A DOSE OF EMPTINESS

An Annotated Translation of the sTong thun chen mo of mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang.

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Contents*

Acknowledgments xv
Introduction 1
A Short Biography of mKhas grub rje 13

TRANSLATION: THE GREAT DIGEST

[Preamble]

[Hommage] 23
[Reason for the Composition of the Text] 23
[The Buddha’s Doctrine as the Ultimate Source of Salvation] 24
[The Prophecies of Nāgārjuna’s Coming] 24

[Introduction]

1. The Reason Why It Is Correct to Seek Out Reality 27
   [The Emptiness Taught in the Tantras] 27
2. The Benefits of Trusting in the Profound [Doctrine of Emptiness] 30
3. The Vessel, That is, the Listener, to Whom This Doctrine Should be Explained 32
   [A Misconception Concerning Emptiness and Its Consequences] 32
4. The Characteristics of the Proper Disciple 33
4.1. Identifying Which Scriptures Are of Definitive Meaning (nges don) and Which of Provisional Meaning (drang don) 35

*[Brackets] indicate that the title is not originally found in the text, being instead my insertion.
4.1.1. THE DOCTRINES OF THE YOGĀCĀRA SCHOOL

[Yogācāra Metaphysics and Hermeneutics] 39
[The Three Natures] 39
[The Reality of the Dependent and the Real, and the Yogācāra Critique of the Madhyamaka] 43
[The Rationale Behind the Prajñāpāramitā’s Claims That Things “Do Not Arise” According to the Sutrālamkāra, a Yogācāra Text] 45
[The Elucidation of Some Scriptural Passages Highlighting Unique Features of the Yogācāra] 45
[The Yogācāra Belief in Three Final Vehicles and a Foundation Consciousness (kun gzhi) as Another of Their Distinctive Features] 47
[Arguments Against the Advocates of “the Emptiness of What Is Other” (gzhan stong)] 48
[The Distinctively Yogācāra Use of the Example of the Illusion and the Status of the Dependent] 49
[Tsong kha pa’s Unique Exposition of the Yogācāra Theory of Emptiness] 52
[On Latent Potentialities] 61
[The Proof of the Linguistic Interpretation of Emptiness] 63
[Nonduality as a Corollary of the Linguistic Interpretation of Emptiness] 66
[The Explanation of the Three Natures] 67
[Similarity in Terminology Between the Yogācāra and Prāsaṅgika Is Not a Reflection of an Underlying Similarity in Meaning] 69
[Cittamātra Hermeneutics] 69

THE DOCTRINES OF THE MADHYAMAKA SCHOOL

[The Sources of the Madhyamaka School]

4.1.2. How the Father, the Ārya Nāgārjuna, and His Son [Āryadeva], Following Such Śūtras as the Aksayamatinirdesā, Set Forth the Doctrine of the Definitive and the Provisional 77
4.2 How, Step by Step, the Texts of Nāgārjuna and the Commentaries on Their Purport (dgongs pa) Arose 78
4.2.1. The Explanation of the Way in Which the Scriptures of the Ārya Were Written 78

4.2.2. The Explanation of How the Individual Commentaries on the Purport [of Nāgārjuna’s Treatises] Arose 81

[A General Introduction to the Madhyamaka]

[On the Classification of Mādhyamikas] 89
[The Meaning of the Claim That Prāsaṅgikas Accord with the World] 90
4.2.3. Setting Forth Emptiness by Following Those [Madhyamaka Scriptures] 92
4.2.3.1. Identifying What Is to Be Refuted by the Reasoning Which Analyzes the Ultimate (don dam dpyod pa’i rtags) 92
4.2.3.1.1. Why It Is Necessary to Identify What Is to Be Refuted 92
4.2.3.1.2. Refuting the Scriptural Exegesis of Those Who [Proceed in the] Refutation without Identifying [the Object to Be Refuted] 92
4.2.3.1.2.1. Refuting the One Who Overextends (khyab ches ba) Himself or Herself in the Identification of What Is to Be Refuted 92
4.2.3.1.2.1.1. Stating What They Believe 92
4.2.3.1.2.1.2. Refuting Them 96
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.1. Demonstrating That They Have Refuted the Principal and Special Quality of the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas 96
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.1.1. Identifying That Chief Quality 96
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2. How They Have Refuted That [Special Quality] by Their System [of Interpretation] 98
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1. Demonstrating Those Reasons to Be Faulty 100
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1. Demonstrating That Their Examination of What It Means for Something to “Withstand or Not Withstand Logical Analysis” Is Faulty 100
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2. Demonstrating That Their Analysis into the Four Possibilities, Existence, Nonexistence, and So Forth, Is Faulty: [The Law of Excluded Middle and the Question of Whether the Madhyamaka Has a Viewpoint] 102
[A Critique of Quietism] 112
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3. Demonstrating That Their Analysis of [What It Means for Something] to Be Established or Not Established by a Valid Cognition, and Their Subsequent Refutation, Is Faulty 117
### The Doctrines of the Svātāntrika School

- **4.2.3.1.3.2.** The Explanation of the Measure of the Svātāntrikas’ Object of Refutation
  - [The Analysis of the Svātāntrikas’ Object of Refutation Based on the Example of the Illusion]
  - [The Analysis of the Svātāntrikas’ Object of Refutation Based on Scriptural Sources]
  - [The Correct Identification of the Svātāntrikas’ Object of Refutation]
  - [The Reasoning of the One and the Many]
  - [How the Example of the Reflection in the Mirror Is Understood]
  - [The Diamond-Granule Reasoning and the Question of the Qualification of the Object of Refutation]
  - [The Reasoning Refuting Arising via the Four Extremes]
  - [The Reasoning Refuting the Arising of the Existent and Nonexistent]

- **4.2.3.1.3.3.** Explaining the Extent (tshad) of the Prāsaṅgikas’ Object of Refutation (dgag bya)
  - [Does Reality Truly Exist or Is It Too a Mere Label?]

### The Doctrines of the Prāsaṅgika School

- **4.2.3.1.3.4.** Refuting Misconceptions in Regard to the Distinction between Svātāntrikas and Prāsaṅgikas
  - [On “Withstanding Logical Analysis”]
  - [An Explanation of the Implications of This]
  - [An Explanation of (1) the Two Kinds of Selflessness to Be Refuted and (2) the Selflessness That Is the Refutation]
  - [A Brief Mention of the Tenets Advocated by Other Systems]
  - [4.2.3.1.3.5.1.1.1. Identifying the Self that Is the Perceived Object (dmigs yul) of the Innate View of a Self As Accepted by Both Buddhists and Others]
  - [4.2.3.1.3.5.1.2. What Faults the Glorious Candra Finds in These [Views]]
  - [4.2.3.1.3.5.1.3. How the Other Buddhist Schools Posit the Self That Is the Direct Object of the Two Views of the Self [the Person and Phenomena] and How That Self, Which Is Something to Be Refuted, Is Posited as Nonexistent]
  - [The Hinayāna’s Views on Liberation and Buddhahood]
  - [4.2.3.1.3.5.1.4. How the Glorious Candra’s Critique Is to Be Expounded]
  - [4.2.3.1.3.5.1.2. The Exposition of the System of the Prāsaṅgikas as a Distinct [System in Its Own Right]]
  - [A Brief Explanation of the Differences between the Selflessness of the Person and Phenomena]

### Srāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Understand Reality

- **4.2.3.1.3.5.2.** The Explanation of Whether Srāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Understand the Selflessness of Phenomena
  - [How the Glorious Candra Goes About Explaining This]
4.2.3.1.3.5.2.2. The Refutation of the Misconception That Believes That [Exposition] to Be Incorrect [The Response to the Preceding Criticism] 207

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3. The Exposition of the Valid Scriptural Evidence explaining that Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddhas Have an Understanding of the Selflessness of Phenomena 208

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.1. The Exposition of the System of the Son of the Conqueror, Sāntideva 217

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.2. The Explanations of This Point According to the Abhisamayālaṃkāra, the Uttaratantra, and Their Commentaries 221

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.2.1. How the Abhisamayālaṃkāra and Its Commentaries Explain This Point 221

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.2.2. The Explanation of the Meaning of the Uttaratantra and Its Commentary 226

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.4. An Extensive Explanation of Scripture and Logical Reasoning Proving That It Is Correct [to Claim That] Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Have an Understanding of the Selflessness of Phenomena 230

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.4.1. The Exposition of the Logical Reasoning 230

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.4.2. Bringing Scriptural Exegesis to Bear [on the Problem] 234

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.4.2.1. On the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna Understanding of Nirvāṇa] 239

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3. The Explanation of the Two [Kinds of] Obscurations (sgrub pa) and the Paths on Which They Are Abandoned [How the Obscurations Are Eliminated on the Various Paths] 245

4.2.3.2. As Regards the Refutation of That [Object of Refutation], the Explanation of the Differences between the Prāsaṅgikas and the Svātāntrikas 257

4.2.3.2.1. Refuting What Others Believe, [Do the Mādhyamikas Have Philosophical Positions] 257

4.2.3.2.2. Setting Forth Our Own Position 257

4.2.3.2.2.1. The Explanation of the Meaning of Svatantra and Prasāṅga 272

4.2.3.2.2.2. The Explanation of the Reasons Why the Svatantra Is Not Accepted 277

4.2.3.2.2.3. Bringing the Prasannapadā to Bear on This [Question] and Explaining [Its Meaning] 279

[Madhyamaka Logical Strategies and Related Polemics]

4.2.3.3. The Explanation of the Reasoning That Refutes the Object of the Refutation 287

4.2.3.3.1. The Actual Explanation of the Reasoning That Refutes the Object of the Refutation 287

4.2.3.3.1.1. The Reasoning That Refutes the Self of the Person 287

4.2.3.3.1.2. The Explanation of the Refutation of the Self of Phenomena 290

4.2.3.3.1.2.1.(A) The Actual Explanation of the Reasoning That Refutes the Self of Phenomena 290

4.2.3.3.1.2.1.(B) The Refutation of Arising from Another 302

4.2.3.3.1.2.1.(C) [The Refutation of the Arising from Both Self and Other] 305

4.2.3.3.1.2.1.(D) [The Refutation of Arising Causelessly and Conclusion] 305

[Other Unique Tenets of the Prāsaṅgika School]

4.2.3.3.1.2.2. Explaining Other Facets of the Prāsaṅgika Tenets That Are Not in Common with the Cittamātrins and Others 307

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.1. The Explanation of the Uncommon Exposition of the Three Times 307

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.1.1. The General Explanation of the Three Times 307

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.1.2. The Explanation of the Proof of Why the Past and Future Are Entities 311

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2. The Explanations of Two Other Factors Differentiating the Prāsaṅgikas from Other Schools, Namely, the Rejection of the Foundation Consciousness (kun gzhi) and the Acceptance of External Objects (phyi don) 314

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.1. The Explanation of How, Even Though We Do Not Accept the Foundation Consciousness, the Relationship between Karma and Effects Is Still Possible 314

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.2. Refuting the Fact That the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] and so on Accept [the Foundation Consciousness] 316

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.2.1. The Reason Why They Do Not Accept [the Foundation Consciousness] 316

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.2.2. The Refutation of the Belief That [the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas] Accept It 318
4.2.3.3.2. The Explanation of the Two Truths, Which Is the Basis Set Forth by Reasoning 357
4.2.3.3.2.1. The Basis for the Division [into Two Truths] 357
4.2.3.3.2.2. The Meaning of the Words [Ultimate and Conventional] 360
4.2.3.3.2.3. Considering Whether They Are the Same or Different 363
4.2.3.3.2.4. The Nature of Each [of the Two Truths] Individually 365
4.2.3.3.2.4.1. The Definitions 365
4.2.3.3.2.4.2. The Divisions 365
4.2.3.3.2.4.2.1. The Divisions of the Ultimate Truth 365
4.2.3.3.2.4.2.2. The Divisions of the Conventional 366
[The Prāsaṅgika Interpretation of the Three Nature Theory of the Yogācārās] 370
4.2.3.3.3. The Explanation of the Valid Cognition That Ascertains the Two Truths, [That Is, All Phenomena] 371
4.2.3.3.3.1. The Definition 371
4.2.3.3.3.2. The Divisions 372

[Conclusion]
4.2.3.4. Having Set Forth Emptiness, How to Meditate on It 381
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**Introduction**

All men by nature desire to know.

Aristotle

With these words the great Greek philosopher, Aristotle, begins his *Metaphysics*. Although history has been witness to a plethora of interpretations of these seven words, Ortega y Gasset’s must be one of the most interesting. In his Postscript to an essay in *What Is Philosophy* he states: “To know is to be not content with things as presented to us, but to seek beyond their appearance for their being. This ‘being’ of things is a strange condition: it is not made clear in things, but on the contrary, it throbs hidden within them, beneath them, beyond them.” There is a sense in Buddhism also in which we might say that it is natural for man or woman to know. Knowledge, and specifically knowledge of the true nature of things, of the “being” that lies throbbing within things, as Ortega y Gasset puts it, is our destiny as human beings. It is natural for human beings both to know and to want to know. Hence, it is not truth in and of itself that will set us free, but our appropriation of it, our knowledge of it.

Ortega y Gasset also recognizes, however, that the being of things “is not clear,” that it is “hidden.” Buddhists also believe that reality is not evident to us, that, while always present, it evades our attempts at apprehending it. The reason for this has to do with the condition of our own mind, with the fact that we have accustomed ourselves to constantly misperceiving the world. This continual misapprehension of ourselves, of others and the world around us is called ignorance, and it is said to be the cause of all of the pain and anguish in the cycle of rebirth, this world known as *samsāra*. Hence, mKhas grub rje, the author of the text translated here, begins his polemical treatise on insight meditation called *The Lamp for Eliminating the Darkness of Evil Paths* with these words:

Apart from meditation on the correct view
There is no path that can destroy the root of *samsāra*.

