established as any extreme in the experiential perspective of meditative equipoise seeing [emptiness] just as it is, and thus is called “The inexpressible mother not established as anything.” This inexpressible mother not established as anything, this emptiness of inherent existence, “poses in all sorts of ways,” that is to say, it exists in the omniscient who have extinguished all defects and are endowed with all good qualities and exists in those beings who, due to having accumulated a great ill-deed, have been born in a most torturous hell; these varieties of existent good and bad phenomena dawn from the sphere of this emptiness of inherent existence. In sum, the varieties of phenomena have this nature of natural quiescence, and since they have this nature, they dawn, so to speak, from this nature; they are the sport of this nature; they are manifestations of this nature; they are the display of this nature. Therefore this nature, this emptiness of inherent existence, “poses in all

<sup>a</sup> *chos can*; literally, “possessor of the attribute” which in this case is emptiness.

<sup>b</sup> *chos nyid*.

<sup>c</sup> *dbying*s.

sorts of ways.”

Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po explains this “mutual interdependence of the two, dependent-arising and emptiness, in which this emptiness of inherent existence—the inexpressible mother that is the nonestablishment of anything ultimately—poses, or dawns, as all sorts of varieties of dependent-arisings conventionally” in the twofold manner of “the dawning of emptiness as dependent-arising and the dawning of dependent-arising as emptiness.”

Regarding the timing of the mutually supportive ascertainment, Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po dismisses as uninformed guesswork the opinion that analysis of the view of emptiness and dependent-arising is complete with finding the view of emptiness. For, although Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po reports:

It is even said that when emptiness dawns thus as the meaning of dependent-arising, “analysis of the view is complete.”

later he makes it clear that he disagrees:

In dependence upon these elegant explanations, find ascertainment regarding how to posit the two, emptiness and dependent-arising, as method and that arisen from method, in terms of a single substratum. The statement by some that “When the view is found, the analysis of the view is necessarily complete” appears to be random guesswork lacking understanding of this essential.

More than inference realizing emptiness is required.

## GUNG-THANG KÖN-CHOG-TAN-PAY-DRÖN-ME’S NUANCES

Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po’s student Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me presents many interesting points related to this topic in commentary on his *Meaningful Praise of Tsong-kha-pa*. At the end of an expansive, pregnant exposition, he refers to his teacher Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po’s commentary that we just considered. Here is Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me’s explanation:<sup>269</sup>

Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* (see above, 253) says that the way these two mutually go as the meaning of each other is not that the term explicitly expressing the one suggests by

import<sup>a</sup> the other and also is not that when the one is explicitly realized, the other is as if implicitly realized, but is a way that the one bestows understanding<sup>b</sup> of the other in the perspective of the awareness of a Proponent of the Middle who knows the absence of inherent existence.

Working up the meaning of this, Yang-jan-ga-way-lo-drö<sup>c</sup> indeed explains in his *Instructions on the View* that initially when seeking the view, one ascertains emptiness through the force of dependent-arising, and afterwards, through the force of that meditative equipoise realizing emptiness, dependent-arisings dawn as like illusions in subsequent attainment [outside of meditative equipoise]. However, this does not contain a way of simultaneously avoiding the two extremes, and even Autonomists assert merely this. Hence, [his explanation] has little to offer toward bestowing understanding about this [Consequence] system's uncommon [assertion on] the nonestablishment [of objects] by way of their own entities. Therefore, it should be explained as follows.

For example, if upon being asked [by someone], "Is such activity as this something that should be done?" a servant answers, "I do not know that sort of thing," it is understood that he/she must rely on the power (*dbang*) of the master, and if in answer to the above, [the servant] explains "The master indeed knows that," it is by import<sup>d</sup> understood that he/she does not have power (*dbang*) over this. Similarly, when "not inherently existent" is set forth, its meaning—not being understood as utter nonexistence—is understood as meaning reliance on a collection of dependent-arisings of causes and conditions, and when "dependent-arising" is set forth, its meaning—not being understood as mere arising—is understood as the absence of own-power (*rang dbang*) that is nonreliance on any other, and it also means the absence of inherent existence. Āryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas* says:<sup>270</sup>

Those which have a dependent arising  
Are not under their own power.  
All these are not under their own power;  
Therefore, they do not have self [that is, establishment by

<sup>a</sup> *don gyis 'phangs pa*; or "projects by import."

<sup>b</sup> *go ba ster lugs*.

<sup>c</sup> *dbyangs can dga' ba'i blo gros, a kya yongs 'dzin*, 1740-1827.

<sup>d</sup> *don gyis*.

way of their own nature].

*Qualm:* If nothing is established in the least from the side of the basis of imputation, the aggregates and so forth, then since through words it is possible to speak even of the horns of a rabbit, how could merely these [words] posit them as existing! [The horns of a rabbit] are assuredly nonexistent in fact!

*Response:* Mere nominalities are left over in place of the establishment from the side of the basis of imputation which is negated, and aspects of helper and helped, harmer and harmed, and so forth undeniably dawn also to ordinary worldly beings in the mere perceptual framework of a conceptual consciousness that arises subsequent to this [negation], and since the performance of the functions of those various objects in the manner of the mere conventions of those mere appearances do not incur damage by other, conventional valid cognitions, they are posited as true relative to the mental perspective of the world. However, even though the mere names of the horns of a rabbit or of a permanent self and so forth are spoken, the appearances of them rely on superficial causes of mistake, and their performance of functions in accordance with their appearance is damaged by other, conventional valid cognitions, due to which they differ from the former.

Consequently, that “Mere nominalities are left over” is not to be taken as the existence of the mere respective terms of those; rather, a presentation of object, agent, and so forth must feasibly be positable in the context of being merely imputed there nominally because:

(1) Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* says:

Also, it is not logical to think “If object produced and producer exist, then the facts of cause and effects exist, due to which ‘name-only’ is not feasible.” The reasons for this are that:

- the term “only” does not eliminate the existence of objects that are not names and does not eliminate objects established by valid cognition, and also
- although the statement “exists only as nominally imputed” [indicates that] an existent that is not posited through the force of nominal conventions does occur, it does not indicate that all of what are posited by nominal

conventions exist.

(2) and Khay-drub's *Great Text of Instructions on the View* says:

At this point, in the perspective of ascertainment within meditative equipoise not even a little bit is left over, but when those skilled at maintaining [this meditative view] look at what is left in place of that negation upon rising from this [meditative equipoise] here in subsequent attainment:

- they have the capacity to readily induce ascertainment that there remain mere names such as “I” and so forth and readily induce ascertainment also that those names are exhausted as conceptual imputations, only mere nominalities, baselessly associated by conceptuality,<sup>a</sup> and
- not doing any analysis regarding the meanings of those mere nominalities, by engaging in the context of them they establish through experience [that the merely nominal “I” is] the accumulator and experiencer of karma, and has the capacity to perform the actions of eating, drinking, and so forth.

This experiential mode of engendering ascertainment—from the depth of heart—in the mode of noncontradiction and union of dependent-arising and emptiness differs greatly from the way ascertainment is generated when professing formulations of tenets in the context of mere oral explanations.

Though it is difficult for this mode to dawn on the occasion of a beginner, for the sake of planting predispositions for the path free from the two extremes it is necessary to think this way even just in imaginative thought; Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* says:

Due to being greatly accustomed to positing object produced and means of production within establishment by

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<sup>a</sup> *rtog pas gzhi med du sbyar ba*. Baseless association of names with objects refers to the Buddhist assertion that names are arbitrarily associated with objects and do not inhere in objects; see .



way of their own character, when this is refuted, the positing of them within merely being posited through the force of nominal conventions is not comfortable in the mind. However, it is necessary to draw the mind in this direction, thinking, “If the former [that is, establishment by way of their own character] is not logically feasible, it is indispensable to posit these the latter way [within merely being posited through the force of nominal conventions].”

This is advice for those such as us out of very merciful skill in method; from between the two truths it is a little easier for the class of emptiness to dawn upon negating the possibilities through the middle way reasonings, but it is evident that the class of appearance in which objects and agents can be feasibly posited within mere nominality is much more difficult to dawn than that.

Then, after much discussion of the features of the path Gung-thang<sup>271</sup> cites the beginning and end of the quote from the “Great All-Seeing Foremost Holy” Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po’s *Commentary on (Jang-kyä Röl-pay-dor-je’s) “Song of the View”*: *Lamp for the Words* given above.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>272</sup> mentions that although Gung-thang cites his teacher Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po’s exposition, it is unclear whether he follows it. Then, he adds that the followers of those two, spiritual father and son, *treat* them as being in agreement on this topic.

Before we turn to Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho’s own opinion, we will consider at the beginning of the next chapter another of his provocative references.



## 15. Ngag-wang-tra-shi, Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho, and Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho on the “Synonyms”

As indicated earlier (256), Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>273</sup> approves of his near contemporary Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho’s opinion on how emptiness comes to mean dependent-arising but cites only the last sentence of Sha-mar’s lengthy exposition in his *Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa’s) “Great Exposition of Special Insight.”* In this chapter we will consider Sha-mar’s fascinating exposition in full, but since during it he refutes a presentation by Jam-yang-shay-pa’s chief student Ngag-wang-tra-shi, we need first to cite Ngag-wang-tra-shi’s pithy demonstration both for context and because it restates in clear debate format many of the points discussed above.

### NGAG-WANG-TRA-SHI’S PITHY REFORMULATION OF TSONG-KHA-PA’S PRESENTATION

Ngag-wang-tra-shi begins with a challenge by a hypothetical opponent which sets the stage for the favored nuanced opinion. The statements are color coded with the translation in three colors: blue, red, and black. **Blue** presents what Ngag-wang-tra-shi considers to be right positions, while **red** represents what he considers to be wrong positions; words in black are other information or function structurally. In his *Great Exposition of Dependent-Arising* Ngag-wang-tra-shi restructures Tsong-kha-pa’s presentation in his *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* as a debate between a hypothetical opponent and Tsong-kha-pa. The opponent presents Tsong-kha-pa with the conundrum that Tsong-kha-pa himself is seeking to solve, setting the stage for Tsong-kha-pa to respond with his solution:<sup>274</sup>

**Also, someone says:** It follows that the emptiness of true establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising because such is explained in sūtra. It follows [that such is explained in sūtra] because the *Elephant Prowess Sūtra*<sup>a</sup> also speaks of such with “If phenomena had inherent existence,”<sup>b</sup> and so forth, because Tsong-kha-

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<sup>a</sup> glang po’i rtsal kyi mdo, *hasti-kakṣya-sūtra*; sde dge tsha, 3796.

<sup>b</sup> The passage, as cited in Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* (La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 387.15) Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Exposition of the Stages of the*

pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* says, "It is very clear that this sūtra teaches that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising." If you accept the root [statement that the emptiness of true establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising], it follows that it is not reasonable that the emptiness of true establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising because the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is not the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot. It follows [that the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is not the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot] because there is no way the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot. It follows [that there is no way that the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot] because:

1. the meaning of this [statement that the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot] is not like positing that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot
2. also [the emptiness of true establishment of a pot] is not the meaning expressed by the phrase expressing that a pot is a dependent-arising
3. and [the emptiness of true establishment of a pot] is not taken to be an object of the mode of apprehension of an awareness ascertaining that a pot is a dependent-arising.

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*Path* is:

If phenomena had inherent existence,  
 The Victors as well as Hearers would know such a nature.  
 Everlasting phenomena would not pass beyond sorrow.  
 The wise would never separate from proliferations.

With material added from the *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 713.4:

If phenomena had inherent existence,  
 The Victors as well as Hearer Superiors would know such a nature, but  
 they do not perceive such,  
 And if inherently established, phenomena would have to be everlasting,  
 that is, permanent and stable—unchangeable by anything, and it  
 would be impossible for such permanent stable phenomena to be re-  
 leased, whereby passing beyond sorrow would not occur.  
 In such a state under its own power even the wise would never attain  
 separation from proliferations.

For context see also Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 320.

**Response:** [That those three are so] does not entail [that there is no way that the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot]. If someone says that the first [reason which is that the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot is not like positing that which is bulbous, flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid as the meaning of pot] is not established, it [absurdly] follows that an awareness ascertaining a pot as a dependent-arising also ascertains a pot’s emptiness of true establishment because (1) an awareness ascertaining a pot ascertains that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] and (2) you have asserted that those two [that is, ascertaining that the emptiness of true establishment of a pot is the meaning of the dependent-arising of a pot and positing that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot] are similar. If you assert [that an awareness ascertaining a pot as a dependent-arising also ascertains a pot’s emptiness of true establishment], it [absurdly] follows that an awareness ascertaining a pot as produced from causes and conditions ascertains a pot’s emptiness of true establishment because [according to you] an awareness ascertaining a pot as a dependent-arising ascertains a pot’s emptiness of true establishment. You have asserted the reason [which is that an awareness ascertaining a pot as a dependent-arising ascertains a pot’s emptiness of true establishment]. You cannot accept [that an awareness ascertaining a pot as produced from causes and conditions ascertains a pot’s emptiness of true establishment] because Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* (above, 253) says:

Since it is frequently said that the meaning of the emptiness of inherent establishment is the meaning of dependent-arising, what does this mean? It would be unreasonable if it were like the import of positing, for instance, that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, for the very awareness ascertaining that effects arise in dependence upon causes and conditions would [absurdly] also ascertain the meaning of emptiness.

The latter two reasons [which are that the emptiness of true establishment of a pot (1) is not the meaning expressed by the phrase expressing that a pot is a dependent-arising and (2) is not taken to

be an object of the mode of apprehension of an awareness ascertaining that a pot is a dependent-arising] are also established because the phrase expressing that a pot is a dependent-arising does not express either explicitly or implicitly a pot's emptiness of true establishment, and an awareness ascertaining a pot as a dependent-arising is not an awareness ascertaining a pot's emptiness of true establishment either explicitly or implicitly, because Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* (above, 253) says:

However, even if it is asserted that the very meaning of the term expressing dependent-arising is the meaning of the emptiness, there is that same damage. Even if it is asserted that [emptiness] is the implicit meaning of explicitly ascertaining dependent-arising, this is not feasible, as before.

***With regard to this, someone says:*** Well then, a pot's emptiness of true establishment is not the meaning of a pot's dependent-arising because of not being [any of] those above [three].

***Our response:*** [That a pot's emptiness of true existence is not any of those above three] does not entail [that a pot's emptiness of true existence is not the meaning of a pot's dependent-arising] because although the emptiness of true existence is the meaning of dependent-arising, its going as the meaning of this is for Proponents of the Middle who have completed analysis of the view, but is not for all who have ascertained dependent-arising with valid cognition. [That although the emptiness of true existence is the meaning of dependent-arising, its going as the meaning of this is for Proponents of the Middle who have completed analysis of the view, but is not for all who have ascertained dependent-arising with valid cognition] follows because in the speech of the Foremost Second Conqueror [Tsong-kha-pa, the *Three Principal Aspects of the Path* (see also 302, 311, 332, 344, 360, 372)] says:

When without alternation and simultaneously  
 From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
 An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode  
     of apprehension of the object,  
 That time is completion of analysis of the view.

and [Tsong-kha-pa] says "when" [in the *Praise of Dependent-arising*]:<sup>275</sup>

When you see emptiness  
As the meaning of dependent-arising,

and [Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* (above, 253)] says:

That the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others.

**Someone says:** Well then, it follows that Proponents of the Middle who have completed analysis of the view also ascertain—with an awareness ascertaining external and internal things as dependent-arising—that those are empty of true existence because there is a way that emptiness dawns as the meaning of dependent-arising to those persons.

**Our response:** [That there is a way that emptiness dawns as the meaning of dependent-arising to Proponents of the Middle who have completed analysis of the view] does not entail [that Proponents of the Middle who have completed analysis of the view also ascertain—with an awareness ascertaining external and internal things as dependent-arising—that those are empty of true existence] because [that emptiness dawns as the meaning of dependent-arising to Proponents of the Middle who have completed analysis of the view] means that through the power of this awareness [ascertaining external and internal things as dependent-arising] great ascertainment regarding the emptiness of true existence is generated because Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* (above, 253) says:

For such Proponents of the Middle, when they explicitly ascertain that internal and external things are dependent-arising contingent on causes, they—in dependence upon the power of just that awareness—will ascertain<sup>a</sup> this as meaning that [things] are empty of inherent existence

[This] entails [that that emptiness dawns as the meaning of dependent-arising to Proponents of the Middle who have completed

<sup>a</sup> nges par ’gyur.

analysis of the view means that through the power of this awareness ascertaining external and internal things as dependent-arising great ascertainment regarding the emptiness of true existence is generated] because it says “in dependence upon the power of that awareness”<sup>a</sup> and not “ascertain with that awareness.”<sup>b</sup>

**Also, someone says:** It follows that **the three—emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path—have the same meaning**<sup>c</sup> because Nāgārjuna’s *Refutation of Objections* says:

Supreme [by] speaking  
Of emptiness, dependent-arising,  
And the middle path as having the same meaning,<sup>d</sup>  
To the unequalled Buddha, homage.

*Our response:* [That Nāgārjuna says this] does not entail [that **the three—emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path—have the same meaning**] because it describes the meaning of these three as similar:<sup>e</sup>

- phenomenon that is solely empty of true establishment<sup>f</sup>
- dependent-arising<sup>g</sup>
- and that which is empty of true establishment free from the two extremes,<sup>h</sup> called “the middle path.”

For, this is in accordance with the statement in the *Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*, “Form is emptiness; emptiness is form.”

Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho in his *Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa’s) “Great Exposition of Special Insight”* reacts against the final step in Ngag-wang-tra-shi’s presentation. Let us cite his presentation in full since it rehearses Ngag-wang-tra-shi’s points:<sup>i</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 33b.3: *blo de’i mthu la brten nas.*

<sup>b</sup> 33b.3: *blo des nges.*

<sup>c</sup> *don gcig*; I often translate this as “equivalent.”

<sup>d</sup> *don gcig pa.*

<sup>e</sup> *don ’dra.*

<sup>f</sup> *bden grub kyis stong pa kho na’i chos.*

<sup>g</sup> *rten ’byung.*

<sup>h</sup> *mtha’ gnyis dang bral ba’i bden stong.*

<sup>i</sup> *zhwa dmar dge bdun btsan ’dzin rgya mtsho (1852-1910), lhag mthong chen mo’i dka’ gnad rnams brjed byang du bkod pa dgongs zab snang ba’i sgron me*; TBRC W2993 (Lha sa: sman rtsis khang gi par khang, n.d.), 24a.3-24a.6. I am making use of a few phrases from the conclusion of Sha-mar’s previous annotation, which are highly relevant to this topic, to begin this quotation, and thus have



In the twenty-fourth chapter [of the *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called “Wisdom”* Nāgārjuna] indicates that the meaning of dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness with:<sup>a</sup>

We describe that which is  
Dependent-arising as emptiness.

and [Nāgārjuna] indicates that the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising with [the next line in this stanza]:

That is dependent imputation.<sup>b</sup>

Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* says that if the statement that the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising is like positing that which is bulbous, [flat-bottomed, and able to hold fluid] as the meaning of pot, this is not feasible since the very awareness ascertaining dependent-arising would [absurdly] also ascertain emptiness, and it is not feasible even if it is posited that emptiness is the meaning of the term expressing

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used an ellipsis a few lines down to avoid confusion.

<sup>a</sup> XXIV.18; *dbu ma rtsa ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan ’gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyal-wae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5224, vol. 95, 9.3.4.

<sup>b</sup> The fourth line in the stanza is “That is the middle path.” Jam-yang-shay-pa (above, 256) cites this stanza along with Chandrakīrti’s comments prior to his explanation of the Sanskrit formation of *pratītyasamutpāda*. Since we have come full circle in this excursion exploring the connection between dependent-arising (*rten nas ’byung ba*, *pratītyasamutpāda*) and dependent imputation (*brten nas gdags pa*, *upādāyaprajñapti*), let us cite those quotations again; Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise* says:

We describe “arising dependent [on causes and conditions]”  
As [the meaning of] the emptiness [of inherently existent production].  
That [emptiness of inherently existent production] is dependent imputation.<sup>b</sup>  
Just this [emptiness of inherently existent production] is the middle path.

and Chandrakīrti’s *Clear Words* says:

Due to lacking the two extremes of existence and nonexistence, just this emptiness characterized as no inherently existent production is called the middle path, the middle passage. Therefore, emptiness, dependent imputation,<sup>b</sup> and middle path are different names<sup>b</sup> for dependent-arising.

dependent-arising either explicitly or implicitly or if it is taken as meaning that an awareness ascertaining dependent-arising realizes emptiness either explicitly or implicitly.

Ngag-wang-tra-shi in his *Great Exposition of Dependent-Arising* (above, 356) establishes that although emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, its going as the meaning of dependent-arising is for a Proponent of the Middle who has completed analysis of the view, but is not for all who have ascertained dependent-arising with valid cognition; he does this (1) through [citing Tsong-kha-pa's *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*]:<sup>a</sup>

When without alternation and simultaneously  
 From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
 An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode  
     of apprehension of the object,  
 That time is completion of analysis of the view.

and (2) through the statement in Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"*:

That the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others.

and so forth (see above, 253).<sup>b</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> I have fleshed out Sha-mar's citation of only one line followed by "and so forth."

<sup>b</sup> It may be that Sha-mar cites this part of Ngag-wang-tra-shi's explanation to identify a referent of Jang-kya's mention (above, 299) of "some others assert that it is just for those whose analysis of the view is complete," and thus someone with whom Jang-kya disagrees since Jang-kya holds that emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising also occurs for a *range* prior to this level. However, does Sha-mar agree with Ngag-wang-tra-shi or with Jang-kya? Given that Sha-mar, below, frames the meaning of how emptiness comes to mean dependent-arising differently from Jang-kya in that Sha-mar does not emphasize a range of understandings, it could be that he disagrees with Jang-kya and indeed holds, like Ngag-wang-tra-shi, that this is for those whose analysis of the view is complete. That is what I presume Sha-mar is doing, despite the fact that now he goes on to criticize Ngag-wang-tra-shi concerning the meaning of the three "synonyms"—emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path. Such mixtures of agreement with certain opinions and disagreement with others are typical to Sha-mar's independently

Sha-mar now presents his disagreement with Ngag-wang-tra-shi about the three “synonyms”—emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path. It proceeds in five stages, (1) providing the source quote from Tsong-kha-pa, (2) laying out how Ngag-wang-tra-shi describes the three “synonyms,” (3) tweaking Ngag-wang-tra-shi’s description, (4) criticizing it by explaining how the source quote should be explained, and (5) undermining how Ngag-wang-tra-shi might defend his position. Sha-mar says:

**[1. Providing the source quote from Tsong-kha-pa]**

Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* (above 255) says that the statement in Nāgārjuna’s *Refutation of Objections*.<sup>a</sup>

Supreme [by] speaking  
Of emptiness, dependent-arising,  
And the middle path as having the same meaning,<sup>b</sup>  
To the unequalled Buddha, homage.

indicates that those three [emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path] are synonyms.<sup>c</sup>

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minded text.

<sup>a</sup> *rtsod pa bzlog pa, vighavyāvartanī*, in *bstan ’gyur* (*sde dge* 3828), TBRC W23703.96:55-59 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). stanza 71, vol. *tsa*, 29a.6; Sha-mar cites what in my translation are the two middle lines; I have provided the entire stanza for context. Sanskrit in K. Bhattacharya, E.H. Johnston, A. Kunst, *The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), 85: *yaḥ śūnyatām pratītyasamutpādaṃ madhyamām pratipadaṃ ca / ekārtham nijagāda praṇamāmi tam apratimabuddham //*. Sanskrit and Tibetan also in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 217 and 229.

<sup>b</sup> *don gcig pa*.

<sup>c</sup> *rnam grangs*. As cited (above 253), Tsong-kha-pa’s *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom”* says:

This emptiness of inherent existence is posited as dependent imputation; a chariot is imputed in dependence upon the components of a chariot such as wheels and so forth, and what is imputed in dependence upon its components is empty in the sense that it is not inherently produced. Since this emptiness, the absence of being inherently produced, has abandoned all extremes of existence and nonexistence, it is the middle and the middle path—the trail travelled by Proponents of the Middle. In this way, Nāgārjuna’s *Refutation of Objections* says that those three [emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path] are synonyms:

Supreme [by] speaking

Tsong-kha-pa also cites this stanza from Nāgārjuna's *Refutation of Objections* in *The Essence of Eloquence* (above, 66) and adds that it "indicates that dependent-arising, middle path, and emptiness of inherent existence have the same meaning."<sup>a</sup> (Also, we saw in a footnote just above that Chandrakīrti similarly says in a list of four that "emptiness, dependent imputation, and middle path are different names for dependent-arising.") Sha-mar now relates how Jam-yang-shay-pa's student Ngag-wang-tra-shi, famous for his debate manuals, inventively reworks these three so that they can be strictly equivalent:

**[2. Laying out how Ngag-wang-tra-shi describes the three "synonyms"]**

Ngag-wang-tra-shi's *Great Exposition of Dependent-Arising* explains<sup>b</sup> that this means that:

- phenomenon that is solely empty of true establishment<sup>c</sup>
- dependent-arising<sup>d</sup>
- and middle path, that is to say, that which is empty of true establishment free from the two extremes<sup>e</sup>

are similar in meaning.<sup>f</sup>

**[3. Refining Ngag-wang-tra-shi's description]**

This appears to be in consideration of synonymous equivalents.<sup>g</sup>

By (a) taking "emptiness" to mean not the nonaffirming negative emptiness itself but a phenomenon that is empty of true establishment; (b) leaving "dependent-arising" as is; and (c) taking "middle path" as "that which is empty of true establishment free from the two extremes," Ngag-wang-tra-shi fashions a list of three such that whatever is any one of them also is the other two, whereby all three are utterly equivalent. For instance,

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Of emptiness, dependent-arising,  
And the middle path as having the same meaning,  
To the unequalled Buddha, homage.

Because there are no phenomena that are not dependent-arisings and also dependent-arisings are empty of inherent establishment, there are no phenomena that are not empty of inherent existence.

<sup>a</sup> *don gcig pa.*

<sup>b</sup> This is a paraphrase, not a quote; for the passage see just above, 356.

<sup>c</sup> *bden grub kyis stong pa kho na'i chos.*

<sup>d</sup> *rten 'byung.*

<sup>e</sup> *dbu ma'i lam ste mtha' gnyis dang bral ba'i bden stong.*

<sup>f</sup> *don 'dra ba.*

<sup>g</sup> *don gcig ming gi rnam grangs.*

whatever is a phenomenon empty of true establishment is a dependent-arising and also is something that is empty of true establishment free from the two extremes. Because the equation is so thorough, Sha-mar avers that when Ngag-wang-tra-shi says that they are “similar in meaning,” he should have said that they are synonymous equivalents, since the stronger identification as strictly equivalent would be more appropriate to his point.

This is how Sha-mar tweaks Ngag-wang-tra-shi’s creative rendering of Nāgārjuna’s statement. Still, Sha-mar does not think that such elaborate lengths are required to explain what Nāgārjuna and Tsong-kha-pa have in mind. He finds a simpler, more elegant route in a different edition of the Tibetan of Nāgārjuna’s text. Sha-mar explains:

***[4. Criticizing Ngag-wang-tra-shi’s description by explaining how the source quote should be explained]***

In accordance with “the two, emptiness and dependent-arising” (*stong dang rten ’byung dag*) in Nāgārjuna’s *Autocommentary on the “Refutation of Objections,”* understanding is facilitated if this is taken as meaning that since even each of the two, emptiness and dependent-arising, avoid the two extremes, these have the same meaning<sup>a</sup> as, or have similar meaning<sup>b</sup> to, the middle path.

Sha-mar, having noticed that the Tibetan of Nāgārjuna’s *Autocommentary on the “Refutation of Objections”* has a different reading of this final stanza in the *Refutation of Objections*, suggests that it offers an easy solution to the problems in fabricating strict synonyms.<sup>c</sup> Sha-mar’s point is

<sup>a</sup> *don gcig pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *’dra ba’i don.*

<sup>c</sup> Here is how the same stanza translates with this reading, together with the stanza preceding it:

For whom emptiness is possible,  
For them all objects are possible.  
For whom emptiness is not possible,  
For them nothing is possible.

Supreme [by] speaking  
Of emptiness and dependent-arising  
As having the same meaning as the middle path,  
To the unequalled Buddha, homage.

In the *sde dge* edition of both the *Refutation of Objections* (TBRC W2370, *tsa*, 29a.6) and the *Autocommentary* (TBRC W2370 *tsa*, 137a.4) the first two lines of the final stanza read Sha-mar’s way:

*gang zhig stong dang rten ’byung dag /*

that it can easily be understood that just as the middle path avoids the two extremes, so do emptiness and dependent-arising. With this as background, he turns to Ngag-wang-tra-shi's apparent source, Tsong-kha-pa, for thinking that these are synonymous equivalents, calling this a mis-step that causes him to think that the statement needs to be inventively re-worded:

**[5. Undermining how Ngag-wang-tra-shi might defend his position]**

Also, I wonder whether the statement in Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* that those three are synonyms, aside from merely indicating that those three are similar in meaning in that they avoid the two extremes, does not say that those are synonymous equivalents. This is to be analyzed.

Based on the corrected reading, Sha-mar speculates that when Tsong-kha-pa says "Nāgārjuna's *Refutation of Objections* says that those three [emptiness, dependent-arising, and middle path] are synonyms (*rnam grangs*)," Tsong-kha-pa means this in a looser sense and not in the strict sense of synonymous equivalents (*don gcig ming gi rnam grangs*). This may be Sha-mar's way of politely suggesting that Tsong-kha-pa should have said that these three are similar in meaning in that they avoid the two extremes. He leaves the matter for the reader to analyze, but his preference is clear that the three are not synonyms and, instead of this, are merely similar in meaning in that they all avoid the two extremes.<sup>a</sup>

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*dbu ma'i lam du don gcig par//*

whereas Tsong-kha-pa's version reads:

*gang zhig stong dang rten 'byung dang /*  
*dbu ma'i lam du don gcig par//*

The latter version makes this a list of three and has the added problem of a then difficult-to-read *du* in the middle of the final line. If Sha-mar is taking *dag* as a dual indicator, such is not supported by the Sanskrit; however, his speaking of "two" is nevertheless justified by the fact that it is a list of two, not three.

<sup>a</sup> The Se-ra Jey scholar Ser-shül Lo-sang-pün-tshog reads this stanza from Nāgārjuna's *Refutation of Objections* as saying:

Supreme [by] speaking fearlessly proclaiming in the midst of his circle  
 About the emptiness of inherent existence, dependent-arising,  
 And the middle path—knowable objects (*shes bya yul*)—as without dif-  
 ference and having the same meaning,  
 To the unequalled Buddha, homage.

## REVIEW

Let us put in chronological order the statements on this point by the eight scholars we have considered prior to Sha-mar, who appears to have been aware of most, if not all, of these opinions. We will start with Gyal-tshab, since he was apparently writing down his teacher Tsong-kha-pa’s opinions before Tsong-kha-pa did:

Gyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen, 1364-1432

(198) We do not propound that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising relative to persons prior to understanding the view [of the emptiness of inherent existence], but is for those who, when they have generated the wisdom realizing that even merely a particle of inherent establishment does not exist, realize that the existence of phenomena is not positable—even in the slightest—from [the object’s] own side and see the existence of phenomena as only existing dependent on another. If:

- when they **explicitly ascertain** the meaning of the term “dependent” (*ltos pa zhes pa’i sgra’i don dngos su nges pa na*),
- they **implicitly ascertain** the emptiness that is [the object’s] nonexistence from its own side (*rang ngos nas med pa’i stong pa shugs la nges shing*)
- and thereupon an **awareness explicitly ascertaining** emptiness is immediately induced (*stong pa dngos su nges pa’i blo de ma thag ’dren par byed pa la*),

in this case it is stated that emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising (*stong pa rten ’byung gi don du gsungs pa yin no*).

Tsong-kha-pa, 1357-1419

(253) That the meaning of emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising is for Proponents of the Middle who have refuted inherent establishment with valid cognition, but not for others. For

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He avers that the reading of *rten ’byung dag* which appears in the *dga’ ldan phun tshogs gling* edition of the root text and in some other books that cite the passage is easy to fill out, but that in most books where it is cited it is *rten ’byung dang* and Tsong-kha-pa, in his commentary after citing it, says *rten ’byung dang*; thus, he infers that it looks as if it is to be taken as *dang*, but he points out that it is still a little difficult to fill out *dbu ma’i lam du*; thus, he asks his readers to analyze whether his own filling out the meaning above (as *dbu ma’i lam gsum la*) is fitting or not.

such Proponents of the Middle, when they explicitly ascertain that internal and external things are dependent-arisings contingent on causes, they—in dependence upon the power of just that awareness—will ascertain this as meaning that [things] are empty of inherent existence because they have realized that what is inherently established does not rely on another and have realized with valid cognition that the two, this [nonreliant inherent existence] and dependent-arising are contradictory.

Pal-jor-lhün-drub, 1427-1514

(214) The meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is the meaning of dependent-arising because all functionality, such as the arising of an effect empty of inherent existence, is feasible in a cause empty of inherent existence. Moreover, a person for whom dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness and emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising must be able to posit cause and effect in things upon realizing that things are not established by way of their own character, but such is not said in terms of just any person.

Jang-kya Röl-pay-dor-jay, 1717-1786

(301) That emptiness goes to mean dependent-arising is not just for any person but is posited as so in the perspective of one who has ascertained the pure view and has not forgotten it... Therefore, just as much as when you thoroughly analyze with stainless reasoning, you generate greater ascertainment with respect to the fact that these and those phenomena lack inherent existence, to that extent the inducement of ascertainment with respect to the fact that those phenomena are also merely dependently imputed develops in very greater force, and just as much as inducement of ascertainment with regard to fact that phenomena are only dependently imputed increases in greater force, to that extent inducement of ascertainment of the other one [the emptiness of inherent existence] arises in greater force. Furthermore, once an ascertaining consciousness—induced by inferential realization that a sprout is without inherent existence through the sign of its being a dependent-arising—has been generated and has not deteriorated, it is evident that there are many different levels of capacity with respect to how these two ascertaining consciousnesses assist each other due to gradual progress higher and higher.

Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po, 1728-1791



(344) That this consciousness realizing external and internal dependent-arisings as without inherent existence ascertains—without relying on another awareness—all presentations of cause and effect, definition and definiendum, agent and object, and so on, as feasible in the context of mere nominal imputation is the meaning of emptiness dawning as dependent-arising. That this awareness ascertaining external and internal things as dependent-arisings—as dependent imputations—is able to induce a strong consciousness ascertaining the emptiness of inherent existence without needing to rely upon another awareness is the dawning of dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness.

Such dawning is for one who has identified the pure view and not forgotten it; it is not for others. It is even said that when emptiness dawns thus as the meaning of dependent-arising, “analysis of the view is complete.”...[F]ind ascertainment regarding how to posit the two, emptiness and dependent-arising, as method and that arisen from method, in terms of a single substratum. The statement by some that “When the view is found, the analysis of the view is necessarily complete” appears to be random guesswork lacking understanding of this essential.

Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me, 1762-1823

(214, 347) The one bestows understanding of the other in the perspective of the awareness of a Proponent of the Middle who knows the absence of inherent existence.

(348) For example, if upon being asked [by someone], “Is such activity as this something that should be done?” a servant answers, “I do not know that sort of thing,” it is understood that he/she must rely on the power (*dbang*) of the master, and if in answer to the above, [the servant] explains “The master indeed knows that,” it is by import<sup>a</sup> understood that he/she does not have power (*dbang*) over this. Similarly, when “not inherently existent” is set forth, its meaning—not being understood as utter nonexistence—is understood as meaning reliance on a collection of dependent-arisings of causes and conditions, and when “dependent-arising” is set forth, its meaning—not being understood as mere arising—is understood as the absence of own-power (*rang dbang*) that is nonreliance on any other, and it also means the absence of inherent existence.

<sup>a</sup> *don gyis*.

Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa, 1759-1839(?)

(321) This must be explained as meaning a way that [understandings of] the two, emptiness and dependent-arising, mutually bestow understanding, the one on the other. Hence, when another party—to whom it is being proven by the sign of dependent-arising that a sprout does not inherently exist—generates an inference realizing that a sprout does not inherently exist, in the perspective of this person a sprout's absence of inherent establishment goes, from this point, as meaning a sprout's dependent-arising, but not before this.... Moreover, unlike in the Autonomy School and so forth in which it is asserted that other valid cognitions must be involved—such as that initially the property of the subject is established, and after that in order to establish the entailment a common locus of the sign and the predicate of negandum is refuted, and so forth—in this [Consequentialist] system the proposition is realized while the functioning of just the awareness ascertaining the property of the subject in the proof of this—that is to say, that a sprout is a dependent-arising—has not deteriorated. Thereby, the dawning, to such an inference, of a combination of the two, a sprout's emptiness of inherent existence and a sprout's dependent-arising, arises from the power of ascertaining a sprout as a dependent-arising.... The reason why a combination of the two, appearance and emptiness, dawns to that inference<sup>a</sup> is that this party has already realized that inherent establishment entails noncontingency on another through the functioning of the consequence “It follows that the subject, a sprout, does not rely on anything because of being inherently established.”... Hence, to this inference realizing—through the sign of dependent-arising—that a sprout is empty of inherent establishment both a sprout's emptiness of inherent establishment and a sprout's dependent-arising appear, and moreover, the appearance [of the sprout] as empty of inherent establishment is from the force of ascertaining it as a dependent-arising, and the appearance of it as a dependent-arising<sup>b</sup> is from the force of realizing it as empty of inherent establishment, whereby when the party sees sprouts and so forth, this person sees

<sup>a</sup> That is, inferential consciousness.

<sup>b</sup> This latter statement of “the appearance of it as a dependent-arising” must refer to subsequent perception of the sprout under the influence of realization of its emptiness; however, Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa does not seem to openly discuss this except for this extremely brief reference.

them as dependent-arising, and due to this also induces ascertainment that they are empty of inherent establishment....At that time this called “the combination of the two—appearance and emptiness—occurs for that person, whereby these called “emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising” and “realizing the profound dependent-arising” also are just this.

Ngag-wang-pal-dan (b. 1797)

(332) Accordingly,

- for persons who have completed analysis of the view in this way the way the extreme of existence is avoided through appearance is that as much as they take to mind the meaning of dependent-arising, which is merely posited by name and terminology, to that same degree does the force of their awareness conceiving inherent existence diminish, and
- for such persons the way the extreme of nonexistence is avoided through emptiness is that as much as they take to mind the emptiness of inherent existence, to that same degree does the force of their awarenesses not believing in the cause and effect of karma and apprehending the cause and effect of karma to be nonexistent diminish.

Sha-mar offers his rendition of the mutually reinforcing understanding of dependent-arising and emptiness:

Therefore, through the power of explicit ascertainment that a phenomenon is a dependent-arising, ascertainment—without relying on another valid cognition—that it is empty of inherent existence is posited as ascertaining dependent-arising as meaning emptiness; and in dependence upon just the functioning of ascertaining that a phenomenon is empty of inherent existence and without relying on another [valid cognition], ascertainment that it is a dependent-arising is posited as realizing emptiness as meaning dependent-arising. Hence, “realizing the meaning of dependent-arising as the meaning of emptiness”<sup>a</sup> is not said about realizing emptiness within taking dependent-arising as the basis of emptiness<sup>b</sup> [and realizing it to be empty of inherent existence by way of reasoning] but is said about ascertaining the meaning of emptiness by the very functioning of ascertaining the meaning of dependent-

<sup>a</sup> *rten 'brel gyi don stong pa'i don du rtogs pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *rten 'brel stong gzhi byas pa'i stong pa rtogs pa.*

arising.<sup>a</sup>

Regarding the way the two extremes are avoided:

- ascertainment of dependent-arising prevents<sup>b</sup> at its own time the extreme of annihilation, and when through its very functioning<sup>c</sup> ascertainment of the absence of inherent existence is induced, the extreme of permanence [that is, superimposition of inherent existence] is prevented
- ascertainment of emptiness prevents at its own time the extreme of permanence [that is, superimposition of inherent existence], and through its force,<sup>d</sup> right afterward the extreme of annihilation is prevented.

It appears that in order to avoid the type of vocabulary evinced in Gyal-tshab's rendition—an explicit ascertainment of dependence producing an implicit ascertainment of emptiness, producing an explicit ascertainment of emptiness—these scholars avoid the vocabulary of implicit ascertainment by using vocabulary such as “in dependence upon the power of just that awareness” (Tsong-kha-pa), “without relying on another awareness” (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po), “by import<sup>e</sup>” (Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me), and “mutually bestow understanding” (Tan-dar-lha-ram-pa). Sha-mar similarly speaks twice of “without relying on another valid cognition” and speaks of “in dependence upon just the functioning of ascertaining.”

Through such vocabulary the two extremes are shown to be avoided in a quick serial process that is called “simultaneously.” As Sha-mar, just above, lays out the process:

1. Ascertainment of dependent-arising prevents at its own time the extreme of annihilation, deprecation of the existence of functionality.
2. Through the functioning itself of the ascertainment of dependent-arising ascertainment of the absence of inherent existence is induced, whereby the extreme of permanence, superimposition of inherent existence, is prevented.

and:

1. Ascertainment of emptiness prevents at its own time the extreme of

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<sup>a</sup> *rten 'brel gyi nges pa'i byed pa nyid kyis stong pa'i don nges pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *khegs pa.*

<sup>c</sup> *de'i byed pa nyid kyis.*

<sup>d</sup> *de'i stobs kyis.*

<sup>e</sup> *don gyis.*

permanence

2. Through its force, right afterward the extreme of annihilation is prevented.

Through these many ways it is maintained that realization of the emptiness of inherent existence is realization of a nonaffirming negative and that the realizations of dependent-arising and of emptiness are interactively mutually supportive and mutually enhancing. The explorations themselves draw the reader into envisaging the process in the realm of metaphysical imagination.

## JIG-MAY-DAM-CHÖ-GYA-TSHO’S FASCINATING SUGGESTION

In addressing the question of whether mutually supportive ascertainment of emptiness and dependent-arising occurs *after* finding the view or *at the same time as* finding the view of the emptiness of inherent existence, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (1898-1946):

1. presents the two opinions
2. states a criticism of simultaneity
3. responds to the criticism
4. and ends with a call for more analysis.

He leaves the issue for his readers to pursue, but in the process raises a fascinating series of dramatically important experiential doctrines.

First, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho rehearses the opinion that mutually supportive ascertainment of emptiness and dependent-arising occurs *after* finding the view:<sup>276</sup>

Some say that:

- avoidance of the extreme of existence by appearance and avoidance of the extreme of nonexistence by emptiness,
- emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising and dependent-arising going as the meaning of dependent-arising,
- emptiness dawning as cause and effect and cause and effect dawning as emptiness,
- and completion of analysis of the view

occur after finding the view [of the emptiness of inherent existence].

Second, he presents in detail the opinion that mutually supportive ascertainment of emptiness and dependent-arising occurs *at the same time as* finding the view of the emptiness of inherent existence:<sup>277</sup>

To this, others say: It follows that those are not logically feasible because [in the *Three Principal Aspects of the Path* Tsong-kha-pa] says that destruction of the object conceived by [a consciousness] apprehending true existence through the force of seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive is the measure of completing analysis of the view:<sup>a</sup>

When without alternation and simultaneously  
From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode  
of apprehension of the object,  
That time is completion of analysis of the view.

and moreover [Tsong-kha-pa] says that the noncapacity of an extreme view to captivate your mental continuum is an imprint of avoiding the extreme of existence through appearance, and so forth:

Moreover, if you know how the extreme of existence is  
avoided by appearances,  
And the extreme of nonexistence is avoided by emptiness,  
And emptiness dawns as cause and [conventionalities as]  
effects,  
You will not be captivated by extreme views.

and implicit to:

As long as the two, understanding of appearances<sup>b</sup>—that

<sup>a</sup> Stanza 13. For commentary by the Dalai Lama, see his *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1984), ==148-153, which is excerpted in the next chapter in this book. See also the Fourth Panchen Lama's placement of this and the next stanza in the context of instructions for practice in Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Cutting through Appearances: The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1990), 95-102, as well as in Geshe Wangyal, *Door of Liberation* (New York: Lotsawa, 1978), 126-160. For a translation of Tsong-kha-pa's text, see Robert Thurman, *Life and Teachings of Tsong Khapa* (Dharmasala, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1982), 57-58.

<sup>b</sup> It is interesting that Jam-yang-shay-pa in his *Great Exposition of Tenets* (Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, and Taipei reprint, 583.4) misquotes the line,

dependent-arisings are nondelusive—  
 And understanding of emptiness—that it is devoid of as-  
 sertation—  
 Seem to be separate, there still is no realization  
 Of the thought of the Sage.

he says that when the two understandings of appearances and of emptiness come to be such that the one assists the other, the final thought of the Sage is realized, and he says that when the two—the nondelusiveness of cause and effect and the destruction of the target aimed at by the apprehension of true existence—come to be such that the one mutually does not damage the other, the path pleasing the Conqueror, that is, the view of the middle, is found:

Whoever, seeing the cause and effect of all phenomena  
 Of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as never delusive,  
 Destroy all the targets of apprehension of objects [as truly  
 existent]  
 Have entered on a path pleasing the Conqueror.

[That Tsong-kha-pa says these] entails [that the opinion that mutually supportive ascertainment of emptiness and dependent-arising occurs *after* finding the view is wrong] because given [that Tsong-kha-pa says such] it is established that:<sup>a</sup>

- avoidance of the extreme of existence by appearance and avoidance of the extreme of nonexistence by emptiness
- emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising and dependent-arising going as the meaning of dependent-arising
- emptiness dawning as cause and effect and cause and effect dawning as emptiness
- completion of analysis of the view
- noncaptivation by extreme views
- realization of the final thought of the Sage
- and finding the profound path pleasing the Conqueror

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substituting “conventionalities” (*kun rdzob*) for Tsong-kha-pa’s “appearances” (*snang ba*). Perhaps he is making the point that the ultimate does indeed *appear* to a consciousness realizing it. However, later (*Maps of the Profound*, 946) he uses the dyad of appearance and emptiness and refers back to his explanation and citation here. Tsong-kha-pa’s meaning undoubtedly is “conventional appearances.”

<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (37.4) gives the first five merely as “those” (*de rnams*), referring to the list above.

occur upon finding the view. Furthermore, Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* says that without emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising the middle path free from permanence and annihilation is not found:

Since all the targets aimed at by the apprehension of signs are destroyed in dependence upon just having induced ascertainment of cause and effect, all places of going wrong with respect to the view of reality—the extremes of permanence and annihilation and superimposition and deprecation are eliminated from there. Until such a meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is realized as the meaning of dependent-arising, one does not pass beyond falling into either permanence or annihilation due to either a remainder of the targets aimed at by the apprehension of true existence being left over or there being no way to induce full-fledged ascertainment of dependent-arising, the dependent-arising of this arising from such-and-such a cause being uncomfortable in one's own system.

and he says that without emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising and so forth the middle path abandoning the two extremes is not found:

In brief, as long as one does not know to posit cause and effect, bondage and release, and so forth within the absence of inherent existence, that is, establishment by way of [the object's] own entity, no matter how one tries to abandon views of permanence and annihilation one does not pass beyond those two extremes because when one abandons the view of annihilation one must assert an extreme of existence and when one abandons the view of permanence, one must assert a view of nonexistence.

and the *Commentarial Explanation of the Kālachakra Tantra*<sup>a</sup> says that without emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-

<sup>a</sup> Lo-sang-chos-kyi-gyal-tshan, *dus 'khor ſik bshad/ rgyud thams cad kyi rgyal po bcom ldan 'das dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rtsa ba'i rgyud las phyung ba bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyas 'grel dri ma med pa'i 'od kyi rgya cher bshad pa de kho na nyid snang bar byed pa'i snying po bsdus pa yid bzhin gyi nor bu*, in *gsung 'bum (blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mishan, bkra shis lhun po'i par khang)*, TBRC W23430. 3:9-376 (New Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1973).



arising the view of reality is not found:

In brief, this situation that when from between the two—the emptiness of inherent establishment and the presentation of objects and agents—the one is posited, there is no way to posit the other, is the chief obstacle to understanding the final view. Not only is it just suitable to contain those two in conventional terms in one base but also if one has not penetrated well how even in conventional terms through the negation itself of inherent establishment it is permissible to posit all presentations of the objects and agents of the three—basis, path, and fruit—without any damage by valid cognition *there is no way to find the final view of reality*.

and this is known from statements by the Foremost Nor-sang-gya-tsho:<sup>a</sup>

The mere dawning of the appearances of their respective  
objects  
To [mental] consciousnesses and sense consciousnesses  
Induces definite knowledge ascertaining their respective  
objects as empty  
Without relying on other factors of reasoning.

and it can be known from the statement in the *Foremost [Tsong-kha-pa's] Secret Liberation [Biography]* that when the view is found, all discomforts are reversed:

Even if [I] made a try at such prior to arriving at nondeliberative constant analysis, ascertainment in which discomforts about the final essentials were utterly reversed could not be induced...A deeply penetrating ascertainment unlike anything previous was engendered.

and it is known from a statement in the same that at this time the analysis of the view is complete:

Although mentally a decision had been made with regard to that meaning upon having found ascertainment induced from the path of scripture and reasoning, [now] one without any aspect of discomfort came from the depths.

<sup>a</sup> See also the earlier citation with an additional initial line, 342.

Third, having made the case that mutually supportive ascertainment of emptiness and dependent-arising occurs *at the same time as* finding the view, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho presents someone's challenge to this very notion by drawing out an unwanted consequence of this very position that is based on the dictum that a single consciousness cannot have two different modes of apprehension:<sup>278</sup>

It [absurdly] follows that if emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising, emptiness is necessarily realized as the meaning of dependent-arising because [you] accepted [that emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising]. If you accept [that if emptiness goes as the meaning of dependent-arising, emptiness is necessarily realized as the meaning of dependent-arising], then it [absurdly] follows that the subject, one who has just realized emptiness, has necessarily realized emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising because [for that person emptiness has gone as the meaning of dependent-arising]. It cannot be accepted [that one who has just realized emptiness has necessarily realized emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising] because there does not exist a valid cognition apprehending such in that [person's] continuum.

Fourth, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho offers a final opinion that gets around this objection by splitting "realizing" from "going as the meaning." He puts this final step in the mouth of "others," though I take the "others" to be he himself:<sup>279</sup>

*Others say:* Finding the view, emptiness going as the meaning of dependent-arising, and so forth are simultaneous, but *realizing* the one as the meaning of the other and so forth is not simultaneous.

Then he calls his readers to look into the topic:<sup>280</sup>

Hence, this must be analyzed in detail.

and he leaves the issue, having taken us on a journey into the riches of one of the most profound topics of Tibetan religious geography.

## 16. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Commentary

To conclude this part of the Analysis of Issues on emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising, I will cite the Fourteenth Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso's commentary on the view of reality in Tsong-kha-pa's *Three Principal Aspects of the Path* because it brings together most of the aforementioned issues within the context of practice. The impact of these sometimes seemingly scholastic ruminations is dramatically apparent:<sup>a</sup>

Why is it important to generate the wisdom realizing emptiness?  
Tsong-kha-pa says:

If you are not endowed with the wisdom realizing the mode  
of subsistence,  
Even though you have familiarized with the thought definitely  
to leave cyclic existence and the altruistic mind,  
You cannot cut the root of cyclic existence.  
Therefore strive at the means for realizing dependent-arising.

There are many levels of the mode of subsistence of phenomena. Here Tsong-kha-pa means the most subtle level, the final reality. Of the two truths, this is the ultimate truth. There are many conventional modes of subsistence, ways that phenomena abide, but the correct view of emptiness apprehends the final mode of subsistence, the ultimate truth.

Without the wisdom realizing the final mode of subsistence of phenomena, even though you have made great effort in meditation and have generated both the determination to be freed from cyclic existence and the altruistic intention to gain enlightenment, the root of cyclic existence still cannot be severed. For, the root of cyclic existence meets back to ignorance of the mode of subsistence of phenomena, misconception of the nature of persons and other phenomena. It is necessary to generate wisdom that, within observing the same objects, has a mode of apprehension directly contradictory with that of this ignorant misconception. Even

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<sup>a</sup> Drawn from The Dalai Lama, *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, trans. and ed. by Jeffrey Hopkins, coedited by Elizabeth Napper (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1984; revised edition, 2006), 167-176.

though the mere wish to leave cyclic existence or the mere altruistic intention to become enlightened indirectly help, they cannot serve as direct antidotes overcoming the misconception that is the root of cyclic existence. This is why the view realizing emptiness is needed.

Notice that Tsong-kha-pa exhorts us to “work at the means of realizing dependent-arising,” not “work at the means of realizing emptiness.” This is because the meaning of dependent-arising resides in the meaning of emptiness, and conversely, the meaning of emptiness resides in the meaning of dependent-arising. Therefore, in order to indicate that emptiness should be understood as the meaning of dependent-arising, and vice versa, thereby freeing one from the two extremes, he says that effort should be made at the means of realizing dependent-arising.

Emptiness should be understood not as a mere negation of everything but as a negation of inherent existence—the absence of which is compatible with dependent-arising. If the understanding of emptiness and the understanding of dependent-arising become unrelated and emptiness is misunderstood as nihilism, not only would emptiness not be understood correctly but also such conception would, rather than being advantageous, have the great fault of falling to an extreme of annihilation. Therefore, Tsong-kha-pa explicitly speaks of understanding dependent-arising. Then:

Whoever, seeing the cause and effect of all phenomena  
Of cyclic existence and nirvāṇa as never delusive,  
Destroy all the targets of apprehension of objects [as truly  
existent]  
Have entered on a path pleasing the Victor.

When, through investigating this final mode of subsistence of phenomena, we come to understand the nonexistence of the referent object of the conception of self, or inherent existence, in persons or phenomena—that is, when we realize the absence of inherent existence—within still being able posit, without error, the cause and effect of all the phenomena included within cyclic existence and nirvāṇa, at that time we have entered on the path that pleases Buddha. Emptiness is to be understood within not overriding your understanding of the cause and effect of mundane and supramundane phenomena, which obviously bring help and harm and cannot be denied. When emptiness is realized within understanding

the non-mistakenness, non-confusion, and non-disordering of the process of cause and effect, that is to say, dependent-arising, this realization is capable of destroying all misapprehension of objects as inherently existent.

As long as the two, understanding of appearances—that  
dependent-arising are nondelusive—  
And understanding of emptiness—that it is devoid of as-  
sertion—  
Seem to be separate, there still is no realization  
Of the thought of the Sage.

If the understanding of appearances as unconfused dependent-arising and the understanding of the emptiness of inherent existence of those appearances seem mutually exclusive, unrelated—if the understanding of the one does not facilitate understanding of the other or makes the other seem impossible—then you have not understood the thought of Shākyamuni Buddha. If it is the case that your realization of emptiness causes realization of dependent-arising to lessen or that your realization of dependent-arising causes realization of emptiness to lessen and these two realizations alternate as if separate and contradictory, you do not have the proper view.

Rather:

When without alternation and simultaneously  
From only seeing dependent-arising as nondelusive  
An ascertaining consciousness entirely destroys the mode  
of apprehension of the object,  
That time is completion of analysis of the view.

The wisdom realizing the lack of inherent existence, the absence of a self-instituting entity, is induced through searching for and not finding an object designated, for instance, one's own body, using a method of analysis such as the sevenfold reasoning.<sup>a</sup> Finally, through the reason of the phenomenon's being a dependent-

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<sup>a</sup> This is an analysis of whether the person and the mind-body aggregates are inherently the same entity or different entities, whether the person inherently depends on mind and body, whether mind and body inherently depend on the person, whether the person inherently possesses mind and body, whether the person is the shape of the body, and whether the person is the composite of mind and body. See Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1983; rev. ed., Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1996), Part One Chapters 3 & 4, Part Two

arising, the practitioner induces ascertainment that it is devoid of inherent existence. For, once it is under the influence of other factors, it depends upon them, and it is through its dependence on something else that the subject is shown to be empty of existing under its own power. In that we establish, through the reason of dependence on something else, or dependent-arising, that a phenomenon is empty of existing under its own power, a dependently arisen phenomenon is left as positable after the refutation.

If we investigate a human who appears in a dream and an actual human of the waking state by way of the sevenfold reasoning, to an equal extent no self-instituting entity can be found in either case. However, although the dream human and the actual human, when investigated with the sevenfold reasoning, are equally unfindable, this does not mean that a dream human is to be posited as a human. Such would contradict valid cognition that experiences conventional objects; a subsequent conventional valid cognition refutes that a dream human is a human, whereas positing an actual human as a human is not damaged by conventional valid cognition.

Even though a human cannot be found when sought through the sevenfold reasoning, it is unsuitable to conclude that humans do not exist, because that assertion would be refuted by conventional valid cognition. Conventional valid cognition establishes actual human beings, and, therefore, humans must be posited as existing. In that they are not findable under analysis such as the sevenfold reasoning but do exist, it can be decided that humans exist not by way of their own power but only under the influence of, or in dependence upon, other factors. In this way, the meaning of being empty of being under its own power comes to mean depending on others.

When Nāgārjuna and his students cite reasons proving the emptiness of phenomena, they often use the reason of dependent-arising, that phenomena are produced in dependence upon causes and conditions, and so forth. As Nāgārjuna says in his *Treatise on the Middle*:<sup>a</sup>

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Chapter 5, and Part Six Chapter 7.

<sup>a</sup> XXIV.19; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5224, vol. 95, 9.3.5: *gang phyir*

Because there are no phenomena  
That are not dependent-arising,  
There are no phenomena  
That are not empty [of inherent existence].

Once there is no phenomenon that is not a dependent-arising, there is no phenomenon that is not empty of inherent existence. Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* says:<sup>a</sup>

All these [phenomena] are not self-powered;  
Thus, there is no self [inherent existence].

No phenomenon exists under its own power; therefore, all phenomena are devoid of being established by way of their own character. As the reason why phenomena are empty, they did not say that objects are not seen, not touched, or not felt. Thus, when phenomena are said to be empty, this does not mean that they are empty of the capacity to perform functions but that they are empty of their own inherent existence.

Moreover, the meaning of dependent-arising is not that phenomena *inherently* arise in dependence upon causes and conditions, but that they arise in dependence upon causes and conditions like a magician's illusions. If you understand the meaning of emptiness and dependent-arising well, you can, with respect to one object, understand its inevitable unmistakable appearance as well as its emptiness of inherent existence; these two are not at all contradictory. Otherwise, you might think that it would be impossible to realize these two factors, the unfabricated reality of emptiness and the fabricated fact of dependent-arising, with respect to one object.

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*rten 'byung ma yin pa'i// chos 'ga' yod pa ma yin pa// de phyir stong pa ma yin pa'i// chos 'ga' yod pa ma yin no//*; Sanskrit: *apratītya samutpanno dharmah kaścinna vidyate/ yasmāttasmādaśūnyo 'hi dharmah kaścinna vidyate*, both as found in Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra par Candrakīrti*, Bibliotheca Buddhica 9 (Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1970), 505. Brackets are from Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations, dbu ma pa*, 74a.8.

<sup>a</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa (catuḥśataka)*, XIV.23; in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3846)*, TBRC W23703.97:3-37, dbu ma, vol. tsha, (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 16a.4; Peking 5246, vol. 95, 139.2.7. Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka*, 134; see Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas*, 274. Brackets are from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, and *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 704.6. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 317.

However, once you have established the emptiness of inherent existence by the very reason of dependent-arising, it is impossible for the understanding of appearance and the understanding of emptiness to become separated.

An emptiness of inherent existence appears to the mind through the route of eliminating an object of negation, which in this case is inherent existence. At that time, a mere vacuity that is the negative of inherent existence appears to the mind; this is an absence that does not imply another positive phenomenon in its place. To understand emptiness it is necessary to eliminate an object of negation just as, for example, to understand the absence of flowers here in front of me it is necessary to eliminate the presence of flowers. When we speak of this vacuity that is a mere negation, or negative, of inherent existence, we are talking about the way in which emptiness appears to the mind—as a mere vacuity devoid of the object of negation. We are not saying that at that time there is no consciousness or person realizing emptiness, for in fact we are describing how this appears in meditation to the mind of the meditator.

In brief, by reason of the fact that phenomena are dependent-arising—that they arise dependently—we establish that they are empty of inherent existence. Once dependent-arising is used as the reason for the emptiness of inherent existence, then with respect to one basis [or object] the practitioner conveniently avoids the two extremes of inherent existence and utter nonexistence.

When emptiness is understood from the very perception of appearances themselves—from the very perception of dependent-arising itself—this understanding of appearance assists in understanding emptiness. When an understanding of emptiness is achieved through the reason of perceiving just dependent-arising without depending on any other type of reasoning such that the understanding of the one does not harm the understanding of the other but instead they mutually help each other and there is no need to alternate understanding of appearances and understanding of emptiness as if they were unrelated and separate, the analysis of the view is complete.

As Chandrakīrti says in the *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"*:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *madhyamakāvatāra, dbu ma la 'jug pa*, VI.160: *rnam bdun gyis med gang de ji lta bur// yod ces rnal 'byor pas 'di'i yod mi rnyed// des de nyid la 'ang bde blag*



[When] yogis do not find the existence of this [chariot],  
How could it be said that what does not exist in the seven  
ways exists [inherently]?

Through that, they easily enter also into suchness.

Therefore, here the establishment of this [chariot] is to be  
asserted in that way.

When sought for in the seven ways, phenomena cannot be found; yet, they are posited as being existent. This existence derives not from the object's own power but from the other-power of conceptuality. Hence, a thorough understanding of how phenomena are posited conventionally helps in gaining an understanding of their ultimate nature.

Prior to this deep level of realization, when you gain a little understanding of emptiness, you might wonder whether the activities of cause and effect, agent, activity, and object are possible within emptiness. At that time, consider an image in a mirror which, while being a mere reflection, is produced when certain conditions are met and disappears when those conditions cease—this being an example of the feasibility of functionality within absence of inherent existence. Or, contemplate your own experience of the obvious help and harm that come from the presence and absence of certain phenomena, thereby strengthening conviction in dependent-arising. If, on the other hand, you start moving to the extreme of the reification of existence, reflect on emptiness. In other words, when you are tending toward the extreme of nihilism, reflect more on dependent-arising; then, when you begin to move toward the extreme of inherent existence, reflect more on emptiness. With such skillful alternation of reflecting on emptiness and on dependent-arising by means of a union of stabilizing and analytical meditation, your understanding of both dependent-arising and the emptiness of inherent existence will become deeper and deeper, and at a certain point your understanding of appearances and emptiness will become equal.

The text continues:

Moreover, if you know how the extreme of existence is  
avoided by appearances,

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*'jug 'gyur bas// 'dir de'i grub pa de bzhin 'dod par bya//*. The bracketed material is from Tsong-kha-pa's *Illumination of the Thought* (*dgongs pa rab gsal*) (Dharmasala: Shes rig par khang edition, n.d.), 218.14-218.19.

And the extreme of nonexistence is avoided by emptiness,

Among all four Buddhist schools of tenets as well as, for instance, the Sāṃkhya and even the Nihilist schools, it is held to be true that the extreme of nonexistence—misidentification of what exists as not existing—is avoided by appearance and the extreme of existence—misidentifying what does not exist as existing—is avoided by emptiness. However, according to the uncommon view of the Middle Way Consequence School, the opposite also holds true: by way of appearance the extreme of existence is avoided, and by way of emptiness the extreme of nonexistence is avoided. This doctrine derives from the pivotal point that the meaning of dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness and the meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising.

The understanding of dependent-arising differs among the Mind-Only School, Middle Autonomy School, and the Middle Consequence School. The Mind-Only School posits the meaning of dependent-arising only in terms of compounded phenomena, those that arise from and are dependent upon causes and conditions. In the Middle Autonomy School, the meaning of dependent-arising is applied to all phenomena, permanent and impermanent, in that all phenomena depend on their parts. In the Middle Consequence School, dependent-arising is, in addition, explained as the arising, or establishment, of all phenomena in dependence on imputation, or designation, by conceptuality. The mutual compatibility of such dependent-arising and emptiness is to be understood.

In this vein, the text says:

And emptiness dawns as cause and [conventionalities as] effects,

You will not be captivated by extreme views.

When, from within the sphere of emptiness, cause and effect appear in dependence upon emptiness in the sense that dependent-arisings are feasible because of emptiness, it is as if the dependent-arisings of cause and effects appear from or are produced from emptiness. When in dependence upon emptiness you understand the feasibility of dependent-arising, you are released from the two extremes.

Thus, the understanding of emptiness itself helps you to avoid the extreme of nonexistence. Also, when you understand that dependence upon causes and conditions, parts, or a designating consciousness contradicts inherent existence, that very understanding

of dependent-arising will help you to avoid the extreme of reification of existence. Once the meaning of emptiness dawns as dependent-arising such that what is just empty of inherent existence dawns as cause and effect, it is impossible for the mind to be captivated by an extreme view reifying what does not exist or deprecating what does exist.



## 17. How Nāgārjuna Identifies the Definitive

By showing how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising and dependent-arising is the meaning of emptiness, Nāgārjuna differentiates which sūtra passages are definitive and which are interpretable. As Tsong-kha-pa (above, 54) says:

Through delineating with reasoning just this mode [of how emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising]<sup>281</sup> in his Middle Way treatises the master [Nāgārjuna] explains that there is not even the slightest damage by reasoning to the literality of high sayings that set out that production and so forth do not truly exist, and when there is not [any such damage], then since there also is no way from another viewpoint to comment on those [high sayings] as of interpretable meaning, those are very much established as of definitive meaning. In consideration of this, Chandrakīrti says in the *Clear Words*:<sup>a</sup>

The master [Nāgārjuna] composed this *Treatise on the Middle* for the sake of showing the difference between sūtras of interpretable meaning and of definitive meaning.

Also, Nāgārjuna in his *Compendium of Sutra* answers a hypothetical question about what the sūtras teaching the profound emptiness are by citing the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*, the *Diamond Cutter*, the *Seven Hundred Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*, and so forth, and in his Collections of Reasonings he makes it clear through myriad reasonings that their meaning cannot be interpreted as other than what they indicate. As Tsong-kha-pa (above, 56) says:

In answer to a question concerning what the profound doctrines are, Nāgārjuna's *Compendium of Sutra* cites sūtras teaching the profound such as the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, the *Diamond Cutter*, the *Seven Hundred Stanza [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra]*, and so forth, and [Nāgārjuna's]

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<sup>a</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba* (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 7.5.7. La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 40.7: *evedam madhyamakaśāstram prañītam ācāryeṇa neyanītārthasūtrāntavibhāgo-padarśanārthaṃ* /. For more context for this and next quote, see the lengthy citation later in the Analysis of Issues, 90, and in Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 806ff.

Collections of Reasonings make it definite that it is unsuitable to interpret the meaning of these as other than what is taught. Thereby, [Nāgārjuna] asserts that these are of definitive meaning and those spoken in a way other than these have a thought [behind them].

In his *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment* Nāgārjuna singles out as non-literal the refutation of external objects and the supposed proof of the inherent existence of mind-only.<sup>a</sup> Furthermore, in his *Precious Garland* Nāgārjuna explains that Buddha teaches only what trainees' could bear, thereby clarifying that not all teachings can be taken literally. (Tsong-kha-pa cites both of these above, 57.)