In Buddhism ignorance (skt. *avidyā*; tib. *ma rig pa*) is said to be the most basic cause of suffering. In this context ignorance does not refer to a passive
lack of factual knowledge but to an active misapprehension of the world. It is considered an innate, prelinguistic, psychological predisposition that, having found a niche in the minds of sentient beings, causes us to suffer. This ignorance, which is the active superimposition of a certain kind of ontological status onto entities that lack them, is believed to be at the very root of the trials and tribulations that affect not only human beings, but all sentient life forms that inhabit this universe of limited existence. Certainly, one of the most important of the Buddha’s insights was the fact that neither suffering nor its most fundamental cause, ignorance, is an adventitious thing. Instead, the tradition has consistently maintained that both suffering and its cause could be overcome through the application of an antidote. That antidote is called wisdom (skt. prajñā; tib. shes rab), and it refers to the understanding of reality, the ultimate nature of all phenomena. Being the antidote to ignorance, it brings about the reversal of the normal misperception of the world to which living things are heir. The understanding of the true and final nature of our selves and of the world around us is said to be the force that brings an end to suffering, liberating the person to lead the life of an awakened one, a buddha. The object that wisdom perceives, the ultimate nature of phenomena, the reality that eludes sentient beings in their limited modes of thought, is (at least in Mahāyāna Buddhism) called emptiness (skt. śūnyatā; tib. stong pa nyid). It is little wonder, therefore, that emptiness has been characterized as “the central philosophy of Buddhism.”

What follows is an annotated translation of one of the most important works on emptiness in the history of the scholastic tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, the Stong thun chen mo (TTC) of the fourteenth century scholar-saint, mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang po. It is an encyclopedic work that aims at synthesizing into a coherent whole the most important strands of Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy around one central theme, that of emptiness. The dGe legs pa, or, as it was known in its early days, the dGa’ ldan pa school of Tibetan Buddhism, of which mKhas grub rje is the third patriarch, is both historically and intellectually the culmination of a long tradition of scholasticism that began in the early centuries of the common era in India with such figures as Asanga and Nāgāruma. Following in the steps of his master, the founder of the dGe legs pa school, the great Tsong kha pa bLo bzang grags pa (1357–1419), mKhas grub rje attempts a synthesis of the different schools of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought (the idealist school, known as the Yogācāra or Cittamātra, and the nominalist, the Madhyamaka—itself divided into two sub-schools, the Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika). His approach is to create an interpretive scheme that at once validates these different schools as soteriologically useful while maintaining a gradation in philosophical accuracy (truth) that allows him ultimately to declare the “bright rays of the logical methods of the glorious Candrakīrti,” that is, the Prāsaṅgika school of the Madhyamaka as elucidated in the works of Candrakīrti (seventh century) and his successors, to be the ultimate and final expression of truth, the Buddha’s ultimate purport (dgongs pa mthar thug pa). Based on a hermeneutical framework that seeks to interpret and reconcile the different (and oftentimes contradictory) scriptures upon which these schools were based, he sets forth the doctrine of emptiness in the Mahāyāna, contrasting it to the doctrines of the Buddhist “realists,” and throughout relying very heavily on the methodology of the school of Buddhist “logicians,” the Pramāṇika. Indeed, the particular synthesis of Madhyamaka thought and Dharmakīrti’s pramāṇa method is considered one of the striking (and most controversial) features of the dGe legs pa approach to Mahāyāna philosophy. The later dGe legs pa tradition goes to the extent of characterizing this synthesis of the Madhyamaka and Pramāṇika traditions as “two lions back to back” (dbya śarad seng ge rgyab sprod), implying that it is an invincible philosophical stance impervious to external attack.

Much of mKhas grub rje’s work therefore can be seen as the synthesis and reconciliation of the different scholastic traditions of India. However, synthesis is only half of mKhas grub rje’s task. This was to a great extent already accomplished in the works of his master, Tsong kha pa. Equally, if not more important to mKhas grub rje was the defense of the views of Tsong kha pa against the attacks, both real and imagined, of rival philosophical schools. Hence, the TTC is both a didactic text and a polemical text, something that is witnessed as much by the style as by the content of the work.

For those with a love of the scholastic mind set, alas an endangered species in this postmodern age, the scope and detail of the TTC will be found to be truly amazing. In a text of less than 500folio sides mKhas grub rje manages to touch upon most of the major issues of Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy, from prophecy to hermeneutics to psychology and meditation. The table of contents of the work, an exquisite piece of scholastic precision in its own right, is a veritable curriculum for an advanced course in Buddhist metaphysics. However, the very ambitious nature of the enterprise oftentimes makes the work demanding on the part of readers. I have attempted to ease the reader’s burden by supplying the context of arguments, or expanding on them, in brief explanatory notes. In view of the length of the work, and the additional task of annotating the copious citations from scriptural and commentarial sources on which mKhas grub rje relies, I have tried to keep these to a bare minimum. Be that as it may, I can assure the reader that perseverance in regard to these more difficult portions of the text will be well rewarded.

Contextualization of the TTC

Historically speaking, the TTC is a work of pivotal importance within the Madhyamaka exegetical tradition of the dGe legs pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. In many ways it is a transitional work, taking us historically and intellectually from the works of Tsong kha pa (founder of the dGe legs pa school) to the later yig cha literature, the manuals-guidebooks for dialectical
disputation in the great monasteries of the order. In the TTC the influence of Tsong kha pa's writings is evident, especially as regards the framework and layout of the text. We also begin to find, however, more emphasis on the "opponent-reply" format so typical of the later yig chas. Indeed, to this day the TTC has been used as a supplement to the yig cha material within the monastic curriculum itself. In many ways it bridges the gap between the all-encompassing and erudite works of Tsong kha pa and the more specialized debate manuals. In an area where opinions abound and vagueness is rampant, the tradition considers the TTC to be one of the clearest expositions of Madhyamaka thought.

The works of rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (the senior-most disciple of Tsong kha pa and his first successor) can be said to have set the standard for the study of the prajñāpāramitā (tib. phar phyin) and pramāṇa (tib. tshad ma) genres within the dGe lugs pa school. Although mKhas grub rje also composed commentaries to the Abhisamayālaṃkāra and to the Pramāṇavārttikam (the chief textbooks for the study of prajñāpāramitā and pramāṇa, respectively), it is principally the rNam bshad snying po rgyan and the Thar lam gsal byed of rGyal tshab rje that have been relied upon as the standard first-order Tibetan commentaries in these two fields.

When it comes to Madhyamaka studies, the works of Tsong kha pa are primarily relied upon. His commentaries to the Madhyamakāvatāra and to the Mālamadhyamakakārikās, the dGongs pa rab gsal and rTsa shes tib chen, respectively, are classics and the standard works for the study of Madhyamaka in the dGe lugs pa school to this very day.

Unlike these works, whose importance lies in being commentaries on specific Indian texts, the significance of the TTC as a piece of Madhyamaka exegesis lies in its being a synthetic work that brings together in a systematic way relevant strands of thought, approaching the subject thematically without being bound by adherence to a root text. mKhas grub rje's real genius, then, is as a composer of synthetic works. The TTC, the dDe bsdun yid kyi mun gsal, his synthetic work on pramāṇa, and the rGyud sde spyi rnam, on tantra, are all considered masterpieces of independent and systematic thought arranged thematically, owing no structural allegiance to any single Indian text. For this very reason, it seems to me, the work presented here is of the utmost relevance to the Western student of Buddhist thought whose interest is in gaining a broad yet detailed understanding of key areas of Māhāyāna philosophy.

**Structure of the TTC**

The chief virtue of the TTC, the quality that sets it apart from other Madhyamaka works, is its synthetic character. But how is this synthesis accomplished? As we have said, it is synthetic in that it approaches the philosophy of the

Mahāyāna topically, dealing with specific issues and bringing the fundamental works of the Indian philosophical tradition to bear on these major themes. It is "synthetic" in another way, however. The TTC, in the way it is structured, is a synthesis of three of Tsong kha pa's major works:

1. The Drang nges legs bshad snying po, itself a synthetic work on the doctrine of emptiness in the Yogācāra, Svātāntrika, and Prāśāntika Madhyamaka schools and on the hermeneutical questions arising from such different interpretations of emptiness.
2. The "Insight" (stkt. vipaśyānā, tib. ldag mthong) section of the Lam rim chen mo, a systematic exposition of the path to enlightenment based on Atīśa's model of the individuals of small, intermediate, and great scope.
3. The dBu ma dgongs pa rab gsal, his commentary on the Madhyamakāvatāra of Candrakīrti.

Each of these three works contributes some element, structural, doctrinal, or both, to the TTC. The general layout of the TTC is based on that of the Legs bshad snying po. We find first in the TTC a brief section on Yogācāra hermeneutics and on the notion of emptiness derived from this interpretive scheme, a section very similar, both in structure and content, to that of the Legs bshad snying po. This is followed by a section on the Svātāntrika Madhyamaka school, again resembling that of the latter work, but discussing at much greater length several pivotal topics such as "the reasoning from the one and the many," the uncommon Svātāntrika tenet of accepting that things exist by virtue of their own characteristic and so forth. Finally, as in Legs bshad snying po, the bulk of the work is dedicated to a detailed exposition of the Prāśāntika Madhyamaka school, and here the TTC's treatment differs from and in some ways far more elaborate than that found in the work of Tsong kha pa, emphasizing and discussing at great length the uncommon tenets of the Prāśāntikas such as their belief that śrāvaka and pratītyakabuddha āryāns must have understood emptiness, their rejection of a foundation consciousness (stkt. alaṃvijñāna) and of autocognition (stkt. svasaṃvedanā), their peculiar views concerning the nature of time, and so forth. It seems clear, therefore, that the general framework of the TTC is based on that of the Legs bshad snying po.

At the beginning of the Madhyamaka section, before discussing the specific tenets of the Svātāntrika and Prāśāntika subschools, we find a section (4.2.3) in the TTC that is clearly derived from the vipaśyānā section of the Lam rim chen mo. We find here a format that is almost identical to that of the latter work: a discussion of why it is necessary to identify the object to be negated, the rejection of two faulty interpretations, one that does not go far enough in its refutation and one that goes too far, and finally the proper iden-
tification of the object to be refuted and the methods for doing so. This is essentially the same framework Tsong kha pa uses in his *Lam rim chen mo*.

Finally, within the Prāsaṅgika section itself we find that much of the material is based on texts in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*. It is not surprising, therefore, that much of mKhas grub rje’s exposition here is loosely structured on Tsong kha pa’s great commentary to the latter work, the *dGongs pa rab gsal*.

Hence, the *TTQ* is indeed mKhas grub rje’s synthesis of three of Tsong kha pa’s major works into a logical and systematic whole. It should be evident from this that the *TTQ* is arguably the best available synoptic exposition of the dGe legs pa’s views on the Madhyamaka.24 In my translation I have attempted to point out instances where sections in the *TTQ* correspond to sections in the three works mentioned earlier, to cross reference the *TTQ* to the relevant works of Tsong kha pa, making reference both to the Tibetan originals and available translations.

**Madhyamaka Polemics**

The *TTQ* is, however, more than just an expository work on the Madhyamaka in general and the views of Tsong kha pa in particular. It cannot be overemphasized that it is in great measure a *polemical* work,25 defending the views of Tsong kha pa against rival theories and in the process criticizing those theories themselves. In this sense the *TTQ* can be seen as one of the earliest texts in what was to later become a large corpus of literature dedicated to Madhyamaka polemics.26 Nor is it unfair to characterize mKhas grub rje himself as the first “defender” of the views of Tsong kha pa against the rival theories of his day.27 To say that much of his language in the *TTQ* is extremely harsh is an understatement. It is clear from his own words that he viewed himself as the defender of his master’s views and considered the critiques of others something demanding response and rebuttal.

It is difficult to determine exactly to whose views mKhas grub rje is responding much of the time: very rarely does he mention a rival school of thought by name, much less that of an individual opponent.28 Even though it is often impossible to identify individual opponents,29 it is an easier task to identify some of the philosophical positions that mKhas grub rje finds anathema. We know, for example, that chief among these views was that known as the *gzhan ston*; “the emptiness of what is other,” a theory first systematized textually by Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1361) in his *Ri chos rgyes don rgya mtho* and later expanded on by his successors to the throne of the *Jo mo nang* monastery, the most famous of which was Jo nang *Taranātha* (c. 1575–1634). Another major philosophical position criticized in the *TTQ* is called by mKhas grub rje “the view that things are neither existent nor nonexistent” (*yod min med min gyi lla ba*).30 Although explicitly an ontological position, in actuality it seems to be a code word for a complex of beliefs (some dealing with language and conceptual thought, some with ontology, some with epistemology, some with soteriology and the theory of meditation) that were most likely never held by a single individual or school.31

To understand the kinds of issues that the *TTQ* is addressing, it might be useful to make some more general observations concerning the philosophical positions that mKhas grub rje ascribes to his opponents. Generally speaking, we can say that mKhas grub rje sees himself responding to at least three major sets of beliefs that he considers to be doctrinally misguided intellectually. He regards all three as forms of skepticism or nihilism, and so do the later dGe legs pa exegetes who follow him. In fact, as mentioned earlier, often the three are conflated and portrayed as the view of a single opponent, something that is clearly not the case historically.

The first is considered by mKhas grub rje to be a form of quietism,32 which he considered a kind of soteriological nihilism in the sense of being a dead end in the path to salvation. It has been variously called “the view of Hva shang” or “the view that nothing is to be thought of” (*ci yang yid la mi byed pa’i lla ba*). As described by the *TTQ* and other dGe legs pa sources, it is the position that discursive and analytical forms of meditation are but expedients to lead the adept to the supreme form of meditation in which all thought is to be eliminated, the mind resting in the peacefulness of no thought.33

Another position repeatedly criticized by the dGe legs pa authors is a form of epistemological skepticism, a view that challenges the validity of conceptual and linguistic knowledge.34 From a cognitive perspective, this view is portrayed as criticizing the validity of logical inference, where the Prāsaṅgika critique of the *svatantra* form of reasoning is mistaken for a critique of syllogistic reasoning in general.35 At its most extreme the position is seen as the repudiation of the possibility of valid knowledge (skt. *pramāṇa*; tib. *tsad mo*) in general. On the linguistic side it upholds the doctrine of radical ineffability, that nothing can be predicated of anything else, that any description of emptiness is useless, all being equally distant from the ultimate; as a corollary it maintains that the Prāsaṅgika therefore holds no philosophical position whatsoever.36

Finally, we find a form of radical ontological skepticism known as “the view that things are neither existent nor nonexistent” (*yod min med min kyi lla ba*). According to this view the Madhyamaka critique is to be carried out in regard to existence, causality, and so on in *general*, without the need to affix the qualifier *ultimately*; that is, without it being necessary to qualify what is being repudiated as “ultimate” existence, or “true” causality, and so forth. This view derives from a literal interpretation of certain passages in the Madhyamaka literature that on the surface repudiate the law of the excluded middle.
Introduction

Tsong kha pa, mKhas grub rje, and the later tradition have all been consistent in claiming that these views are mutually related. If they had ever been confronted with the fact that there was probably no one historical figure that held all of these views they most likely would have answered that whether they are ever found to be historically exemplified within a single school or individual, the views are mutual corollaries of each other in the logical sphere. If nothing exists, they would say, nothing can be said to exist as anything else (a man cannot be said to exist as an impermanent thing, for example), and if this is the case, nothing can be said to be anything else (predication is impossible), reducing one to the view of radical ineffability. If nothing exists, then knowledge is also impossible, for knowledge is knowledge of what exists. What is more, if nothing exists and if there is nothing that can be said or known, what method of meditation would be more appropriate than the empowering of the mind? The connection between these three views, they would claim, is obvious.37

Even though we often can glean the general philosophical principles that mKhas grub rje found anathema, principles such as those outlined earlier, corollating these to the views of specific historical persons or texts, as we have said, is highly problematical. Although a few Tibetan scholars, such as Phya pa Cho kyi seng ge, are mentioned by name when their views are rejected, this is by far the exception. Usually we find an opponent identified simply as “someone” (ka cig), nor is it clear that every opponent’s opinion is cited it need represent the views of a well-established school or a well-known individual. It is more likely that on many such occasions mKhas grub rje is putting forth hypothetical arguments that he has either pondered over himself or else encountered on the debate courtyards of different monasteries.38 Be that as it may, the opponent-reply format of much of the TTC is clear evidence that the work is to a great extent polemical and intended by mKhas grub rje as a defense of the views of his master.

Ideally, the translation of a work the likes of the TTC should make extensive reference to the views of mKhas grub rje’s opponents. It is the ideal because, by identifying the intellectual currents that influenced the writing of such a work and by noting those currents to which the work itself gave rise, the text, now placed in the intellectual and historical context in which it arose, can truly be understood. Given that these opposing views are almost never identified with historical figures or texts, an explanation of this sort has as a prerequisite the complete mastery of the vast corpus of Tibetan Madhyamaka literature.39 Needless to say, this is something I lack. Nonetheless, I have not completely forsaken the vision of providing for the reader a text that, although food for thought for the philosophically minded, is not lacking in interest to the intellectual historian. To this end I have made reference to other pivotal Madhyamaka works of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries where their views either support or are in clear opposition to those of the TTC.40

Textual Considerations

The unabridged title of our text is The Treatise That Perfectly Elucidates Reality, The Profound Doctrine of Empiness, Called “Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate” (Zab mo stong pa nyid kyi de kho na nyid rab tu gsal bar byed pa’i bstan bcos skal bzang mig ‘byed). It is, however, known colloquially as The Great Digest (sTong thun chen mo)41 or as The Digest That Opens the Eyes of the Fortunate (sTong thun skal bzang mig ‘byed).

In my translation, I have consulted three different editions of the text:

1. That found in the first volume of the Madhyamika Text Series (MTS), edited by Lha mkhar yongs ’dzin bstan pa rgyal mtshan (New Delhi: 1972);
2. That found in the gSungs ’bum (Collected Works), vol. ka, of the 1897 Lhasa Zhon edition preserved in microfiche by the Microform Research Program of the State University of New York at Stonybrook (1976), and subsequently published in Dharmasala (1981); and
3. That found in the gSungs ’bum, vol. ka, of the bKra shis lhun po edition from the library of Lochen Rinpoche (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1983).

From the pattern of textual and scribal errors it seems clear that the MTS was most likely based on the Lhasa Zhon edition.

In my translation I have made reference to the page numbers of the MTS edition that, though not the most reliable, is nonetheless one of the most accessible. The MTS edition is labeled both with the traditional Tibetan page numbers (written out in words on the left-hand margin of the front of each folio) and with arabic numbers (each folio-side numbered sequentially).42 The arabic page numbers of MTS are to found in the margin of the translation to facilitate access to the original. The text of the TTC is then 473 pages (235 folios)43 in length. In addition, in the same volume we find the text followed by three appendices, separate from, but nonetheless related to, the TTC itself. Instead of being the actual writings of mKhas grub rje, these three smaller works are notes on lectures given by him and taken down by one of his chief disciples, Zhang zhung pa Phyogs las rnam rgyal Chos dbang grags pa’i dpal (1404–1469). The first of these (MTS, pp. 473–506) is an explanation of the refutation of “arising via the four extremes” as it is explained in Candrakīrti’s Prasannapadā. The second (MTS, pp. 506–512) is a brief commentary on Tsong kha pa’s rTen ’brel snying po.44 The final one (MTS, pp. 512–523) is a work on the difficult points relating to the cultivation of śamatha and vipaśyanā. Although these three smaller texts are related to each other and to the TTC in that they deal with topics in Madhyamaka philosophy, that they are distinct works from the TTC is evidenced by the fact that the concluding
verses and colophon to the TTC separate it from these three appendices, despite the fact that they are not listed separately in the table of contents of the Collected Works (dkar chag).\textsuperscript{45}

The editions consulted are riddled with textual or scribal errors (on an average of two per folio). Most of these errors are evident and minor. No mention was made of most of them in the notes to the translation. To have done so would have been both tedious and pointless. Only major errors whose correction could change the meaning of the text in a drastic way were referred to in the notes, but such instances are relatively rare. It is my hope to see published a list of textual emendations to the TTC at a later date.

The Translation

The translation was completed under the tutelage of several eminent native scholars of the tradition (see Acknowledgments). One of my mentors once said that the key to good annotations is knowing not what to include, but what to omit. I have taken his words to heart and have tried to be laconic in the notes to the translation. My annotations are in general of four kinds: historical, explanatory, bibliographical, and philological. Historical notes attempt to show the intellectual connections, antagonisms or allegiances between mKhas grub rje’s views and those of other Tibetan scholars throughout history.

Explanatory notes are meant to elucidate obscure points in the arguments or to set forth some of the presuppositions assumed by mKhas grub rje in the course of his exposition, presuppositions that might be evident to a Tibetan scholar with many years of background in Madhyamaka studies, but that, more often than not, escape the Western reader. I have assumed the reader to have a substantial knowledge of Buddhist philosophy. Given the already advanced nature of the text, not to have done so would have meant a proliferation of explanatory notes that could easily have matched the text itself in length.

The bibliographical notes are usually to be found at the beginning of a major section. In these I have attempted to give the references to the latest or best works, usually in the secondary literature, that treat the topic in question. Where the literature on a certain subject is vast, I have referred the reader to the bibliographies contained in one or two recent works.

Philological notes point out major textual or scribal errors or inconsistencies in the body of the TTC and give references to the works cited by the author. Although I have attempted to locate all of the passages from the Indian and Tibetan texts that mKhas grub rje cites, I cannot say that I have completely succeeded. There are over 1,000 such citations and, as is the custom among Tibetan scholars, mKhas grub rje will often quote a work without giving any information as to the title (this is especially true when citing a sūtra). With few exceptions, however, I have located almost every work cited. Most of the passages cited have been traced to the Tibetan canon (see the list of abbreviations for the different editions of the canon used) except in instances where separate critical editions of a superior quality exist (MA, for example). When the Sanskrit is available I have generally attempted to give the reference to the passage in the Sanskrit text as well. Finally, I have discussed variations between the TTC citation and the original (either Tibetan or Sanskrit) only when the original varies significantly from the cited passage. Therefore, I have given the Sanskrit-Tibetan original for a cited passage only in exceptional cases, when it differs sufficiently from the TTC citation to warrant discussion.

For the transliteration of Tibetan words I have used a modified Wylie system,\textsuperscript{46} identical to that used in the Descriptive Catalogue of the Naritasan Institute Collection of Tibetan Works (Narita, Japan: Naritasan Shinshoji, 1989), Monograph Series, Occasional Papers, vol. 1. The first letter of pronounced letter-clusters of proper nouns has been capitalized.

The TTC is a philosophical work written in very terse philosophical Tibetan that is at once extremely accurate and extremely difficult to understand. The problems of rendering such a work into readable English should be evident. I make no apologies for the fact that my translation is at times terse and awkward. The original itself is this in many cases. I have not, however, forsaken the hope of making the translation readable; and yet, when it has come down to a choice of a flowing style or accuracy, I have opted for the latter. Nonetheless, whether "easy English" or not, I hope that what I have written is English. An accurate and grammatical translation that is at times difficult and unwieldy is as much as I had ever hoped to accomplish. Still, the very difficult portions of the work (the linguistic version of the Yogācāra theory of emptiness, the critique of the svatāntara form of reasoning, and so forth) are few and far between, and I would once again encourage the reader to persevere even with these more difficult sections. mKhas grub rje, of course, likens the work, in its unabridged title, to the proverbial curative for the blind that acts "to open the eyes of the fortunate." One might hope that for those of us in whom the text does not elicit the advent of gnostic insight, its study may nonetheless provide us with a glimpse, albeit ever so small, of the very profound Buddhist theory of emptiness.
A Short Biography of
mKhas grub dGe Legs dpal bzang

Note: This biography is based on several bio-hagiographical works (rnam thar) concerning mKhas grub rje. The basis for the present account has been Tshe mchog gling Yong's 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan's (1713–1793) biography in the Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i bla ma bgyud pa'i rnam thar (LRLN) (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1970, vol. I, pp. 877–922), a concise work that discusses most of the major points in mKhas grub rje's life. This has then been supplemented by consulting other works such as the gSang ba'i rnam thar (SNT) of rJe btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan, to be found in mKhas grub rje's Collected Works, vol. a, pp. 421–493. I have also consulted, in the composition of the present biography, the rNam thar mKhas pa'i yid 'phrog (KYP), Collected Works, vol. ka, pp. 1–22, written by gNas rnying 'Jam dbyangs kun dga' dge legs rin chen rgyal mtshan (1446–1496), the basis for a great deal of later rnam thar material on the life of mKhas grub rje. I have also used as a source the incomplete rNam thar (NT) by dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po (1728–1791) found in his Collected Works, vol. 5, Gadan Sungrab Minyam Gyuelpel Series, vol. 25 (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1971), pp. 699–723; and also sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's history of the dGe lugs pa sect, the Baidar ser po (BS) (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1976), pp. 121–123. Many of the dates, both in this biography and throughout the text, have been determined in dependence upon, and others cross referenced against, the bsTan rtis kun las btras pa of Tshe tan zhab's drung (TTKT) (Tsho sngon: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, n.d.) My goal has been to give the reader a feeling for the contents and style of traditional Tibetan hagiographical literature without the loss of a critical historical perspective. Discussions of the variations in the different biographies, differences in dates, and supplementary materials derived from oral traditions, for the most part, is relegated to the notes. Very little secondary literature is devoted to mKhas grub rje. Of what is available, the most interesting and accurate is L. W. J. van der Kuijpp's two articles, "Studies in the Life and Thought of Mkhhas grub rje I. mKhas grub rje's Epistemological Oeuvre and His Philosophical Remarks on Dignaga's Pramāṇasamuccaya I" (SK-I) and "Studies in the Life and Thought of Mkhhas-Grub-Rjes IV Mkhhas-Grub-Rje on Regionalisms and Dialects" (SK-IV), both in Berliner Indologische Studien (BIS), Band 1 (1985): 75–105 and Band 2 (1986): 23–49, respectively.
I live in the gorge of a snow mountain, the Tathāgata’s teachings,
My mane heavy with the weight of a thousand scriptural traditions,
Possessing the power of the inexhaustible claws of reasoning,
I alone am the supreme sage, the king of beasts.\(^2\)

mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang\(^3\) (1385–1438) was one of the two chief disciples of Tsong kha pa bLo bzang grags pa (1357–1419), one of the greatest figures in the history of Tibetan Buddhism and the founder of the dGe legs pa school. Though the younger contemporary of rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen\(^4\) (1364–1432), who was Tsong kha pa’s first successor to the throne of dGa’ ldan, mKhas grub rje is often characterized as the “chief spiritual son” (sras kyi thu bo),\(^5\) implying a closer personal relationship to Tsong kha pa. Indeed, so close were his spiritual ties to his master that, after the death of Tsong kha pa, mKhas grub rje is said to have received visions of him in many different forms. He is also, as we have seen, the first major upholder and defender of the tradition after the death of his teacher, guarding the doctrine set forth by his master against the onslaught of rival theories.