Similarly, Ngag-wang-pal-dan in a different context in his *Explanation of the Veiling and the Ultimate in the Four Systems of Tenets* cites three passages speaking about Buddha's teaching in accordance with the capacity of trainees including this same passage from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*.<sup>282</sup>

It is established [that the Supramundane Victor did not teach Hearer sectarians the emptiness—that is a lack of things' inherent existence—and so forth as is set forth in the scriptural collections of the Great Vehicle] because Hearer sectarians are not suitable as vessels for teaching the profound emptiness. [That Hearer sectar-

<sup>a</sup> About this, Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of Tenets* says:

[T]he master the Superior Nāgārjuna clearly refutes the Mind-Only School because his *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment* individually refutes the self asserted by Other Schools, the partless particles asserted by the Hearer schools, and the three characters and the mind-basis-of-all asserted by Proponents of Mind-Only, and so forth:

When the self imputed by Forders  
Is analyzed with reasoning,  
It is not found anywhere  
Among all the aggregates...

The statement by the Subduer  
That all these [three realms] are mind-only  
Is so that childish beings might give up their fear [of the profound];<sup>a</sup>  
It is not thus.

and so forth.

See Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 504.

ians are not suitable as vessels for teaching the profound emptiness] entails [that the Supramundane Victor did not teach Hearer sectarians the emptiness—that is a lack of things’ inherent existence—and so forth as is set forth in the scriptural collections of the Great Vehicle] because many sūtras and treatises explain that the doctrines spoken by the Buddha are through the force of trainees:

1. because Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called “Wisdom”* (XVIII.8) says that Buddha teaches doctrine relevant to trainees by way of four stages:<sup>a</sup>

That all are real, are not real,  
Are real and unreal,  
Are neither unreal nor real:  
Those were taught by the Buddha.

Initially, in order to generate [in trainees] respect for himself with the thought, “This one is omniscient, knowing the ways in which the entire world arises,” [Buddha] says that all environments and inhabitants, such as the aggregates, the constituents, the sense-fields, and so forth are real, that is, true. Then, when respect has been generated in that way, he says that these compounded phenomena are unreal, that is, impermanent, since they change otherwise in each moment. Then, he says that all of these environments and inhabitants are real relative to childish beings in the sense of abiding in their own entities for a second moment after their own time, and that these are unreal relative to a Superior’s pristine wisdom attained subsequent [to meditative equipoise] in the sense of not abiding in their own entities for a second moment after their own time. Then, for those who are suitable as vessels for the generation of the profound view in their [mental] continuum, he says that the unreal, those which change into something else each moment, are not established through their own entities and also the real, those which do not change into something else each moment, are not established through their own entities.

2. and because Nāgārjuna’s *Precious Garland* (see above, 58) says:

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<sup>a</sup> See also the translation by Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield, *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nāgārjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 383.

Just as a grammarian [first]<sup>283</sup> has students  
 Read a model of the alphabet,  
 So Buddha taught trainees  
 The doctrines that they could bear.

To some he taught doctrines  
 To turn them away from ill-deeds;<sup>a</sup>  
 To some, for the sake of achieving merit;<sup>b</sup>  
 To some, doctrines based on duality;  
 To some, doctrines based on nonduality;  
 To some what is profound and frightening to the fearful<sup>c</sup>—  
 Having an essence of emptiness and compassion—  
 The means of achieving [unsurpassed]<sup>284</sup> enlightenment.

and also Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* (VIII.20) says:<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.6/379.23) takes these two lines as referring to the teaching of actions and their effects and so forth to those predominantly engaging in ill-deeds, for the sake of turning them away from such deeds.

<sup>b</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.6/379.25) takes this line as referring to teaching those not achieving merit how to accumulate merit for the sake of attaining the levels of gods and humans as effects of merit.

<sup>c</sup> *khu 'phrig can*; “the timid” and “the apprehensive”; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 33.5/380.8) glosses *khu 'phrig* as “qualms or apprehensiveness” (*dogs pa 'am rnam rtog*).

<sup>d</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa* (*catuḥśatakaśāstrakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3846), TBRC W23703.97:3-37 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Sanskrit from La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 372:

*sadasatsadasacceti nobhayam ceti kathyate /  
 nanu vyādhivaśāt sarvamaṣadhaṃ nāma jñāyate //*

See also Karen Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka: On the Bodhisattva's Cultivation of Merit and Knowledge*, Indiske Studier 7 (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1986), ; and *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas: Gyal-tshab on Āryadeva's Four Hundred*, commentary by Geshe Sonam Rinchen, translated and edited by Ruth Sonam (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1994), 194. See also the translation by Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield, *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 384. The Tibetan is:

*yod dang med dang yod med dang  
 gnyid ka min zhes kyang bstan te  
 nad kyi dbang gis thams cad ni*



Existence, nonexistence, and existence and nonexistence,  
 And also not both are taught.  
 Is it not that all become  
 Medicine due to the illness?

Chandrakīrti, in the course of commenting on Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called "Wisdom"* (XVIII.6):

The Buddhas designate that there is a self  
 And also teach that there is no self,  
 And furthermore teach that self  
 And no-self do not at all exist.

cites in his *Clear Words* two texts speaking about the multifaceted nature of Buddha's teaching:

1. another stanza from Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* (VIII:15):<sup>a</sup>

One who knows that  
 Initially the non-meritorious is overcome,  
 In the middle self is overcome, and  
 Finally all views are overcome is wise.

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*sman zhes bya bar 'gyur min nam*

<sup>a</sup> Jam-yang-shay-pa expands on the three-staged teaching in this quote from Āryadeva:

The one who is skilled in means makes trainees into suitable vessels over three stages:

- Nihilistic views are overcome through [teaching about] actions and their effects, and so forth.
- A permanent, unitary, and self-powered self as well as the self in the mode of apprehension of the twenty views of the transitory collection [as a real self] in which the self is substantially existent in the sense of having a character discordant with the characters of the aggregates are refuted by [teaching] the four—impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness—as antidotes to conceptions that the unclean is clean, pain is pleasure, the impermanent is permanent, and the selfless is self.
- When through having taught such, trainees' continuums have ripened and they have become fit vessels for the profound, in the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras and so forth not only are consciousnesses conceiving that the coarse selflessness and the coarse absence of true existence are the final mode of subsistence overcome but also all whatsoever proliferations of bad views—consciousnesses conceiving true existence and so forth—are overcome.

See Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 914.

2. and the passage quoted above from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*.

Also, Chandrakīrti, in the course of commenting on Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* (XVIII.8):

That all are real, are not real,  
Are real and unreal,  
Are neither unreal nor real:  
Those were taught by the Buddha.

cites stanza VIII.20 from Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* speaking about the multifaceted nature of Buddha's teaching quoted above by Ngag-wang-pal-dan:

Existence, nonexistence, and existence and nonexistence,  
And also not both are taught.  
Is it not that all become  
Medicine due to the illness?

We notice that Chandrakīrti puts the quote from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* together with Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* stanza XVIII.6, whereas Ngag-wang-pal-dan cites the quote from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* in series with Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* stanza XVIII.8. This raises an interesting issue.

## Issue #48: Do Nāgārjuna's two stanzas, XVIII.6 and XVIII.8, have the same meaning as the passage from his *Precious Garland*?

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho<sup>285</sup> demonstrates that although the meaning indicated by XVIII.6:

The Buddhas designate that there is a self  
And also teach that there is no self,  
And furthermore teach that self  
And no-self do not at all exist.

and the passage from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* are similar, the meaning indicated by XVIII.8:

That all are real, are not real,  
Are real and unreal,  
Are neither unreal nor real:  
Those were taught by the Buddha.

and the passage from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* are not similar.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho explains that the meaning indicated by Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* stanza XVIII.6 and the meaning indicated by this passage from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* are similar:<sup>286</sup>

because (1) to those who would not be able to posit actions and their effects if he did not teach that self exists, [Buddha,] based on the existence of self, taught [practices] stemming from [how to achieve] high status [within cyclic existence]; (2) to certain ones bound by views of self so that they might turn away from nonvirtues he taught a coarse selflessness of persons and an otherness of substantial entity of apprehended-object and apprehending-subject; (3) to certain such ones he taught the nonduality of apprehended-object and apprehending-subject; and (4) to those able to realize the final profound meaning he taught that having an essence of emptiness and compassion, because Tsong-kha-pa in his *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called 'Wisdom'"* immediately after commenting in that way says:<sup>a</sup>

These stages are set forth in Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* (VIII.15):<sup>b</sup>

One who knows that  
Initially the non-meritorious is overcome,  
In the middle self is overcome, and  
Finally all views are overcome is wise.

and says:

and accord with what is said [in Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland*], "Just as a grammarian" and so forth.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho then explains that it cannot be asserted that the meaning indicated by Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* stanza XVIII.8:

That all are real, are not real,

<sup>a</sup> See also the translation by Geshe Ngawang Samten and Jay L. Garfield, *Ocean of Reasoning: A Great Commentary on Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadh-yamakakārikā*, 381.

<sup>b</sup> See the footnote in the citation above for Jam-yang-shay-pa's commentary on this stanza which is built around three stages; Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho perhaps suggests a flexible reading by introducing the third as "certain such ones" thereby connecting it to the second.

Are real and unreal,  
 Are neither unreal nor real:  
 Those were taught by the Buddha.

and the meaning indicated by the passage from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* are similar:

because [the meaning indicated by Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* stanza XVIII.8 is that] (1) so that trainees would respect him as omniscient he taught that all environments and inhabitants are truly established; and (2) so that they would realize subtle impermanence he taught that compounded phenomena are unreal in the sense of being untrustworthy; and (3) to some he taught that all environments and inhabitants are real relative to childish beings in the sense of abiding for a second moment after their establishment and unreal relative to a Superior's pristine wisdom attained subsequent [to meditative equipoise] in the sense of not abiding for a second moment after their establishment; and (3) to those who had familiarized with the view of the profound [emptiness] he taught that the unreal, those which change into something else each moment, are not inherently established and also the real, those which do not change into something else each moment, are not [inherently established]; and this is not the meaning of those scriptural passages from Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* and Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* [VIII.20], because Tsong-kha-pa in his *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called 'Wisdom'"* after expansively opening up the meaning of [Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* stanza XVIII.8] "That all are real," and so forth says:

Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* (VIII.20) says:

Existence, nonexistence, and existence and nonexistence,  
 And also not both are taught.  
 Is it not that all become  
 Medicine due to the illness?

saying that [Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise* stanza XVIII.8] has the same significance as this passage from Āryadeva's *Four Hundred*.

## Issue #49: Then, why does Ngag-wang-pal-dan cite this passage from the Precious Garland in series with the Fundamental Treatise stanza XVIII.8 “That all are real,”...?

It is likely the Ngag-wang-pal-dan wanted to cite two teachings with different meanings, even though after the *Precious Garland* he cites Āryadeva’s *Four Hundred* (VIII.20) which has the same meaning as the *Precious Garland*, since the latter two are included within one reason (“because”) clause, whereas the first two are in separate reason clauses.

In sum, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho wants to make it clear that:

1. Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Treatise* stanzas XVIII.6 and XVIII.8 about Buddha’s multifaceted teachings do not have the same meaning.
2. The meanings indicated by Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Treatise* XVIII.6 and the passage from Nāgārjuna’s *Precious Garland* are similar and accord with Āryadeva’s *Four Hundred* VIII.15.
3. The meanings indicated by XVIII.8 and the passage from Nāgārjuna’s *Precious Garland* are not similar, but the meanings indicated by Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Treatise* XVIII.8 accords with Āryadeva’s *Four Hundred* VIII.20.

Tsong-kha-pa concludes:

Therefore, as long as it is not allowable to posit all the presentations of bondage and release within the teaching of the absence of true existence, it is necessary to make a differentiation that some [phenomena]<sup>287</sup> are not true and that some [phenomena] are true because:

- [such persons] must be led by stages upon being taught a partial selflessness, and
- if there is no basis for positing cause and effect, even that trifling emptiness is not suitable to be posited [for them].

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 41a.3) identifies the “partial selflessness” (*bdag med pa’i phyogs re*) and the “trifling emptiness” (*nyi tshe ba’i stong pa*) here as “substantial existence in the sense of self-sufficiency” (*rang rkya thub pa’i rdzas yod*); he says:<sup>288</sup>

If [someone] (1) says [about Tsong-kha-pa’s statement] that the selflessness of persons is to be posited as a partial selflessness and a trifling emptiness, and (2) says that the selflessness of persons is

a partial emptiness, the first is not logically feasible because here trifling is from the viewpoint of the object of negation, not from the viewpoint of the basis of emptiness, and here trifling also is to be taken as substantial existence in the sense of self-sufficiency. The second is not logically feasible because in that case even the emptiness of true existence of a pot would be a trifling emptiness.

Thus, we can conclude that, according to Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, even though Tsong-kha-pa uses the term “absence of true existence” in the first clause of the quotation above, the two usages of the term “true” in the next clause do not refer to “true existence” but to an elevated status of objects, namely, “substantial existence in the sense of self-sufficiency.” In the citation below, Tsong-kha-pa goes on to call this status “an inherent nature” (*rang bzhin*) but then complicates the matter by using the same term “an inherent nature” in the next clause to mean “true existence”:

Therefore, [Buddha] set out:

- a mode of refuting an inherent nature in persons<sup>a</sup> and thereupon mostly not refuting [such] with respect to the aggregates [for the sake of taking care of those of the Hearers schools],<sup>289</sup> and
- a mode of refuting that apprehended-object and apprehending-subject are other substantial entities and thereupon not refuting an inherent nature [that is, true existence] with respect to the emptiness of duality [for the sake of taking care of Proponents of Cognition].<sup>b</sup>

Tsong-kha-pa expects his readers to read into these terms the meanings appropriate to the particular occasions.

<sup>a</sup> In Lo-sang-wang-chug's *Notes* (325.10) the “inherent nature” that is refuted with respect to persons is taken to be a self-sufficient self (*rang rkya thub pa'i bdag*) as Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho did just above, but with respect to the aggregates the “inherent nature” that is mostly not refuted is taken as establishment by way of its own character (*rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa*).

<sup>b</sup> *rnam rig pa, vijñaptika/vijñaptivādin*; these are the Proponents of Mind-Only. Brackets from Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 186.5.

*ANALYSIS OF ISSUES III:  
THE ESSENCE OF THE MEANING  
OF THE HIGH SAYINGS*





## 18. The Essence of Buddha's Teaching

Tsong-kha-pa (above, 64) encapsulates Nāgārjuna's praise of the Buddha for teaching that the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence is the meaning of dependent-arising:

Perceiving that just this speaking of the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence as the meaning of dependent-arising—"Due to just the reason of arising in dependence upon cause and conditions phenomena do not have inherent existence in the sense of being established by way of their own nature"—is an unsurpassed distinguishing feature elevating our own Teacher above other proponents, the master [Nāgārjuna] praised the Supramundane Victor in many texts from the viewpoint of his setting out dependent-arising. Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text called "Wisdom"* says:<sup>a</sup>

To the one who taught that what dependently arises  
Has no cessation, no production,  
No annihilation, no permanence,  
No coming, no going,  
No difference, no sameness—  
The quiescence of proliferations, and pacification:  
To the perfect Buddha,  
The best of propounders, homage.

and his *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:<sup>b</sup>

To the one who spoke of dependent-arisings  
Having abandoned through this mode  
Production and disintegration,  
The Sovereign of Subduers, homage.

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<sup>a</sup> Introductory stanzas; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 1b.2-1b.3; Sanskrit in La Vallée Poussin, *Prasannapadā*, 11.13: *anirodhamanutpādamanucchedamaśāsvataṃ / anekārthamanānārthamanāgamamanirgamam // yaḥ pratītyasamutpādam prapañcopaśamam śivam / deśayāmāsa sambuddhastam vande vadatām varam //*.

<sup>b</sup> Introductory stanza, *rigs pa drug cu pa* (*yuktiṣaṭikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3825), TBRC W23703.96:42-46, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa*, (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 20a.1-20a.2. Tibetan and English translation also in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 72-73.

and his *Refutation of Objections* says:<sup>a</sup>

Supreme [by] speaking  
Of emptiness, dependent-arising,  
And the middle path as having the same meaning,<sup>b</sup>  
To the unequalled Buddha, homage.

and his *Praise of the Inconceivable* says:<sup>c</sup>

To the one having incomparable, inconceivable,  
Unequalled pristine wisdom  
Who spoke of dependently arisen things  
As just natureless, I make homage.

The first indicates that dependent-arising are equally devoid of the eight—cessation and so forth. The second indicates that by reason of being dependently arisen they are devoid of those. The third indicates that dependent-arising, middle path, and emptiness of inherent existence have the same meaning. The fourth indicates that for this reason cessation and so forth are devoid of entities established by way of their own character.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho reframes this as:<sup>290</sup>

The master Nāgārjuna praise of our Teacher upon perceiving that just this setting forth—under his own power—the meaning of the emptiness of inherent existence as the meaning of dependent-arising:

“The subjects, compounded phenomena, are without a na-

<sup>a</sup> *rtsod pa bzlog pa, vīgrahavyāvartanī*, stanza 71; in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3828), TBRC W23703.96:55-59, dbu ma, vol. tsa (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); 29a.6; Sanskrit in K. Bhattacharya, E.H. Johnston, A. Kunst, *The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), 85: *yaḥ śūnyatām pratītyasamutpādaṃ madhyamām pratipadam ca / ekārthāṃ nijagāda prañamāmi tam apratimabuddham //*. Sanskrit and Tibetan also in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 217 and 229.

<sup>b</sup> *don gcig pa*.

<sup>c</sup> *bsam gyis mi khyab par bstod pa, acintyastava*, stanza 1; in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 1128), TBRC W23703.1:154-159 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). Sanskrit in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 163: *pratītyajānām bhāvānām naiḥsvābhāvyam jagāda yaḥ / tam namāmy asamajñānam acintyam anidarśanam //*; Tibetan and English translation on pages 12-13.

ture in the sense of establishment by way of its own character because of arising in dependence upon their own respective causes and conditions,”

is an unsurpassed feature elevating our Teacher above bad proponents such as [nonBuddhist] Forders and so forth and right proponents such as Hearers, Solitary Realizers, Bodhisattvas, and so forth. For, Nāgārjuna praises him from the approach of his speaking of:

1. dependent-arising as devoid of the eight, cessation and so forth, in the *Fundamental Text* called “*Wisdom*,”
2. [phenomena] as devoid of the eight, cessation and so forth, due to being dependent-arisings in the *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*,
3. emptiness, dependent-arising, and the middle path as having the same meaning in the *Refutation of Objections*, and (4) and [phenomena] as empty of establishment by way of their own character in the *Praise of the Inconceivable*.

**The meaning of the first scripture.** The way in which the Buddha, the supreme proponent, who taught dependent-arising under his own power, taught the suchness of dependent-arising is that he taught it by way of the eight, cessation and so forth. Those eight are: Since dependent-arisings are not inherently produced, dependent-arisings, relative to the nature of the objects of uncontaminated meditative equipoise, are:

1. without cessation in the sense of momentary disintegration;
2. without production in the sense of becoming their own entity;
3. without annihilation of an earlier continuum;
4. without permanence in the sense of abiding at all times;
5. without coming from a distant area;
6. without going to a distant area;
7. without difference in the sense of individual meanings;
8. without sameness in the sense of nonindividual meanings.

Among those,

relative to entity there are two, cessation and production, which bring about deterioration and increase;

relative to time there are two, annihilation and permanence;

relative to area there are two, coming and going;

relative to an equivalent there are two, difference and sameness.

In the perspective of a Superior's perception of the suchness of dependent-arising in accordance with the mode of subsistence, proliferations are thoroughly quiescent in the suchness of dependent-arising, and in it there is no movement of the conceptual operation of minds and mental factors; therefore, by way of the vanishing of the conventions of consciousness and objects of consciousness it is devoid of all the injuries of birth, aging, sickness, death, and so forth, due to which it is said that it is "pacification."...

**The meaning of the second scripture.** The way in which the Sovereign of Subduers, who set forth dependent-arising under his own power, is that it was upon having abandoned inherent production and disintegration through this mode of dependent-arising.

**The meaning of the third scripture.** The way in which the unequalled Buddha, supreme of teachers by way of setting forth dependent-arising under his own power, is that it was to set forth the three—phenomena that are only empty of true establishment, dependent-arising, and the middle path, that is, the center devoid of the two extremes—as having the same meaning.<sup>a</sup> In accordance with the occurrence of "the **two**, emptiness and dependent-arising"<sup>b</sup> in the translation of Nāgārjuna's root text in the *Autocommentary on the "Refutation of Objections,"* it indeed comes to accord with what Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho's *Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Great Exposition of Special Insight"* (above, 363, in the fourth section above) says:

Understanding is facilitated if this is taken as meaning that since even each of the two, emptiness and dependent-arising, avoid the two extremes, these have the same meaning<sup>c</sup> as, or have similar meaning<sup>d</sup> to, the middle path.

However, it is to be taken as [I have] above, in accordance with the statement in the text [Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence*] (above, 68):

Dependent-arising, middle path, and emptiness of inherent existence have the same meaning.

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<sup>a</sup> *don gcig pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *stong dang rten 'byung dag*, with the dual ending.

<sup>c</sup> *don gcig pa.*

<sup>d</sup> *'dra ba'i don.*

and the statement in Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom,"* upon citing Nāgārjuna's *Refutation of Objections*, that those three are synonyms.<sup>a</sup> In Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called "Wisdom"* (above, 258 and 359):<sup>b</sup>

We describe that which is  
Dependent-arising as emptiness.  
That is dependent imputation.  
That is the middle path.

the statements that (1) dependent-arising is meaning of emptiness, (2) emptiness is dependent imputation, and (3) the emptiness of inherent existence is the trail travelled by Proponents of the Middle mean that these are essentially similar.<sup>c</sup>

**The meaning of the fourth scripture.** This seems to be "The Teacher endowed with three distinctions—unequalled pristine wisdom, inconceivability, and incomparability—said that because all things are dependently arisen, cessation and so forth are not established by way of their own character."

Moreover, it should be known that:

- Among praises of the Teacher, praise from the approach of setting forth dependent-arising under his own power is supreme.
- Concerning that, setting forth dependent-arising under his own power is the attribute elevating the unsurpassed Teacher.
- Concerning that, the object, emptiness, and the subject, the

<sup>a</sup> *rnam grangs pa.*

<sup>b</sup> XXIV.18; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmālamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5224, vol. 95, 9.3.4. With brackets from Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Called Wisdom"* (Peking 6153, vol. 156, 148.3.2ff and 148.5.1ff.);

We describe "arising dependent [on causes and conditions]"  
As [the meaning of] the emptiness [of inherently existent production].  
That [emptiness of inherently existent production] is dependent imputation.  
Just this [emptiness of inherently existent production] is the middle path.

<sup>c</sup> *gnad 'dra ba'i don.*

view, are the essence of the realizational teaching.

## Issue #50: What is the view that Tsong-kha-pa is opposing?

In showing how the meaning of dependent-arising, the absence of inherent existence, is the essence of (Buddha's) high sayings, Tsong-kha-pa's presentation (above, 68) is carefully constructed to undermine Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's<sup>a</sup> exposition of an ultimate that Tsong-kha-pa considers to be beyond the pale of the tenets of all Great Vehicle schools. Tsong-kha-pa's near predecessor,<sup>b</sup> Shay-rab-gyal-tshan developed a new doctrinal language through an amalgamation of the classical texts of the Mind-Only and Middle Way systems into a Great Middle Way,<sup>c</sup> and he also intertwined the particular vocabulary of the Kālachakra system. In what are often considered the classical texts of separate systems, he saw presentations of multiple systems crowned by the Great Middle Way. For instance, he found separate passages of the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought* to present the views of Mind-Only and the Great Middle Way, the latter being concordant with Ultimate Mind-Only,<sup>d</sup> or Supramundane Mind-Only,<sup>e</sup> which is beyond consciousness.<sup>f</sup> Not just in sūtras and tantras but also in Indian treatises that are often taken to be strictly Mind-Only he finds passages teaching Mind-Only but others teaching the Great Middle Way.

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<sup>a</sup> *dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan*; 1292-1361. Ken-sur Ngag-wang-leg-dan reported that Shay-rab-gyal-tshan reincarnated as Jam-yang-chö-jay, Tsong-kha-pa's student who founded Dre-pung Monastery, who, in turn, reincarnated in what is now the Republic of Mongolia to disseminate the teaching. Jam-yang-chö-jay had leanings toward the Jo-nang doctrine of other-emptiness, due to which some of his works were later banned.

<sup>b</sup> The presentation of Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's views is drawn from Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 315ff.; for a translation of Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's fundamental text, see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Mountain Doctrine: Tibet's Fundamental Treatise on Other-Emptiness and the Buddha Matrix* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2006).

<sup>c</sup> *dbu ma chen po*.

<sup>d</sup> *don dam pa'i sems tsam*; also "Final Mind-Only" (*mthar thug gi sems tsam*).

<sup>e</sup> *'jig rten las 'das pa'i sems tsam*.

<sup>f</sup> *rnam shes las 'das pa*.

## SHAY-RAB-GYAL-TSHAN'S SYSTEM: TWO TYPES OF EMPTINESS

For Shay-rab-gyal-tshan there are two types of emptiness—self-emptiness and other-emptiness. He calls the first empty-emptiness, whereas he calls the second non-empty-emptiness,<sup>a</sup> because it is not self-empty. Self-emptiness means that conventional phenomena are empty of their own entities. Such phenomena cannot withstand analysis, for he says (*Mountain Doctrine*, 213), “subjects that cannot withstand analysis and finally disintegrate are empty of their own entities.” A central question is whether this means that an object is empty of itself. Is a table empty of a table, and a consciousness empty of a consciousness, and so forth? If so, would this mean that a table is not a table and that a consciousness is not a consciousness, and hence that tables and minds do not exist? In the *Mountain Doctrine* (214) Döl-po-pa quotes the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*,<sup>b</sup> which clearly says that cows and horses exist:

Child of lineage, as you propound, a horse does not exist in a cow, but it is not suitable to say that a cow does not exist, and a cow does not exist in a horse, but it is not suitable to say that even a horse does not exist.

From this, it seems that ordinary phenomena do indeed exist.

Also, some passages in the *Mountain Doctrine* limit the scope of the negation by qualifying that these phenomena do not appear to wisdom of reality, for Döl-po-pa speaks of their not existing **in the mode of subsistence** (*Mountain Doctrine*, 527-528):

[Vasubandhu's] *Commentary on the Extensive and Middling Mothers* and so forth also say that because **in the mode of subsistence** these imputational three realms are utterly non-existent like the horns of a rabbit, they do not appear **to a consciousness of the mode of subsistence**, just as the horns of a rabbit do not appear to an unmistaken consciousness.

and (*Mountain Doctrine*, 535-536):

That the noumenon exists **in the mode of subsistence** and that

<sup>a</sup> Hopkins, *Mountain Doctrine*, 213, 252, 301.

<sup>b</sup> *yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa chen po'i mdo (mahāparinirvāṇasūtra)*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 121), TBRC W22084.54:303-306 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979); Peking 787-789, vols. 30-31.

phenomena do not exist **in the mode of subsistence** are set forth in many elevated, pure scriptural systems such as Maitreya's *Differentiation of the Phenomena and Noumenon* and so forth. If you are skilled in the thought of the similar, extensive statements of existing and not existing **in the mode of subsistence** such as:

- the ultimate exists, but the conventional does not exist
- nirvāṇa exists, but cyclic existence does not exist
- true cessation exists, but the other three truths do not exist
- the noumenal thoroughly established nature exists, but the other natures do not exist
- thusness exists, but other phenomena do not exist
- external and internal adventitious defilements do not exist, but the alternative supreme matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss exists,

you will know them within differentiating well existence and non-existence.

By qualifying non-existence with “in the mode of subsistence” he suggests that ordinary phenomena indeed exist but not ultimately.

However, at other points Dōl-po-pa seems to indicate that not existing in the mode of subsistence means that conventional phenomena only provisionally exist in a way that is equivalent to not existing. He recognizes that this position has many consequences and carefully defends it against criticism:

1. He says that these phenomena exist only for consciousness,<sup>a</sup> which is necessarily mistaken, and thus what appears to pristine wisdom<sup>b</sup> does not appear to consciousness and what appears to consciousness does not appear to pristine wisdom (*Mountain Doctrine*, 527):

Also, the statement in Vasubandhu's *Principles of Explanation*:

Awakened from the sleep of ignorance  
And spread intelligence also to what is to be  
known,

and so forth establishes that these three realms, which are appearances of ignorance, do not appear to the pristine wisdom of one awakened from the sleep of ignorance because these three realms are appearances of

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<sup>a</sup> *rnam shes.*

<sup>b</sup> *ye shes.*



consciousness and whatever is consciousness is ignorance. Vasubandhu's] *Extensive Commentary on the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra in One Hundred Thousand Stanzas* also says that just as when awakened from sleep, dream appearances, which dawn in sleep, fade away, so these three realms, which are like dreams, do not appear to pristine wisdom for one awakened from the sleep of ignorance.

2. Döl-po-pa says that these phenomena appear “in the perspective of mistake,” that is, only in the perspective of a mistaken consciousness (*Mountain Doctrine*, 537):

Therefore, these mistaken karmic appearances of sentient beings are the private phenomena<sup>a</sup> just of sentient beings; they utterly do not occur in the mode of subsistence, like the horns of a rabbit, the child of a barren woman, a sky-flower, and so forth. Consequently, they are not established even as mere appearances to a cognition of the mode of subsistence, and appearing in the face of mistake does not fulfill the role of appearing in the mode of subsistence. In consideration of these [points], it is again and again said in many formats that all phenomena are not observed, non-appearing, unapprehendable, and so forth.

3. These mistaken phenomena do not even appear to a pristine wisdom that has extinguished mistakenness (*Mountain Doctrine*, 525-526):

It is not reasonable for these to appear to a pristine wisdom in one for whom ignorance and imputation have been extinguished, just as falling hairs, a yellow conch, and so forth do not appear to those whose eyes are flawless. For Āryadeva's *Middle Way Conquest over Mistake*<sup>b</sup> also says:

When the eye of intelligence is opened and the undefiled pristine wisdom of a One-Gone-to-Bliss dawns like awakening upon separating from the sleep of the predispositions of ignorance,

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<sup>a</sup> *sgos chos*.

<sup>b</sup> *dbu ma 'khrul pa 'joms pa (madhyamakabhramaghāta) in bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3850)*, TBRC W23703.97:49-54 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

nothing at all is perceived because an entity of things is not observed.

and when, upon the dawning of the sun of the correct pristine wisdom knowing emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness, all predispositions of non-knowledge and the afflictive emotions that make the connection [between lives] are cleared away, minds and mental factors as well as their objects of activity are not perceived and not observed as actualities and entities because, when the unsurpassed pristine wisdom dawns, the great rest is attained.

Having in that way indicated through reasoning that all phenomena conventionally are like dreams, falling hairs, and visual illusions and ultimately those are non-things, clear light, non-appearing, and devoid of proliferations, he also indicates such through scriptures. The holy master says that just as when one has awakened from sleep, dream appearances vanish and just as when the eyes become free from visual defect, appearances of hairs and so forth vanish, so to pristine wisdom—cleared of the sleep of ignorance and devoid of the visual cloudiness of consciousness—the phenomena of the three realms, minds and mental factors as well as their objects and so forth do not appear, because for pristine wisdom those as well as their seeds have stopped, been extinguished, and have vanished.

4. Döl-po-pa finds the perception of what exists in fact to be contradictory with perceiving what does not exist in fact, and thus if pristine wisdom, which has removed mistakenness, perceived the desire, form, and formless realms, which do not exist in fact, it would very absurdly follow that it does not perceive the noumenon, which abides in fact. Since these three realms have not passed beyond consciousness, if they did appear to such pristine wisdom, it would very absurdly follow that pristine wisdom would not have passed beyond consciousness, in which case it would not be a pristine wisdom perceiving the real. The headings for these sections (*Mountain Doctrine*, 528) make these points clearly:

If such pristine wisdom perceived these three realms, which do not exist in fact, it would very absurdly follow that it does not perceive the noumenon, which abides in fact.

and (529):

If these three realms, which have not passed beyond consciousness, did appear to such pristine wisdom, it would very absurdly follow that pristine wisdom would not have passed beyond consciousness.

and (530):

If these unreal three realms did appear to such pristine wisdom, it would very absurdly follow that it would not be a pristine wisdom perceiving the real.

and (531):

If sufferings and their origins did appear to such pristine wisdom, it would very absurdly follow that the seeds of cyclic existence and dualistic appearance would not have been stopped.

5. A consequence of the non-appearance of ordinary phenomena to pristine wisdom is that these phenomena do not appear to Buddhas. Dölpo-pa accepts this but holds that Buddhas are still omniscient, since they **implicitly** know these phenomena, in which case the phenomena themselves do not have to appear. He explains implicit realization in this context to mean that when Buddhas know the ultimate, they know that these phenomena do not exist and in this way know them (*Mountain Doctrine*, 532-534):

*Objection:* In that case, a Buddha's pristine wisdom would not know the phenomena of the three realms, but this contradicts the statements even in the *Extensive* and *Medium-Length Mothers* and so forth that [a Buddha's pristine wisdom] knows—just as they are—minds involved with withdrawal, diffusion, and desire and so forth.

*Answer:* There is no fault because, since there are innumerable cases of knowing within not appearing, knowing does not entail appearance [of the object], like knowing the past and the future, which are separated [from the present] by many eons, and knowing selflessness and so forth, even though those do not appear. Also, the thought of such statements in the *Mother* [scriptures] is said to be that knowing the diffusion, withdrawal, and so forth of the

mind means to know that the mind is not really established and hence to know that its diffusion, withdrawal, and so forth also are not really established and void.... Therefore, upon explicit appearance of the basis devoid of all phenomena—the noumenal thoroughly established nature—it is implicitly known that phenomena do not exist, whereby that is called “knowing all phenomena.” Also, when such is seen, the real meaning of great significance is seen.

In consideration of these [statements] in that way of knowing but not appearing, it is said:

Why? Because the Buddhas, knowing,  
Do not perceive phenomena.

This means that phenomena are known, although they do not appear. Similarly, [the *Verse Summary of the Perfection of Wisdom*] says:

The One-Gone-Thus teaches that one who does  
not see forms,  
Does not see feelings, does not see discrimina-  
tions,  
Does not see intentions, does not see conscious-  
ness,  
Mind, or mentality sees reality.  
Analyze how space is seen as in the expression  
By sentient beings in words, “Space is seen.”  
The One-Gone-Thus teaches that seeing reality is  
also like that.  
The seeing cannot be expressed by another exam-  
ple.  
Whoever see thus see all phenomena....