The eleven volumes of his Collected Works are witness to his expertise in both the fields of śūtra and tantra. As regards the latter, he is especially renowned for his work on the Kālacakra.\(^6\) With regard to the śūtra tradition, his commentaries on Madhyamaka,\(^7\) Pramāṇa, and the Prajñāpāramitā\(^8\) are all extremely respected and popular with scholars in the dGe legs pa tradition, being in part the foundation for the later yig cha literature, that corpus of work that formed the basis for the curriculum of the great dGe legs pa monastic institutions of Tibet.

He was born\(^9\) in a section of sTod byang\(^10\) in gTsang called lDog gzung,\(^11\) not far from where a famous monastery was later to be founded. His father, bKra shis dpal bzang,\(^12\) was a nobleman in government service; his mother’s name was Bu\(^13\) ‘dren rgyal mo.\(^14\) He was the eldest of three brothers. The intermediate one, Ba so Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1402–1473), also became renowned as a great scholar-saint and like his elder brother eventually came to occupy the throne of dGa’ ldan.

mKhas grub rje is said to have had a very uneventful, obstacle-free youth, and from an early age is said to have been admonished by “the Buddhas and their Sons and by all of the holy protectors of the doctrine to firmly grasp onto the teachings of the Master, the Protector Mañjuśrī (Tsong kha pa).”\(^15\) He took novice (sramanera) vows at the permissible age of seven under mKhas grub Seng ge rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po.\(^16\) At this point he received the ordination name of dGe legs dpal bzang. He was then put under the tutelage of the great Sa skya scholar Red mda’ ba gZhon nu blo gros (1349–1412)\(^17\) from whom he is said to have very quickly learned all the important philosophical texts studied at the time, including “the seven logical treatises, the higher and lower Abhidharmas, the Five Works of Maitreya, and (Nāgārjuna’s) Sixfold…

Compendium of Reasoning, as well as the Vinaya.” At that time he is also said to have received from Ye shes dpal the initiation into Hevajra and the full transmission of the Lam ‘bras teachings, the principal tantric practice of the Sa skya school to which he belonged.\(^18\) His earlier years were spent at places like Ngam ring and Sa skya, studying śūtra and tantra from a variety of Sa skya scholars the likes of bSod nams rgyal mtshan and the great Na bza’ ba.\(^19\)

During his years of study, as was the custom of the time, he traveled to many of the great monasteries of gTsang (Western Tibet) to debate with other students and to sharpen his own mental faculties through dialectical dispute. At one point, while he was visiting the monastery of Ngam ring chos sde,\(^20\) the great scholar Bo dong Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1375–1450)\(^21\) arrived to challenge the monks and their understanding of scripture. He announced a date and time and dared anyone to speak out against his systematic critique of the Sa skya Paṇḍita’s controversial work on logic, the Tshad ma rig gter,\(^22\) a work that Bo dong characterized as “a teeming mass of internal contradiction.” Several of the more prominent scholars attempted to confront Bo dong but were reduced to accepting contradictions “in a matter of two or three arguments.”\(^23\) The monks in the assembly, witnessing the displeasure of their benefactor, who at one point is even said to have scolded them,\(^24\) are said to have urged mKhas grub rje to stand up to the great scholar as the defender of the Sa skya tradition even though he was but a mere sixteen years of age at the time.\(^25\) Not only was he said to have properly defended the views of Sa skya Paṇḍita, but, as the story goes, he mercilessly attacked Bo dong’s own views, reducing him to accepting the absurd conclusion that “there was such a thing as an entity (dngos po) that did not arise from a cause.”\(^26\) In general, the debate is said to have been a classic in the field of logic, an air of open-mindedness prevailing, with neither party insistently holding onto his own views dogmatically. Many of the philosophical positions advocated by Bo dong are said to have been cited in mKhas grub rje’s classic work on logic, the sDe bdun yid kyi mun sal, and later, Bo dong is said to have himself praised the young mKhas grub rje.\(^27\)

When he reached the appropriate age of twenty he took full monastic ordination with Red mda’ ba as the abbot.\(^28\) Then, two years later in 1407,\(^29\) it is said that Red mda’ ba, realizing the tremendous boon for the doctrine if mKhas grub rje met the great Tsong kha pa, sent his student to Se ra chos sding,\(^30\) where Tsong kha pa was residing at the time. On the way, at Nye thang, mKhas grub rje had a vision of an orange colored Mañjuśrī, considered very significant as Tsong kha pa is believed to be a manifestation of Mañjuśrī.\(^31\) Arriving at Se ra chos sding, he inquired as to the whereabouts of Tsong kha pa from a monk. This simple ascetic so impressed mKhas grub rje with his lifestyle, conduct, and respect for his own master that, when he heard that the ascetic was a disciple of Tsong kha pa, mKhas grub rje’s faith and wish to meet his future master increased.
When the meeting took place there is said to have been an instant rapport between the two. The master asked his new disciple what dreams he had had. The latter is said to have replied that mKhas grub rje was an extremely bright lad. The master noticed this new disciple and invited him to join his monastery. The latter agreed and was formally accepted as a monk. He was given the name 'yi dam' Vajrabhairava, which he had chosen from the Vajrayana, and was given extensive teachings. He is said to have been overjoyed and to have taken his new monastic life seriously.

Next, he is said to have received from Tsong kha pa the instructions on Lam rim (the Graded Stages of the Path) and to have obtained "indestructibly firm faith" in them. At dGa' ldan, after mKhas grub rje had made a series of extensive offerings to Tsong kha pa, the latter consented to give him ten months of consecutive teaching. During this time the master would explain the four classes of tantra and the great treatises (gzung chen mo) during the day. At night he would give instructions concerning the generation and completion stages of the tantra; and again, at the same time, after more extensive offerings. Tsong kha pa is said to have related to mKhas grub rje his "secret autobiography" and many other hidden instructions concerning the tantra. He is also said to have received many essential instructions (man ngag) from his master's other disciples, especially from rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen and from 'Dul 'dzin grags pa rgyal mtshan.

It is not clear how long mKhas grub rje spent in Tsong kha pa's presence. We know, however, that he eventually left for gTsang, where he founded several monasteries, taught, and dedicated himself especially to tantric practice. During his time in gTsang he founded the Nyang stod Icang ra monastery, and he initially became known in the area under the title Icang ra bKa' bcu pa, the Icang ra Master of Ten Treatises. On the death of Tsong kha pa, mKhas grub rje is said to have retired to mDangs can Mountain, another of the monasteries he founded in gTsang, where he continued to practice all aspects of the doctrine in accordance with the precepts of his master. At this time he wrote several verses and made ten solemn promises such as to engage only in religious activity and never in politics, war, and so on; never to speak of the faults of others no matter how slight; never to speak harshly to others; not to think about things that incite attachment, desire for wealth and fame, and so forth; but to focus solely on those religious principles that deserve to be contemplated.

Then, in 1424, five years after the death of Tsong kha pa, when mKhas grub rje was thirty-nine years old, he founded the great monastery of dPal 'khor sde chen under the sponsorship of the local ruler, Rab brtan kun bzang. There he remained for four years, teaching extensively the doctrinal system of his master and gathering an extensive following of disciples. Although we do not know the exact date of the composition of the TTC, as we know from its colophon that it was composed at dPal 'khor sde chen, we know that it must have been written in this four year period between 1424 and 1428.

It is both interesting and significant that several of his biographies make little mention of mKhas grub rje's association with dPal 'khor sde chen. Both the mKhas pa'i yid 'phrog (KYP) and the gSbang ba'i rnam thar (SNT), however, give lengthy accounts of the events that led up to mKhas grub rje's eventual departure from this monastery. According to KYP and to an oral tradition of this monastery itself, a disagreement arose between mKhas grub rje and the monastery's sponsor, the local monarch Rab brtan kun bzang, over a debate that the latter wished to organize, one that would pit mKhas grub rje against one of the other great scholars of the day, Rong ston pa Sākyā rgyal mtshan (1367–1449). According to KYP, mKhas grub rje agreed to participate in the debate. Scholars were invited to serve as judges, and the event was scheduled to take place on a specific date. Then, without explaining why, the text simply states that "bdag po Rab brtan and Rong ston Sākyā rgyal mtshan had a change of heart and made preparations to leave." MKhas grub rje, in response to the imminent exodus of his opponent, wrote several inflammatory verses that he passed on the door of the main temple at dPal 'khor chos sde in a final attempt to incite his opponent to debate him. These verses have been preserved for us in the KYP. Not only because of their importance as a historical source but also because they reflect so clearly mKhas grub rje's inclinations toward and expertise in the art of polemics, I have included them as Appendix 1.

The SNT account is much more detailed but, being a more partisan work, is prone to exaggeration as well. It begins by painting a picture of Rong ston pa as a frustrated and scheming scholar. The text states that Rong ston declared Tsong kha pa's enterprise to be one of refuting the Sa skya tradition and that this created an atmosphere of tremendous hostility toward Tsong kha pa and his disciples, to the point where certain Sa skyas even resorted to black magic (gtor ma 'phen pa) against them. The SNT account also differs from that of KYP on several points. For one thing, SNT implies that the machinations of mKhas grub rje himself (and not those of the local ruler) led to cornering Rong ston pa. Despite its excesses, the SNT account is a lively one, often depicting the human side of the actors in this most fascinating of scenarios. For example, once Rong ston pa had been put in the position of having to debate mKhas grub rje, it portrays him as being "extremely nervous, unable to stand still, pacing back and forth, having to go to the bathroom repeatedly." He adds, immediately after that, almost as if anticipating that the reader may doubt his characterization of the great Rong ston pa, "this is not my imagination, for it was common knowledge among all of the disciples of the day." SNT also states that Rong ston pa, realizing that he had no way out of the situation, wrote to mKhas grub rje telling him that he would not
debate him because he had already defeated his teacher, rGyal tshab, in debate. We also find in this text the mention of Rong ston pa’s last ditch attempt to rescue his reputation, a plan that involves sending a disciple to the prayer hall with a prepared argument for mKhas grub rje. The plan backfired, for the poor student, who brought the prayers to a halt with his entrance and now had all the monks’ eyes on him, forgot his coaching and stated the argument incorrectly. mKhas grub rje, in characteristic form, asked him, “What is it you want to say, fool?” This was the last straw, and the poor disciple ran out of the hall ashamed and in disgrace. It is worth reiterating that despite its sectarian bias, SNT presents us with what is clearly a very human side of these great scholars, something that too often is missing in the more stylized accounts.

Both KYP and SNT make it very clear that mKhas grub rje’s attempts to incite Rong ston pa to debate were in vain and according to most written historical records the event never took place. Again, from dPal ‘khor chos sde he went back to his monastery-retreat on mDangs can Mountain, where he continued to teach, engaging in tantric practice in his spare time.

Not only was mKhas grub rje a master of the tenets of the sūtrayāna schools, he was also a very accomplished adept of the tantras, having obtained, within his lifetime, visions of many deities. Many of the particulars of his spiritual life can be gleaned from SNT. Even after the death of Tsong kha pa, mKhas grub rje is said to have had many visions of his master, both in dreams and in waking life. For instance, on one occasion when mKhas grub rje was at a loss regarding the doctrine of emptiness, Tsong kha pa is said to have appeared to him in a dream and given him the complete instructions on the “Kāśyapa Chapter” of the *Ratnakāta Sūtra*. He is said to have had five major visions of Tsong kha pa, each with his master in a different aspect, ranging from that of an ordinary monk riding on the back of a white elephant to that of a wrathful tantric practitioner riding on a tiger.

In the iron pig year (1431) he is said to have met rGyal tshab rje in gNas rnying. The latter requested mKha sgrub rje to accompany him back to Central Tibet, to dGa’ ldan, to assume the throne of Tsong kha pa as his second successor. They stopped for a short time at the newly founded ‘Bras spungs Monastery where both were treated with great respect by ’Jam dbyangschos rje and his followers. They also lectured there. Finally, arriving at dGa’ ldan, they were served with great devotion by the Elder Rin chen rgyal mtshan and the congregation of monks. Once at dGa’ ldan, the seat of Tsong kha pa, rGyal tshab rje stepped aside to allow his younger contemporary and student to assume the throne and the responsibilities of the newly formed order. mKhas grub rje then began teaching extensively at dGa’ ldan, covering Tsong kha pa’s systematic exposition of the stages of the path, the *Lam rim chen mo*, in great detail once a year, and giving the monks many initiations (dbang), oral transmissions (lung), and teachings (khrid). He gathered together some of the best scholars of his day, men the likes of the great Śākya śrī sNon pa dpal ldan and bLama yar ’bro pa, in this way consolidating the program of studies at the monastery, and in the process attracting many new monks as students.

He passed away at age fifty-three at dGa’ ldan, where his body was cremated. The golden urn containing his relics remained beside that of his master as an object of devotion for more than five centuries, until the destruction of the monastery at the hands of the Chinese in 1959.
Translation: The Great Digest

The Treatise Which Perfectly Elucidates Reality,
The Profound Doctrine of Emptiness,
Called "Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate"
I bow with great respect to the feet of the chief of all the conquerors’ sons, the holy and glorious Master who is none other than the Lord Mañjughoṣa¹ and who possesses the great objectless compassion (dmigs pa med pa’i thugs rje chen po).²

I bow down to you, peerless teacher, who are the wavering clouds of compassion, an expert at making it rain the waters which clear away the torment of the heat of egotistic views (bdag tu lta ba) by ceaselessly roaring, from the portals of space, the doctrine of dependent arising (rien cing ’brel ’byung), the melody of summer clouds, the drum roll of profound emptiness (stong pa nyid).

You spoke of the profound in the midst of numberless bodhisattvas, the great doctrinal convocations of all the conquerors. You, who are peerless in proclaiming the lion’s roar, protect me with the treasury of Mañjughoṣa’s knowledge.

With all my heart I bow down to the supreme Ārya Nāgārjunapāda and to his sons. You were prophesied by the Conqueror and are yourself a second conqueror in your [ability] to unerringly explain emptiness, the essence of the Conqueror’s teachings.