It is being said that the thought of the teachings that just not seeing is seeing is that—through just not seeing the phenomena that are the objects of negation—the basis of negation, the noumenon, is seen, and, through just knowing that all phenomena appearing in the face of mistake are not established in fact, all phenomena are known, this being inconceivable exalted knowledge....

The *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*<sup>a</sup> says that those having and not having special insight have good and bad appearances [respectively] and that what appear to those without special insight do not appear to those with special insight:

What are seen by those without special insight  
Are the bad sights of phenomena.  
When special insight sees,  
All are not seen.

Because of this and because a conqueror's pristine wisdom is the finality of special insight, it is perforce established that these three realms do not appear to it because these appear to those without special insight.

6. A consequence is that a Buddha's pristine wisdom has both explicit and implicit realization (*Mountain Doctrine*, 535):

Therefore, the final pristine wisdom perceiving the ultimate is a valid cognition of explicit realization with respect to knowing that the noumenon exists and is a valid cognition of implicit realization with respect to knowing that phenomena do not exist.

7. Döl-po-pa faces an objection, based on scripture, that all phenomena whatsoever must **appear** to a Buddha's pristine wisdom by explaining away the passage as being metaphorical (*Mountain Doctrine*, 536):

*Objection:* If these three realms do not appear to a Conqueror's pristine wisdom, it contradicts:

Just as the sun's emitting one ray  
Illuminates transmigrating beings,  
A conqueror's pristine wisdom simultaneously  
Shines to all objects of knowledge.

*Answer:* There is no fault:

- because that was said considering [that is, meaning] that all objects of knowledge are known simultaneously

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<sup>a</sup> *sangs rgyas phal po che zhes bya ba shin tu rgyas pa chen po'i mdo (buddha-avatamsaka-nāma-mahāvaiṣṭya-sūtra)* in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 44), TBRC W22084.35:4-787 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979); Peking 761, vols. 25-26.

- and because that passage says that a conqueror's pristine wisdom shines to all objects of knowledge and does not indicate that all objects of knowledge appear to a conqueror's pristine wisdom
- and because here "shine" is just used metaphorically in relation to the example of the sun.

Moreover, it was proven above that knowledge of the non-existence of phenomena within their non-appearance is the meaning of knowing phenomena.

8. At the end of *Mountain Doctrine* Döl-po-pa makes it clear that these phenomena do not appear to a Buddha in any way at all, since a Buddha is always in meditative equipoise (*Mountain Doctrine*, 538-539):

*Objection:* Although objects do not appear to the meditative equipoise of a conqueror's pristine wisdom, they appear to [a conqueror's] pristine wisdom subsequent [to meditative equipoise].

*Answer:* [A conqueror's] pristine wisdom is solely only meditative equipoise:

- because it is said that [a conqueror's pristine wisdom] is always just meditative equipoise, "Though an elephant rises, it is set in equipoise," and so forth
- and the holy Āryadeva also says:

Buddhas are always set  
In equipoise on thusness.  
Entry into and leaving  
That inexpressible state does not exist.

How could the state subsequent to meditative equipoise  
Be the way pristine wisdom is?  
If this did occur in them,  
How would they differ from those who have  
entered on grounds!

Hence, there is never non-equipoise in a Buddha's pristine wisdom.

*Objection:* That contradicts such statements as, "[Buddha] **rose** from being thoroughly set within," and "[Buddha] **rose** from the meditative stabilization."

*Answer:* Those are solely mere displays. Though [Buddhas] display rising from meditative stabilization, they do not have unequipoised minds because [their mind] is a pristine wisdom in which the mind-basis-of-all as well as the seeds are utterly extinguished, the continuum of all breaths has stopped, and the two obstructions as well as their seeds have been utterly extinguished. Therefore, you need to be skilled in the thought also of other such scriptural passages and need to be skilled also in the thought of other [scriptural passages speaking of] states subsequent [to meditative equipoise in a Buddha].

## SELF-EMPTINESS IS NOT THE ULTIMATE

For Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan, self-emptiness is inadequate to being the ultimate truth. He carefully analyzes a sūtra passage from the *Āṅgulimāla Sūtra*<sup>a</sup> that indicates that the ultimate is of a different order of being, beyond the temporary nature of compounded phenomena, which, like hailstones, may appear solid but quickly disappear. Döl-po-pa explains that the mere finding that some phenomena are empty does not make all phenomena, such as the great liberation, also empty.

He faces an objection that, to the contrary, Āryadeva holds that realization and accustoming to self-emptiness is taught as an antidote to afflictive emotions (*Mountain Doctrine*, 394):

*Objection:* Āryadeva's *Lamp Compendium for Practice* states:

All Ones-Gone-Thus possessing an essence of compassion—seeing all sentient beings fallen into a whirlpool of suffering, without refuge, and without defender—cause those beings to purify afflictive emotions through thorough knowledge of the nature of afflictive emotions in a conventional manner, and cause them to be thoroughly set in meditative stabilization having an essence of the mode of reality through having cleansed conventional truth also by means of ultimate truth.

and so forth. Does this not say that the entities of afflictive emotions are purified through knowledge itself that they are self-

<sup>a</sup> *sor mo'i phreng ba la phan pa'i mdo (āṅgulimālīyasūtra)* in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 213) TBRC W22084.62:253-414 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979); Peking 879, vol. 34.

empty?

*Answer:* This is in consideration of temporarily suppressing or reducing the pointedness of coarse afflictive emotions because even this very passage says that, in the end, the conventional knowledge that afflictive emotions are self-empty must also be purified by non-conceptual pristine wisdom, meditative stabilization actualizing the ultimate.

Although self-emptiness does not fulfill the role of the actual ultimate, it has a place in the course of spiritual development as a means to temporarily reduce the force of coarse levels of afflictive emotions. Thoroughgoing release, however, is brought about through wisdom of other-emptiness (*Mountain Doctrine*, 394):

Through merely knowing that things are self-empty one is not released; rather, when one is released from the stirrings of wind and mind, one is released from bondage; mistake as well as mistaken appearances having vanished, pristine wisdom manifests in self-appearance.

Döl-po-pa objects to the notion that the ultimate also could be self-empty, since then the ultimate would be empty of itself and thus would not exist at all (*Mountain Doctrine*, 213-214):

Moreover, if everything were self-empty, then the body of attributes of release also would be self-empty, and if that is accepted, it also would be totally non-existent, whereby this would accord with the systems of the [non-Buddhist] Forder Naked Ones and so forth....Also, that same sūtra [the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*], using the non-existence of a horse in a cow and the non-existence of a cow in a horse, pronounces that the ultimate noumenon, the great nirvāṇa, is other-empty in the sense of not being empty of itself. It extensively says:

Child of lineage, it is thus: Nirvāṇa is not formerly non-existent, like the non-existence of earthenware in clay. It is not non-existent upon ceasing, like earthenware's non-existence upon being destroyed. It is also not utterly non-existent, like the hairs of a turtle or the horns of a rabbit. Rather, it accords with the non-existence of the one in the other.

Child of lineage, as you propound, a horse does not exist in a cow, but it is not suitable to say that a cow does not exist, and a cow does not exist in a horse, but it is not



suitable to say that even a horse does not exist. Nirvāṇa also is like that; nirvāṇa does not exist in afflictive emotions, and afflictive emotions do not exist in nirvāṇa. Hence, it is said to be the non-existence of the one in the other.

Based on such passages, Döl-po-pa speaks of the thoroughly established nature not as empty of merely a non-existent object of negation, as Tsong-kha-pa does, but as empty of the other two natures—imputational natures and other-powered natures. If this rule for the ultimate—that if it is self-empty, it would be non-existent—is also to be applied to conventional phenomena, then since they are self-empty, they are decidedly non-existent. Nevertheless, in the *Mountain Doctrine* Döl-po-pa does not explicitly extend this rule for the ultimate to the conventional.

In sum, the ultimate is empty of something other than itself and thus is other-empty. Just as a home is empty of humans, so the great liberation is empty of defects—which are other than itself and do not exist in reality—but it itself is not empty of itself. The great liberation does not melt under examination; it can bear analysis. In this way, other-emptiness, the thoroughly established nature, ultimately exists (*Mountain Doctrine*, 219-220):

The imputational nature is empty in the sense of always not existing. Other-powered natures, although tentatively existent, are empty in the sense of not existing in reality; those two are fabricated and adventitious. It is said that the noumenal thoroughly established nature exists because the emptiness that is the [ultimate] nature of non-entities [that is, the emptiness that is the ultimate nature opposite from non-entities]—due to being just the fundamental nature—is not empty of its own entity, and it is also said that it does not exist because of being empty even of other-powered natures.

Thus, that other-emptiness ultimately exists means that it is able to withstand analysis.

Though Döl-po-pa himself does not explicitly say that the ultimate is truly established, or truly existent, the seventeenth-century Jo-nang savant Tāranātha, second only to Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan in Jo-nang estimation, repeatedly uses this vocabulary in his short presentation of the schools of Buddhism, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*. First let us cite his presentation of the ordinary, or inferior, Middle Way School:<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Tāranātha, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, translated and edited by Jeffrey

In the country of Tibet, the Ordinary Middle Way is renowned as self-emptiness, and in both India and Tibet [this school] is renowned as the Proponents of Naturelessness.<sup>a</sup> This is the system of the masters Buddhapālita, Bhāvaviveka, Vimuktasena, and Shāntarakṣhita, as well as their followers.<sup>b</sup>

Although among them there are many different divisions with respect to tenets, they all agree in asserting that:

- All these phenomena—all compounded things (that is, the two, forms and minds, as well as non-associated compositional factors) and all uncompounded phenomena and non-things, such as space—are conventionalities.<sup>c</sup>
- The mere absence of true existence, which is their nature, is the ultimate.
- Those two [that is, conventional truths and ultimate truths] are inexpressible as either one entity or different entities<sup>d</sup> and merely differ in the presentation of them. Since nothing at all exists in the entity of the ultimate basic element,<sup>e</sup> the voidness of proliferations<sup>f</sup> is taught through the example of space. Through the example of a magician's illusions, it is taught that although when conventionalities appear, they are empty of truth, their appearance is unimpeded.
- Both of these [that is, conventional truths and ultimate truths]

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Hopkins (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 2007), 55-60. For the Tibetan, see *gzhan stong snying po*, Collected Works of Jo-nañ rJe-btsun Tāranātha, vol. 4 (Leh, Ladakh: Smartsis Shesrig Dpemzod, 1985), 498.2.

<sup>a</sup> *ngo bo nyid med par smra ba, niḥsvabhāvavādin.*

<sup>b</sup> Tāranātha holds that all of these scholars are actually Proponents of the Great Middle Way, for as he says later (*The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, 92), “That Bhāvaviveka, Buddhapālita, and so forth are renowned as Proponents of Self-Emptiness and Proponents of Non-Nature is a case of mainly taking what is renowned to the ordinary world.” In *Mountain Doctrine* Döl-po-pa cites these scholars (except for Shāntarakṣhita, whom he does not cite at all) in the context of the Great Middle Way. For Buddhapālita, see *Mountain Doctrine*, 343 and 530; Bhāvaviveka or Bhāvaviveka the Lesser (*legs ldan chung ba*), 307 and 469; Vimuktasena, 428.

<sup>c</sup> *kun rdzob.*

<sup>d</sup> Ge-lug-pa scholars uniformly assert that the two truths are one entity and different isolates (*ngo bo gcig la ldog pa tha dad*); for instance, see Jam-yang-shay-pa's presentation in Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 896ff.

<sup>e</sup> *don dam dbyings.*

<sup>f</sup> *spros bral.*

are beyond all proliferations, such as existence and non-existence, is and is not, and so forth.

Moreover, this system of tenets is mistaken in:<sup>a</sup>

- asserting that the ultimate noumenon<sup>b</sup> is like space, a mere negation of proliferations<sup>c</sup>
- saying that a Buddha's pristine wisdom and so forth are conventionalities and do not truly exist<sup>d</sup>
- asserting that even ultimate truth does not truly exist<sup>e</sup>

and in particular, mistaken also is the Consequentialists' non-assertion of anything—this being in order to avoid others' debates—despite positing a presentation of tenets. And mistaken are the Consequentialists' assertions that wrong conceptions are overcome even though an ascertaining consciousness is not generated, and so forth.

Tāranātha points out that it is indeed correct that apprehended object and apprehending subject lack true existence and that self-emptiness lacks true existence:<sup>f</sup>

[This Consequentialist system of tenets] is not wrong [in asserting] that all phenomena included within apprehended object and apprehending subject do not truly exist and that even the mere absence of true existence is not truly established,<sup>g</sup> and so forth.

<sup>a</sup> The first three of these are asserted in Ge-lug-pa presentations.

<sup>b</sup> *don dam chos nyid*.

<sup>c</sup> *spros pa bkag tsam*. According to the Ordinary Middle Way School, just as space is a mere negation of obstructive contact, so the ultimate noumenon is a mere negation of the proliferations of true existence. In the Great Middle Way, however, the ultimate noumenon is an affirming negative, not a mere absence or non-affirming negative, and includes positives, since ultimate Buddha-qualities of body, speech, and mind are integrally contained in the ultimate.

<sup>d</sup> In Ge-lug-pa presentations all types of mind, including a Buddha's pristine wisdom, are impermanent, even though at Buddhahood pristine wisdom is uninterruptedly continual. In the Great Middle Way, however, pristine wisdom itself is ultimate and, therefore, permanent and truly existent.

<sup>e</sup> In the Great Middle Way, ultimate truth itself ultimately exists and is truly established.

<sup>f</sup> Tāranātha, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, 60-61.

<sup>g</sup> In the Great Middle Way also, self-emptiness—that is to say, the mere absence of true establishment—is not truly established. However, other-emptiness, the actual ultimate, is truly established.

These two, Proponents of Mind-Only and Middle Way Proponents of Self-Emptiness, do not assert in their own systems the mystery of the matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss<sup>a</sup> and a self-cognizing and self-illuminating ultimate pristine wisdom.<sup>b</sup> Due to not having heard information<sup>c</sup> about these, earlier masters did not refute other-emptiness. However, later followers made refutations,<sup>d</sup> but not even a single one of them understood the essentials of the tenets of other-emptiness, and hence these are solely refutations in which the opposing position has not been apprehended.

For Tāranātha, the fact that Döl-po-pa repeatedly says that other-emptiness ultimately exists and is ultimately established and does not use the vocabulary of “true existence” and “true establishment” is of no significance. The two sets of terminology are equivalent.

In his exposition of the Great Middle Way in *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, Tāranātha describes the meaning of true existence/true establishment the same way that Döl-po-pa describes the meaning of ultimate existence or ultimate establishment—being able to bear analysis:<sup>e</sup>

The Great Middle Way is the Middle Way School of Cognition, renowned in Tibet as Other-Emptiness. It is illuminated by the texts of the foremost holy Maitreya, by the Superior Asaṅga, and by the supreme scholar Vasubandhu and is greatly illuminated also in the Superior Nāgārjuna’s *Praise of the Element of Attributes*. Therefore, the assertion of both of the supreme Superiors [that is, Asaṅga and Nāgārjuna] is other-emptiness.

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<sup>a</sup> *bde gshegs snying po'i nges gsang*. Although Ge-lug-pas assert a matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss that is the emptiness of inherent existence of a mind that is associated with defilement, they do not assert a matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss endowed with ultimate Buddha-qualities of body, speech, and mind, whereas such is asserted in the Great Middle Way.

<sup>b</sup> *don dam ye shes rang rig rang gsal*.

<sup>c</sup> *gnas tshul ma go ba*.

<sup>d</sup> In his *Autocommentary on the “Supplement”* Chandrakīrti explains that the teaching of a matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss endowed with ultimate Buddha-qualities of body, speech, and mind requires interpretation, and Tsong-kha-pa takes Döl-po-pa’s presentation of other-emptiness as his main opponent in his *The Essence of Eloquence*; see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Reflections on Reality: The Three Natures and Non-Natures in the Mind-Only School* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), Part Four.

<sup>e</sup> Tāranātha, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, 63-72.

In this system, the truthless [that is, those lacking true existence] are in brief:

1. all *basal* phenomena of cyclic existence—non-things<sup>a</sup> (that is, imputed uncompounded phenomena,<sup>b</sup> such as the three uncompounded phenomena<sup>c</sup> asserted in the Mind-Only School and below), forms and so forth that are renowned to be external objects, the eight collections of consciousness, the fifty-one mental factors, and so forth
2. all temporary phenomena included within *paths*
3. from among those included within the *fruit*, Buddhahood, newly arisen factors<sup>d</sup> and those [phenomena] included within the other-appearance<sup>e</sup> of trainees

that is to say, all appearing and renowned phenomena, or phenomena in the division of phenomena and noumenon,<sup>f</sup> or all phenomena included within apprehended object and apprehending subject, or—on this occasion of delineating the ultimate—all effective things and non-things, namely, all that are compounded and adventitiously posited.<sup>g</sup>

Self-cognizing, self-illuminating pristine wisdom<sup>h</sup> that is non-

<sup>a</sup> *dingos med, abhāva*.

<sup>b</sup> *'dus ma byas biags pa ba*. These are called “imputed” because the actual uncompounded is the ultimate truth according to the Great Middle Way, as Tāranātha explicitly says in the *Twenty-one Differences Regarding the Profound Meaning*; see Tāranātha, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, 127.

<sup>c</sup> The three renowned uncompounded phenomena are uncompounded space, analytical cessations, and non-analytical cessations. The latter two are to be distinguished from ultimate true cessations.

<sup>d</sup> *gsar du byung ba'i cha*. These are produced fruits (*bskyed pa'i 'bras bu*), that is to say, effects produced by the spiritual path as opposed to separative fruits (*bral ba'i 'bras bu*), which are merely uncovered by the path and thus already existent factors that need only to be separated from defilement.

<sup>e</sup> *gzhan snang*. These are displays by Buddhas in accordance with the dispositions and needs of trainees and thus are compounded, impermanent, and conventional. See especially the quotes from Maitreya's *Sublime Continuum of the Great Vehicle* in the fruit section of Döl-po-pa's *Mountain Doctrine*; see Hopkins, *Mountain Doctrine*, 492-511.

<sup>f</sup> *chos dang chos nyid*.

<sup>g</sup> *glo bur bar gzhas pa*. Even non-things are compounded, since only the ultimate is actually uncompounded.

<sup>h</sup> *ye shes rang rig rang gsal*.

dual with the basic element is called the ultimate truth, the uncompounded noumenon. It is only truly established, able to bear analysis by reasoning.<sup>a</sup> They assert that because, when analyzed, the space-like [absence of true establishment] asserted by the Proponents of Self-Emptiness is a non-thing,<sup>b</sup> it is not the ultimate truth.<sup>c</sup> These tenets are flawless and endowed with all good qualities.

Tāranātha describes the type of analysis that the ultimate can withstand is the reasonings of dependent-arising, the lack of being one or many, and so forth, which are the typical reasonings of the Middle Way School:<sup>d</sup>

Therefore, the glorious great Jo-nang-pa, knowing such, understood through rational analysis that:

- Because of being partless and because of being all-pervasive the noumenon is only one in the individual environments and beings therein, in the threefold basis, path, and fruit, and in all Buddhas and sentient beings.
- And for that reason the matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss is endowed with all [ultimate Buddha-]qualities.
- And for that reason [the noumenon] is not damaged by the reasoning of dependent-arising, the lack of being one or many, and so forth, and hence withstands analysis.
- And since that is the case, the uncommon tenets of the Autonomists and Consequentialists, who assert that [the noumenon] falls apart under analysis, are in error, and hence the views of the Autonomy School and the Consequence School are incorrect and therefore do not accord with the thought of the middle wheel of doctrine.
- and so forth.

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a In his *Twenty-one Differences Regarding the Profound Meaning* Tāranātha specifies this as “the reasoning of dependent-arising, the lack of being one or many, and so forth.”

b *dingos med.*

c See Döl-po-pa’s long exposition that self-emptiness is not the ultimate in *Mountain Doctrine* in a section titled “Extensive explanation of damage to the assertion that self-emptiness, the ultimate, and so forth are synonyms,” 254-315.

d The following is quoted from Tāranātha’s *Twenty-one Differences Regarding the Profound Meaning*, which I have included as a supplemental text in Tāranātha, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, 133.

Due to being partless, the ultimate is not damaged by the reasoning examining whether it is one or many, since it is one. Due to not being a dependent-arising (see below, 422ff.), it is not damaged by the reasoning of dependent-arising.

## *OTHER-EMPTINESS IS AN AFFIRMING NEGATIVE, NOT A NON-AFFIRMING NEGATIVE*

For Shay-rab-gyal-tshan, although the ultimate is without the phenomena of cyclic existence, it is replete with beneficial qualities, and thus it is not a mere absence. In the *Mountain Doctrine*, he identifies the ultimate as an affirming negative (nine times), something that implies a positive in place of the negation. For instance (*Mountain Doctrine*, 132-133):

Earlier statements due to the perspective of trainees that all—liberation and so forth—do not exist, are empty, selfless, and so forth are in consideration of the non-existence of whatsoever [object of negation] in something, whereas later statements of non-emptiness, existence of self, and so forth are in consideration of the remainder after the negation. Therefore, the fact that, although earlier and later scriptures seem to be contradictory but are, when analyzed well, non-contradictory is because an affirming negative exists as the basis of a non-affirming negative and because a pristine wisdom in which all fundamental qualities are contained abides—in the manner of thorough establishment pervading space—in the basis which from the start is naturally pure and devoid of all defects.

and (*Mountain Doctrine*, 205-206):

When, through having yogically made endeavor at the perfection of wisdom, a meditative stabilization that is a union of calm abiding and special insight has been generated, you need to be taught within differentiating existence and non-existence, emptiness and non-emptiness, and so forth, and you need to identify these in accordance with how they abide and how they are:

- because all do not abide as non-existent and non-established, and so on, and there exists an affirming negative as the basis of non-affirming negatives—such as non-existence and emptiness and the basis of them
- and because an inclusionary elimination abides as the basis of an exclusionary elimination

- and because realization that contains all final qualities spontaneously abides in the basis that naturally has abandoned all defects.

Therefore, the third wheel of doctrine is said to be “possessed of good differentiation.”

## Other-emptiness and the middle wheel of doctrine

Although Döl-po-pa recognizes that the middle wheel of doctrine teaches that even the ultimate does not ultimately exist, he explains this away as a technique for developing non-conceptual meditation at a certain level of practice. Döl-po-pa depicts the middle wheel of doctrine and Nāgārjuna’s Collection of Reasonings as presenting the view that phenomena are as unfounded as a flower of the sky, the horns of a rabbit, and the child of a barren woman **in the perspective of their final nature** (*Mountain Doctrine*, 199):

About that, in order to realize well the commonly renowned correct view [of self-emptiness], it is necessary to conclude that all phenomena are like a sky-flower because in the mode of abiding they are not anything and are not established as anything, like the horns of a rabbit and the child of a barren woman. Since sources for this are well renowned in the middle wheel of Buddha’s word and in Nāgārjuna’s Collection of Reasonings and so forth, and since here an exposition on this topic would be too much, I will not write on it.

The second wheel of doctrine is seen as providing a means for entry into meditative equipoise beyond conceptuality (*Mountain Doctrine*, 205):

When yogically performing the perfection of wisdom, it is necessary to be devoid of all conceptuality, and hence all objects are refuted for the sake of stopping all apprehending subjects. Therefore [in the second wheel of doctrine, Buddha] was intent on teaching everything as emptiness through many aspects such as everything’s non-existence, non-establishment, voidness, and so forth but was not intent on differentiating existence, non-existence, and so forth, due to which the second wheel of doctrine is said to be “through the aspect of speaking on emptiness.”



However, the middle wheel's blanket teaching of emptiness and non-existence does not take into account that the ultimate ultimately exists (*Mountain Doctrine*, 206):

In this fashion, the second wheel out of purposeful intent teaches that even what are not self-empty are self-empty, and so on, and is not possessed of good differentiation, that is to say, is not without internal contradictions, and for such reasons [the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*] says that [the second wheel] "is surpassable, affords an occasion [for refutation], requires interpretation, and serves as a basis for controversy." About the third wheel, by reason that, opposite from those, it differentiates meanings well just as they are, and so forth, [the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*] says that it "is unsurpassable, does not afford an occasion [for refutation], is of definitive meaning, and does not serve as a basis for controversy."

The third wheel, however, clearly differentiates what does and does not truly exist (*Mountain Doctrine*, 202):

The first wheel of doctrine concords with a precursor to meditating on the profound definitive meaning of the Great Vehicle; the second wheel of doctrine concords with practicing a special meditative stabilization of equipoise on the profound meaning; and the third wheel concords with profound Secret Mantra identifying—within good differentiation—existence, non-existence, and so forth.

Seeing an underlying harmony in the three wheels of doctrine, he indicates that the third wheel of doctrine makes clear that the ultimate truly exists and thus is distinctively superior. From this viewpoint, he sees the middle and final wheels as differing primarily in terms of clarity, not in terms of meaning:

Absence of production, absence of cessation, quiescence from the start, and naturally passed beyond sorrow are taught even in the third wheel and are taught in the vajra vehicle. By reason of teaching unclearly [in the middle wheel], clearly [in the third wheel], and very clearly [in tantra], there are great and also very great differences of being obscured, not obscured, and so forth with respect to the meaning of those. Therefore, even the statements of being surpassable or unsurpassable, affording an opportunity [for refutation] or not affording an opportunity, and so forth are due to differences in those texts with respect to whether the final profound

meaning is unclear and incomplete or clear and complete, and so forth, and are not due to the entity of the meaning.<sup>a</sup>

Döl-po-pa sees—as the meaning of a great many pronouncements in Great Vehicle scriptures about non-existence and existence—that the non-existent are conventionalities and the existent is the noumenon (*Mountain Doctrine*, 222):

Here, in accordance with the statement in that way of the meaning of not existing and not not existing, Maitreya's *Differentiation of the Middle and the Extremes* says, "Not existent, and also not non-existent," and moreover the thought of all the statements—in a great many stainless texts of the middle way—of being devoid of the extremes of existence and non-existence is that:

- Since all dependently arisen conventionalities do not really exist, when one realizes this, one does not fall to an extreme of existence and is released from the extreme of superimposition.
- Since the ultimate noumenon that is beyond dependent-arising is never non-existent, when one realizes this, one does not fall to an extreme of non-existence and is released from the extreme of deprecation.

The middle wheel of doctrine requires interpretation both because of its lack of clarity on what does and does not ultimately exist and because it over-extends statements of non-existence to include the ultimate. For Döl-po-pa, the final wheel of doctrine **clearly** teaches a truly established "other-emptiness"—that is, a thoroughly established nature that is empty of imputational natures and other-powered natures—and hence is definitive, whereas the middle wheel does not clearly teach the actual mode of subsistence of phenomena and hence requires interpretation. He refers to the third wheel as teaching directly and clearly and to the other two wheels as teaching obliquely by way of intentional speech (*Mountain Doctrine*, 394-395):

Consequently, the noumenal ultimate truth—the basis of the emptiness of all phenomena abiding as empty—is the final definitive

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<sup>a</sup> He does not explain how the middle wheel could teach what is opposite to the ultimate—by proclaiming that the ultimate which is actually not self-empty is self-empty—and yet be unclear and incomplete with respect to the ultimate. Nowadays, some Jo-nang-pas explain that these statements in the middle wheel of doctrine that the ultimate also is self-empty merely refer to a conceptualized ultimate.

meaning of the profound scriptures, be they those that directly teach clearly or those that teach by way of oblique intention.

In this way, he is able to frame the three wheels of doctrine as a harmonious whole. Still, he does not obliterate any difference between the teachings of the middle and final wheels. For he holds that the middle wheel of doctrine teaches what is non-empty to be empty—that is, that the ultimate is empty of true establishment—and he says that the middle wheel is even internally contradictory. He repeats this point later (*Mountain Doctrine*, 364):

Similarly, it should be understood that all statements—in these and those texts of the middle wheel of doctrine—of the non-self-empty as self-empty are just of interpretable meaning with a thought behind them. [Understanding] this depends on the lamp of unique quintessential instructions of good differentiation [found in the three cycles of Bodhisattva commentaries].<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> These are:

- Kalkī Puṇḍarīka's (*rigs ldan pad ma dkar po*) *Great Commentary on the "Kālachakra Tantra"*: *Stainless Light*, *bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel bshad rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes su 'jug pa stong phrag bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od ces bya ba / 'grel chen dri med 'od* (*vimālaprabhānāmamūlatantrānusārīṇīdvādaśasāhasrikālaghukālacakratantrarāja-ṭīkā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 1347), TBRC W23703.11:216-555 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 2064, vol. 46
- Vajrapāṇi's (*phyag na rdo rje*) *Meaning Commentary on the "Chakrasaṃvara Tantra," mngon par brjod pa 'bum pa las phyung ba nyung ngu'i rgyud kyi bsdus pa'i don rnam par bshad pa / phyag rdor stod 'grel* (*lakṣābhidhānādudhṛtalaghutantrapīṇḍārthavivaraṇa*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 1402), TBRC W23703.16:158-283 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 2117, vol. 48
- Vajragarbha's (*rdo rje snying po*) *Commentary on the Condensation of the "Hevajra Tantra," kye'i rdo rje bsdus pa'i don gyi rgya cher 'grel pa / rdo rje snying 'grel* (*hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 1189(a)), TBRC W23703.2:2-253 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 2310, vol. 53.

According to Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations for (Jam-yang-shay-pa's) "Great Exposition of Tenets"* (*dnegos*, 1.4), they are called the three cycles of Bodhisattva commentaries because of being composed by Bodhisattvas. The latter two are done in the manner of the *Kālachakra Tantra*, that is to say, through the grid of the teachings in the *Kālachakra*. John Newman calls these three texts the "Bodhisattva Corpus"; see his "A Brief History of the Kālacakra," in *The Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra in Context*, ed. Geshe Lhundub Sopa (Madison, WI:

The “purposeful intent of,” or “thought behind,” the second wheel is to draw practitioners into a state of non-conceptual meditative equipoise (*Mountain Doctrine*, 209-210):

Therefore, although the meaning of the last two wheels of doctrine and of the vajra vehicle is one, when they are practiced, you set in equipoise in the conclusive profound noumenon devoid of proliferation in accordance with the middle wheel, and then when making distinctions in subsequent attainment [after meditative equipoise], you individually discriminate phenomena in a correct way, at which time you make identifications upon good differentiation in accordance with what is said in the final wheel and in the vajra vehicle. When [this procedure is followed], practice of the meaning of all the scriptures of the Great Vehicle becomes complete, unmistakable, and just thoroughly pure. Hence, here I will teach within making good differentiation of:

- existing and not existing in the mode of subsistence
- emptiness and non-emptiness of its own entity
- exclusionary elimination and inclusionary elimination
- non-affirming negation and affirming negation
- abandonment and realization

and so forth in accordance with how these are in the basic disposition of things.

Döl-po-pa’s opinion is that the middle wheel overstates the doctrine of self-emptiness when it extends this to the ultimate, declaring it to be without ultimate existence.

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Deer Park Books, 1985), 73.

According to Khenpo Tshultrim Dargyey Rinpoche (oral commentary), some mistakenly say the three are:

- Kalkī Puṇḍarīka’s (*rigs ldan pad ma dkar po*) *Great Commentary on the “Kālachakra Tantra”*: *Stainless Light*
- Suchandra’s commentary, which was not translated into Tibetan
- Mañjuśhrīkīrti’s commentary.

They call these three authors the “three with the aspect of Bodhisattvas” (*sems dpa’ rnam gsum*).

## SHAY-RAB-GYAL-TSHAN'S SYSTEM: THE TWO TRUTHS

In Döl-po-pa's system the ultimate is true ultimately, and veil truths are true veilingly, or conventionally (*Mountain Doctrine*, 342-344):

*Objection:* Since truth does not exist in any phenomenon, the ultimately true does not occur.

*Answer:* That is not so. If something is not true conventionally, it is not suitable as a conventional truth, and hence that which is a conventional truth is conventionally true and is not ultimately true. Just so, if something is not ultimately true, it is not suitable as an ultimate truth, and hence that which is an ultimate truth is ultimately true and is not conventionally true. Furthermore, that which is the ultimate truth is ultimately true because:

- the honorable Superior Nāgārjuna's autocommentary,<sup>a</sup> the *Akutoḥbhayā* says:

Since the ultimate truth is realized by Superiors to be non-erroneous, that which is perceived as the non-production of all phenomena is itself ultimately true for them themselves, whereby it is the ultimate truth.

- and [a sūtra cited therein] says, "Monastics, it is thus: this non-deceptive phenomenon, nirvāṇa, is the supreme of truths."
- and the master Avalokitavṛata, in his *Commentary on (Bhāvaviveka's) "Lamp for (Nāgārjuna's) 'Wisdom',*" also quotes those same words
- and Buddhapālita's *Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"* also quotes those same words and says, "Furthermore, truth is one; there is no second."
- and Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* also says:

When the conqueror said  
That only nirvāṇa is a truth,  
What wise person would think,  
"The rest are not unreal"?...

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<sup>a</sup> Ge-lug-pa scholars do not accept that this is Nāgārjuna's autocommentary, since it cites Nāgārjuna's own student, Āryadeva, in it.

- and the *Shrīmālādevī Sūtra* also says, “The truth of the cessation of suffering itself is—in reality—true, permanent, and a refuge.”
- and Chandrakīrti’s middle way *Clear Words* also says, “The Supramundane Victor said, ‘Monastics, this is the ultimate truth—nirvāṇa having the attribute of non-deceptiveness.’”
- and profound Secret Mantra texts also have extensive statements as in:

Endowed with the truth

And abiding in the manner of the two truths.

and so forth.

Similarly, conventional truths are not really true, and if, though unproduced, it is refuted that they are produced conventionally, it would incur fault, because Jñānagarbha’s *Two Truths* refutes such:

Some who are renowned for bad arguments

Say that things that are not produced in reality

Also are not produced conventionally,

Like the child of a barren woman and so forth.

as do other passages.