You, oh supreme one among the flocks of preachers, in a vision were perfectly instructed by Mañjughoṣa in all of the Conqueror’s doctrinal methods. I bow down to you, my incomparable Master, who are the eye of beings in the three worlds.

[Reason for the Composition of the Text]

Though there are some who are very learned [in scholarly matters], others who apply themselves to samādhi (ting nge ’dzin), and yet others who exert themselves in the verbal repetition of profundities (sab mo’i bzas brjod),³ still none seem to understand the root of the samsāra that binds them. Because the tree of their ego grasping (bdag tu ’dzin pa) expands and once again spreads, I
see (their various religious efforts) as purposeless hardships. Out of compassion for them, and due to the kindness of my master, I will here explain the profound path.

[The Buddha’s Doctrine as the Ultimate Source of Salvation]

When the wise begin to analyze what the state of greatest fulfillment for themselves and others is, they will not be satisfied with methods that eliminate suffering and bring about a form of happiness that lasts only the length of this life. The gateway for those who especially seek higher states from the next life on is but one: the teachings, a banner waiving over the three worlds, of the one renowned as the Lord Buddha, the great impartial friend of the world. As it says in the Miśrakastotra:

We live inside an ocean, samsāra, without breadth or depth, our body eaten by the sea serpents of our everpresent attachment. At such a time to whom should we go for refuge? Anyone with half a mind would go for refuge to one who in every way possesses all good qualities, and who is devoid of absolutely every single fault. It is fitting to shower such a one with praise and to abide by his teachings.4

[The Prophecies of Nāgārjuna’s5 Coming]6

What is more, in the scriptures of our Teacher, the Conqueror himself has again and again prophesied a man who could be considered trustworthy in commenting on the profound [doctrine of emptiness], that being the protector, the Ārya Nāgārjuna himself. As it says in the Lankāvaśīra:

In the South, in the land of Vaidalya, a monk renowned as The Glorious One, called by the name of Nāga, will eliminate both the side of existence and that of nonexistence. Having explained to the world that my yāna is the supreme Mahāyāna, he will accomplish the stage of joy,7 and then proceed to Sukhavatī.8

And in the Mahāmegha Sūtra it says:

This younger will be born as a monk called Nāga when four hundred years have elapsed since my Parinirvāṇa. He will spread my teachings and eventually [he will be born] in the earthly kingdom called Radiance of Faith (Dad pa’i ’od) where he will become the conqueror known as the Tathāgata “Radiance of the Gnostic Source” (Ye shes ’byung gnas ’od).9

The Mahāyānālakāraka has also explained that his name and time of birth would be like this and that he would live for 600 years.10 The Mahābhāerti Sūtra also states:

This young Litsavi, Sarvalokapriyadarśana, will, after the passing away of the Teacher, during the time of the degeneration of the doctrine, when [lifespan] are 80 years in age, become a monk with all of the marks of a teacher. He will spread the teachings, and having passed on after 100 years of age, he will be born in Sukhavatī.11

These then are the prophecies concerning the Acārya [Nāgārjuna] accepted by the Great Lord [Atiśa] and by the Elder Bodhibhadra. [That they are prophecies concerning Nāgārjuna] depends on the Suvarṇaprabhāsā’s gloss of the “young Litsavi” spoken of in the Mahābhāerti Sūtra, for example] as being of the same continuity as Nāgārjuna.12 The Mahābhāerti Sūtra explains this Acārya to be of the seventh stage, and there are many other works such as the Later Tantra of the glorious Kālacakra that prophesy him, commenting in a definitive way (nges don du ’grel par). The Pradīpottarotana says:

The Acārya [Nāgārjuna], by means of the tantric path, actualized the [state of] the great Vajradhāra in that very lifetime for, as it is said: “The great Acārya, the glorious Nāgārjuna, came face to face with his goal, and having taught personal self-knowledge to the world (so so'i rang rig pa), this being the samādi of the great Vajradhāra, he went beyond the happiness of gods and men. He went beyond the bliss of the meditational equipoise of the heterodox (mu steg), śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. But he knew not satisfaction with simply seeing the body that possesses the best of all qualities, the body of a Tathāgata, devoid of arising and cessation, and so, having ornamented himself with all of the qualities of a buddha, such as the ten powers and fearlessness, he went to Sukhavatī and remained there, possessing the eight might as his qualities.”13

Now, his having actualized the state of Vajradhāra refers to the sāṃbhogakāya [he obtained], and his proceeding to Sukhavatī and his becoming enlightened as the Conqueror called Radiance of the Gnostic Source, refers to the nirmanakāya that he will create. For example, the fact that our teacher, Śākyamuni, is said to have attained buddhahood many eons ago in no way contradicts his having demonstrated the act of becoming enlightened in India during this time period when [the lifespan of beings] was 100 years in length. [6] And now, following that very Acārya [Nāgārjuna], I will here explain the profound doctrine of emptiness.
[INTRODUCTION]

1. The Reason Why It Is Correct to Seek Out Reality
   (de kho na nyid)

Beings who strive to liberate themselves from samsāra should first properly determine what reality, that is, selflessness (bdag med pa), is like, and then above all things, exert themselves in meditation on the wisdom that realizes selflessness. Should [that wisdom] be lacking, it reduces one to being like the heterodox, who possess in great quantities extremely stable, clear and nonconceptual samādhis that are devoid of agitation and mental dullness, together with all of the magical powers and the forms of extrasensory perception based on those [samādhis]. Therefore, these accomplishments alone cannot make the least impact on the root of samsāra. For this reason, the Lord of Sages, Kamalaśīla, says in his first Bhāvanākrama:

Thus, having put the mind firmly on the object, analyze it with wisdom. Because when the light of wisdom is born in this way, the seeds of the afflictions (nyon mongṣ) will be eliminated. Otherwise, mere samādhi, like that of the heterodox, will not eliminate these afflictions, for as it says in the sūtras, “Even though worldly beings open the door to samādhi, they do not destroy the perception of the self; and because of their afflictions, they remain in utter turmoil. Such was the case, for example, with Udraka’s samādhi.”

Well then, what method does free one from samsāra, you might ask. The passage that follows in the sūtra quoted in the Bhāvanākrama, says: “If one understands the lack of self in phenomena, if one analyzes it and does meditation on it, this will be the cause of the result, the attainment of nirvāna. No cause other than that will pacify [the afflictions].” By accustoming oneself to the wisdom that is the understanding of selflessness, one will become liberated from samsāra, because the root that binds one to samsāra is the misapprehension of the self (bdag ’dzin).

Therefore, because every last bit of the Conqueror’s scriptures are only directed at reality (de bzhiṣ nyid), and only point to reality, one should not be satisfied merely with samādhi, but, having searched for the wisdom that is the
understanding of reality, one should exert oneself in single-pointed meditation [on it]. That is why in the second Bhāvanākrama it also says:

All of the Buddha’s words are well spoken, and because they are derived from his direct experience (mgon sum), they clarify reality [for us], they immerse us in reality. If one understands reality, one will become free of the net of all views (ita ba), just as darkness is dispelled when light arises. One cannot attain pure wisdom simply by means of śamatha, nor can it eliminate the darkness of the obscurations (sgrīb pa). When wisdom (shes rab) correctly mediates on reality, it transforms into perfectly pure gnosia (ye shes), it will realize reality. It is by means of wisdom that one eliminates the obscurations. Therefore, think to yourself, “I will abide in śamatha and will strive by means of wisdom toward reality. I will not be satisfied only with śamatha.” And what, you may ask, is reality? It is emptiness, that is, that ultimately all things, both persons and phenomena, [are devoid] of self.\[8\]

Not only is it the cause of obtaining nirvāṇa, but the principle path for attaining omniscience itself is this very wisdom that understands reality, for the other [perfections], giving and so on, are as if blind when not steeped in wisdom, and [hence wisdom] is said to be like a guide to the blind. The Vajracchedikā says:

When a man who has eyes enters the darkness, he does not see a thing. Likewise should one consider a bodhisattva who engages in giving, having fallen into eternalism. It is like this, Subhūti, at daybreak, when the sun rises, men who have eyes see the various aspects of physical things. Likewise should one consider any bodhisattva who engages in giving without falling into eternalism.\[17\]

Also, as the Āryasamayayagāhā says: “The trillions of blind men cannot, without a guide, even find the road, much less enter the city. Devoid of the guide of wisdom, the five perfections, without eyes, cannot reach enlightenment.”\[18\] This has been a very brief treatment [of this subject].

[The Emptiness Taught in the Tantras]\[19\]

Not only is this so within the vehicle of the perfections of the Mahāyāna, but even in the Vajrayāna, the reality on which beings are to meditate conjoined with the endless specialities of methods [particular to the tantras] is none other than the emptiness set forth in the Madhyamaka logical compendia (dBu ma rigs pa’i thogs).\[20\] There is no special [kind of emptiness in the tantras] apart [9] from this [one taught in the Madhyamaka]. Hence, the reality that is to be meditated on by everyone in all three vehicles—both [the two divisions of the] greater and the lesser—is only of one [kind]. Though there are many scriptural passages from such tantras as the glorious Guhyasāmasāra and from the Mahāsiddhas’ [works] that substantiate this, as it would lengthen [my work] and as this is not the appropriate place for [such a discussion], I will not expand on it.

[Opponent:] But is not the intention of the Kālacakra Tantra different, for in the “Brief Topic” (mdor bstan) “Explanation of What We Ourselves Believe”\[22\] it says: “The emptiness which analyzes the aggregates (phun po), like a plantain, has no core.”\[23\] Does this not suggest that emptiness arrived at through logical analysis is without a core, [that is, is pointless]?\[24\]

[Reply:] The meaning of this scripture is as follows. It is not referring to the object that is arrived at through analysis. It is instead refusing a nihilistic kind of emptiness (chad stong) which is a blank mindedness that results through the [incorrect] analysis of the aggregates, without [as is correct] setting forth the aggregates as truthless (bden med) through the negation [of truth and not of existence in general]. That is why the great commentary, the Vimalaprabhā says: “The emptiness which is the end product of analyzing the aggregates is a far cry from a nihilistic [kind of] emptiness.”\[25\]

[This position that the emptiness as taught in the Kālacakra Tantra is different from that taught in the Madhyamaka sources] is also in contradiction to the seventh “Brief Topic” of the second chapter [of the Vimalaprabhā], where it states that a Madhyamaka should understand reality by determining the consciousness aggregate to be devoid of an essence (rang gzhin) by means of the reasoning that proves it to be neither one nor many, and by means of such examples as the sky flower. Moreover, in the “Brief Topic” concerning “The Insuperable”\[26\] in the section dedicated to the refutation [of the claim] that nothing whatsoever coming to mind is meditation on reality, it says that the gnosia of the Tathāgata is the realization that all phenomena lack inherent existence; that it is not a mind which has fallen into a deep sleep, the characteristic [of the mind that thinks of] nothing. Thus, it explains the reality of all phenomena to be the lack of inherent existence.

In the second chapter it says: “The multitude of beings who are confused by illusion are seized by one suffering after another.”\[27\] And in the Commentary, it says: “They are seized by one suffering after another; such as those of the hell beings, pretas, and animals, and this [is because] they are confused by the illusions of samsāra. They are confused in the sense of their grasping to ‘I’ and ‘mine.’”\[28\] Because it explains that the grasping of “I” and “mine” is the root of the suffering of samsāra, [it implies] its acceptance that the antidote that cuts the root of samsāra is the wisdom which realizes selflessness. Thus, one should understand that [the philosophy of the tantras] is not in the least inconsistent with the Madhyamaka of the perfections. That is why the second chapter of the Great Commentary [the Vimalaprabhā] says: “Thus the effect
does not arise from itself, from something else, from both, nor is it causeless." 29 Such passages as these teach the reasoning that refutes the four extremes. It goes on to say that this can be understood more extensively by studying the vast scriptures, such as those of the Mādhyamaka. 30

[Opponent:] But doesn’t this tantra [the Kālacakra] explain that emptiness possesses an object (dmigs bcas)? 31

[Reply:] Even though it does explain this, in that context it is the emptiness of an object of refutation (dgag bya) that is physical matter [the body] qua aggregation of subtle atoms that is termed emptiness. 32 This omni-aspected matter (nam pa’i thams cad pa’i gzugs) is conventional, it is not the reality set forth via the refutation of the object of refutation, namely true existence. The [11] gnosis of great bliss that arises from such matter perceives reality, and it is because of this that it is on more than one occasion called objectless bliss. Although a great deal is to be said in regard to these [points], because it is not something found in common [to discussions of sūtra and tantra, as it is a strictly tantric matter], and because this is not the appropriate occasion [to deal with it], I will say nothing further. Nonetheless, seeing that all of us, both members of our own school and others, being committed to the incorrect path of such [interpretations], are then hindered from believing in the profound [doctrine of] emptiness, and accumulate great quantities [of nonvirtue], I have introduced the subject.

2. The Benefits of Trusting the Profound [Doctrine of] Emptiness

To explain [to others] and to pursue [one’s own] study based on the scriptures that teach the profound [doctrine of] emptiness and their commentaries creates a source of merit so great that it is difficult to fathom. The Sūtrasamuccaya says: "By having faith in the profound doctrine, all merit is accrued, and until one obtains buddhahood, one will acquire all wealth, both worldly and supramundane." 33 Also, in the Khye’u rin po che byin pa’i mdo 34 it says:

Mañjuśrī, bodhisattvas who lack skill in means must practice the six perfections for a hundred thousand eons. Now if the study of this exposition, even when they are doubt ridden, makes their merits greatly increase, then what need is there to mention [the benefits of study for those who lack doubt. If just by writing one letter [of it] one can impart instruction, then what need is there to mention [the benefits of teaching others [this doctrine] in an extensive fashion. 35

The Vajracchedikā says:

The Blessed One spoke. "What do you think, Subhūti, all those particles that there may be in the river Ganges, are they many, those particles that are in the river Ganges?"