Here Döl-po-pa clearly indicates that conventional objects are produced conventionally and that they are not non-existent like the child of a barren woman.

Furthermore, despite suggestions that conventional phenomena are only diseased phenomena to be transcended, there are conventional types of four of the five pristine wisdoms of a Buddha (*Mountain Doctrine*, 456-457):

Similarly, the pristine wisdom of the pure element of attributes is only ultimate, whereas there are compounded and uncompounded [types] with regard to the four—the mirror-like wisdom and so forth—whereby it should be known that there are conventional [ones] and there are also ultimate [ones].

Conventional form bodies, unlike ultimate form bodies, are impermanent (*Mountain Doctrine*, 448):

Conventional form bodies are endowed with correct pristine wisdom, the non-perverse thoroughly established nature; they are endowed with the Great Vehicle pristine wisdom of a non-learner

that is not beyond momentariness.

Tāranātha gives a brief summary of which Buddha qualities are ultimate and which are conventional:<sup>a</sup>

Therefore, the pristine wisdom of the element of attributes necessarily is only an ultimate truth; although the other four pristine wisdoms are mainly the primordially abiding ultimate, each in a minor way has conventional portions that are newly attained through having cultivated the path. The ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and so forth also are similar to those [four pristine wisdoms in mainly being the primordially abiding ultimate, but each in a minor way has conventional parts that are newly attained through having cultivated the path]. The qualities of exalted body (the marks, the beauties, and so forth) and the qualities of exalted speech (the sixty branches [of vocalization] and so forth) each equally has conventional and ultimate portions. Likewise, the nature body is only ultimate; the body of attributes is mostly ultimate; the two, the complete enjoyment body and emanation bodies, have equal portions when a division of actual and imputed types is not made; moreover, the appearances of exalted activities in others' perspectives are conventional, whereas the pristine wisdom of capable power is ultimate.

Hence, all exalted body, pristine wisdom, qualities, and activities that are included within the ultimate abide primordially in the matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus. When a person is Buddhafied, those are not newly attained and are merely separated from defilements obscuring them, but those that are conventional are newly attained. In past Buddhas and in future Buddhas those that are ultimate are one entity, and even those that are conventional are indivisible in nature upon attaining Buddhahood and thereafter but at the point of attainment are different; hence, they are unpredicable as either the same or different.<sup>b</sup>

In this way, Tāranātha shows the multiple viewpoints in which these two types of qualities are the same and/or are different.

<sup>a</sup> Tāranātha, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, 95-96.

<sup>b</sup> They are the same from one perspective and different from another perspective and thus inexpressible as either.

## *TWO TYPES OF EFFECTS: SEPARATIVE AND PRODUCED*

Although ultimate Buddha qualities pre-exist in the matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus, effort at the spiritual path is nevertheless required because there are two types of effects, separative and produced, and the latter have to be generated through practice. In this way, although Döl-po-pa holds that the basis and the fruit are undifferentiable, he makes the distinction that while a person is still a sentient being, the basis is obstructed by defilements, and when a person has become a Buddha, the basis has separated from defilements (*Mountain Doctrine*, 148-151):

That all sentient beings nevertheless do not perceive [ultimate qualities] is due to being obstructed by adventitious defilements, since those [ultimate qualities] are not objects of consciousness and since they are objects of activity just of self-cognizing pristine wisdom. Moreover, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* says:

Then, the Bodhisattva great being Lion's Roar asked:

Supramundane Victor, if all sentient beings possess the Buddha-nature which is like a powerful vajra, why is it that all sentient beings do not see it?

Buddha said:

Child of lineage, for example, although there are different forms—blue, yellow, red, white, long, and short—a blind person does not see them. Such are not seen, but it is not suitable to say that the differences of blue, yellow, red, and white do not exist and that long and short shapes do not exist. Why? Even though a blind person does not see them, it is not that one with eyes does not see them. The Buddha-nature is like this.

Even though all beings do not see it, Bodhisattvas on the ten grounds see a portion, and a One-Gone-Thus sees it entirely. Bodhisattvas on the ten grounds see the Buddha-nature like a form seen at night. The One-Gone-Thus sees it like a form in daytime. Child of lineage, the semi-blind do not see a form clearly, but when a doctor skilled in medicine cures them, through the power of the medicine it is clearly seen. Bodhisattvas on the ten grounds are like this; they see the Buddha-nature, but it is not clear. Through the



power of the meditative stabilization [called] proceeding like a hero, they will see it very clearly.

and:

There are cases in which it is known but not seen. When it is known that all sentient beings have the Buddha-nature, but, overwhelmed and obstructed by afflictive emotions, it is not seen, this is called “known but not seen.” Also, there are cases in which it is known and seen a little. Bodhisattva great beings on the ten grounds know that all beings have the Buddha-nature, but cannot see it clearly; this is like the moon being unclear during the day. Moreover, there are cases in which it is both seen and known—by Buddhas, Ones-Gone-Thus—this is called “perceived and known.”

and:

It is not that nirvāṇa did not exist in the beginning but presently exists. If nirvāṇa did not exist in the beginning but presently exists, it would not be a phenomenon that always abides. Whether Buddhas arise or do not arise, the nature and character [of nirvāṇa] always abides. Because sentient beings are obstructed by afflictive emotions, they do not see nirvāṇa, and hence think, “It does not exist.” Bodhisattva great beings who have familiarized with ethics, meditative stabilization, and wisdom excise the afflictive emotions and thereupon see it. Hence, nirvāṇa has the quality of always abiding. Since it is known that it is not formerly non-existent and presently existent, it is therefore called “permanent.”

and:

All sentient beings have the Buddha-nature. Due to being thoroughly veiled by afflictive emotions it is not seen.

and so forth, and the *Great Drum Sūtra* also says:

Kāshyapa, these four are examples of causes of obstructions to the basic constituent of sentient beings and examples of reasons [for its existence]. What are the four? Like eyes darkened by yellow and blue eye film; like the moon covered by clouds; like digging a well; like a lamp inside

a pot. Kāshyapa, these four are causes and reasons for saying, “The matrix exists.” By way of these causes and reasons all sentient beings and all living beings have the Buddha-constituent; its adornment, the endless good signs and beauties, will be perceived, and due to that basic constituent sentient beings will attain nirvāṇa.

With respect to “one whose eyes are [afflicted] with cataracts,” the eyes, darkened from being covered with yellow and blue film, are suitable to be cured but will be blind until a physician is found, and when a physician is found, will speedily see again. About this basic constituent, covered by a sheath of millions of afflictive emotions, like being darkened upon being covered with blue film: as long as one takes a liking to Hearers and Solitary Realizers, the self will not be the self; it will be the self’s self. When one takes a liking to the Buddha Supramundane Victors, [the self] becomes the self, and after this, one becomes a human fit for advancement. The afflictive emotions are to be viewed as like that human’s eye disease—the darkness of yellow and blue film. The matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus definitely exists, like the eye.

With respect to “like the moon covered by clouds,” just as the sphere of the moon covered by awful clouds is not perceived, the basic constituent covered by a sheath of afflictive emotions is not perceived. When it is separated from the collections of afflictive emotions, like clouds, then the basic constituent, like the full moon, is perceived.

With respect to “like digging a well,” when, for example, a person digs and digs a well, as long as the ground comes up dry, this sign makes the person think, “Water is a long ways from here.” When mud comes up, this sign causes the knowledge, “Water is near here.” When water is arrived at, that is the end of digging. Similarly, Hearers and Solitary Realizers please the Ones-Gone-Thus and partake of good practices, whereby they dig out the afflictive emotions. Having dug them out, the matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus, like water, is found.

With respect to “like a lamp inside a pot,” just as the light of a lamp inside a pot is not bright and vivid and does not do anything for sentient beings, so the matrix-of-One-

Gone-Thus, said to possess limitless good marks and beauties, does not bring about the welfare of sentient beings. Just as when the pot is broken, then the lamp brings about the welfare of living beings through its own illumination, so when the afflictive emotions of cyclic existence are consumed due to the intense burning, like a lamp, of the matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus abiding in the pot of cyclic existence, which has the covering of millions of afflictive emotions, the matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus—like the lamp of a broken pot—brings about the welfare of sentient beings.

Through these four reasons it should be understood that just as I have the basic constituent of a sentient being, so all sentient beings also have it.

and so forth and:

Some, wanting to view the self, asked, “If one looks into the self’s afflictive emotions and the self’s beginning and end, will they be found?”

The Supramundane Victor said, “They will not. Upon having purified the afflictive emotions, then the self will be found.”

and so forth. Thereby, many very profound sūtras set forth many examples for and reasons why although the pure nature, the matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss, always dwells in all sentient beings, it is not seen and is not attained if not separated from adventitious defilements.

Thus, there is no question that a process of purification must take place before Buddhahood can be attained.

Although sentient beings already possess Buddha qualities, Döl-po-pa avoids having to hold that ordinary sentient beings are already Buddhas by making distinctions between ultimate and conventional Buddha and between ultimate and conventional qualities, as indicated above. Ultimate Buddha and Buddha qualities are already present in the noumenon, whereas conventional Buddha and conventional Buddha qualities must be attained.

## *RELATIONSHIP OF THE TWO TRUTHS*

Döl-po-pa clearly holds that the ultimate exists and is an object of

knowledge (*Mountain Doctrine*, 241):

Likewise, the *Tantra of the Supreme Original Buddha* also speaks of it as being the ultimate object of knowledge and also the ultimate mind with:

That object of knowledge seen here,  
Unproduced and unceasing,  
Is none other than one's own mind.

The two truths, veil/conventional and ultimate, are different and are not the same entity (*Mountain Doctrine*, 404-405):

An emptiness of all<sup>a</sup> does not occur because an emptiness of the noumenon does not occur. A basis of the emptiness of all phenomena<sup>b</sup> occurs; it is the noumenon. A basis empty of the noumenon<sup>c</sup> does not occur because that is damaged by immeasurable, great, absurd consequences. Therefore, empty of all and empty of all phenomena are extremely different because the mode of subsistence is empty of phenomena but is not empty of the noumenon.<sup>d</sup> This also clears away the assertion that phenomena and noumenon are one entity and different isolates<sup>e</sup> and the assertion that they are not at all different because those two are different in the sense of negating that they are the same entity.<sup>f</sup>

*Objection:* Well then, this contradicts the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*, which says that the two truths are not either one or different:

The character of the compounded realm and of the ultimate  
Is a character devoid of sameness and difference.  
Those who consider that they are the same or different  
Are improperly oriented.

*Answer:* This passage refutes that the two truths are the same entity or different entities because although ultimate entities are

<sup>a</sup> *thams cad kyi stong pa.*

<sup>b</sup> *chos thams cad kyi stong pa'i gzhi.*

<sup>c</sup> *chos nyid kyi stong pa'i gzhi.*

<sup>d</sup> *des na thams cad kyis stong pa dang chos thams cad kyi stong pa ni khyad par shin tu che ste/ gnas lugs la chos kyis stong yang chos nyid kyis mi stong:* 384.5/207b.7. The usage of *la* in *gnas lugs la* is unclear to me.

<sup>e</sup> *ngo bo gcig la ldog pa tha dad.*

<sup>f</sup> *ngo bo gcig pa bkag pa'i tha dad.*

established in the mode of subsistence, conventional entities are not established [in the mode of subsistence].

Hence, the two truths are neither one nor one entity. They are different, though not different entities. Hence, an ultimate truth is not a veil truth, and a veil truth is not an ultimate truth. Their difference means simply that they are not the same entity.

The ultimate is other than lowly conventionalities (*Mountain Doctrine*, 389-391):

Similarly, without the flaws of a combination of contradictions many scriptural statements—speaking of body without body, existence without existence, wondrous form without form, the aspectless endowed with all aspects, and so forth—again and again teach the profound ultimate other-emptiness, the basis of emptiness, beyond worldly examples....The *Revelation of the Thought Tantra*... and *Glorious Union of All Buddhas*... extensively speak of natural, fundamental, noumenal, naturally pure aggregates, constituents, and so forth—which primordially are bases of emptiness of fabricated, adventitious aggregates, constituents, and so forth—alternative, supreme, transcendent, and ultimate. In this way, ultimate truths are other than these lowly external and internal conventionalities; they are transcendent, ultimate, and supreme. Moreover, in elevated tantras it is said:

As is the external, so is the internal.

As is the internal, so is the alternative.

It is said that just as although the external husk of a grain, the internal part, and the essence of the grain are not the same entity, but abide similarly in terms of aspect, so although this external world of the container-environment, the internal sentient beings who are contents, and the alternative matrix-of-One-Gone-to-Bliss, thusness, are indeed not the same entity, they are similar in aspect. This mode abides as equivalent also to the statement in other texts of the great middle:

Just this as it appears is conventional.

The counterpart is other.

“Just this as it appears” [means that] these externals and internals appearing to consciousness are conventionalities. That which is “other” than these is the ultimate noumenal, which is other than these conventional phenomena—transcendent or the ultimate of

the supreme. From between the two truths, ultimate truth is the counterpart to conventional truths; therefore, it is called “the counterpart.” Thus this statement that whatever are ultimates are other than conventionalities also clears away the assertion by some that the two truths are undifferentiable.

The otherness of the two truths eliminates the possibility that somehow they are undifferentiable.

Though the two truths are different, their difference is not that conventionalities are appearances and their emptinesses are ultimate truths, since the ultimate also appears to pristine wisdom and since conventionalities are self-empty (*Mountain Doctrine*, 391):

Furthermore, those who assert that these things appearing to consciousness are conventionalities and the factors of their emptiness of themselves are ultimate truths are extremely mistaken:

- because it is impossible for those that are self-empty to be ultimate truths and it is impossible for those that are ultimate truths to be self-empty
- and because many pure sources for those have been set forth and will be set forth.

Similarly, the assertion that all whatsoever appearances are conventionalities and all whatsoever emptinesses are ultimates also is babble because since both appearance and emptiness are contained in conventionalities and both appearance and emptiness are contained in ultimates, this [assertion] is harmed by the absurd consequence that even the appearance of the noumenon would be a conventionality and by the extreme absurdity that conventional emptiness [that is, self-emptiness] would be ultimate.

## The ultimate is not a dependent-arising

For Döl-po-pa, dependent-arising is limited to impermanent phenomena produced from causes and conditions, and, therefore, the ultimate cannot be a dependent-arising. This seems to contradict Nāgārjuna’s statement that all phenomena are dependent-arising, but Döl-po-pa explains that it does not, first by showing that the ultimate is necessarily not impermanent and deceptive through citing a Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra, the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*, the *Shrīmālādevī Sūtra*, and Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called “Wisdom”* and then by indicating that Nāgārjuna’s reference about the mutuality of dependent-arising and

emptiness both here and in his *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment* has to be to self-emptiness, not other-emptiness (*Mountain Doctrine*, 398-400).

Döl-po-pa openly faces an objection that this would contradict the frequently made statement that conventionalities and emptinesses are mutually pervasive by answering that in such a context “emptiness” refers to self-emptiness, not other-emptiness (*Mountain Doctrine*, 400-401):

*Objection:* Well then, this contradicts [Nāgārjuna's statement in the *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*]:

Conventionalities are described as emptinesses,  
And just emptinesses are conventionalities  
Because it is definite that without the one, the other does  
not occur,  
Like product and impermanent thing.

*Answer:* There is no fault because emptiness on this occasion is dependently arisen self-emptiness, and he is indicating that it is a mutually pervasive single entity with dependent-arising, and we also assert this in that way.

For Döl-po-pa also, all conventionalities are self-empty, or self-emptinesses—the two terms being used interchangeably—and thus self-emptiness is a conventionality, not the ultimate.

## Third category

Döl-po-pa holds that the ultimate—since it is an object of pristine wisdom—is an object of knowledge, and thus he does not resort to a third category with regard to whether it is or is not an object of knowledge. Also, he holds that the two truths are different, and whatever exists must be either an ultimate truth or a veil truth. However, he uses the notion of a third category in other contexts, for he holds that the ultimate is not a wing of a dichotomy between existing as an effective thing and not existing as an effective thing, since it is neither (*Mountain Doctrine*, 338):

Hence, those who propound that all objects of knowledge are limited to the two, existing as an effective thing and not existing as an effective thing, are reduced to only not having realized the ultimate mode of subsistence, since although it is an object of knowledge, it does not either exist as an effective thing or not exist as an effective thing. Consequently, it is also established as just a third category and the center or middle.

and (346):

Similarly, that:

- a non-fallacious combination of contradictions does not occur
- a third category does not occur with regard to direct contradictions [that is, with respect to dichotomies]
- objects of knowledge are limited to the two, effective thing and non-effective thing

and so forth are in terms of conventionalities, but ultimate truths are not included in any of those.

## TSONG-KHA-PA'S REBUTTAL TO SHAY-RAB-GYAL-TSHAN'S PRESENTATION OF THE TWO TRUTHS

Now let us return to the carefully structured argument against Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's system in Tsong-kha-pa's *The Essence of Eloquence* and identify the impact of his presentation of the two truths step by step (above, 68):

All of the high sayings of the Teacher operate in the context of the two truths, veil and ultimate, and if one does not know the distinction between those two, one does not know the suchness of the teaching; therefore, the mode of commenting on the high sayings by way of the two truths is just this [speaking of emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising]<sup>291</sup> because all that teach varieties of subjects having the attribute of being dependently imputed and dependently produced are veil truths, whereas the ultimate is exhausted as only the emptiness that is the absence of establishment by way of [objects'] own character due to this reason [that is, due to being dependent-arising]; Nāgārjuna's *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* says:<sup>292</sup>

Due to the emptiness of inherent existence  
Of all things, the unequalled  
One-Gone-Thus taught  
The dependent-arising of things.

The ultimate is exhausted as that.  
The Buddha, the Supramundane Victor,  
In dependence upon the conventions of the world



Thoroughly designated all the varieties.

[Nāgārjuna] asserts the ultimate truth in just the way that his own commentary on this says:<sup>293</sup>

The ultimate is exhausted as this “emptiness of inherent existence of all dependently arisen things.”

Therefore, the two chariot-ways [of the Middle Way School and Mind-Only School opened respectively by Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga], except for differences in the object of negation, agree in positing as the ultimate truth just the elimination of self—that is, their respective object of negation—in dependent-arising that are the bases of negation.<sup>a</sup> Hence, it is not reasonable to posit an ultimate other than this.

Tsong-kha-pa does not mention Shay-rab-gyal-tshan by name, but he has directly indicted his system of the two truths as failing to present “the suchness of the teaching” since it fails at understanding “the distinction between those two.” For, once the ultimate is just the emptiness of objects’ established by way of their own character, and thus a mere absence of a reified status, and therefore a nonaffirming negative, it cannot be an affirming negative as Shay-rab-gyal-tshan holds. In the Mind-Only section of *The Essence of Eloquence* Tsong-kha-pa showed at length how in the Mind-Only School “the ultimate truth [is] just the elimination” of its object of negation—a difference of entity of apprehended-object and apprehending-subject or establishment by way of its own character as the referent of terms and conceptual consciousnesses. Here, based on the Middle Way School, Tsong-kha-pa shows that “the ultimate **is exhausted as only** the emptiness that is the absence of establishment by way of [objects’] own character,” a mere absence of a misconceived status of phenomena, a self-emptiness, thus leaving no room for an ultimate that is an other-emptiness and an affirming negative. Tsong-kha-pa backs this up with statements by Nāgārjuna:

Furthermore, concerning asserting suchness to be truly [established], Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Text Called “Wisdom”* describes [such a person] as having an incorrigible view:<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> This statement does not seem to take account of the fact that in the Mind-Only School permanent phenomena also are bases of emptiness but are not dependent-arising.

<sup>b</sup> Stanza XIII.8cd; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3824)*, TBRC

Those who view emptiness [as truly established]  
Are said to be irredeemable.

and also his *Praise of the Supramundane* speaks of this as a source of great derision:<sup>a</sup>

Since the ambrosia of emptiness was taught  
For the sake of abandoning all [wrong] conceptions,  
You [Buddha] have greatly derided  
Those who adhere to it [as truly established].

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's rearrangement and expansion of Tsong-kha-pa's exposition highlights the points:<sup>294</sup>

The mode of commenting on the high sayings by way of the two truths is just this speaking of emptiness as the meaning of dependent-arising because the high sayings are only taught in the context of either of the two truths, and if one does not know the distinction between those two, one does not know the suchness of the teaching, because all that teach the varieties of dependent-arising are veil truths, and the ultimate is exhausted as only the emptiness that is the absence of establishment by way of [objects'] own character due to the reason of dependent-arising.

It follows [that all that teach the varieties of dependent-arising are veil truths, and the ultimate is exhausted as only the emptiness that is the absence of establishment by way of (objects') own character due to the reason of dependent-arising] because the positing—by those who assert the ultimate truth like Nāgārjuna's *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* and its autocommentary—of just the elimination of self, the object of negation, as the ultimate truth is in agreement with the two, the Middle Way School and Mind-

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W23703.96:3-39, dbu ma, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 8a.6-8a.7; Sanskrit in de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 18: *yeṣāṃ tu śūnyatādr̥ṣṭis tān asādhyān babhāṣire* // For a citation by Döl-po-pa, see Hopkins, *Mountain Doctrine*, 334.

<sup>a</sup> 'jig rten las 'das par bstod pa (lokātītastava), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 1120), TBRC W23703.1:138-140 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), stanza 23. Sanskrit in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 161: *sarvasaṃkalpanāśāya śūnyatāmṛtadeśanā / yasya tasyām api grāhas tvayāsāv avasāditaḥ* //; Tibetan and English on pages 8-9. For a citation in Tsong-kha-pa's *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2008), 162.

Only School, whereby it is not reasonable to posit an ultimate other than this. The meaning of the passage in Nāgārjuna's *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* is:

Since all things are empty of inherent existence, the Teacher [Buddha] taught this mode of the dependent-arising of those things, which is the emptiness that is evidence for positing them as empty; the ultimate truth is exhausted as that emptiness of inherent existence of dependent-arising. Nevertheless, in dependence upon the various conventions of the world the Buddha thoroughly designated all the varieties of conventionalites.

Although there are many discordant translations, the one cited here [in Tsong-kha-pa's text] is the translation in the autocommentary, and through it the meaning of the autocommentary can be understood.

In the thirteenth chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text Called "Wisdom"* those who view emptiness as truly established are described as having a view that is unfixable, irredeemable, as is stated in the *Heap of Jewels Sūtra* and so forth, and in the *Buddhapālita Commentary* they are described as having an irredeemable view:<sup>a</sup>

To those who adhere to emptiness as having thingness [that is, true establishment], others cannot do even anything to reverse this adherence; it is like, for example, if someone states, "[I] have nothing," then to someone's saying, "Hand over that nothing," how could [the latter] be caused to understand nothing!

and in Nāgārjuna's *Praise of the Supramundane*:

When, for the sake of abandoning all conceptions, the Teacher taught the ambrosia of doctrines stemming from emptiness, the Subduer spoke of those who adhere to it as

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<sup>a</sup> *Buddhapālita Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle," dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa buddha pā li ta (buddhapālita-mūlamadhyamakavṛtti), in bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3842), TBRC W23703.96:318-563, XIII.8 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapa chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). See also the translation in Akira Saito, "A study of the Buddhapālita-Mūlamadhyamakavṛtti" (Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, Australia, 1984), 186, and text,*

truly [established] as a source of great derision.

Tsong-kha-pa (above, 72) proceeds to show how the Proponents of Mind-Only and the Proponents of the Middle Way agree that the phenomena having the attribute<sup>a</sup> of emptiness and the noumenon,<sup>b</sup> emptiness itself, are *equally* ultimately existent or ultimately nonexistent, his point being for the Proponents of Mind-Only they are *equally* ultimately existent and for the Proponents of the Middle Way they are *equally* ultimately nonexistent:

Even the former [Mind-Only] system propounds:

It is in the perspective of a conventional consciousness that the two—a dependent-arising which is the subject [or qualificand] and the ultimate truth which is [its] noumenon—exist as support and supported;<sup>c</sup> it is not in the perspective of a rational consciousness of uncontaminated meditative equipoise. Therefore, it is indeed not contradictory that although the noumenon exists in its perspective,<sup>d</sup> the subject does not; however, for [something] to exist for the ultimate [consciousness] that analyzes phenomena for how they exist in the mode of subsistence by way of their own character, if the subject [the qualificand] does not exist, the noumenon [that is, its quality of reality] has no power to abide in an isolated way, whereby if other-powered dependent-arisings are empty of inherent establishment, the thoroughly established [nature] also would not be established by way of its own character.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *chos can*, which also could be translated as “substratum.”

<sup>b</sup> *chos nyid, dharmatā*; I translate this term as “noumenon” because the term is often found in a combination with *chos (dharma)* which I translate in this context as “phenomenon.” Thus, “noumenon” needs to be understood in its basic dictionary sense as reality and thus the final nature of phenomena, and not with an overlay from other systems of thought, such as found in Kant.

<sup>c</sup> *rten dang bren pa*; or “substratum and what is based on it.” When these terms are used with regard to a maṇḍala, they refer to the residence (which is a ground and building) and the residents (which are the deities residing therein).

<sup>d</sup> Reading *de'i ngo na* for *de'i don* (Grags pa & rnam rgyal, 98.16) in accordance with their footnote and in accordance with Ye-shay-thab-khay's *The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa*, Part Two, 141.8 and n.2.

<sup>e</sup> In the Mind-Only School this is taken as the reason why both other-powered natures and thoroughly established natures are inherently established, or established by way of their own character. As Tsong-kha-pa (Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School*, 95):

and this [Middle Way] system propounds it too;<sup>a</sup> [Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle*] says:<sup>b</sup>

When the compounded are thoroughly not established,  
How could the uncompounded be established?

and both systems speak many times in accordance with the statement in sūtra, "If even form itself is not observed, how could the thusness of form be observed?" The "not established" and "established" in Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle* and the "not observed" and "observed" in sūtra should be taken as "not inherently existent" and "inherently existent."

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho reframes Tsong-kha-pa's presentation in order to emphasize the central points:<sup>295</sup>

It is not contradictory that although the noumenon (*chos nyid*) [emptiness] exists in the perspective of uncontaminated meditative equipoise, the subjects (*chos can*) [the phenomena having the attribute of emptiness] do not exist in its perspective because that the subjects (*chos can*) and the noumenon (*chos nyid*) exist as support and supported, aside from the perspective of a conventional consciousness, is not in the perspective of a Superior's meditative equipoise. However, for phenomena that exist as truly established, if the subjects (*chos can*) do not exist, the noumenon (*chos nyid*)

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This [Mind-Only School] is a system in which, if other-powered natures are not established by way of their own character, production and cessation are not feasible due to which [other-powered natures] would be deprecated, and it is a system in which if the thoroughly established nature does not exist by way of its own character, it could not be the basic disposition of things.

<sup>a</sup> In the Middle Way School the equivalency of status of other-powered natures and thoroughly established natures is taken as a reason why the ultimate also does not inherently exist and is not established by way of its own character. Döl-po-pa, however, holds that the ultimate truth ultimately exists, or truly exists, whereas dependent-arising do not; see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 295ff., and Tsong-kha-pa's rebuttal, 331ff.

<sup>b</sup> Stanza VII.33cd; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmālamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. tsa (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 5b.6-5b.7; Sanskrit in de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 11: *saṃskṛtasyāprasiddhau ca katham setsyatya asaṃskṛtam* //. For citations in Tsong-kha-pa's *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 96 and 98.

cannot abide in an isolated way, whereby if other-powered [natures] are empty of inherent establishment, the thoroughly established [nature] also would be that way [that is, empty of inherent establishment]. Although the two—the Proponents of True Existence (*dingos smra ba*) and Proponents of the Middle Way do not differ in asserting this, these [Proponents of the Middle Way] assert that since other-powered [natures] are empty of inherent establishment, the thoroughly established [nature] also is empty of inherent establishment, whereas the Proponents of True Existence do not assert such.

Tsong-kha-pa (above, 75) turns to addressing an objection that Nāgārjuna seems to say in his *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* that only nirvāṇa, which here means the natural nirvāṇa—that is to say, the ultimate truth, emptiness, is true, that is, truly established, whereas everything else is not truly established:

With respect to the statement in Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*,<sup>a</sup> "That only nirvāṇa is true," that is, that it alone is true and compositional phenomena have the attribute of falsity and deception, on this occasion of the meaning of untruth, falsity, he speaks of deceptiveness, and hence the meaning of true, which is its opposite [of false], is also non-deceptiveness but is not true [that is, truly established] in the sense of existing by way of its own character when [a phenomenon] is analyzed as to whether it is established or is not established as [its own] the mode of being.<sup>b</sup>

Concerning deceptiveness, just as, for example, misleading upon pretending to seem helpful despite not being helpful is called

<sup>a</sup> Stanza 35a; *rigs pa drug cu pa* (*yuktiṣaṣṭikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3825), TBRC W23703.96:42-46, dbu ma, vol. tsa, (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sunggrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 21b.5; Tibetan and English also found in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 84-85. The full stanza is:

When the Conqueror said  
That only nirvāṇa is a truth,  
What wise person would think,  
"The rest are not unreal"?

Tsong-kha-pa's challenges Döl-po-pa's reading that this stanza indicates that nirvāṇa, or ultimate truth, is truly established; see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 98ff.

<sup>b</sup> Although emptiness is the mode of being of phenomena, it itself is not established as its own mode of being, and hence is not established by way of its own character.

deceptive, these compositional phenomena—despite not being established by way of their own character—appear to be so, whereupon childish beings are deceived, due to which compositional phenomena are called “false” or “deceptive;” however, since—in the perspective of one who directly sees it—nirvāṇa, ultimate truth, is not deceptive through appearing as above, it is said to be “nondeceptive” or “true.”

In spelling out the objection to which Tsong-kha-pa is responding, Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho gives the full stanza from Nāgārjuna and the sūtra source for it showing that Nāgārjuna is speaking about the deceptiveness of all phenomena except emptiness as it is seen in direct perception, which is true in the sense that it appears exactly as it is, without the deception of appearing to exist inherently:

*Someone asks:* How do you construe the statement in Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* that only nirvāṇa is true [that is, truly established], and others are not true [that is, not truly established]:

When the Conqueror said  
That only nirvāṇa is true,  
What wise person would think,  
“The rest are not unreal”?

*Response:* That is commentary on the meaning of the statement in sūtra.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> This passage is cited in Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* (*dbu ma tshig gsal, prasannapadā*) commenting on Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called “Wisdom,”* stanza I.1; sde dge 3860, *dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 13a.4-13a.5, which reads: *dge slong dag 'di ni bden pa dam pa ste 'di lta ste slu ba med pa'i chos can mya ngan las 'das pa'o*, as does Döl-po-pa's citation (Gangtok edition, 318.3); Tsong-kha-pa cites this passage in his *Explanation of (Nāgārjuna's) “Treatise on the Middle”*: *Ocean of Reasoning* [in *gsung 'bum* (*tsong kha pa, bla brang par ma*), TBRC W22273.15:5-622 (*bla brang: bla brang bkra shis 'khyil*, [199?]); Peking 6153, vol. 156, 64.2.3] and in his *Medium-length Exposition of the Stages of the Path* (see Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Special Insight*, ; Tsong-kha-pa's citation differs in minor ways: *dge slong dag bden pa dam pa 'di ni gcig ste/ 'di lta ste mi slu ba 'i chos can mya ngan las 'das pa'o*. The Sanskrit is in La Vallée Poussin, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās (Mādhyamikasūtras) de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā Commentaire de Candrakīrti* (Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1970), 41: *tattvadarśanāpekṣayā tūktam bhagavatā / etadddhi bhikṣavaḥ paramaṃ satyaṃ yaduta amoṣadharmā nirvāṇaṃ / sarvasaṃskārāś ca mṛṣā moṣadharmāṇaḥ /*.

The Supramundane Victor said “Monastics, this ultimate truth is one—nirvāṇa having the attribute of nondeceptiveness. All compositional things<sup>a</sup> have the attribute of falsity, deceptiveness.”

Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning”* says:

In the way that compounded phenomena deceive the childish due to appearing wrongly, nirvāṇa is not so because of permanently abiding in its own entity of nonproduction. It never appears as an entity of production as the compounded do to the childish. Hence, since nirvāṇa always abides as just nirvāṇa, it is described with worldly conventions as “ultimate truth.”

Thus, nondeceptive is the meaning of [calling nirvāṇa] true [in Nāgārjuna’s *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*], and moreover, it is through the force of conventions, and on the occasion also of the passage from sūtra itself, the phrase “having the attribute of nondeceptiveness” says that the meaning of true (*bden pa*) is nondeceptiveness,<sup>b</sup> and “All compositional things have the attribute of falsity, deceptiveness” says that the meaning of falsity is deceptiveness, and hence the meaning of “true,” which is the opposite of [false], is to be taken as nondeceptive, but not true [that is, truly established] in the sense of “existent by way of its own character.”

The mode of deceptiveness in the statement “All compositional things have the attribute of falsity, deceptiveness” is that while those [compositional things] are not existent by way of their own character, they appear to be established by way of their own character, whereupon common beings are deceived by way of being obstructed from the final mode of subsistence, due to which [those compositional things] are called false, or deceptive, like a worldly conning. Nirvāṇa, the ultimate truth, is without the deception of appearing—in the perspective of an awareness directly realizing it—as being inherently established while it is not inherently established, due to which it is called nondeceptive, or true; aside from this, it not true in the sense of being the object of negation [that is, being truly established].

<sup>a</sup> ‘du byed, *saṃskāra*; this term is often used as an equivalent for compounded things (‘dus byas, *saṃskṛta*).