Subhūti replied. "The sand particles that there are in the river Ganges, oh Lord, are indeed many. How is it possible to know even the number of those sand particles?"

The Blessed One spoke. "You understand, Subhūti, you have fathomed it. Now if a man or a woman were to fill universes equal in the number to the sand particles of the river Ganges with the seven kinds of precious substances, and were then to offer it to the Tathāgata, would that man or woman generate great merit from such an action?"

Subhūti replied. "Yes, oh Lord, a great amount! A great amount, oh Tathāgata!"

The Blessed One spoke. "Whoever memorizes even one four-line stanza from this doctrinal exposition and teaches it to others would thereby generate even more merit." 36

The bDe.bzhin gshigs pa’i mdzod kyi mdo says: "Should those who possess even the greatest of the ten nonvirtues come to understand the selflessness of phenomena and have faith and trust in the fact that all dharmas are primordially pure, they will not go to the lower rebirths." 37 And the bdud ‘dul ba’i le’u says:

If a monk simply by understanding that all phenomena are utterly subdued and by understanding that even the origin of faults is naturally solitary, can thereby subdue even an anantarya sin 38 without the [need to rely on the] firm and clear contrition that arises from such a fault; then what need is there to mention the fact [that such knowledge can purify] such travings as following incorrect moral discipline or ritual. 39

The Ajātaspuru Sūtra also says: "Because those who commit an anantarya sin can understand to come under the holy Dharma and have faith in it after hearing it, I did not call that [sin] a karmic defilement." 40 These passages [all show] that in the purification of sin, there is no purifying force of greater strength than faith in emptiness.

To obtain the benefits of explaining the profound doctrine as they have been spoken of above, two prerequisites are necessary: (1) one must have a pure motivation that does not seek material wealth or fame, and (2) one must, without misapprehending the meaning of the doctrine to be explained, expound upon it in a nonerroneous way. If one possesses either one or both of these faults, one will not accrue new merit, and indeed, the previous merit one has accrued will degenerate. That is why the Acārya Vasubandhu has said: "Thus, whoever incorrectly explains the doctrine, or explains it with a negative attitude, such as the desire for profit, honor or fame, will degenerate enormous amounts of personal merit."
3. The Vessel, That Is, the Listener, to Whom This Doctrine Should Be Explained

[A Misconception Concerning Emptiness and Its Consequences]

This profound subject should be taught to those who in the past have repeatedly established within their minds the propensity for understanding emptiness, and not to others. This is because, although those [others] may have managed to study the scriptures that teach emptiness, with their mistaken preconceptions about emptiness, teaching it to them will be utterly useless. It is utterly useless because some of them, those who have no expertise, refute emptiness and go to unfortunate realms. Others, thinking that the meaning of emptiness is that phenomena do not exist, first generate the mistaken view that is nihilistic in regard to cause and effect. Then, without turning from this false view, it grows larger and larger until, as a result of this, they are reborn into the Avīci Hell.

Now here, although the expressions nihilistic view (med par lta ba) and the view that things do not exist (yod par ma yin par lta ba) are nominally different, in terms of the way they are apprehended by the mind, that is, in terms of the way their generic images (don spyi) arise, there is not the slightest difference, because in both cases they [the images] arise as mere negations of existence. As regards this point, in commenting on the following lines:

When they have a faulty view of emptiness
Those of poor intellect will degenerate.

the Prasannapāda says:

If one conceives of the emptiness of everything in terms of the non-existence of everything, then this is a mistaken view. For as it is said, “If this doctrine is mistakenly understood, those who are not experts disparage it, in this way sinking into the mire of nihilism.” When, however, they avoid this nihilistic attitude in regard to everything, they introspect as follows. “How is it that things that have been perceived can be empty? Hence, essencelessness cannot be the meaning of emptiness.” And in no uncertain terms they refute the doctrine of emptiness. To repudiate it in this way is to create the karma of “disparaging the doctrine” (chos kyi phongs pa), which leads to definite rebirth in an unfortunate realm. As the Ratnāvali explains: “And moreover, if this is misapprehended, the fools, possessing the pride of sages, refute it. Thus these unworthy mahātmās end up falling head first into the Avīci [hell].”

One goes to Avīci not only by having a nihilistic attitude in regard to emptiness, but also by having a nihilistic attitude in regard to cause and effect. A multitude of reputable sūtras and śāstras all agree that to view causality as non-existent is the cause of losing the roots of all of one’s merit, and is also the cause of the degeneration of one’s vows.

Still, some insist that they are claiming that [things] “do not exist” and not that “things are nonexistent.” However, this scriptural citation from the Prasannapāda quoted earlier clearly explains that such a distinction in phrasing is both unnecessary and unjustified. That is why the Catuḥśatakatākā, [commenting on the lines from the root text] that go: “The one [who repudiates emptiness] will be reborn into an unfortunate realm, but the extraordinary one [who comes to correctly understand it] will find peace,”

says: “When the unholy ones hear the doctrine of emptiness, they end up refuting and misunderstanding it, and so they can only be reborn into an unfortunate realm.” Therefore, to refute emptiness or to conceive of the meaning of emptiness in terms of [things] not existing are both misconceptions that bring rebirth in an unfortunate realm.

[The Characteristics of the ProperDisciple]

[Question:] How can one know the difference between a disciple to whom the doctrine of emptiness is to be taught and one to whom it is not to be taught?

[Reply:] In the Madhyamakāvatāra it says:

Even though still at the stage of ordinary beings, when [some people] study emptiness, they experience great rapture and wonderment internally. Arising from this great rapture, their eyes well with tears, and the hairs of their body stand on end. Those beings have the seed of the perfect Buddha’s mind. They are the vessels to whom reality (de nyid) is to be taught. It is to them that the ultimate truth (dam pa’i don gyi bden pa) should be taught.

Thus, when someone hears an unrestricted explanation of emptiness and understands its meaning, and should there, based on that understanding, well up tears that come from such wonderment, such are the unmistaken signs. However, an outburst of tears on the part of a fool who has misguided faith in a mistaken doctrine [does not indicate] firmness of mind (yid brtan).

[Question:] If one teaches such a suitable vessel, what kind of benefits arise from his or her having understood the doctrine of emptiness?

[Reply:] Again, the Madhyamakāvatāra says:

For those who follow this [doctrine] good qualities will arise, for having taken up the practice of moral discipline, they abide by it; they engage in charity and they practice compassion; they meditate on patience; and the virtue [arising from] all of these practices they com-
To whatever extent they have understood emptiness, to that extent will their faith in the doctrine and the quantities of the merit ensuing from charity and moral discipline [increase]. The Bodhicittavivarana also says: ‘‘Having understood the emptiness of all phenomena, one comes to trust karma and its effects. This is more marvelous than the most marvelous thing, more astonishing than the most astonishing.” This [fact] is mentioned in extremely praiseworthy sources.

[Opponent:] That, after meditating in order to generate certainty in the doctrine of emptiness, one [still engages] in moral discipline and so on [is a [17] teaching] meant for those who have not understood the definitive meaning (nges don). How could someone who has understood the definitive meaning engage in such mental proliferations (spros pa), [which distinguish between good and evil, and so forth]? 

[Another Opponent:] Training in karma and its effects was urged provisionally for the sake of others.

[Reply:] [The adherents to] both of these [views] are identical in accepting that these [doctrines like karma and moral discipline] do not apply to themselves. Hence, they are sources of great negative karma for all, themselves as well as others, and they open the door to the unfortunate realms. One should realize this to be a case of reasoning from the effect [to the cause] (‘‘bras rtags yang dag’) that has led to an incorrect understanding of emptiness.

If one explains the profound doctrine of emptiness to one who is not a suitable vessel, should the one explaining emptiness possess the bodhisattva vows, the Śīksamāra (Sāma) states that “speaking of emptiness to sentient beings who do not engage in mental training” (kun dris) is a downfall (pham pa), if all of the negative emotional factors are present.

Even when the disciple has generated a pure understanding biased in favor of neither of the two extremes, when he or she hears an unmistaken explanation of emptiness, there may be no other [external signs] arising from amazement, [signs] such as the standing on end of hairs or the welling up of tears. If these signs are lacking, although it is not definite whether or not [the disciple] is a fit vessel for this profound doctrine, as long as they do not transgress the instructions of the holy master, [teaching it] may make them suitable vessels by newly implanting many seeds for understanding emptiness [in the future]. The Catuttiṣatikākā says:

If one has faith in the teachings of emptiness, one should do whatever increases one’s devotion for emptiness by means of establishing conditions that are conducive to it. One’s compassion should increase and one should become more grateful to the Lord, the Tathāgata.

Those who desire to rid themselves of the great peril, the reason behind the impediments [one has] toward the holy doctrine, should rely on the subtle (yang bza), give though giving is difficult, and collect disciples with the four means for accumulating them (du ba’i dngos po bzhig). One should, with every effort, teach this holy doctrine to the one who is a receptacle for this doctrine of holy men.

It is saying that those who have the ability to teach without erring must explain [the doctrine] with great fervor. But some, who pride themselves on having done just a little study of one or two other scriptures, and faulty study at that, without any training in the scriptural system of the Madhyamaika, where the profound abode [emptiness], so difficult to fathom, is taught, exert themselves at advising others. Without having studied the abode of stainless reasoning [the Madhyamaika scriptures] they teach or impart some trifling instruction (man ngag). They, who have the audacity to claim that they are explaining the meaning of the profound, who do not know their own limitations, tire themselves explaining the meaning of the profound. [For them] these become, without a doubt, the dual causes [for rebirth] in an unfortunate realm, and so one should never earnestly compete with those whose audacity is so great, who are preoccupied with mere material gain and fame.

4. The Actual Doctrine to Be Explained

4.1 Identifying Which Scriptures Are of Definitive Meaning (nges don) and Which of Provisional Meaning (drang don)

Those who wish to understand reality (de kho na nyid) must rely on the scriptures of the Sage. Yet various kinds of scriptures are taught, depending upon the various intellectual levels of the disciples. On which of these [scriptures] should one base one’s examination of this profound topic [emptiness]? Know that one should examine the scriptures of definitive meaning.

Well then, what is of definitive meaning and what is of provisional meaning? In this regard, some śrāvakas believe that all of the scriptures of the Sage are strictly of definitive meaning, whereas others believe that there are [scriptures] of both definitive and provisional meaning. [But regardless of which side they take], all [śrāvakas] believe that what distinguishes definitive from provisional [scriptures] is whether or not they can be taken literally. They also believe that the Mahāyāna canon is not the word of the Buddha.

The Vaiṇhāśikas, Sautrāntikas, and so forth, who came after the split into the eighteen subschools, accept only the śrāvaka canon as valid (iṣhad ma). Hence, those who are termed śrāvaka (lit. “hearer”) do not accept the Mahāyāna as the word of the Buddha. It is because they strive for śrāvaka
enlightenment (byang chub) that [those who challenge the authenticity of the Mahāyāna sūtras] are called srāvakas. But how could the Srāvakayāna that is the referent (jug gzhi) of the word hearer, [that is, those actually on the srāvaka path as opposed to those who are srāvakas by virtue of their philosophical outlook, like Vaibhāṣikas, and so on,] be skeptical to the point of saying "I do not [believe] that the Mahāyāna is the [Buddha's] word." Even were they to be skeptical in this way, it would follow, absurdly, that though [such srāvaka] arhants have eliminated all afflictions (nyon mongs), they accumulate the karma of disparaging the doctrine (chos spong gi las) with the ignorance of one ridden with afflictions. It seems that for this reason Tibetans [20] have made many mistakes in their failure to distinguish between those on the srāvaka path (nyan thos theg pa ba), [who do not slander the Mahāyāna,] and srāvaka philosophers (grub mtha' smra ba), [who do do so].

In distinguishing the definitive from the provisional we have the two chariots of the Mahāyāna. They are as follows: (1) the interpretation of Ārya Asanga and his brother [Vasubandhu] who follow the Saṃdhinirmochana Sūtra, and (2) the method of interpretation of Ārya Nāgārjuna, the father, and his son [Āryadeva] who follow the Ārya Aksayamatinirdeśa Sūtra.
The Sūtracāra Metaphysics and Hermeneutics

[The Three Natures]

The Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra says in the chapter requested by Pāramārtha-
samudgata:

At first, the Lord, in the Vārāṇasi region at the Deer Park in the
Rṣivadana, taught, for the followers of the Śrāvakayāna, the four
noble truths, a wheel of the doctrine that was astonishing and mar-
velous, a doctrine the likes of which had never previously been ex-
pounded in the world by anyone, either god or man. But that turning
of the wheel of the doctrine by the Lord was surpassed, it became
outdated, it was of provisional meaning and it became the object of
dispute. And so the Lord set about teaching that all phenomena have
no nature (ṅgo bo), that they do not arise nor do they cease, that they
are naturally peaceful and by nature nirvāṇa itself. By so doing he
taught emptiness to those who follow the Mahāyāna, thereby turning
the second wheel of the doctrine which was even more marvelous and
astonishing. But that turning of the wheel by the Lord was also sur-
passed. It became outdated, was of provisional meaning, and it be-
came the object of disputation. And so the Lord set out [teaching]
that all phenomena have no nature, that they are naturally peaceful
and by nature nirvāṇa itself. This was the perfect elucidation [arbiter-
ing the doctrines of the first two wheels] for the followers of all yānas.
It was the third turning of the wheel of the doctrine, astounding
and marvelous. This turning of the wheel by the Lord was unsur-
passed, it did not become outdated, it was of definitive meaning, and
it did not become the object of disputation.