<sup>b</sup> *mi slu ba*,



Contrary to Döl-po-pa's view that other-emptiness is ultimately or truly established in the sense that it can withstand analysis, Tsong-kha-pa holds that everything, including the ultimate, is not ultimately established because of not being able to withstand analysis. In all of his five works on the view of emptiness,<sup>a</sup> Tsong-kha-pa opposes Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's presentation; in the fourth of these in the section on special insight in the *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, he says about this point:<sup>296</sup>

When sought with reasoning analyzing suchness, persons—who are born and transmigrate—and so forth, able to withstand analysis, are not found, not even a particle.

and:<sup>297</sup>

Therefore, when [an ultimate truth] is analyzed with the reasoning investigating whether it is truly established or not, it is not truly established in the sense of being able to withstand analysis.

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<sup>a</sup> Tsong-kha-pa composed five expositions on the view of emptiness (see Elizabeth Napper, *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1989), 6-7):

1. In 1402, at the age of forty-five, he wrote the *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, which has a long and complicated section on special insight into emptiness.
2. Five years later, when he was fifty, he began writing a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way*, called *Ocean of Reasoning*, at Chö-ding Hermitage above what became Se-ra Monastic University on the northern outskirts of Lhasa, but in the midst of explicating the first chapter, he foresaw that there would be interruptions if he stayed there. Thus, he left Chö-ding Hermitage for another hermitage at Se-ra, Ra-ka Precipice, where he wrote the *Treatise Differentiating Interpretable and Definitive Meanings: The Essence of Eloquence*. (I imagine that he felt the need to compose his own independent work on the view of emptiness in the Great Vehicle schools as background for his commentary on Nāgārjuna's treatise. If this is so, he wrote *The Essence* as an overarching structure in which that commentary could be understood.)
3. After completing *The Essence* in 1408, he returned to commenting on Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way*, completing the *Ocean of Reasoning*.
4. At age fifty-eight in 1415, he wrote the *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, which includes a section on special insight.
5. At age sixty-one, one year before his death, he wrote a commentary on Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way,"* called *Illumination of the Thought*.

To establish that emptiness is the ultimate truth but is not ultimately existent, Tsong-kha-pa distinguishes between the meanings of “ultimate” in these two usages—ultimate truth and ultimately existent. For Döl-po-pa the ultimate truth has to be ultimately existent, since if it were not, it would not exist as the ultimate. Döl-po-pa holds that:<sup>298</sup>

If something is not true conventionally, it is not suitable as a conventional truth, and hence that which is a conventional truth is conventionally true and is not ultimately true. Just so, if something is not ultimately true, it is not suitable as an ultimate truth, and hence that which is an ultimate truth is ultimately true and is not conventionally true.

Tsong-kha-pa responds that Döl-po-pa has failed to make a distinction between:

- truly, or ultimately, established in the sense of being able to withstand analysis, and
- ultimately true in the sense of being true for a rational consciousness.<sup>a</sup>

Tsong-kha-pa re-explains one of Döl-po-pa’s sources and then openly refutes Döl-po-pa’s opinion by drawing an absurd conclusion:<sup>299</sup>

Moreover, with respect to the master Jñānagarbha’s statement [in his *Commentary on the “Differentiation of the Two Truths”*], “Because of being a truth ultimately, it is an ultimate truth,” since he also describes a rational consciousness as the ultimate, he is saying that what is non-deceptive in its perspective is a truth. His thought is not that [an ultimate truth] is **truly established** in the sense of being able to withstand analysis because in his text the true establishment of all phenomena is refuted. Therefore:

- we accept the proposition that “If an ultimate is not true ultimately [that is, in the perspective of a rational consciousness called the ultimate], then a conventionality is not a truth conventionally [that is, in the perspective of a conventional valid cognition],”
- but to propound [as Döl-po-pa does] that “If the ultimate is not ultimately established, then a conventionality is not conventionally established,” is to [absurdly] say that if a negative

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<sup>a</sup> *rigs shes*. This term specifically refers to an inference realizing emptiness or to a consciousness of meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness; it does not refer to a consciousness engaged in reasoning in general.

of truth [that is, a negative of true establishment] is not truly established, then the subjects that are the bases of the negation would be truly established.

This is because an ultimate truth is posited as just a negative of truth [that is, an absence of true establishment] in the subject that is the basis of negation and because the suggestion that subjects are not established conventionally suggests that they are not falsely established. Thus, [to propound such] would be even extremely senseless because the bases of negation must be established as false due to the very fact that the subjects—appearances—do not exist as truly established, that is to say, are not truly established.

Also, as we saw earlier (436), Döl-po-pa holds that the ultimate is not a dependent-arising and thus there is no way that dependent-arising could be used to prove that the ultimate does not truly exist. Tsong-kha-pa, however, sees just the opposite:<sup>300</sup>

Thinking that when in this way compounded things—persons and other phenomena—have been established as not truly existent by way of the reasonings described earlier, it can be established with little difficulty that uncompounded phenomena such as space, analytical cessations, non-analytical cessations, thusness, and so forth are not truly existent, Nāgārjuna says in the *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle, Called "Wisdom"*:

Since compounded phenomena are thoroughly not established,

How could the uncompounded be established?

Whereas for Döl-po-pa dependent-arising necessarily means arising in dependence on causes and conditions, Tsong-kha-pa posits two types of dependent-arising (1) from the viewpoint of reliance on causes and conditions and (2) from the viewpoint of reliance of the object's own parts.<sup>301</sup>

Therefore, external things such as sprouts and internal things such as compositional activity arise in dependence, respectively, on seeds and so forth, and on ignorance and so forth. This being so, that those [sprouts, compositional activity, and so forth] are established by way of their own character is not feasible because whatever is established by way of its own nature must be inherently established—that is, be able to set itself up under its own power—

due to which it is contradictory for it to rely on causes and conditions. Āryadeva's *Four Hundred* (above, 348) says:<sup>302</sup>

Those which have a dependent arising  
Are not under their own power.  
All these are not under their own power;  
Therefore, they do not have self [that is, establishment by  
way of their own nature].

Through this you should understand that persons, pots, and so forth also are without inherent establishment because of being imputed in dependence on their own collection [of parts]. Those are two presentations of the reasoning of dependent-arising.<sup>a</sup>

As explained in detail above (Chap. 6, 185ff.), Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of Tenets* shows that *samutpāda* does not just mean arising in the sense of being produced but also includes "existing" and "being established":

Hence, *pratītyasamutpāda* means the dependent-arising of products—their arising in reliance on their own causes and conditions. It also means the dependent-arising [of all phenomena, products and non-products]—their existence meeting to or in reliance on their own parts, their own bases of imputation, or their own components because:

- with regard to the Sanskrit original of "arising" (*samutpāda*), Vasubandhu's *Commentary on the "Sūtra on Dependent-Arising"* explains *sam* as "coming together," "aggregating," and so forth, and
- Rājaputra Yashomitra<sup>303</sup> explains *pāda* as "existing" and so forth.

Also, because all phenomena are just established in dependence upon, in reliance upon, or meeting to [causes and conditions, their parts, and their basis of imputation], they are not self-instituting and do not exist under their own power.

From Tsong-kha-pa's viewpoint, Döl-po-pa's limitation of dependent-arising to what is arisen from causes and conditions reflects non-comprehension of the basic Middle Way tenet of the compatibility of dependent-

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<sup>a</sup> The two are (1) arising in dependence upon causes and conditions and (2) being imputed in dependence on their own collection of parts.

arising and emptiness and has not risen above the explanation of dependent-arising in the Great Exposition School, Sūtra School, and Mind-Only School.

However, it is not that Döl-po-pa is without sources for his assertion that the ultimate truly exists; therefore, Tsong-kha-pa must explain away quotes from Nāgārjuna that Döl-po-pa uses to buttress his argument. Specifically, Döl-po-pa takes the statement in Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* that "only nirvāṇa is true" and statements in Nāgārjuna's *Praise of the Element of Attributes* as supporting his notion that the mode of subsistence ultimately or truly exists. Tsong-kha-pa accurately re-states Döl-po-pa's argument but re-frames Nāgārjuna's statements so that they support the opposite opinion.<sup>304</sup>

[*Hypothetical*] objection [by Döl-po-pa]: If the meaning of the statement [in Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle*]:

When the compounded are thoroughly not established,  
How could the un compounded be established?

is as you [Tsong-kha-pa] explain it, does it not contradict (1) the statement in his *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* that only nirvāṇa is true and that the others are not:

When the Conqueror said  
That only nirvāṇa is true,  
What wise person would think,  
"The rest are not unreal"?

and (2) the statement also in his *Praise of the Element of Attributes* that the sūtras teaching emptiness—the absence of inherent existence—are for the sake of abandoning the afflictive emotions and do not teach the non-existence of the naturally pure basic constituent:

All the sūtras teaching emptiness  
Set forth by the Conqueror  
Overcome the afflictive emotions.  
[These sūtras] do not diminish this basic constituent.

*Answer:* Those [who say such] are wrongly perspected with respect to the meaning of the scriptures as follows. The meaning of the former scripture is expressed [in sūtra]:

The Supramundane Victor said "Monastics, this ultimate

truth is one—nirvāṇa having the attribute of nondeceptiveness. All compositional things<sup>a</sup> have the attribute of falsity, deceptiveness.”

This sūtra passage also says that nirvāṇa is a truth and all compositional things are false. The early part of the passage very clearly explains that truth means non-deceptive, and the latter part very clearly explains that falsity means deceptive. Furthermore, nirvāṇa [here refers] to ultimate truth [that is to say, the natural nirvāṇa, which is the emptiness of inherent existence, and not the nirvāṇa that is the cessation of obstructions attained through practice of the path], as is explained in Chandrakīrti’s *Commentary on (Nāgārjuna’s) “Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning.”* ... Moreover, Nāgārjuna’s *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:

These two, cyclic existence and nirvāṇa,  
Do not [inherently] exist.  
The thorough knowledge itself of cyclic existence  
Is called “nirvāṇa.”

He explains that **both** cyclic existence and nirvāṇa are not inherently existent and that [the emptiness which is] just the object of the knowledge that cyclic existence is not inherently established is posited as nirvāṇa. Therefore, how could this be a position asserting that the emptiness that is the absence of true existence of cyclic existence is an annihilatory emptiness!

Moreover, the passage from Nāgārjuna’s *Praise of the Element of Attributes*<sup>b</sup> means:

For the sake of overcoming the apprehension of things as truly existent—the root of all other afflictive emotions—the sūtras teaching emptiness, the absence of inherent establishment, teach that the conceived object of the apprehension of true existence does not exist. They do not teach that emptiness—the naturally pure basic constituent, the

<sup>a</sup> 'du byed, saṃskāra; this term is often used as an equivalent for compounded things ('dus byas, saṃskṛta).

<sup>b</sup> chos kyi dbyings su bstod pa, dharmadhātustotra; sde dge 1118, bstod tshogs, vol. ka, 64b.2-64b.3:

All the sūtras teaching emptiness  
Set forth by the Conqueror  
Overcome the afflictive emotions.  
[These sūtras] do not diminish this basic constituent.

negative of the two selves that are the objects of the apprehension of true existence—does not exist.

Since although this emptiness exists, it is not truly established, that passage serves as a source refuting the proposition that the emptiness that is a negative of true existence—its object of negation—does not exist. It also refutes the proposition that it is not necessary to realize emptiness, the ultimate suchness, in order exhaustively to abandon the afflictive emotions. Hence, Nāgārjuna's *Praise of the Element of Attributes* itself says:

Through the three called impermanence, [coarse] emptiness,  
And suffering, the mind is purified.  
The doctrine supremely purifying the mind  
Is naturelessness [that is, the absence of inherent existence].

and:

The naturelessness of phenomena  
Should be meditated upon as the element of attributes.

He says that the absence of an inherently established nature in these phenomena is the element of attributes that is the object of meditation, and he says that just meditation on it is the supreme purifier of the mind. Therefore, how could it be suitable to cite this [*Praise of the Element of Attributes*] for the position that the emptiness that is the absence of inherent establishment of phenomena appearing in this way is an annihilatory emptiness and that, therefore, a truly existent emptiness separate from it is to be posited as the emptiness that is the object of meditation!

This is like propounding that in order to remove the suffering of fright upon apprehending a snake in the east despite there being none there, the demonstration that there is no snake in the east will not serve as an antidote to it, but rather one should indicate, "There is a tree in the west." For, one is propounding that in order to remove the suffering upon adhering to the true existence of what appears in this way to sentient beings, realization that those bases [that is, objects]—which are apprehended to truly exist—do not truly exist will not serve as an antidote, but that rather one must indicate that some other senseless base truly exists.

From this viewpoint Tsong-kha-pa repeatedly criticizes Döl-po-pa for

turning to a truly existent ultimate as the principal object of meditation. Tsong-kha-pa emphasizes that because suffering is caused by misapprehending the nature of persons and phenomena, reflective and meditative attention must be paid to the **absence** of such a status. Otherwise, it is impossible to overcome the afflictive emotions driving the very process of cyclic existence.

Tsong-kha-pa's fundamental principle is that because beings misapprehend the status of phenomena, they must concentrate on understanding the **lack** of such a status in order to overcome the tendency to this basic error and all the ills built on it. Otherwise, meditation would be unrelated to the problem sought to be overcome.<sup>305</sup>

it is like searching for a robber on the plain after the robber has gone to the woods.

and in the context of the Mind-Only School:<sup>306</sup>

since ordinary sentient beings conceive just these other-powered internal and external things—eyes, forms, and so forth which are objects seen, heard, and so forth—as self [that is, as objects and subjects that are different entities or as established by way of their own character as the referents of conceptual consciousnesses and of words], emptiness must be delineated within taking just these as the bases of emptiness. The error does not come through holding that the other two natures [that is, other-powered natures and imputational natures] exist as other factualities in the thoroughly established nature. Therefore, how could selflessness be delineated within thinking [as the Jo-nang-pas do] that the thoroughly established nature is empty because of existing as factually other than the other two natures! ... Therefore, Sthiramati's *Explanation of (Vasubandhu's) Commentary on (Maitreya's) "Differentiation of the Middle and the Extremes"* also says that it is not like a temple's being empty of monastics and so forth but like a rope's being empty of a snake... Therefore, without letting it become like the worldly [example] of putting a scapegoat effigy at the western door when a demon is bringing harm at the eastern door, one should meditate on an emptiness that is such that the emptiness of the imputational self as it is apprehended in just those other-powered natures—these being the bases apprehended as self—is the thoroughly established nature. If this is done, it will serve as an antidote to the apprehension of self. If, on the other hand, one meditates on an emptiness the mode of which is other than this style, it will not harm the apprehension of self at all.



Tsong-kha-pa makes the cogent case that innate misapprehension of the self of phenomena must be countered by taking those same phenomena—which are misperceived so as to lead beings into suffering and finitude—and by seeing that they do not have the falsely superimposed quality of the imputational nature. He indicts Döl-po-pa for putting forth a system that is inadequate to the task of opposing the basic ignorance drawing beings into suffering and finitude.<sup>307</sup>

With respect to that, when the thoroughly established nature that is the selflessness of phenomena is delineated in either the Yogic Practice School or the Middle Way School, the bases of emptiness with respect to which [the thoroughly established nature] is delineated are relative to those bases with respect to which a self of phenomena is apprehended by a consciousness apprehending a self of phenomena. It is like, for example, the fact that if you wish to remove the suffering of fright from someone upon that person's apprehending a rope as a snake, you must show—upon taking the rope as the basis of emptiness—that it is empty of a snake. However, it is not suitable to take the rope's **emptiness** of a snake as the basis of emptiness and say that it is empty [of being a rope and a snake] because of existing as factually other [than them].

Furthermore, with respect to the apprehension of a self of phenomena, such apprehensions as that directionally partless minute particles exist and that objects of apprehension composed of them exist or that a moment of consciousness that has no earlier and later temporal parts exists or that a consciousness that is a continuum composed of those exists—these being imputed only by those whose awarenesses have been affected by [mistaken] tenets—occur only among those proponents of tenets and do not exist among other sentient beings. Therefore, though an emptiness that is no more than merely an absence of those [objects of negation] is taught, it does not at all harm the innate apprehension of self that has resided [in the mental continuum] beginninglessly. Therefore, it must be taught that those bases—that the innate apprehension of self apprehends as self—are empty of self in the way that such is apprehended. It must be understood that the refutation of imputational factors that are constructed by tenet systems is a branch [of the process] of refuting that [innate apprehension of self].

This being the case, since ordinary sentient beings apprehend just these other-powered internal and external things—eyes, forms, and so forth which are objects seen, heard, and so forth—

as self [that is, as objects and subjects that are different entities or as established by way of their own character as the referents of conceptual consciousnesses and of words], emptiness must be delineated within taking just these as the bases of emptiness. The error does not come through holding that the other two natures [that is, other-powered natures and imputational natures] exist as other factuities in the thoroughly established nature. Therefore, how could selflessness be delineated within thinking [as the Jonang-pas do] that the thoroughly established nature is empty because of existing as factually other than the other two natures! ...

Therefore, without letting it become like the worldly [example] of putting a scapegoat effigy at the western door when a demon is bringing harm at the eastern door, one should meditate on an emptiness that is such that the emptiness of the imputational self as it is apprehended in just those other-powered natures—these being the bases apprehended as self—is the thoroughly established nature. If this is done, it will serve as an antidote to the apprehension of self.<sup>a</sup> If, on the other hand, one meditates on an emptiness the mode of which is other than this style, it will not harm the apprehension of self at all.<sup>b</sup>

In sum, Tsong-kha-pa's indictment is that Döl-po-pa's reliance on other-emptiness makes his system bereft of an adequate means of undermining afflictive emotions, since it does not directly address the way objects are misapprehended. In this way, he shows that it is both feasible and necessary for the object of meditation for overcoming obstructions to be a mere elimination of an object of negation, specifically, inherent existence.

Here in *The Essence of Eloquence* Tsong-kha-pa (above, 76) now turns to show how when the meaning of dependent-arising is not realized, one fall to extremes of exaggeration and deprecation:

Others' [that is, non-Buddhists'] schools who do not assert persons and phenomena as relative phenomena which are dependently arisen<sup>c</sup> but assert those two [that is, persons and phenomena] to be tru[ly established] fall into the chasms of views of

<sup>a</sup> "Self" here does not mean "person" but (1) the establishment of objects by way of their own character as the referents of conceptual consciousnesses and of words and (2) the establishment of subject and object as different entities.

<sup>b</sup> For a thorough explanation of this quotation, see the Synopsis in Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism*, 335-341.

<sup>c</sup> *rten nas byung 'byung ba'i rten 'brel*.

permanence and annihilation. Also, our own schools who, although they assert those two as relative phenomena, assert them to be established as [their own] suchness and to be established by way of their own character have come under the influence of views of permanence and annihilation. Hence, if you want to be free from views of permanence and annihilation, just this mode of asserting persons and phenomena to be dependent-arisings, empty of inherent existence like a moon in water, is asserted to be the excellent door for abandoning permanence and annihilation. Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:

Those who adhere to the self  
 Or the world as not dependent,  
 Alas, are captivated by views  
 Of permanence, impermanence, and so forth.

How could those who assert dependent things  
 As established as [their own] suchness  
 Also not be involved  
 In the fallacies of permanence and so forth!

Those who assert dependent things  
 As not real and not unreal.  
 Like a moon in water  
 Are not captivated by views.

Through [objects] not being established as [their own] reality, the view of permanence is abandoned, and through [objects] being able to perform their respective functions, the view of annihilation is abandoned—they are also not unrealities unable to do such.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho spells out the meaning of these three citations from the *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* based on Chandrakīrti's commentary and Nāgārjuna's own commentary:

1. ***How Others' [that is, non-Buddhists'] Schools fall to extremes.*** It appears that there are two modes of commentary: Others' schools who do not assert persons and phenomena to be relative phenomena but assert them to be truly established, adhering to a mind that is established by way of its own character as a self or world without depending on [mental and physical] aggregates that do not inherently exist, alas—that is, definitely—turn away from the path of liberation through views of permanence, annihilation, and so forth.

Or, both:

- the Sāṃkhyas and so forth who assert that the self, without depending on the aggregates, is permanent, is established by way of its own entity,<sup>a</sup> and is not a dependent-arising and who although they adhere to the world, that is, the aggregates, as of the essence of the fundamental nature<sup>b</sup> and adhere to this nature as abiding permanently since it is unchanging, assert that [its] manifestations are reversible
- and Forders who assert otherwise

are captivated by views of permanence and annihilation.

**2. How Proponents of True Existence fall to extremes.** Also, how could the Proponents of True Existence among our own schools who although they assert that persons and phenomena to be relative phenomena but are established by way of their own character not be involved in the fallacies of permanence and annihilation!

**3. How Proponents of the Middle Way abandon the two extremes.** Those who wish to be free from views of permanence and annihilation must assert that dependent things are empty, like a moon in water, through the reasoning of dependent-arising. Those who assert that [dependent things] are not real in the sense of being inherently established and also not unreal in the sense of appearing to exist while not existing at all are not captivated by views of permanence and annihilation because of having abandoned views of permanence due to [dependent things] not being established as [their own] reality, and so forth. This very mode is asserted as the excellent door for avoiding permanence and annihilation [that is, exaggeration and deprecation].

If in [Tsong-kha-pa's] text he says that by asserting that phenomena inherently established one falls to extremes of permanence and annihilation, what is the manner of manner of fall to an extreme of annihilation by asserting such? About this, Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words* says:

The expression of an inherent nature means that it never will not exist because an inherent nature is not reversible...Having asserted an inherent nature at an earlier time, assertion that now later it is nonexistent due having been disintegrated would entail a view of annihilation.

<sup>a</sup> ngo bo nyid kyis grub pa.

<sup>b</sup> rang bzhin, prakṛti.

and Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* says:

It is said that in asserting an inherent nature it is a view of permanence, and if it is asserted that this former inherent nature itself later disintegrates, it is a view of nonexistence.

and:

When it asserted that this inherent nature does not change at all times, it becomes a view of permanence, and when it asserted that what existed at an earlier time, disintegrates at a later time, it becomes a view of annihilation.

Tsong-kha-pa (79) concludes by indicting Döl-po-pa Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's view of the ultimate, criticizing both his understanding of self-emptiness and his resorting to an other-emptiness as the actual ultimate:

Therefore, to propound that these external and internal things are asserted to be empty of inherent existence and that this emptiness is an emptiness annihilating conventionalities is a proposition contradicting the two systems of the great openers of the chariot-ways [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga] who earnestly prove dependent-arising to be devoid of both permanence and annihilation. Also, many who claim to be Proponents of the Middle assert that this [proposition] and their own assertion that conventionalities are empty of their own entities are similar. Even both misapprehend the meaning of self-emptiness and even are [perforce] proclaiming, "We have no method for showing that these external and internal dependent-arising are devoid of permanence and annihilation."

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho extends the reasoning:<sup>308</sup>

Concerning this, the assertion by the Jo-nang-pas who propound that all phenomena are empty of inherent existence and that this emptiness is an emptiness annihilating conventionalities contradicts the systems of both great chariots [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga], and also many who claim to be Proponents of the Middle propound that the former mode of explanation and their own assertion that conventionalities are empty of their own entities are in agreement. Even both misapprehend the meaning of self-emptiness because while a mere emptiness of inherent existence does not become an annihilatory emptiness, deprecating the existent as non-

existent becomes an annihilatory emptiness, and while conventionalites' being empty of themselves is not the meaning of self-emptiness, a basis of emptiness being empty of inherent establishment is the meaning of self-emptiness. The remainder of [Tsong-kha-pa's statement] is easy [to understand].

If words and explanations were empty of themselves, they would not exist, and there would be no way for proponents of such a self-emptiness to demonstrate that external and internal dependent-arisings are devoid of permanence and annihilation].

Let us consider this in more detail. Döl-po-pa explains that other-emptiness eliminates and is beyond the extremes of non-existence, whereas self-emptiness, despite avoiding the extreme of existence, does not eliminate the extreme of non-existence (*Mountain Doctrine*, 328-329).<sup>309</sup>

This emptiness, which is thus equivalent to the element of attributes and so forth, is the meaning of the emptiness of non-entities, other-entity emptiness, and non-empty emptiness mentioned again and again in stainless scriptures. Mere self-emptiness does not fulfill its role. Why? It is because that which is the ultimate emptiness not only clears away the extreme of existence but also clears away the extreme of non-existence—"not existent and not non-existent"—but self-emptiness does not clear away the extreme of non-existence. Concerning this, whereas conventional phenomena do not at all exist in the mode of subsistence, the extreme of existence is the superimposition that they do. Whereas the partless, omnipresent pristine wisdom of the element of attributes always abides pervading all, the extreme of non-existence is the deprecation that it does not exist and is not established and is empty of its own entity. That which is the middle devoid of those extremes is the basis devoid of all extremes such as existence and non-existence, superimposition, and deprecation, permanence and annihilation, and so forth, due to which it is the final great middle. It is non-material emptiness, emptiness far from an annihilatory emptiness, great emptiness that is the ultimate pristine wisdom of Superiors, five immutable great emptinesses, six immutable empty drops, *a* which is the supreme of all letters, Buddha earlier than all Buddhas, primordially released One-Gone-Thus, causeless original Buddha, aspectlessness endowed with all aspects—insuperable and not fit to be abandoned. Not to be deprecated, it is the inconceivable element of attributes beyond phenomena of

consciousness and not in the sphere of argument; it is to be realized in individual self-cognition by yogis.

Consequently, those who come to the conclusion that:

- the “middle” is solely designated to the mere voidness of all extremes
- “even the middle is empty of the middle”
- “even the ultimate is empty of the ultimate”

and so forth do not accord with the thought of the Conqueror because, for the character of the emptiness that is the final mode of subsistence, the mere emptiness of non-entities is not sufficient. Rather, the emptiness that is the [ultimate] nature of non-entities [that is, emptiness that is the ultimate nature opposite from non-entities] is required.

In the section on special insight in the *Medium-Length Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, Tsong-kha-pa responds that Döl-po-pa has not understood the meaning of self-emptiness; first he states his predecessor's opinion:<sup>310</sup>

*Objection:* The meaning of the statement that compounded phenomena are empty of their own inherently existent entity is that those phenomena do not have their own entities, whereby this is an annihilatory emptiness. However, since thusness has its own entity, it truly exists.

Then Tsong-kha-pa proceeds to make the case that Döl-po-pa has completely misunderstood what is negated in self-emptiness. Whereas Döl-po-pa holds that it is the entities of phenomena themselves that are negated, Tsong-kha-pa holds that it is the inherent existence of those entities:

*Answer:* [The first part of that assertion] is the final place of going wrong with respect to delineating compounded phenomena as empty of inherent establishment, a view deprecating the dependent-arising of compounded phenomena. The latter [part of that assertion] is an awful view of permanence superimposing true existence on whatever has its own entity. Therefore, [the proponents of this] are wrongly perspected with respect to the correct meaning of emptiness.

If [an object's] emptiness of its own inherently established entity [meant that] it did not exist in itself, then since not existing in itself [means] that existence would not occur anywhere, holders

of the thesis that some phenomena truly exist as well as the scriptures and reasonings proving this, and so forth, would not be established bases [that is, would not exist] due to being empty of their own inherently established entity. Therefore, the positing of a tenet that some phenomena truly exist is an unexamined propounding of whatever appears to mind.

As we saw above, Döl-po-pa does indeed hold that holds that suchness, the matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus, and all of the ultimate Buddha attributes associated with the matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus ultimately, or truly, exist, whereas all conventional phenomena are empty of themselves. However, we also saw that there is some question as to just how far Döl-po-pa takes the negation in self-emptiness; Tsong-kha-pa, however, indicates that he reads his predecessor as denying the very existence of compounded phenomena. This is hard to square with Döl-po-pa's assertion that persons do not become Buddhas until the compounded qualities of Buddhahood are attained and does not include his frequent statements that conventionalities do not exist **in the mode of subsistence**, but Tsong-kha-pa's estimation does reflect tendencies in other parts of Döl-po-pa's presentation. Tsong-kha-pa concludes:<sup>311</sup>

Also, with respect to those here [in Tibet] who propound two discordant [positions] regarding suchness, you should through the above explanation, understand well the status of their modes of debate—as to whether the ultimate is ultimately established or not—in the context of their affinity for the former mode of conventionalities being empty of their own inherently established entity [mistaking this to mean that self-emptiness means that phenomena are empty of themselves and wanting to avoid holding that the ultimate is empty of itself and hence non-existent, which would be a view of deprecatory nihilism]. For the two—(1) [correctly] not asserting true existence with respect to all things and all phenomena, having [properly] refuted with reasoning true existence in phenomena, and (2) propounding that all things and all phenomena do not truly exist based on an annihilatory emptiness in which the way of understanding emptiness is faulty—are dissimilar in all respects.

Tsong-kha-pa attributes Döl-po-pa's assertion that the ultimate truly exists to his misunderstanding of self-emptiness. Tsong-kha-pa's position that what is negated in self-emptiness is not the object itself but the inherent existence of the object allows him to hold that self-emptiness is not annihilatory, whereby the ultimate can be a non-affirming negative that is not



truly established.

As cited above, from Tsong-kha-pa's viewpoint (79) Shay-rab-gyal-tshan's perspective on the two truths puts his system outside the realm of Great Vehicle tenet systems:

Therefore, to propound that these external and internal things are asserted to be empty of inherent existence and that this emptiness is an emptiness annihilating conventionalities is a proposition contradicting the two systems of the great openers of the chariot-ways [Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga] who earnestly prove dependent-arising to be devoid of both permanence and annihilation.

Then Tsong-kha-pa (above, 80) ridicules those who in dependence upon asserting the path of the Buddha—dependent-arising in which things arise from causes—propound that all things are impermanent and yet dwell in the assertion that all things are truly established, while wanting to debate with Proponents of the Middle Way:

Since Outsiders who propound that things are permanent do not assert dependent-arising, their assertion that phenomena are truly established is not the system of our Teacher, and therefore they are not a source of amazement; however, that those who, upon asserting dependent-arising<sup>a</sup> in which [things] are produced and arise in dependence upon causes and conditions, assert [things] to be truly established are said to be a source of great laughter. Nāgārjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says:

Those Proponents of Existence

Who upon apprehending things as supreme [that is, as truly established]

Abide in just that path

Are not amazing even in the slightest.

Those who, depending on the path of the Buddha,

Propound that all are impermanent

And then with debate hold things as supreme [that is, as truly established]

Are indeed fantastic.

This [second stanza] says that those who assert that fully qualified production, cessation, and so forth are not positable within no true

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<sup>a</sup> *rten 'brel*.

establishment and nonexistence by way of [the object's] own character are a source of laughter.

Tsong-kha-pa concludes this section on how the meaning of dependent-arising, the absence of inherent existence, is the essence of Buddha's high sayings by indicating how difficult realization of it is:

Since this dependent-arising devoid of permanence and annihilation is very greatly difficult to realize, the Teacher himself thought, "If I teach to others the profound doctrine that I have understood, they will not realize it, and therefore for the time being I will remain without speaking." Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text Called "Wisdom"* says:<sup>a</sup>

Therefore knowing that it would be difficult  
For the weak to realize the depth of this doctrine,  
The mind of the Subduer turned  
Away from teaching doctrine.

According to the first opening of the way [that is, the Mind-Only system], it is not quite that difficult. "Therefore" is explained [as meaning that] those who misapprehended this mode would be ruined and also that those who did not possess supreme intelligence would have difficulty in realizing it.

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho expands on Tsong-kha-pa's presentation by providing his referents:<sup>312</sup>

Since dependent-arising devoid of permanence and annihilation is very difficult to realize, the Teacher put on a show of being inclined toward little mental activity because Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text Called "Wisdom"* says:<sup>b</sup>

Therefore knowing that it would be difficult  
For the weak to realize the depth of this doctrine,  
The mind of the Subduer turned

<sup>a</sup> Stanza XXIV.12; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyal-wae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 15a.3; Sanskrit in de Jong, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ*, 35: *ataś ca pratyudāvṛttaṃ cittaṃ deśayitum muneh / dharmam matvāsya dharmasya mandair duravagāhatām //*.

<sup>b</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho cites only the first line of the Tibetan; I have supplied the rest; see the citation just above for the Sanskrit and the Tibetan.

Away from teaching doctrine.

With respect to the meaning of this, [the Buddha] knowing that those of weak wisdom would find it difficult to realize the depths of profound doctrine, said:<sup>a</sup>

I have found a truth, profound, peaceful, lacking the proliferations [of conceptuality], luminous, uncompounded, the ambrosia. Though I taught it, no one would understand. I should stay without speaking in the forest.

For forty-nine days the mind of the Subduer turned away from teaching doctrine because due to misapprehending emptiness the misapprehender would be ruined, and due to low intelligence emptiness is difficult to realize correctly. In this way the faults of misapprehending the meaning of emptiness and of abandoning the perfection of wisdom are mentioned manifoldly such as in that very text [Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Text Called "Wisdom"*] which says:<sup>b</sup>

If emptiness is viewed wrongly,  
Those of small wisdom are ruined,  
Like wrongly holding a snake  
Or wrongly using a spell.

<sup>a</sup> *Extensive Sport Sutra*, *mdo rgya cher rol pa (lalitavistara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra)*, in *bka'* 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*, 95), TBRC W22084.46:3-434 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979); Peking 763, vol. 27 238.5.6, chapter 25; Buddhist Sanskrit Texts No. 1, 286.10. Translation follows the Tibetan. The Peking edition reads *rdul bral*. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho cites half the quotes and "and so forth"; I have supplied the rest.

<sup>b</sup> XXIV.11; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). About these two types, in commentary on VI.3 of Chandrakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"* Tsong-kha-pa says:

Some through lack of skill abandon emptiness and thereby go to a bad transmigration [upon rebirth]. Others, erroneously apprehending the meaning of emptiness, which is the absence of establishment of inherent existence, think that these phenomena [due to lacking inherent existence] simply do not exist (*med pa nyid*) or are non-existent (*yod pa ma yin*); first they generate the wrong view deprecating all things—causes and effects—and then, since they do not give it up, this view increases more and more.

and in Nāgārjuna's *Precious Garland* which says:<sup>a</sup>

Further, the stupid who fancy  
Themselves wise,<sup>b</sup> having a nature  
Ruined by rejecting [emptiness], go headfirst  
To a terrible hell due to their wrong understanding.

and in the *Compendium [of Doctrine Sūtra]* which says:<sup>c</sup>

Those who, having abandoned [emptiness], are protector-  
less go to a terrible hell.

and so forth.

Moreover, the reason for its being so difficult to realize is as  
set forth in Tsong-kha-pa's [Great Exposition of] Special Insight:

In brief, when [emptiness] is refuted propounding, "This  
emptiness of inherent existence is not the authentic<sup>d</sup> emp-  
tiness," one goes to a bad transmigration due to the doc-  
trinal abandonment of having abandoned the perfection of  
wisdom, and even when, despite believing in the absence  
of inherent existence, one asserts that all phenomena are  
utterly nonexistent, thinking "If there is no inherent exist-  
ence, what is there!" one fall into the chasm of a view of  
annihilation.

By reason of its being difficult to realize in that way, Chan-  
drakīrti's *Supplement to (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle  
Way"* also says:<sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Stanza 120. See Hopkins, *Nāgārjuna's Precious Garland: Buddhist Advice for Living and Liberation*, 71, 114.

<sup>b</sup> These are those who take emptiness to mean a denial of cause and effect and therefore reject emptiness.

<sup>c</sup> *chos yang dag par sdud pa (dharmaśamgītisūtra)*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 238), TBRC W22084.65:3-200 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 904, vol. 36.

<sup>d</sup> *dam pa*.

<sup>e</sup> XI.55ab: *dbu ma la 'jug pa (madhyamakāvatāra)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3861)*, TBRC W23703.102:403-439 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5261, vol. 98:

དེ་ཉིད་བཤད་ཟེན་ཟབ་མོ་འཛིགས་རུང་འདི་ནི་ཐོན་གོམས་ཉིད་ལས་སྐྱེ་བོ་ཡིས།  
ངེས་པར་རྟོགས་འབྱུང་འདི་ནི་གསལ་བྱ་ཆེ་ཡང་གཞན་གྱིས་སྤྱགས་སུ་རྒྱུད་མི་འགྱུར། །

The brackets in the translation are from Tsong-kha-pa's *Illumination*.

This frighteningly profound [meaning of] suchness explained earlier will definitely be realized by beings from earlier familiarization [with predispositions of intense interest in emptiness in other lives].

It will not be comprehended in mind by others though they have heard a vast amount.

According to the first opening of the way, the system of the Proponents of Cognition,<sup>a</sup> it is not difficult to that extent.

Tsong-kha-pa finishes the general section on the Middle Way School in *The Essence of Eloquence* with advice to strive at realizing that the emptiness of inherent existence is the meaning of dependent-arising:

Hence, [Nāgārjuna] says, “Strive at knowing the meaning of suchness, having abandoned (1) forsaking both the words or the meaning of this mode and (2) nihilistic views in which cause, effect, and so forth cannot be posited;” his *Precious Garland* says:

[Just as one comes to ruin  
Through wrong eating but obtains  
Long life, freedom from disease,  
Strength, and pleasures through right eating,]

So one comes to ruin  
Through wrong understanding  
But obtains bliss and highest enlightenment  
Through right understanding.

Therefore having forsaken with respect to this [doctrine  
of emptiness]  
Nihilistic views and rejection,  
Be supremely intent on correct understanding  
For the sake of achieving all aims.

You should understand the many other forms of reasoning, spoken by the master [Nāgārjuna] in commenting on the profound meaning of the high sayings, to be branches of understanding this and train in the meaning of the middle. I have explained this mode of reasoning at length elsewhere, and I also wish to compose a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Fundamental Treatise Called “Wisdom”*; therefore, here I will not elaborate any more beyond just this.

<sup>a</sup> *rnam rig pa, vijñaptika / vijñaptivādin.*

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho explains:<sup>313</sup>

The two stanzas of the *Precious Garland* indicate that it is necessary to strive at knowing the meaning of suchness, having abandoned (1) forsaking both the words and meaning or the meaning of this mode of the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras and (2) nihilistic views in which—upon having held the meaning of emptiness to be utter nonexistence—cause, effect, and so forth are viewed as nonexistent.

Moreover, he is saying: Just as good qualities such as increase of physical strength and so forth arise from appropriate food and proper amount and problems such a generation of disease and so forth arise from the opposite, so through misapprehending meaning of emptiness one is ruined, and knowing it well one attains pleasure temporarily Buddhahood finally. Therefore, having abandoned both rejecting it due to deprecation and viewing it as nonexistence, all desired aims are achieved; hence, work supremely earnestly at methods for understanding the meaning the mode of subsistence. Having understood that all of the reasonings spoken by the master Nāgārjuna are methods for comprehending dependent-arising, you should train in the middle.

**Issue #51: So, would the great scholars among the Proponents of Truly Existent Things—the Proponents of Mind-Only and below—incur the faults of having abandoned the perfection of wisdom? After all, Tsong-kha-pa says in the Great Exposition of Special Insight, “In brief, when [emptiness] is refuted propounding, ‘This emptiness of inherent existence is not the authentic emptiness,’ one goes to a bad transmigration due to the doctrinal abandonment of having abandoned the perfection of wisdom”!**

Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho faces this issue directly in the form of hypothetical challenge, after which he responds that the motivation of the great scholars among the Proponents of Mind-Only and below prevents them

from incurring the faults of having abandoned the perfection of wisdom.<sup>314</sup>

*Someone says:* It follows that the great scholars<sup>a</sup> among the Proponents of [Truly Existent] Things incur the faults of having abandoned the perfection of wisdom because if the meaning emptiness is wrongly apprehended and the perfection of wisdom is abandoned, the faults are huge as explained earlier.

*Our response:* [That if the meaning emptiness is wrongly apprehended and the perfection of wisdom is abandoned, the faults are huge as explained earlier] does not entail [that the great scholars among the Proponents of (Truly Existent) Things incur the faults of having abandoned the perfection of wisdom] because they are not polluted by bad motivation due to having taken up analysis of suchness in the high sayings solely with an intention to benefit the teaching and sentient beings in accordance with the statement in Kulika Puṇḍarīka's *Great Commentary on the "Kālachakra Tantra," the Stainless Light* on the condensation of supreme immutable [bliss]:

The philosophers<sup>b</sup> mutually do not have the defects in the views of those proponents because of having a mind dependent on thoroughly analyzing suchness and because of not having a mind harming any sentient beings and because of having a mind helping all sentient beings.

This perspective stems from the recognition that the great scholars of any Buddhist school would have generated compassion within taking cognizance of all sentient beings. Greatness in this context requires an altruistic motivation.

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<sup>a</sup> *mkhas pa chen po.*

<sup>b</sup> *lta ba po.*





# Backnotes

<sup>1</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba, prajñānāmamūla-madhyamakakārikā*, in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5224, vol. 95.

<sup>2</sup> *dbu ma la 'jug pa, madhyamakāvatāra*, in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3861), TBRC W23703.102:403-439 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5261, vol. 98 and Peking 5262, vol. 98.

<sup>3</sup> Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan's *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures, legs bshad snying po'i gsung bshad zin bris su bkod pa kun mkhyen gsung gi chu rgyun dag byed mchod yon*, in *gsung 'bum (dkon mchog rgyal mtshan)*, TBRC W1KG1132.2:379-468 (dga' ldan chos 'khor gling, no publication data), 28b.4/431.4.

<sup>4</sup> The citation is in the first chapter of Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words*, *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba*, in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 8.2.2. Chandrakīrti also refers to the *Teachings of Akṣhayaṃatī Sūtra* in the fifteenth chapter of the *Clear Words*; see Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 2.2.

<sup>5</sup> *shes rab sgron ma rgya cher 'grel pa (prajñāpradīpaṭīkā)*, in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3859), TBRC W23703.99:4-575. (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey,

Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5259, vol. 96. For the abbreviated passage see Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 2.4.

<sup>6</sup> *dbu ma snang ba (madhyamakāloka)*, in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3887), TBRC W23703.107:268-489 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5287, vol. 101, 46.2.6. For the abbreviated passage see Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, *drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par phyed ba gsal bar byed pa legs bshad snying po'i don mtha' dag rnam par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i 'jug ngogs*, TBRC W3621 (Pe Cin: krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1999), vol. 2, 3.2.

<sup>7</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 8.2.

<sup>8</sup> This and the next two sets of brackets are from Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, 9.6.

<sup>9</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, *drang nges rnam 'byed legs bshad snying po dka' gnad rnams mchan bur bkod pa gzur gnas blo gsal dga' ston*, TBRC W1KG10421, 1 vol. (No publication data), 171.1.

<sup>10</sup> Ser-shül's *Notes*, 2b.1, and Lo-sang-wang-chug's *Notes*, *drang nges legs par bshad pa'i snying po'i zin bris blo gsal sgron me*, TBRC W1KG4772 (Bylakuppe, Karnataka, India: Sera Jey Tibetan Monastic University, 1993).321.11.

<sup>11</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 10.1.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 7.3 and 11.6.

<sup>14</sup> Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of* (Tsong-kha-pa's) *Thought, rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa'i gsung 'bum las drang nges rnam 'byed kyi dka' 'grel dgongs pa'i don rab tu gsal bar byed pa'i sgron me*, in *gsung 'bum (dge 'dun rgya mtsho)*, TBRC W861.2:607-817 (dkar mdzes par ma: [s.n.], 199-), 101.1.

<sup>15</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 7.3 and 12.3.

<sup>16</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 12.5.

<sup>17</sup> This and the next set of brackets are from Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching, legs bshad snying po'i dka' 'grel bstan pa'i sgron me*, TBRC W23884 (Delhi, India: Rong Tha mchog sprul rnam pa gnyis, 1979), 3b.1.

<sup>18</sup> *dbu ma snang ba, madhyamakāloka*; sde dge 3887, *sde dge dbu ma*, vol. sa, 148b.7.

<sup>19</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 173.2.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 7.3 and 14.2.

<sup>22</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, 14.4.

<sup>23</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 174.1.

<sup>24</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 174.3.

<sup>25</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 174.2.

<sup>26</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, 14.6.

<sup>27</sup> *sangs rgyas thams cad kyi yul la 'jug pa'i ye shes snang ba'i rgyan* (sarva-buddhaviṣayāvatāra-jñānālokaḥkārā), in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud*, 100), TBRC W22084.47:553-611, mdo sde, vol. ga, 297b (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang,

1982-1985). In Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*, 113, this and next sūtra citation are contained in a quote from Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle*.

<sup>28</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 175.6.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 176.2.

<sup>31</sup> Ye-shay-thab-khay's *The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa* (Part Two, 130 n.3) provides a citation: *lha/ bka' 'bum/ "na"* 448 ba 6.

<sup>32</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.1.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.2.

<sup>35</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.2.

<sup>36</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.3.

<sup>37</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.3.

<sup>38</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.3.

<sup>39</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 177.4.

<sup>40</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 178.1.

<sup>41</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.4.

<sup>42</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 177.5.

<sup>43</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 178.1.

<sup>44</sup> Dön-drub-gyal-tshan's *Four Intertwined Commentaries, dge ldan thun mon ma yin pa drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par phye ba'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i rgya cher bshad pa drang nges bzhi 'dril*, TBRC W29007 (New Delhi, India: Chopel Legdan, 1975), 51a.2/301.2.

<sup>45</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 178.3.

<sup>46</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.1 and 27.6.

<sup>47</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 178.4.

- 48 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 28.3, and Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 178.5.
- 49 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.1 and 28.5.
- 50 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 179.6.
- 51 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 28.6.
- 52 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 180.1.
- 53 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 28b.6.
- 54 Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) Thought*, 104.3.
- 55 Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) Thought*, 104.4.
- 56 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 27.1 and 29.3.
- 57 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 29.3.
- 58 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 29.5.
- 59 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 29.5.
- 60 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 29.5.
- 61 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 30.1.
- 62 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 30.1.
- 63 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 29.3 and 30.3.
- 64 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 30.3.
- 65 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 29.3 and 30.6.
- 66 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.2.
- 67 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 184.3.
- 68 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.4.
- 69 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 185.4.
- 70 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 185.6.
- 71 Ser-shül's *Notes*, 5b.4.
- 72 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 186.3/204.2, for both instances of "phenomena."
- 73 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 186.5.
- 74 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 187.1.
- 75 This and the next brackets are from Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 187.4.
- 76 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 187.6/205.5.
- 77 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 34.4.
- 78 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 34.5.
- 79 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 41.6.
- 80 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 189.1/207.1.
- 81 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 45.2.
- 82 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 45.4.
- 83 *stong pa nyid bdun cu pa'i 'grel pa (śūnyatāśaptavīrti)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3831)*, TBRC W23703.96:221-243, dbu ma, vol. tsa, (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 120b.4-120b.5; Tibetan also in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 205.
- 84 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 192.5/211.1.
- 85 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 193.1/211.3.
- 86 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 194.2.
- 87 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 194.2.
- 88 Brackets in stanza from Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 194.2.
- 89 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of*

Entry, vol. 2, 47.1; he places this heading a paragraph earlier, but it seems more appropriate here.

<sup>90</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 195.6.

<sup>91</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 49.1.

<sup>92</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 51.1.

<sup>93</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 51.4.

<sup>94</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 52.4.

<sup>95</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 200.2.

<sup>96</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 54.1.

<sup>97</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 54.3.

<sup>98</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 200.4.

<sup>99</sup> Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan's *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures*, 31a.5/436.5.

<sup>100</sup> Lo-sang-ge-leg's *Mirror Illuminating the Meaning, drang nges legs bshad snying po'i dgongs don gsal bar byed pa'i me long*, TBRC W2CZ8052 (Zi Ling: mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 199?), 292.4.

<sup>101</sup> This and the remaining brackets in this paragraph are drawn from Ser-shül's *Notes*, 4b.3.

<sup>102</sup> The bracketed additions in this stanza are from Tsong-kha-pa's *Explanation of (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle: Ocean of Reasoning"*, 232.2ff., 1973 Varanasi edition.

<sup>103</sup> Avalokitavrata, *Commentary on (Bhāvaviveka's) 'Lamp for (Nāgārjuna's) "Wisdom",* in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3859)*, TBRC W23703.99:4-575 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking

5259, vol. 96, 159.4.6.

<sup>104</sup> *dbu ma snang ba (madhyamakāloka)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3887)*, TBRC W23703.107:268-489 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5287, vol. 101, 46.2.6.

<sup>105</sup> Cited in Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 5.2.

<sup>106</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 10.5.

<sup>107</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 6.6.

<sup>108</sup> Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) Thought*, 100.2.

<sup>109</sup> Gung-thang Lo-drö-gya-tsho's *Precious Lamp*, 300.3.

<sup>110</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 19.3.

<sup>111</sup> As cited in Ser-shül's *Notes*, 1a.3.

<sup>112</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 17.2.

<sup>113</sup> Gung-thang Lo-drö-gya-tsho *Precious Lamp, drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i dka' 'grel rin chen sgron me*, TBRC W2CZ6655 (bla brang bkra shis 'khyil par khang, republished by: N. Kanara, Karnataka State, India: Kesang Thabkhes, 1982), 300.3.

<sup>114</sup> Ser-shül's *Notes*, 2a.1.

<sup>115</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 8.1.

<sup>116</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 18.1.

<sup>117</sup> See Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 9.3.

<sup>118</sup> Ser-shül's *Notes*, 2b.1.

<sup>119</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 8.3.

- 120 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2,
- 121 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 8.4
- 122 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 17.6.
- 123 Ser-shül's *Notes*, 2a.3.
- 124 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 12.5.
- 125 This and the next set of brackets are from Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching*, 3b.1.
- 126 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 172.4
- 127 Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching*, 3a.6.
- 128 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 20.4.
- 129 Paraphrasing Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 20.4.
- 130 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 20.2.
- 131 I have provided this standard example.
- 132 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 20.5.
- 133 Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan's *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures*, 29b.1/433.1.
- 134 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 13.2.
- 135 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 21.2.
- 136 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 21.4.
- 137 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 175.6.
- 138 Ibid.
- 139 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 22.1.
- 140 *dbu ma snang ba (madhyamakāloka)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3887)*, TBRC W23703.107:268-489 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5287, vol. 101, 46.1.4-46.3.8.
- 141 *sangs rgyas thams cad kyi yul la 'jug pa'i ye shes snang ba'i rgyan (sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatāra-jñānālokālamkāra)*, in *bka' 'gyur (sde dge par phud, 100)*, TBRC W22084.47:553-611, mdo sde, vol. ga (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979), 297b. Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*, 113, quotes this sentence from Kamalashīla's *Illumination of the Middle* with these two citations.
- 142 Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations, grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel*, in *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang dpal ldan)*, TBRC W5926.177. 3-356 (Delhi, India: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), *dbu ma pa, sa*, 93.5.
- 143 Grags pa & rnam rgyal, 88.6; the quote has been lengthened with the material in brackets at the end to provide more context.
- 144 Grags pa & rnam rgyal, 88.10; for the sources of the bracketed material see the notes on 39.
- 145 Grags pa & rnam rgyal, 89.3.
- 146 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 176.2.
- 147 Ye-shay-thab-khay's *The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa* (Part Two, 130 n.3) provides a citation: *lha/ bka' 'bum/ "na"* 448 ba 6.
- 148 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 13.3.
- 149 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 23.4.
- 150 Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 425.2.
- 151 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 23.6.
- 152 Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of*

Entry, vol. 2, 25.2.

<sup>153</sup> This section is drawn from Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 25.2.

<sup>154</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 26.1.

<sup>155</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 176.2.

<sup>156</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho, *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 13.4/ 369.19.

<sup>157</sup> Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching*, 4a.6.

<sup>158</sup> Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching*, 4b.5.

<sup>159</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, 14.6.

<sup>160</sup> Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Brief Decisive Analysis*, 490.6-491.4.

<sup>161</sup> Wal-mang Kön-chog-gyal-tshan's *Notes on (Kön-chog-jig-may-wang-po's) Lectures*, 29b.3/433.3.

<sup>162</sup> Ye-shay-thab-khay's *The Eastern Tsong-kha-pa*, Part Two, 129 n. 5.

<sup>163</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 15.2-15.5.

<sup>164</sup> *sa'i dngos gzhi (bhūmivastu)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 4035)*, TBRC W23703. 127:4-567 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); *sems tsam, tshi*, 130b.1

<sup>165</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, 15.2-15.5; the ellipses are his.

<sup>166</sup> Second Dalai Lama's *Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) Thought*, 102.2.

<sup>167</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 29.6.

<sup>168</sup> This and the two citations below are from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *The Dalai Lama at Harvard*, trans. and ed. by Jeffrey Hopkins (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1989), 197-198.

<sup>169</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 30.2.

<sup>170</sup> In the Delhi edition (703.2/302a.2) for *go las* read *gol sa* in accordance with the *bla brang bkra shis 'khyil* edition (800.4/319b.4).

<sup>171</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa (catuḥśatakaśāstra-kārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3846)*, TBRC W23703.97:3-37, dbu ma, vol. tsha, (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985) XIV.23, 16a.4; Peking 5246, vol. 95, 139.2.7. Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka*, 134; see Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas*, 274. Brackets from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, and *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 704.6. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 317, and Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition*, 91.

<sup>172</sup> *byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa gzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa (bodhisattvayogacaryācatuḥśatakaṭīkā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3865)*, TBRC W23703.103:62-479 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, commenting on XIV.23.

<sup>173</sup> Correcting *go las* in the Delhi edition (703.2/302a.2) to *gol sa* in accordance with the *bla brang* edition (800.4/319b.4).

<sup>174</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa (catuḥśatakaśāstra-kārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3846)*, TBRC W23703.97:3-37, dbu ma, vol. tsha, 16a.4 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985) XIV.23; Peking 5246, vol. 95, 139.2.7. Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka*,

134; see Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas*, 274. Brackets from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, and *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 704.6. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 317, and Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition*, 91.

<sup>175</sup> *byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa gzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa (bodhisattvayogacaryācatuḥśatakaṭīkā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3865)*, TBRC W23703.103:62-479 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, commenting on XIV.23.

<sup>176</sup> Taipei, 549.18

<sup>177</sup> XXIV.19; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3824)*, TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5224, vol. 95, 9.3.5. *Brackets are from Ngag-wang-pal-dan's Annotations, grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel*, in *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang dpal ldan)*, TBRC W5926.177. 3-356 (Delhi, India: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), *dbu ma pa*, 74a.8.

<sup>178</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa (catuḥśatakaśāstrakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3846)*, TBRC W23703.97:3-37, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsha*, 16a.4 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), IX.2 and IX.5; Peking 5246, vol. 95, 136.4.3. Brackets are from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol.

98, 236.3.3. This is quoted in Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words, dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.6; Poussin, 505.

<sup>179</sup> This is quoted in Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words, dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.7; Poussin, 505. He also quotes it in his commentary to the *Four Hundred*, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 236.5.2.

<sup>180</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Commenting on XXIV.19; Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.8; Poussin, 504.14.

<sup>181</sup> XXIV.18; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3824)*, TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5224, vol. 95, 9.3.4. Brackets are from Tsong-kha-pa's commentary, Peking 6153, vol. 156, 148.3.2ff and 148.5.1ff.

<sup>182</sup> Commenting on XXIV.18; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401,

vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.3; Poussin, 504.13.

<sup>183</sup> Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations, grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel*, in *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang dpal ldan)*, TBRC W5926,177. 3-356 (Delhi, India: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), *dbu ma pa*, 75a.8.

<sup>184</sup> Brackets are from Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations, grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel*, in *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang dpal ldan)*, TBRC W5926,177. 3-356 (Delhi, India: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), *dbu ma pa*, 75a.7.

<sup>185</sup> *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la zab mo rten cing 'grel bar 'byung ba gsung ba'i sgo nas bstod pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po*, TBRC W8LS16232 (no publication data); Peking 6016, vol. 153, 37.3.5.

<sup>186</sup> *rigs pa drug cu pa'i 'grel pa*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3864)*, TBRC W23703. 103:4-62 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5265, vol. 98, 171.5.1ff.

<sup>187</sup> *chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi 'grel bshad (abhidharmakośaṭīkā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 4092)*, TBRC W23703. 142:4-661 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). See Peking 5591, vol. 115, 176.2.3ff., and Peking 5593, vol. 116, 175.2.3ff.

<sup>188</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking

5260, vol. 98, 3.5.7ff; Poussin, 9.7-10.2. Literally: "That system which is presented as 'What then? The meaning...' is also incorrect."

<sup>189</sup> Avalokitavrata, *Commentary on (Bhāvaviveka's) 'Lamp for (Nāgārjuna's) "Wisdom", " in bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3859)*, TBRC W23703.99:4-575 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5259, vol. 96, 170.2.1.

<sup>190</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*, in *gsung 'bum (tsong kha pa/sku 'bum par ma)*, TBRC W22272.15:7-590, vol. ba, 517.5/259a.5 (sku 'bum: sku 'bum byams pa gling, 199-?); paraphrased in Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 34.6.

<sup>191</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 34.6.

<sup>192</sup> TBRC, W21503-0414, vol. ba, 306.3.

<sup>193</sup> Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Awareness and Knowledge*, 309.6.

<sup>194</sup> Gung-thang's *Extensive Commentary on the "Meaningful Praise of Tsong-kha-pa,"* TBRC, W7027-11CZ994, 52b.2.

<sup>195</sup> Pal-jor-lhün-drub's *Lamp for the Teaching*, 13.3.

<sup>196</sup> *drang nges legs bshad snying po: The Essence of Eloquent Speech on the Definitive and Interpretable* (Mundgod, India: SOKU, 1991), ed. by Geshe Palden Drakpa and Damdul Namgyal, 220.4ff. The digital Tibetan is from ACIP.

<sup>197</sup> TBRC W1KG1940:3-384, 132a.4.

<sup>198</sup> Bhāvaviveka, *dbu ma'i snying po'i 'grel pa rtog ge 'bar ba (madhyamakahrdayavṛttitarkajvālā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3856)*, TBRC W23703.98:82-660. (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey,



Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). Commenting on Bhāvaviveka's *Heart of the Middle* stanza III.26; *dbu ma*, vol. *dza*, 59b.4-59b.5; Iida, *Reason and Emptiness*, 84.

<sup>199</sup> Commenting on Bhāvaviveka's *Heart of the Middle* stanza III.26; *sde dge* 3856, *sde dge dbu ma*, vol. *dza*, 59b.5-59b.6; Iida, *Reason and Emptiness*, 84.

<sup>200</sup> See Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 159.

<sup>201</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba* (*mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). Golden reprint, vol. 112, 12.1-; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba*, in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 59b.3-77a.7; Peking 5260, vol. 98.

<sup>202</sup> 132a.2.

<sup>203</sup> Adapted from Klein, *Knowing, Naming, and Negation*, 95.

<sup>204</sup> 132b.4.

<sup>205</sup> Klein, *Knowing, Naming, and Negation*, .

<sup>206</sup> 133a.3; Klein, *Knowing, Naming, and Negation*, .

<sup>207</sup> Adapted from Klein, *Knowing, Naming, and Negation*, 100-101.

<sup>208</sup> Adapted from Klein, *Knowing, Naming, and Negation*, 111.

<sup>209</sup> Adapted from Klein, *Knowing, Naming, and Negation*, 112.

<sup>210</sup> Adapted from Klein, *Knowing, Naming, and Negation*, 112.

<sup>211</sup> TBRC, W22272-0687, vol. *ba*, 518.2/259b.2. See also the translation by Jay Garfield, *Ocean of Reasoning*, 504-

506.

<sup>212</sup> *klu'i rgyal po ma dros pas zhus pa'i mdo* (*anavataptanāgarājaparipṛcchāsūtra*), in *bka' 'gyur* (*sde dge par phud*, 156), TBRC W22084.58:413-508, vol. *pha* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 823, vol. 33. This passage is quoted in Candrakīrti's *Clear Words*, *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba* (*mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98 78.2.7; Poussin, 505; Chandrakīrti also quotes it in his commentary to Āryadeva's *Four Hundred*, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 236.5.2.

<sup>213</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 35.4

<sup>214</sup> Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 848-849; and Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 659-661.

<sup>215</sup> XXIV.19; *dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba* (*prajñānāmāmūlamadhyamakakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsa* (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985) Peking 5224, vol. 95, 9.3.5. Brackets are from Ngag-wang-paldan's *Annotations*, *grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel*, in *gsung 'bum* (*ngag dbang dpal ldan*), TBRC W5926, 177. 3-356 (Delhi, India: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), *dbu ma pa*, 74a.8.

<sup>216</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa* (*catuḥśatakaśāstrakārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3846), TBRC W23703.97:3-37, *dbu ma*, vol. *tsha*,

16a.4 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), IX.2 and IX.5; Peking 5246, vol. 95, 136.4.3. Brackets are from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 236.3.3. This is quoted in Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words*, Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.6; Poussin, 505.

<sup>217</sup> This is quoted in Chandrakīrti's *Clear Words*, dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.7; Poussin, 505. Chandrakīrti also quotes it in his commentary to the *Four Hundred*, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 236.5.2.

<sup>218</sup> dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba (mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3860), TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); commenting on XXIV.19; Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.8; Poussin, 504.14.

<sup>219</sup> XXIV.18; dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba (prajñānāmamūlamadhyamakakārikā), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, dbu ma, vol. tsa (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5224, vol. 95, 9.3.4. Brackets are from Tsong-kha-pa's commentary, Peking 6153, vol. 156, 148.3.2ff and 148.5.1ff.

<sup>220</sup> Commenting on XXIV.18; Peking 5260, vol. 98, 78.2.3; Poussin, 504.13.

<sup>221</sup> Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 862; and Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*,

673-674.

<sup>222</sup> chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi 'grel bshad (abhidharmakośaṭīkā), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 4092), TBRC W23703.142:4-661 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). Peking 5593, vol. 116, 175.2.3.

<sup>223</sup> grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa gsal bar bshad pa thub bstan lhun po'i mdzes rgyan, in *gsung 'bum* (rol pa'i rdo rje) TBRC W28833.7:7-220 (Pe Cin: krung go bod brgyud mtho rim nang bstan slob gling nang bstan zhib 'jug khang, 1995).

<sup>224</sup> The translation here is adapted from that in my *Emptiness Yoga: The Middle Way Consequence School* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1983), 409-418; W28833-4834-eBook, 28b.1-33b.5; Gomang/Taipei reprint, 368.3-374.1.

<sup>225</sup> blo gros rgya mtshos zhush pa'i mdo (sāgaramatiparipṛcchāsūtra). in *bka' 'gyur* (sde dge par phud, 152), TBRC W22084.58:3-232, mdo sde, vol. pha, 48a.4 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 819, vol. 33.

<sup>226</sup> sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la zab mo rten cing 'grel bar 'byung ba gsung ba'i sgo nas bstod pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po, TBRC W8LS16232 (no publication data); Peking 6016, vol. 153; this is the first stanza of what is commonly called Tsong-kha-pa's *Praise of Dependent-Arising* (rten 'brel bstod pa).

<sup>227</sup> rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba (rājaparikathāratnāvalī), in *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 4158), TBRC W23703.172:215-253 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5658, vol.

129, 174.4.7, stanza 48ab. The Peking edition has: 'di yod pas na 'di byung dper/ ring po yod pas thung ngu bzhin.

<sup>228</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (445.14) read 'di for 'da in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (489.4).

<sup>229</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (443.-4) read *phyir ro* for *phyi ro* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (489.5).

<sup>230</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (445.-1) read *prati* for *brati* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (489.6) and so forth.

<sup>231</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba* (*mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā*), in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 3.2.8ff; Poussin, 5.1-4. See the notes in Poussin (5ff.) throughout.

<sup>232</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (446.12) read 'byung for 'gyur in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (490.4) and so forth.

<sup>233</sup> Hopkins, *Maps of the Profound*, 849; and Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 661.

<sup>234</sup> Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations, grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel*, in *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang dpal ldan)*, TBRC W5926.177. 3-356 (Delhi, India: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), *dbu ma pa*, 75a.8.

<sup>235</sup> Brackets are from Ngag-wang-pal-dan's *Annotations, grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel*, in *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang dpal ldan)*, TBRC W5926.177. 3-356 (Delhi, India: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), *dbu ma pa*, 75a.7.

<sup>236</sup> *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la zab mo rten cing 'grel bar 'byung ba gsung ba'i sgo nas bstod pa legs par bshad pa'i snying*

*po*, TBRC W8LS16232 (no publication data); Peking 6016, vol. 153, 37.3.5.

<sup>237</sup> *rigs pa drug cu pa'i 'grel pa*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3864)*, TBRC W23703.103:4-62 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5265, vol. 98, 171.5.1ff.

<sup>238</sup> Adapted from Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, 142-143; for my sources see the beginning of that chapter, 131.

<sup>239</sup> *rab tu byed pa lag pa'i tshad, has-tavālaprakaraṇākārikā*; Peking 5244, vol. 95; Peking 5248, vol. 95. Some say this text is by Dignāga.

<sup>240</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (448.4) read *ma thon* for *mthon* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (492.2) and so forth.

<sup>241</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (448.6) read *ma thon* for *mthon* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (492.3) and so forth.

<sup>242</sup> *dbu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa tshig gsal ba* (*mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā*), in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3860)*, TBRC W23703.102:4-401, vol. 'a (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5260, vol. 98, 10.3.1; Buddhist Text Series No. 10, 18.24; Poussin, 54.11. This is quoted in Jam-yang-shay-pa's *Great Exposition of Tenets*, Taipei, 527.14, and *Great Exposition of the Middle*, 282a.2, and in Tsong-kha-pa's *Illumination*, Peking 6143, vol. 154, 37.5.3 and 38.3.2.

<sup>243</sup> *rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba, rājaparikathāratnāvalī*, stanza 48; see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Nāgārjuna's Precious Garland: Buddhist Advice for Living and Liberation* (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1998).

<sup>244</sup> *byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor*

*spyod pa bzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa* (*bodhisattvayogācāracaṭuḥsatakaṭikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3865), TBRC W23703.103:62-479 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5266, vol. 98 270.3.6, commenting on XIV.23.

<sup>245</sup> Ser-shül's *Notes*, 7b.1.

<sup>246</sup> *byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa bzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa* (*bodhisattvayogācāracaṭuḥsatakaṭikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3865), TBRC W23703.103:62-479 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); commenting on VIII.3; Peking 5266, vol. 98, 229.5.3. For the Sanskrit see Khangkar and Yorihiro, 180 n. 34.

<sup>247</sup> *byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa bzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa* (*bodhisattvayogācāracaṭuḥsatakaṭikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3865), TBRC W23703.103:62-479 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5266, vol. 98, 103.4.4, chapter 12. This is quoted in Tsong-kha-pa's *Ocean of Reasoning, Explanation of (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle,"* Peking 6153, vol. 156, 66.1.4. For the Sanskrit see Khangkar and Yorihiro, 181 n. 39.

<sup>248</sup> *byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa bzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa* (*bodhisattvayogācāracaṭuḥsatakaṭikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3865), TBRC W23703.103:62-479 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); commenting on VIII.3; Peking 5266, vol. 98, 229.5.3. For the Sanskrit see Khangkar and Yorihiro, 180 n. 34.

<sup>249</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa* (*catuḥsatakaśāstra-kārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3846), TBRC W23703.97:3-37, dbu ma, vol. tsha, 16a.4 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985) XIV.23; Peking 5246, vol. 95, 139.2.7. Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥsataka*, 134; see Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas*, 274. Brackets from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, and *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 704.6. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa's *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 317, and Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition*, 91.

<sup>250</sup> *byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa bzhi brgya pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa* (*bodhisattvayogācāracaṭuḥsatakaṭikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3865), TBRC W23703.103:62-479 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, commenting on XIV.23.

<sup>251</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (450.13) read *rang ngor* for *rang dor* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (495.1).

<sup>252</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (451.2) read *khyad chos* for *khyad sbyor* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (495.4).

<sup>253</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (451.11) read *je zab* for *rje zab* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (496.1).

<sup>254</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (451.17) read *nges pa'i* for *nge sa pa'i* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (496.3).

<sup>255</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (452.6) read *pir gyis* for *pan gyis* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (496.6).

<sup>256</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (452.12) read *ri mo'i* for *ri bo'i* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (497.2).