Thus, the first two wheels are said to be of provisional meaning and the last
one of definitive meaning. Asaṅga [fourth century C.E.] and his brother [Va-
subandhu] make it quite clear in the Bodhisattvabhumi, in the Mahāyānasam-
graha, in the Abhidharmasamuccaya, in the Vyākhyāyukti, in the Viṃśatikā,
Trimśikā, and their commentaries that their method of [scriptural] interpreta-

[21]
tation is the same as that of the Samdhinirmocana, that is, that they take the first and middle wheels to be of provisional meaning and the final wheel to be of definitive meaning.

In particular, the Nirvayasamgrahani quotes the vast majority of the contents of all of the chapters of the Samdhinirmocana except for the Chapter of Introduction (gling gzhi'i le'u) and extensively explains these passages. In the Bodhisattvakabhumi, moreover, in the chapter on "Reality."

The Mahayanasamgrahani quoted having taught the theory of the foundational consciousness (kun gzhi) and having refuted the notion of external objects (physi don), goes into particular detail concerning the exposition of the three natures (ngo bo nyid gsum) of which the dependent (zhag na dbang) and the real (yongs grub) [are said to] truly exist. The Abhidharmasamuccaya sets forth in condensed form the main points of all such extensive explanations [mentioned earlier]. What is more, the scriptures of Vasubandhu mentioned earlier also follow these [works of Asanga]. The scriptures of both brothers, who are the trailblazers of such a method of expounding on the meaning of the Samdhinirmocana Sruta, have as their basis the [Yogacara-oriented] scriptures of the Lord Maitreya, namely the Srul bkham and the two Vibhangas.

The meaning of definitive and provisional in the system that delineates things in this way is as follows. A sruta that must depend upon another sruta for the elucidation of its purport, that is, whose [meaning] cannot be understood in accordance with its own direct teachings without depending on [another work], is a sruta of provisional meaning. Vice versa, if it can [be taken as self-interpreting], then it is a sruta of definitive meaning. For example, in the first wheel the aggregates and so on are all equally said to exist by virtue of their own characteristics (rang gi mthspan nyid kyi yod). In the middle one, all phenomena are equally said to be essenceless (rang bzhin med). Because [the srutas of these two wheels] do not actually teach [the nature of phenomena] through the elucidation of whether or not they have essences, they are of provisional meaning. The final [wheel] teaches that the imputed (kun brtags) is essenceless, and that the dependent and the real inherently exist (rang bzhin gya'i yod). Therefore, because [the Samdhinirmocana, as exemplary of the final wheel,] explains this distinction in a clear way, it is explained to be of definitive meaning.

The Samdhinirmocana explains the intent of the middle wheel srutas as follows. When srutas of the middle wheel, such as the Prajnaparamita, state that all phenomena are natureless (ngo bo nyid med), they do so with the intention [of expressing that] the imputed is characteristically natureless (mthspan nyid ngo bo nyid med pa), that the dependent is causally natureless (skyed ba ngo bo nyid med pa), and that the real is ultimately natureless (don dam pa ngo bo nyid med pa). It explains this as [the Lord's] reply to the bodhisattva Paramarthasamudgata when he asks the Lord the intention behind his having taught things to be natureless; that is, why in some srutas the Lord taught that the aggregates and so on exist inherently, whereas in others he taught the doctrine of essencelessness. The Samdhinirmocana says: "Pramarthasamudgata, my teaching all phenomena to be natureless is threefold, i.e. characteristic naturelessness, causal naturelessness, and ultimate naturelessness. But this intention did I teach all phenomena to be natureless." The Nirvayasamgrahani also says: "With what intention did the Lord teach that all phenomena are natureless? It is said that he taught it to certain disciples intending the three kinds of naturelessness." The Trimshika also states: "Intending the three kinds of nature to have three kinds of naturelessness did I teach all phenomena to be natureless." In view of this, those who claim that when the Prajnaparamita Srutas teach all phenomena to be natureless, they are referring only to all conventional phenomena, fall outside of both the scriptural system of the Samdhinirmocana Sruta and outside of that of Asanga and his brother as well.

The Prajnaparamita Srutas state that [every phenomenon] from matter up to and including the reality of matter, from omniscience up to and including the reality of omniscience is natureless, and that applies to all other phenomena in the list of permutations (dres khang) as well. They say that even nirvna, and were there something superior to that then even that, would be essenceless. So when someone claims that [the Prajnaparamita] teaches the essenceless of only the conventional and does not include the ultimate among those [essenceless phenomena], then that is when to shout out that "to whatever extent you take your own words seriously, to that extent should you know that you are insane!"

Well then, what is the meaning of these three [kinds of naturelessness], characteristic naturelessness, and so forth? Because they are only posited by name (ming) and sign (rda) and do not exist by virtue of their own characteristic, the imputed are said to be characteristically natureless. Because they must arise in dependence on other causes and conditions and arise neither from their own natures nor from their own selves, the dependent are said to be causally natureless. Because it is the ultimate and also because it lacks the nature of the two kinds of self, [that is, the self of persons and that of phenomena,] the real is said to be ultimately natureless. That is why the Samdhinirmocana Sruta says:

So then what is the characteristic naturelessness of phenomena? It is the characteristic of the imputed. And why is that? It is like this. Because it has the characteristic of being established by name and sign and because it does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic, that is why it is called characteristically natureless.
What is the causal naturelessness of phenomena? It is the characteristic of the dependency of phenomena. And why is that? It is like this. It is because they arise under the influence of other conditions and not by themselves. It is for this reason that these [dependent phenomena] are called causally natureless.\textsuperscript{75}

And also:

Moreover, what is the characteristic of the real? It is said to be ultimate naturelessness. And why is that? Oh Pāramārthasamudgata, the selflessness of phenomena (chos kyi bdag med) is said to be their naturelessness. That is the ultimate, and because the ultimate is identified with the naturelessness of all phenomena, that is why [the real] is said to be ultimately natureless.\textsuperscript{76}

One other secondary explanation of ultimate naturelessness was also taught, for the dependent was also said to be ultimately natureless. That object (dmigs pa) which, when meditated upon by the ārya gnosis that directly realizes the selflessness of phenomena, purifies the obscurations (sgrīb pa) [is called ultimate]. Because [the dependent] lacks the nature of being such an object, it is said to be ultimately natureless.\textsuperscript{77} Again the Samdhinirmocana states:

What is the ultimate naturelessness of phenomena? Those phenomena that arise interdependently, that are causally natureless, are also natureless in the sense that they are ultimately natureless. And why is that? Oh Pāramārthasamudgata, that object among all phenomena that is pure has been taught to be ultimate. It is because the characteristic of the dependent is such that it is not a pure object, that it is said to be ultimately natureless.\textsuperscript{78}

To say that the imputed does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic means that it is not truly existent (bden par med). Were that not so, it would mean that [the characteristic naturelessness of the imputed] was tantamount to its utter nonexistence; and if that were the case, because the imputed could not possibly exist, it would follow, absurdly, that whatever exists (gzhi grub) would have to be substantially existent (rdzas yod). Therefore, although the dependent is taught as existing by virtue of its own characteristic, what this means is that it is truly existing. Otherwise, it would not be correct to claim that a difference [existed] between the imputed, which does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic, and the dependent, which does exist by virtue of its own characteristic, because then both would have to be nominally existent (tha snyad du yod pa) and not truly existent.\textsuperscript{79}

To claim that whether something exists by virtue of its own characteristic is determined by whether it is efficacious (don byed nus pa) is also incorrect.

Because the real is also explained as existing by virtue of its own characteristic, it would follow, absurdly, that it too was an [efficacious] entity (dngos po) [when in fact it is not].

\textbf{[The Reality of the Dependent and the Real, and the Yogācāra Critique of the Madhyamaka]}\textsuperscript{80}

How does one explain the fact that the dependent and the real exist by virtue of their own characteristic? To view the dependent as not existing by virtue of its own characteristic is tantamount to being a nihilist in regard to the dependent,\textsuperscript{81} and nihilism in regard to it is nihilism in regard to the imputed and the real as well, and that is why this is said to be a nihilistic view. The dependent entities: are the linguistic referents (dags gzhi) of the imputed, and as they are also what possess the quality (chos can) of the real [in that they are empty], to be nihilistic in regard to [the dependent] is also to be nihilistic in regard to the other two. The Samdhinirmocana Sūtra says in this regard:

Oh Pāramārthasamudgata, likewise, if the characteristic of the dependent and the characteristic of the real exist, then so too should the characteristic of the imputed be known to exist. This is because whoever perceives the characteristic of the dependent and the characteristic of the real as nonexistent is also being nihilistic in regard to the characteristic of the imputed. Hence, such a [person] should be known to be nihilistic in regard to all three characteristics.\textsuperscript{82}

The Bodhisattvabhūmi also says:

The referents (gzhi) of the labeled word sign (btaugs pa'i tshig gi mthun ma) is the basis (rien) of the labeled word sign. But to say that because it is ineffable in nature (brjod du med pa'i bdag nyid) that the ultimately existing, the correct entity (yang dag pa'i dngos po), never and in no way exists is not only nihilism, but the destruction [of the doctrine]. These two [faults] should be understood to be the utter degeneration of this doctrinal teaching.\textsuperscript{83}

And again, the Bodhisattvabhūmi says:

Thus, if someone should hear teachings as to the intended meaning of the sūtras which are very difficult to understand, which [teach] the Mayājñā, which [teach] the profound doctrine of emptiness, and having heard them, if they do not correctly understand the meaning which was explained, exactly as it is, but instead conceive of it in an
incorrect manner, then due to the conception born from such a mistaken [understanding, they believe] everything to be only labels (btags pa tsam), and that this is reality. Who would view and who would say that such a viewpoint was the correct viewpoint? Were that so, because there would be no entities to act as the referents of labels ('dogs pa), the labels themselves could never and in no way exist. If that were so, how could the reality that is [said to be] a mere label be said to exist? Therefore, the [claims] in those treatises are forms of nihilism in regard both to reality and labels, and one should know that to do away with reality and labels is the worst of nihilistic views.84

This [passage] is ascribing to the Mādhyamika the fault of nihilism when he or she claims that all phenomena are mere labels (btags pa tsam). The words “the ultimately existing, the correct entity” in the first Bohisatvabhbāmi citation clearly indicate that [in the Yogācāra system] entities (dngos po) truly exist. If dependent things were not truly existential, [according to the Yogācāra] there could be no such thing as a substance that has the ability to give rise to an effect. Hence, they would have to be utterly nonexistent. Likewise, the imputed and the real would also have to be nonexistent. This is the meaning [of this passage]. The claim that things which do not truly exist must be utterly nonexistent is a general tenet of the realists (dngos smra ba).

The Nirṇayasamgrahāṇi says:

Some Mahayanists, under their own false misapprehensions, say that conventionally (kun rdzob tu) everything exists but that ultimately (don dam par) they do not exist. To this one must reply: “Oh Venerable One, what does it mean to say that something ultimately exists or that it is conventional?” If one asks them this they reply that whatever is the essencelessness of phenomena, that is the ultimate, which is the ultimate, while the objects of the perceptions of those natureless phenomena as [having intrinsic] nature, are the conventional . . . .85

from this passage up to the line: “if they answer in this way”86 they cite the Madhyamaka position as anathema, namely the position that truthlessness (bden med) is the ultimate and that phenomena as they seem to be (ji snyed pa), appearing as true things, are the conventional.

Although according to the previous citations from the Samdhinirmocana and the Nirṇayasamgrahāṇi, the meaning of the dependent being causally natureless is explained to be that it does not arise from its own self, still, that does not mean they [the Yogācāras] accept arising to be truthless, for were they to accept that arising is truthless it would be pointless [for the Yogācāras] to interpret [the claims of] naturelessness as they do.

[The Rationale Behind the Prajñāpāramitā’s Claims That Things “Do Not Arise” According to the Sūtrālaṃkāra, a Yogācāra Text]

The Sūtrālaṃkāra says: “The [claim of] nonarising was said to hold up when [it is interpreted] in terms of

1. beginning,
2. sameness,
3. otherness,
4. its own characteristic,
5. itself,
6. becoming another,
7. the afflictions, and
8. the distinctiveness.”87

The explanation of the intention behind saying that all phenomena can withstand [the claim made of them in the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, namely that] “they do not arise” is as follows. Beginning refers to the fact that there is no beginning to samsāra [so that the beginning has “never arisen”]. Sameness refers to the fact that once it has arisen in the past it does “not arise” once again by virtue of its own nature. Otherness refers to the fact that effects not concordant with their causes do “not arise.” Own characteristic refers to the fact that the imputed “does not arise” by virtue of its own characteristic. Itself refers to the fact that the dependent “does not arise” from itself. Becoming another refers to the fact that the real “does not arise” to become something else, [as it is permanent]. The afflictions refers to the fact that in the mental continuum of one who knows the exhaustion [of the afflictions, that is, of one who has attained nirvāṇa], these afflictions “do not arise” [ever again]. Distinctiveness refers to the fact that there is “no arising” within the dharmakāya (chos sku) that possesses the two purities. The commentary explains that such is the intention behind explaining the fact that phenomena “withstand the claim of nonarising.” Therefore, we can see from this explanation that this [Yogācāra] system cannot accept the possibility of the nonexistence of true arising [and must instead interpret those passages in which it occurs to mean something different].