<sup>257</sup> VI.151 and 158; Poussin's translation is in *Muséon*, n.s. v. 12, pp. 316 and 320. Brackets are from Tsong-kha-pa's *Illumination of the Thought*, Peking 6143, vol. 154 90.2.4ff. Chandrakīrti's own commentary is Peking 5263, vol. 98 146.4.1ff.

<sup>258</sup> Stanza VI.114; sde dge 3861, *sde dge dbu ma*, vol. 'a, 209b.6; La Vallée Poussin, *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 226.6.

<sup>259</sup> In the Varanasi codex edition (457.5) for *rtogs cha* read *rtogs tshe* in accordance with the Nam-gyal edition (502.2).

<sup>260</sup> *lam gtso rnam gsum*, in *bka' 'bum* (*thor bu: tsong kha pa*), volume kha, TBRC W486.1: 356-369 (Zi Ling; mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1987); Peking 6087, Vol. 153.

<sup>261</sup> Thanks to Geshe Yeshe Thabkhas for the identification.

<sup>262</sup> *tshad ma yid kyi mun sel/ sde bdun la 'jug pa'i sgo don gnyer yid kyi mun sel*.

<sup>263</sup> Brackets are from *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 663.3. See also the translation in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 302-303.

<sup>264</sup> In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3824), TBRC W23703.96:3-39, vol. tsa (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985). TBRC, W22272-0687, vol. ba, 517.5/259a.5.

<sup>265</sup> *dbu ma pa, na*, 238.1; also TBRC, W5926-3831, 169a.2-169b.4.

<sup>266</sup> *lta ba'i gsung mgur gyi 'grel pa tshig gi sgron me*, in *dbu ma stong thun chen mo*, TBRC W00EGS1016265:594-620 (New Delhi, India: lha mkhar yongs 'dzin bstan pa rgyal mtshan, 1972).

<sup>267</sup> *lta ba'i gsung mgur a ma ngo 'dzin*, in

*dbu ma stong thun chen mo*, TBRC W00EGS1016265:589-594 (New Delhi, India: lha mkhar yongs 'dzin bstan pa rgyal mtshan, 1972).

<sup>268</sup> In *dbu ma stong thun chen mo*, TBRC W00EGS1016265:589-594, (New Delhi, India: lha mkhar yongs 'dzin bstan pa rgyal mtshan, 1972), 593.3/ 7a.3; also, TBRC 000587, 4b.3. Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho (*Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 36.3) makes reference to Kōn-chog-jig-may-wang-po's opinion but does not cite the passage.

<sup>269</sup> *tsong kha pa'i bstod pa don ldan rgya cher 'grel pa; in gsung 'bum* (*dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me*), TBRC W7027, vol. ka (Prints from the lha sa blocks by Ngawang Gelek demo, New Delhi, 1972-1979), 52b.3-54a.3.

<sup>270</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa* (*catuḥśatakaśāstra-kārikā*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3846), TBRC W23703.97:3-37, *dbu ma*, vol. tsha, 16a.4 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985) XIV.23; Peking 5246, vol. 95, 139.2.7. Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka*, 134; see Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas*, 274. Brackets from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, and *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 704.6. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 317.

<sup>271</sup> In *gsung 'bum* (*dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me*), TBRC W22185.1:7-14 (bla brang bkra shis 'khyil: bla brang dgon pa, 199-), 61a.4-61a.5; and in *gsung 'bum* (*dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me*) TBRC W7027-IICZ994, vol. ka (zhol par ma, scanned from microfilm copy of blocks carved at zhol par khang chen mo and reproduced from prints from the lha sa blocks

by Ngawang Gelek demo, New Delhi, 1972-1979), 108.8-108.12.; see listings for entire *gsung 'bum* at TBRC W2DB4591.

<sup>272</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 36.4/381.19.

<sup>273</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 36.1.

<sup>274</sup> This is the *Great Exposition of Dependent-Arising/ Decisive Analysis of the Profound Dependent-Arising: Ocean of Eloquence. bse ngag dbang bkra shis* (1678-1738), *rten 'brel chen mo / zab mo rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba 'i mtha' dpyod legs par bshad pa 'i rgya mtsho*, in *gsung 'bum* (ngag dbang bkra shis), TBRC WIKG12177:1-493 (sgo mang skal bzang thabs mkhas, 1973-1974), 32a.4.

<sup>275</sup> *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das la zab mo rten cing 'grel bar 'byung ba gsung ba 'i sgo nas bstod pa legs par bshad pa 'i snying po*, TBRC W8LS16232 (no publication data); Peking 6016, vol. 153.

<sup>276</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 36.4.

<sup>277</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 36.5.

<sup>278</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 39.4.

<sup>279</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 39.5.

<sup>280</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 39.6.

<sup>281</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 30.3.

<sup>282</sup> *grub mtha' bzhi 'i lugs kyi kun rdzob dang don dam pa 'i don rnam par bshad pa legs bshad dpyid kyi dpal mo 'i glu dbyangs*, in *gsung 'bum* (ngag dbang dpal ldan), TBRC W5926.1:9-280 (Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1983), 17a.2/35.2; see also the translation by John B. Buescher,

*Echoes from an Empty Sky: The Origins of the Buddhist Doctrine of the Two Truths* (Ithaca, Snow Lion Publications: 2012), 230-233.

<sup>283</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 32.4.

<sup>284</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 185.4.

<sup>285</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 39.6.

<sup>286</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 40.1.

<sup>287</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 186.3, for both instances of "phenomena."

<sup>288</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 41.3.

<sup>289</sup> Ta-drin-rab-tan's *Annotations*, 186.5.

<sup>290</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 42.1.

<sup>291</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 45.4.

<sup>292</sup> *stong pa nyid bdun cu pa* (*sūnyatāsaptati*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3827), TBRC W23703.96:49-55 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985);, 26b.4-26b.5; Tibetan and English translation in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 116-117.

<sup>293</sup> *stong pa nyid bdun cu pa 'i 'grel pa* (*sūnyatāsaptativṛtti*), in *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3831), TBRC W23703.96:221-243 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985), 120b.4-120b.5; Tibetan also in Lindtner, *Master of Wisdom*, 205.

<sup>294</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 45.5.

<sup>295</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 47.2.

<sup>296</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 82.

<sup>297</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final*

*Exposition of Wisdom*, 100.

<sup>298</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 295.

<sup>299</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 332.

<sup>300</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 95.

<sup>301</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 91.

<sup>302</sup> *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa (catuḥśā-taka)*, XIV.23; in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 3846)*, TBRC W23703.97:3-37, dbu ma, vol. tsha, (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985); Peking 5246, vol. 95, 139.2.7. Lang, *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka*, 134; see Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam, *Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas*, 274. Brackets from Chandrakīrti's commentary, Peking 5266, vol. 98, 270.3.6, and *Four Interwoven Annotations*, vol. 2, 704.6. Cited in Tsong-kha-pa, *Great Treatise*, vol. 3, 317.

<sup>303</sup> *chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi 'grel bshad (abhidharmakośaṭīkā)*, in *bstan 'gyur (sde dge 4092)*, TBRC W23703.142:4-661 (Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang,

1982-1985). Peking 5593, vol. 116, 175.2.3.

<sup>304</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 98.

<sup>305</sup> See Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 57.

<sup>306</sup> Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism*, 226-228. For Döl-po-pa's position, see Hopkins, *Reflections on Reality*, 273-293, 328-351.

<sup>307</sup> Hopkins, *Emptiness in the Mind-Only School of Buddhism*, 226-227.

<sup>308</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 51.2.

<sup>309</sup> Hopkins, *Mountain Doctrine*, 328-329.

<sup>310</sup> Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 97.

<sup>311</sup> Hopkins, *Tsong-kha-pa's Final Exposition of Wisdom*, 98.

<sup>312</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 52.4.

<sup>313</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 54.1.

<sup>314</sup> Jig-may-dam-chö-gya-tsho's *Port of Entry*, vol. 2, 56.4.





# Abbreviations

“co ne” = *co ne bstan ’gyur*. TBRC W1GS66030. *co ne dgon chen: co ne*, 1926.

“Dharma” = the *sde dge* edition of the Tibetan canon published by Dharma Press: the *Nying-ma Edition of the sDe-dge bKa’-’gyur and bsTan-’gyur*. Oakland, Calif.: Dharma Press, 1980.

“Golden Reprint” = *gser bris bstan ’gyur* (Sichuan, China: krung go’i mtho rim nang bstan slob gling gi bod brgyud nang bstan zhib ’jug khang, 1989).

“Grags pa & rnam rgyal” = Palden Drakpa and Damdul Namgyal. *drang nges legs bshad snying po: The Essence of Eloquent Speech on the Definitive and Interpretable*, 84.16-103.5. Mundgod, India: SOKU, 1991.

“Karmapa *sde dge*” refers to the *sde dge mtshal par bka’ ’gyur: A Facsimile Edition of the 18th Century Redaction of Si tu chos kyi ’byung gnas Prepared under the Direction of H.H. the 16th rgyal dbang karma pa* (Delhi: Delhi Karmapae Chodhey Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang, 1977).

“Peking” = *Tibetan Tripiṭaka: Peking Edition kept in the Library of the Otani University, Kyoto*. Edited by Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki. Tokyo, Kyoto, Japan: Tibetan Tripiṭaka Research Foundation, 1955-1961.

“*sde dge*” = *sDe dge Tibetan Tripiṭaka—bsTan hgyur* preserved at the Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo. Edited by Z. Yamaguchi, et al. Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1977-1984. The catalogue numbers are from Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons. Edited by Hukuji Ui. Sendai, Japan: Tohoku University, 1934. And A Catalogue of the Tohoku University Collection of Tibetan Works on Buddhism. Edited by Yensho Kanakura. Sendai, Japan: Tohoku University, 1953. TBRC W23703 (PDF of Delhi, India: Karmapae Chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1977).

“*stog Palace*” refers to the *Tog Palace Manuscript of the Tibetan Kanjur* (Leh, Ladakh: Smanrtsis Shesrig Dpemdzod, 1979).

“TBRC” = Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (<http://www.tbrc.org>).



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Peking 879, vol. 34.

### *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*

buddha-avataṃsaka-nāma-mahāvaiṣṭya-sūtra

sangs rgyas phal po che zhes bya ba shin tu rgyas pa chen po'i mdo

In *bka'* 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*, 44). TBRC W22084.35:4-787 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979).

Peking 761, vols. 25-26.

### *Compendium of Doctrine Sūtra*

dharmaśaṃgītisūtra

chos yang dag par sdud pa

In *bka'* 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*, 238). TBRC W22084.65:3-200 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

Peking 904, vol. 36.

### *Descent into Laṅkā Sūtra*

laṅkāvatārasūtra

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In *bka'* 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*, 107). TBRC W22084.49:113-384 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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### *Diamond Cutter Sūtra*

vajracchedikāsūtra

rdo rje gcod pa

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Peking 739, vol. 21

### *Eight Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*

aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā

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In *bka'* 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*, 12). TBRC W22084.33:3-573 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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*Extensive Sport Sūtra*

lalitavistara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra

mdo rgya cher rol pa

In *bka'* 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*, 95). TBRC W22084.46:3-434 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979).

Peking 763, vol. 27.

*Great Drum Sūtra*

mahābherīhārakaparivartasūtra

mnga bo che chen po'i le'u'i mdo

In *bka'* 'gyur (*sde dge par phud*, 222). TBRC W22084.63:170254 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976-1979).

Peking 888, vol. 35

*Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*

bhagavatī-prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya

bcom ldan 'das ma shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i snying po

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ting nge 'dzin rgyal po'i mdo / chos thams cad kyi rang bzhin mnyam pa nyid mnam par spros pa ting nge 'dzin gyi rgyal po'i mdo

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 rigs pa drug cu pa'i 'grel pa  
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āryasatasāhasrikāpañcaviṃśatisāhasrikākṣatadaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābhratṭikā

yum gsum gnod 'joms / 'phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa 'bum pa dang nyi khri lnga stong pa dang khri brgyad stong pa'i rgya cher bshad pa

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### Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition

#### 1. Analysis of Relations

sambandhaparīkṣā

'brel pa brtag pa

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#### 2. Ascertainment of Prime Cognition

pramāṇaviniścaya

tshad ma nram par nges pa

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#### 3. Commentary on (Dignāga's) "Compilation of Prime Cognition"

pramāṇavārttikakārikā

tshad ma nram 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byas pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 4210). TBRC W23703.174:189-304 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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4. *Drop of Reasoning*

nyāyabinduprakaraṇa

rigs pa'i thigs pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 4212). TBRC W23703.174:463-477 In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge*). TBRC W23703. 174: 463 – 477 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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5. *Drop of Reasons*

hetubindunāmaprakaraṇa

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In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 4213). TBRC W23703.174:477-511 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

Peking 5712, vol. 130

6. *Principles of Debate*

vādanyāya

rtsod pa'i rigs pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 4218). TBRC W23703.175:654-712 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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7. *Proof of Other Continuums*

saṃtānāntarasiddhināmaprakaraṇa

rgyud gzhan grub pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa

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Peking 5716, vol. 130

Dignāga (*phyogs kyi glangs po*, sixth century)

*Compilation of Prime Cognition*

pramāṇasamuccaya

tshad ma kun las btus pa

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prajñāpāramitāpiṇḍārtha / prajñāpāramitāsaṃgrahakārikā

brgyad stong don bsdu / shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin ma bsdu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3809). TBRC W23703.93:586-590 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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udānavarga

ched du brjod pa'i tshom

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- Four Intertwined Commentaries / Extensive Explanation of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Treatise Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence," Unique to Ge-luk-pa: Four Intertwined Commentaries*
- dge ldan thun mon ma yin pa drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par phyed ba'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i rgya cher bshad pa drang nges bzhi 'dril
- TBRC W29007. 1 vol (PDF of New Delhi, India: Chopel Legdan, 1975).
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- Gen-dün-gya-tsho, Second Dalai Lama (*dge 'dun rgya mtsho*, 1476-1542)
- Lamp Illuminating the Meaning / Commentary on the Difficult Points of "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive" from the Collected Works of the Foremost Holy Omniscient [Tsong-kha-pa]: Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Meaning of His Thought*
- rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa'i gsung 'bum las drang nges rnam 'byed kyi dka' 'grel dgongs pa'i don rab tu gsal bar byed pa'i sgron me
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- Guṇamati (*yon tan blo gros*)
- Explanatory Commentary on (Vasubandhu's) "Commentary on the 'Sūtra on Dependent-Arising'"*
- praṭītyasamutpādādivibhaṅganirdeśaṭkā
- rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba dang po dang rnam par 'byed pa bstan pa'i rgya cher bshad pa
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Gung-ru Chö-jung / Gung-ru Chö-kyi-jung-nay (*gung ru chos 'byung / gung ru chos kyi 'byung gnas*; fl. mid 16<sup>th</sup> to early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries)

*Garland of White Lotus / Decisive Analysis of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence": Garland of White Lotus*

drang ba dang nges pa'i mnam par 'byed pa legs bshad snying po zhes bya ba'i mtha' dpyod padma dkar po'i phreng ba

No TBRC data found..

sku bum, Tibet: sku bum Monastery, n.d. [blockprint obtained by the author in 1988].

Gung-thang Kön-chog-tan-pay-drön-me (*gung thang dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me*, 1762-1823)

*Annotations / Beginnings of Annotations on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "The Essence of Eloquence" on the Topic of Mind-Only: Illumination of a Hundred Mind-Only Texts*

bstan bcos legs par bshad pa'i snying po las sems tsam skor gyi mchan 'grel rtson 'phro mnam rig gzhung brgya'i snang ba

In *gsung 'bum (dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me)*. TBRC W22185.3:7-17 (PDF of bla brang bkra shis 'khyil: bla brang dgon pa, 199-).

Collected Works of Guñ-thañ Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i-sgron-me, vol. 1, 725-876. New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1975. Also: Go-mang, n.d. [ed. printed in India with fixed type].

*Difficult Points / Beginnings of a Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive": Quintessence of "The Essence of Eloquence"*

drang nges mnam 'byed kyi dka' 'grel rtson 'phro legs bshad snying po'i yang snying

In *gsung 'bum (dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me)*. TBRC W22185.2:369-686 (PDF of bla brang bkra shis 'khyil: bla brang dgon pa, 199-).

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*Extensive Commentary on the "Meaningful Praise of the Gentle Protector [Tsong-kha-pa], the Second Conqueror, Composed by Way of His Clarifying the Essence of the Teaching: Illuminating the Suchness of the Teaching*

'jam mgon rgyal ba gnyis pa la bstan pa'i snying po gsal bar mdzad pa'i tshul las brtsams te bstod pa don dang ldan pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa bstan pa'i de nyid snang ba

In *gsung 'bum (dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me)*. TBRC W22185.1:7-14 (PDF of bla brang bkra shis 'khyil: bla brang dgon pa, 199-); and in *gsung 'bum (dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me)* TBRC W7027, vol. ka (PDF of zhol par ma, scanned from microfilm copy of blocks carved at zhol par khang chen mo and reproduced from prints from the lha sa blocks by Ngawang Gelek demo, New Delhi, 1972-1979).

Gung-thang Lo-drö-gya-tsho/ A-khu Lo-drö-gya-tso (*gung thang blo gros rgya mtsho/a khu blo gros rgya mtsho*, 1851-1928/1930)

*Annotations to (Haribhadra's) Small Clear Meaning Commentary on (Maitreya's) "Ornament for the Clear Realizations": Clearing Away the Darkness for Those Wanting Liberation*

mngon rtogs rgyan gyi 'grel chung don gsal ba'i mchan 'grel kun bzang zhing gi nyi ma thar 'dod mun sel

Tibetan editions:

In *phar phyin (skabs gsum pa phyogs bsgrigs)* TBRC W30083. 24 – 61 (PDF of lan kru'u: kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2001).

TBRC W00EGS1017126 (PDF of Lhasa?: dge ldan legs bshad gsung rab 'grem spel khang, 2006).

*Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Treatise Differentiating Interpretable and the Definitive Meanings, The Essence of Eloquence": A Precious Lamp*

drang ba dang nges pa'i don mnam par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i dka' 'grel rin chen sgron me

TBRC W2CZ6655 (PDF of bla brang bkra shis 'khyil par khang, republished by: N. Kanara, Karnataka State, India: Kesang Thabkhes, 1982).

Gyal-tshab-dar-ma-rin-chen (*rgyal tshab dar ma rin chen*, 1364-1432)

*Commentary on (Maitreya's) "Sublime Continuum of the Great Vehicle" / Commentary on*

(Maitreya's) "*Treatise on the Later Scriptures of the Great Vehicle*"

theg pa chen po rgyud bla ma'i tika

In *gsung 'bum* (rgyal tshab rje). TBRC W22110.3:5-464 (PDF of bkraś lhun par nying bskyar par ma, New Delhi, India: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1980-1981).

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*Explanation of (Āryadeva's) "Four Hundred": Essence of Eloquence*

bzhi brgya pa'i rnam bshad legs bshad snying po

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*Explanation of (Shāntideva's) "Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds": Entrance for Conqueror Children*

byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad rgyal sras 'jug ngog

In *gsung 'bum* (gyal tshab rje). TBRC W29194.4:5-330. PDF of Dharamsala: Sherig Parkhang, 1997).

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*Illumination of the Essential Meanings of (Nāgārjuna's) "Precious Garland of the Middle Way"*

dbu ma rin chen 'phreng ba'i snying po'i don gsal bar byed pa

In *gsung 'bum* (rgyal tshab rje). TBRC W22110.1:353-508 (PDF of New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1980-1981).

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*Illumination of the Path to Liberation / Explanation of (Dharmakīrti's) Commentary on (Dignāga's) "Compilation of Prime Cognition": Unerring Illumination of the Path to Liberation*

thar lam gsal byed / tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byas pa'i rnam bshad thar lam phyin ci ma log par gsal bar byed pa

In *tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi rnam bshad*. TBRC W665:11-548 (PDF of zhang kang: zhang kang then ma dpe skrun kung zi, 2000).

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*Notes [on Tsong-kha-pa's Teachings] on the Eight Difficult Topics*

dka' gnas brgyad kyi zin bris rje'i gsung bzhin brjed byang du bkod pa

In *gsung 'bum* (tsong kha pa). TBRC W22273.15:623-658 (PDF of bla brang: bla brang bkra shis 'khyil, [199?]).

Jam-yang-shay-pa Ngag-wang-tson-drü ('jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje ngag dbang brtson grus, 1648-1721/1722)

*Eloquent Presentation of the Eight Categories and Seventy Topics: Sacred Word of Guru Ajita*

dnogs po brgyad don bdun cu'i rnam bzhag legs par bshad pa mi pham bla ma'i zhal lung

Tibetan editions:

1973 Ngawang Gelek bla brang: *Collected Works of 'Jam-dbyaṅs-bzad-pa'i-rdo-rje*, vol. 15. New Delhi, India: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1973.

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1999 Tōyō Bunko CD-ROM: "Tibetan texts of *don bdun bcu* of 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa and rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig of *dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me*." In the Toyo Bunko Database CD Release II. Tokyo, Japan: Tōyō Bunko, 1999. CD-ROM. (This edition is based on the 1999 Mundgod.)

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*Great Exposition of the Interpretable and the Definitive / Decisive Analysis of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive": Storehouse of White Lapis-Lazuli of Scripture and Reasoning Free from Mistake, Fulfilling the Hopes of the Fortunate*  
drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa'i mtha' dpyod 'khrul bral lung rigs bai dūr dkar pa'i ngan mdzod skal bzang re ba kun skong

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grub mtha' chen mo / grub mtha'i rnam bshad rang gzhan grub mtha' kun dang zab don mchog tu gsal ba kun bzang zhing gi nyi ma lung rigs rgya mtsho

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dbu ma chen mo / dbu ma 'jug pa'i mtha' dpyod lung rigs gter mdzod zab don kun gsal skal bzang 'jug ngogs
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blo rig gi nam bzhag nyung gsal legs bshad gser gyi 'phreng mdzes
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grub mtha'i nam bzhag / grub pa'i mtha'i nam par bzhag pa gsal bar bshad pa thub bstan lhun po'i mdzes rgyan
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drang nges nram 'byed kyi spyi don rgol ngan tshar geod rin po che'i phreng ba  
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*Port of Entry / Treatise Distinguishing All the Meanings of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "The Essence of Eloquence": Illuminating the Differentiation of the Interpretable and the Definitive: Port of Entry to "The Essence of Eloquence"*  
drang ba dang nges pa'i don nram par phyed ba gsal bar byed pa legs bshad snying po'i don mtha' dag nram par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i 'jug ngogs  
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dbu ma snang ba  
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*Compilation on Emptiness / Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate: Treatise Brilliantly Clarifying the Profound Emptiness*

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*Thorough Expression of the Natures of the One Hundred Seventy-Three Aspects of the Three Exalted Knowers: White Lotus Vine of Eloquence*

mkhyen gsum gyi rnam pa brgya dang don gsum gyi rang bzhin yang dag par brjod pa legs bshad padma dkar po'i khri shing

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drang nges legs bshad snying po'i dgongs don gsal bar byed pa'i me long

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Lo-sang-chö-kyi-gyal-tshan (*blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan*, 1570-1662)

*Commentarial Explanation of the Kālachakra Tantra*

dus 'khor ṭik bshad/ rgyud thams cad kyi rgyal po bcom ldan 'das dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rtsa ba'i rgyud las phyung ba bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyas 'grel dri ma med pa'i 'od kyi rgya cher bshad pa de kho na nyid snang bar byed pa'i snying po bsdus pa yid bzhin gyi nor bu

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*Summarized Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiation of the Interpretable and the Definitive: The Essence of Eloquence": Ornament for the Necks of Youths with Clear Intelligence*

drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po'i don bsdus blo gsal gzhon nu'i mgul rgyan

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Lo-sang-wang-chug (*blo bzang dbang phyug*, 1901-1979)

*Notes on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Interpretable and Definitive, The Essence of Eloquence": Lamp for the Intelligent*

drang nges legs par bshad pa'i snying po'i zin bris blo gsal sgron me

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Maitreya (*byams pa*)

### Five Doctrines of Maitreya

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 mahāyānottaratantraśāstra  
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 dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga  
 chos dang chos nyid nnam par 'byed pa  
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4. *Ornament for the Clear Realizations*  
 abhisamayālaṃkāra/ abhisamayālaṃkāra-nāma-prajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstrakārikā

mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan/ shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan shes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa

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##### 5. *Ornament for the Great Vehicle Sūtras*

mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra

theg pa chen po'i mdo sde rgyan gyi tshig le'ur byas pa

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dharmadhātustotra

chos kyi dbyings su bstod pa

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grub mtha' chen mo'i mchan 'grel dka' gnad mdud grol blo gsal gces nor  
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kyi dpal mo'i glu dbyangs

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tshad ma'i dgongs 'grel gyi bcos chen po rnam 'grel gyi don gcig tu dril ba blo rab 'bring tha ma  
gsum ston pa legs bshad chen po mkhas pa'i mgul brgyan skal bzang re ba kun skong

In *gsung 'bum (ngag dbang bkra shis)*. TBRC W1KG12177:1-493 (PDF of sgo mang skal bzang  
thabs mkhas, 1973-1974).

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*Presentation of the Interpretable and the Definitive, Brief Notes on the Occasion of Receiving Profound [Instruction from Jo-ne Paṇḍita Lo-sang-gya-tso in 1927] on (Tsong-kha-pa's) "The Essence of Eloquence"*

drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par bzhas pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po'i zab nos skabs  
kyi zin bris mdo tsam du bkod pa

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 legs bshad snying po'i dka' 'grel bstan pa'i sgron me  
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 gsung rab kun gyi drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po  
 brgal lan gyis rnam par 'byed pa utpa la'i phreng ba  
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 bka gdams be'u bum sngon po'i rtsa 'grel  
 TBRC W1KG15517 (Kokonor: mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1991).
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*Explanation of the Presentation of Objects and Object Possessors as well as Awareness and Knowledge from the Presentation of the Collected Topics Revealing the Meaning of the Treatises on Prime Cognition: Magical Key to the Path of Reasoning*  
 tshad ma'i gzhung don 'byed pa'i bsdus grva'i rnam bzhag rigs lam 'phrul gyi sde mig las yul  
 yul can dang blo rig gi rnam par bshad pa  
 In *tshad ma'i gzhung don 'byed pa'i bsdus grwa dang blo rtags kyi rnam bzhag rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig*. TBRC W25093:11-396 (PDF of lan kru'u: kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982, 2002 printing).  
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 tshad ma'i gzhung don 'byed pa'i bsdus grva'i rnam bzhag rigs lam 'phrul gyi lde mig  
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 tshad ma'i gzhung don 'byed pa'i bsdus grva'i rnam bzhag rigs lam 'phrul gyi sde mig las rigs  
 lam che ba rtags rigs kyi skor  
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 vimālaprabhāṇāmāmūlatantrānusāriṇīdvādaśasāhasrikālaghukālacakratantrarājaṭīkā  
 bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel bshad rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes su 'jug pa  
 stong phrag bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od ces bya ba  
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*Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Compendium of Sūtra," Ornament Sparkling with Jewels*  
 sūtrasamuccayabhāṣyaratnālokaḥkārā  
 mdo kun las btus pa'i bshad pa rin po che'i snang ba'i rgyan  
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 drang nges rnam 'byed kyi zin bris zab don gsal ba'i sgron me  
 No TBRC data found..  
 Delhi: n.p., 1974.
- Sha-mar Gen-dün-tan-dzin-gya-tsho (*zhwa dmar dge bdun btisan 'dzin rgya mtsho*, 1852-1910)  
*Lamp Illuminating the Profound Thought, Set Forth to Purify Forgetfulness of the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Great Exposition of Special Insight" / Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Great Exposition of Special Insight"*  
 lhag mthong chen mo'i dka' gnad rnam brjed byang du bkod pa dgongs zab snang ba'i sgron me  
 TBRC W2993 (lha sa sman rtsis khang gi par khang, n.d.)  
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 drang nges legs bshad snying po'i dka gnas las brtsams pa'i zin bris bcom ldan yid kyi mun sel  
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 bodhi[sattva]caryāvatāra  
 byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa  
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ri chos nges don rgya mtsho zhes bya ba mthar thug thun mong ma yin pa'i man ngag  
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madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā  
dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel bshad / dbus mtha'i 'grel bshad  
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drang nges rnam 'byed legs bshad snying po dka' gnad rnam mchan bur bkod pa gzur gnas blo gsal dga' ston  
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lam gyi gtso bo rnam gsum gyi 'grel pa 'dod 'jo'i dpag bsam

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gcig du bral gyi mam gzhaḡ legs bshad rgya mtsho las btus pa'i 'khrul spong bdud rtsi'i gzegs ma
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New Delhi: Lama Guru Deva, 1971
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*General Meaning of (Tsong-kha-pa's) "Differentiating the Interpretable and the Definitive": Essence of Eloquence, Garland of White Lotuses*  
drang nges nam 'byed kyi spyi don legs par bshad pa'i snying po padma dkar po'i 'phreng ba  
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drang nges legs bshad snying po'i dgongs rgyan  
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*Explanation of (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle": Ocean of Reasoning / Great Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle"*  
dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i nam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho / rtsa shes tik chen  
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dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rgya cher bshad pa dgongs pa rab gsal  
Tibetan editions:  
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lam rim mchan bzhi sbrags ma/ mnyam med rje btsun tsong kha pa chen pos mdzad pa'i byang chub lam rim chen mo'i dka' ba'i gnad rnams mchan bu bzhi'i sgo nas legs par bshad pa theg chen lam gyi gsal sgron  
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- Golden Garland of Eloquence / Extensive Explanation of (Maitreya's) "Treatise of Quintessential Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom: Ornament for the Clear Realizations" as Well as Its Commentaries: Golden Garland of Eloquence*  
legs bshad gser 'phreng / shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan 'grel pa dang bcas pa'i rgya cher bshad pa legs bshad gser gyi phreng ba  
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snags rim chen mo / rgyal ba khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phyed ba  
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- Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path / Stages of the Path to Enlightenment Thoroughly Teaching All the Stages of Practice of the Three Types of Beings*  
lam rim chen mo / skyes bu gsum gyi nyams su blang ba'i rim pa thams cad tshang bar ston pa'i  
byang chub lam gyi rim pa  
Tibetan editions:  
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skyes bu gsum gyis nyams su blang ba'i byang chub lam gyi rim pa / skyes bu gsum gyi nyams su blang ba'i byang chub lam gyi rim pa bring po sa bcad kha skong dang bcas pa / lam rim 'bring / lam rim chung ngu  
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- rten 'brel bstod pa / sang rgyas bcom ldan 'das la zab mo rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba gsung ba'i sgo nas bstod pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po
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- lam gtso rnam gsum
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- Treatise Differentiating Interpretable and Definitive Meanings: The Essence of Eloquence*
- drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par phye ba'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po
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- hevajrapinḍārthāṭikā
- kye'i rdo rje bsdus pa'i don gyi rgya cher 'grel pa
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Vajrapāṇi (*phyag na rdo rje*)

*Meaning Commentary on the Chakrasaṃvara Tantra*

lakṣābhīdhānādudhṛtalaghutrantrapīṇḍārthavivarāṇa

phyag rdor don 'grel: mngon par brjod pa 'bum pa las phyung ba nyung ngu'i rgyud kyi bsdus pa'i don rnam par bshad pa

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Peking 2117, vol. 48

Vasubandhu (*dbiyig gnyen*, fl. 360)

*Commentary on (Asaṅga's) "Summary of the Great Vehicle"*

mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya

theg pa chen po bsdus pa'i 'grel pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 4050). TBRC W23703.134:244-381 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

Peking 5551, vol. 112

*Commentary on (Maitreya's) "Differentiation of the Middle and the Extremes"*

madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā

dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel pa / dbus mtha'i 'grel pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 4027). TBRC W23703.124:4-55 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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*Commentary on the "Sūtra on Dependent-Arising"*

pratītyasamutpadādivibhāṅganirdeśa

rten 'brel mdo 'grel/ rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba dang po dang rnam par dbye ba bshad pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3995). TBRC W23703.115:4-123 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

Peking 5496, vol. 107

*Commentary on the "Sūtra on the Ten Grounds"*

daśabhūmivyākhyāna

sa bcu'i rnam par bshad pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3993). TBRC W23703.113:208533 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

Peking 5494, vol. 104

*Commentary on the "Teachings of Akṣhayamati Sūtra"*

āryākṣayamatīnirdeśaṭīkā

'phags pa blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa rgya cher 'grel pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (*sde dge* 3994). TBRC W23703.114:4-539. (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae chodhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

*Explanation of (Maitreya's) "Ornament for the Great Vehicle Sūtras"*

sūtrālaṃkārahāṣya

mdo sde'i rgyan gyi bshad pa

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*Extensive Explanation of the Superior One Hundred Thousand Stanza, Twenty-five Thousand Stanza, and Eighteen Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras / Conquest Over Objections about the Three Mothers*<sup>a</sup>

āryaśatasāhasrikāpañcavimśatisāhasrikā-aṣṭadaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitābhratīkā

'phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa 'bum pa dang nyi khri lnga stong pa dang khri bgyad stong pa'i rgya cher bshad pa / yum gsum gnod 'joms

No TBRC data found.

Peking 5206, vol. 93

*Principles of Explanation*

vyākhyayukti

rnam par bshad pa'i rigs pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 4061). TBRC W23703.136:59-270 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

Peking 5562, vol. 113.

*The Thirty / Treatise on Cognition-Only in Thirty Stanzas*

triṃśikākārikā / sarvavijñānamātradesakatriṃśakakārikā

sum cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa / thams cad rnam rig tsaṃ du ston pa sum cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa

*bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 4055). TBRC W23703.213 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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*The Twenty*

viṃśatikā / viṃśikākārikā

nyi shu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa

In *bstan 'gyur* (sde dge 4056). TBRC W23703.136:7-9 (PDF of Delhi, India: Delhi Karmapae choedhey, Gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1982-1985).

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*Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*

abhidharmakośa

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