[The Elucidation of Some Scriptural Passages Highlighting Unique Features of the Yogācāra]

The Madhyāntavibhāga states: “That which is misconceived, [that is, the dependent,] does exist, but its duality does not. Emptiness exists within it, and as regards that [emptiness], it too exists.”88 The first line expresses the fact that
the basis, the thing that is empty, [that is, the dependent,] exists inherently. The second line expresses the fact that that [basis] is empty of duality, [where duality refers to] a difference in substance between what perceives, [the subject,] and that which is perceived, [the object]. The third line indicates that the real, emptiness, the fact that the dependent is empty of the imputed, also exists inherently [just as the dependent itself does]. The commentary explains that to understand emptiness in an unmistakable way one must understand it as follows. Whenever something is missing in something else, that absence is said to be its emptiness. And the residue that exists is what gives it its real existence. Therefore, the existence of the residue is indicated in the line “that which is misconceived does exist.” Hence, [this line] does not mean that there exist dependent entities that are the residues after they have been emptied of the imputed. That such [a remaining dependent entity] can be taken as merely existing [is a position that the Prasangikas but no Yogacaras will accept]. Were that so, [that is, were the Yogacaras to accept that the dependent was merely existent without needing to make the additional claim as to its true or inherent existence,] then, as even [some] imputed [entities like space and so on] are considered [by them] to be “merely existing [phenomena],” there would be nothing to distinguish [these imputed things from dependent things]. Therefore, one must not take this [claim that the dependent “exists” to mean that it merely exists, but] to mean that it truly exists, here [in the commentary] called real existence (yang dag par yod pa).

The Madhyamavibhagatika [of Sthiramati] also explains this passage clearly: “Some think that all phenomena are utterly nonexistent like the horns of rabbit. In order to refute this all-embracing nihilism, the verse ‘that which is misconceived does exist . . .’ was taught. The word inherently is to [31] be supplied.” Likewise, the Triṃśikāvṛtti also states:

Some think of all phenomena as substance, just as consciousness itself is. Others think that consciousness exists conventionally and not ultimately, just as phenomena do. This treatise was composed in order to refute those who propound these two one-sided extremes.

This clearly explains that external objects do not exist and that consciousness ultimately exists.

The Abhidharmasamuccaya states: “There is a perception of something being empty of something else, but it is [the realization] that there is a residue left there that still exists that is the correct understanding of reality.” The meaning is as explained earlier. The imputed is truthless, and the dependent which is the remainder that is empty of that [imputed duality,] must be explained as truly existing. This method [of interpretation] is quite clearly [in sympathy with that found] in [Asanga’s] Bhumis. Nor is that all, for in the Samuccaya, when it briefly explains the four searches (tshol ba bzhi) and the four knowledges (yongs su shes pa bzhi), and in the “extensive explanation” section of the “reality” chapter of the Bodhisatvabhumi, it states that to know that things, that is, to know that dependent entities, which are established by virtue of their own characteristic, are so established is the knowledge associated with the search for the thing (dngos po tshol ba); and to know the tautologous and qualifying predicates (ngo bo dang khyad par kun brtags) to be mere labels (brags pa tsam) is the knowledge associated with the search for essential and specific predication (ngo bo nyid du ‘dogs pa dang khyad par du ‘dogs po tshol ba). The Samuccaya section that begins: “What is the intention behind the [32] Vaipulya [Sutras]’ claiming that all phenomena are natureless?” and that ends: “the nature of the imputed is characteristic naturelessness, that of the dependent is causal naturelessness, and that of the real is ultimate naturelessness” states that the teaching in the Vaipulyapaksa that all phenomena are natureless, as found in such texts as the Extensive Mother [Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra] and so forth, have an ulterior purport (dngongs pa con) and, as was explained earlier, it says, just as the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra does, that the ultimate intention (dngongs gzhi) is the threefold form of naturelessness. Hence, the claims of one individual with no training that [the philosophical position expounded in the Samuccaya is similar to that of the Madhyamaka logical compendia (dbu ma riggs pa tshogs) is nothing but nonsensical blithering. How can the Samdhinirmocana, the Nirvayasangrahāni, the Bodhisatvabhumi, the Mahāyānasangrahā, and the Samuccaya be taken as [expounding] the system of the Madhyamikas, who advocate naturelessness [unqualifiedly, seeing no need to interpret these claims,] when they all teach that the sūtra passage: “All phenomena neither arise nor do they cease; they are primordially peaceful and nirvāṇa by nature” is of ulterior purport and flexible (idem pa)?

[The Yogacāra Belief in Three Final Vehicles and the Foundation Consciousness (kun gzhi) as Another of Their Distinctive Features]

Moreover, the Samdhinirmocana teaches that it is impossible for those who one-sidedly set themselves on the pacification of the śrāvakas to achieve the essence of enlightenment even if they were to possess all of the combined exertion of all the Buddhas. The Nirvayasangrahāni also explains that: The śrāvaka who is set on pacification from the very beginning is part of the lineage that is very impoverished in compassion and is not on the side which [works] solely for the benefit of sentient beings, [33]

*A Madhyamika is someone who follows the Madhyamaka school. The first term refers to a person, the latter to a philosophical position or school of thought.
being terrified by suffering. Thus his mind turns only to thoughts of abiding in nirvāṇa. He is one of the unfortunate ones who cannot attain great enlightenment.100

So it is indisputable that in their system, [that is, in the Yogācāra of Asanga,] three final vehicles are accepted, [pointing to yet another difference between the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka schools]. Again, the Samdhinirmocana states: "Mañjuśrī, in terms of the body which is liberated, there is a similarity, an equality, between the tathāgatas and the śrāvakas."101 Having condensed the meaning in this way, the Śūraṇāmākāra then goes on to say:

One final vehicle was taught because of similarity between the liberated one who has [realized the emptiness] of phenomena and [the one who has realized only] selflessness, because of the one of different lineages [who can be converted from one vehicle to another], because of the one who achieves two thoughts, [who, having first been a Mahāyānist, degenerates,] because of emanations [of arhants who do not themselves die], and because of the finality [of a Buddha’s enlightenment].102

Hence, it indicates the ultimate intention behind the teachings that there is one final vehicle.103 Therefore, those who accept that these [texts] belong to the Great Madhyamaka and who accept them as being of a kind of definitive meaning that is to be taken literally104 and yet who [simultaneously] claim that there is one final vehicle could not possibly be in their right minds.

Again, the Samdhinirmocana states it extensively as follows: "Oh Mativisāla, the group of six consciousnesses is based on that receptacle consciousness (len pa ’i rnam par shes pa) and they are the eye consciousness, ear, nose, tongue, body and mental consciousnesses."105 Stating it briefly it says: "The receptacle consciousness is profound and subtle."106 It thus clearly states that the foundation consciousness, the totality of mental seeds (sa bon), is the cause and condition giving rise to all afflicted phenomena, [a position rejected by the Madhyamikas].107 Quoting this very [scripture] as proof, the Samuccaya and the Mahāyānasamgraha extensively explain [the existence of the foundation consciousness] in the same way.

[Arguments Against the Advocates of ‘the Emptiness of What Is Other’ (gzhon stong)]108

[Opponent:] We claim that a permanent, stable (rtag brtan) tathāgatasagarbha (bde ba rgshegs pa ’i snying po) is the foundation consciousness taught in those scriptures and we also claim that [this doctrine] is of a literal definitive meaning.

[Reply:] This is equivalent to you claiming "we are just blithering without ever having seen even one letter of those [texts]."

As it was explained earlier, the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, the scriptures of Asanga and his brother, the Śūraṇāmākāra, and the Madhyāntavibhanga clearly explain again and again that the ‘emptiness of what is other’ refers to the fact that the bases of emptiness (stong gzhi), that is, the dependent qua truly existent entities, are empty of the imputed qua nonentity (kun brtags dangs med). But some think that the tathāgatasagarbha qua nonentity is the basis of emptiness and conceive that in those scriptures of the ‘emptiness of what is other’ that [basis] is claimed to be empty of the collection of composite (’du byed) dependent entities. They then establish those [scriptures] as being of definitive meaning. These mad ‘sages’ are misapprehending their enemy to be their father.

Therefore, that these works which follow the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra take the dependent to be ultimately established entities, to be entities existing in their own right, is a point that has been made more than once. The reasons proving this point and the fact that taking the dependent to be truthless amounts to nihilism [in this Cittamātra system] have also been explained more than once. Consider the belief that every entity exists only nominally as the object of an erroneous (’khrul pa ’i) mind, and that because it is ‘empty of self’ (rang stong), that is, because it itself is empty of itself, it can in no way be a functional phenomenon (go chod kyi chos). The claim that this [belief] is the literal intention of the Samdhinirmocana and of the scriptures of Asanga [35] and his brother, to claim that it is of definitive meaning and then to persist in this [line of reasoning,] can be, alas, nothing but a cause of [intellectual] poverty.

If ‘empty of self’ means that something is itself empty of itself, then it would imply that every instance of causality would be empty of every instance of causality.109 Hence, because causality would be like the horns of a rabbit, [that is, nonexistent,] what more disastrous consequence could there ensue than this? Therefore, to believe that empty of self means this, whether one accepts, as some do, that all phenomena are empty of themselves or whether one claims that only the conventional are empty of themselves, is something that is not taught by any school of either the Mahāyāna or Hinayāna; it is not the meaning of either sūtras of provisional meaning nor of sūtras of definitive meaning; and there has never arisen in the Noble Land [of India] such a belief among any of the Buddhist philosophical schools.

[The Distinctively Yogācāra Use of the Example of the Illusion and the Status of the Dependent]110

[Opponent:] Well then, what about when the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra states that the dependent is like an illusion? Because that which truly exists cannot be like an illusion, why do you advocate that that sūtra takes the dependent to be truly existent?
[Reply:] It depends upon the way in which one takes the analogy of the illusion. [In the *Samdhinirmocana*] it is not taken as an example the way a Mādhyamika would, that is, as an example of the fact that the dependent is not true, though it appears to be true.

[Opponent:] Why is that?

[Reply:] The way in which this system takes the dependent as being exemplified by an illusion is clearly explained in such works as the [Sūtra] *Alamkāra*, the *Mahāyānasamgraha*, and the *Samuccaya*. As it says in the *Sūtramālamkāra*:

That which is conceptually cogitated, which is [perceived] incorrectly, is accepted as being like an illusion. And in what way does it have the aspect of an illusion? It is said to be like [an illusion] because it is misperceived as being dual, [when in fact it is not].

As for the meaning of this passage, the commentary explains that the basis of the misperception [within the magical trick], the stones and wood and so on, that is, the basis on which an illusion-spell is cast, is similar to the dependent, which is [perceived] incorrectly, which is conceptually cogitated, and which has been affected by the latent potentials (bod chags) of the error of dualistic appearance. The appearance of rocks and so forth as the horse or elephant [within the trick] is similar to the appearance of the dependent as dual, that is, as if there existed a separation between apprehended object and apprehending subject (gezung 'dzin rgyangs chad).

In the *Mother Sūtras* the dependent is taught by means of such examples as the illusion. Now when the *Mahāyānasamgraha* explains this analogy, it explains that to destroy the belief that without external objects nothing could be perceived as objects [of the mind], the example of the illusion [is taught, for in an illusion an object is perceived despite the fact that it does not exist]. To destroy the belief that if there were no objects, thoughts (sams) and secondary mental events (sams byung) could not arise, the mirage [is taught, for sight of water and the decision to reach it can arise without there being any water present]. Finally, to destroy the belief that if there were no objects, things could not be characterized as either pleasant or unpleasant, the example of the dream is taught [because in a dream unreal objects can cause pleasant or unpleasant sensations]. When [the *Mahāyānasamgraha*] explains [things in this way, we can see] how great a difference there is between it and the Mādhyamaka [interpretation of the analogy of the illusion].

[Opponent:] Well then, if in their system, [that is, in the Yogācāra,] dependent entities are truly existent, then why do the *Samdhinirmocana* and the *Sūtramālamkāra*, in explaining the ultimate that possesses five characteristics, explain it to be birthless and destructionless? What is more, the *Samgrahāni* says: ‘Should the misconception (rnam par rtag pa) be said to exist conventionally or should it be said to be ultimate? It is stated that it should be said to exist conventionally.’ So how do you avoid contradicting these explanations [which seem to indicate that the dependent does not truly or ultimately exist]?

[Reply:] There is no contradiction. It is as follows. Whether or not something truly exists has nothing to do with whether it is a conventional truth or an ultimate truth.

[Opponent:] Why is that?

[Reply:] A mental object (dmigs pa) that, when perceived, purifies the obstacles to omniscience (shes bya'i sgrib pa) is called an ultimate truth. A mental object that, when perceived, creates afflictions (kun nas nyon mong) is called a conventional truth. Although the dependent is [in the Cittamātra system] truly existent because it is not a purifying mental object, it is said to be a conventional truth. The true existence of the dependent opposed to the fact that it exists by virtue of its own characteristic as opposed to simply being posited by names and signs (ming dang rda'i bzhags pa tsam). Therefore, there is a very great difference between being an ultimate truth and simply existing. It is a tenet of this system that although something is a conventional truth it need not be a strictly false thing (rdo pa tsam). That is why the *Jñānasūtrasamuccaya* says: ‘The consciousness which has been liberated from the apprehended object / apprehending subject [duality] ultimately exists. This [is a tenet] well known in the Yogācāra scriptures which take the mind to the opposite side of the ocean [of samsāra].’ In this way the followers of the Cittamātra have with great effort set forth proofs of the fact that it is not correct to take as literally true the teachings of the sūtras of the middle wheel, which teach that all phenomena are essenceless, taking instead as literal the way in which the *Samdhinirmocana* distinguishes the three natures in terms of whether they exist by virtue of their own characteristic. Now the chief context of all of these expositions is as follows. There is the identification of the extremes of reification (sgro 'dogs) and nihilism (skar 'debs) in dependence upon [that object] which when negated (khegs pa) establishes the selflessness of this system. Then there is the understanding of how the two kinds of selflessness are set forth by means of the method of refuting those [two extremes]; and finally, by meditating on these two kinds of selflessness, what obscurations are abandoned and what enlightenment, the effect, is actualized.

Nihilism is only posited by tenet, [that is, philosophically or intellectually, as opposed to being an innate thing,] and that it exists in the Buddhist (rang sde) system of the Advocates of Naturelessness, [that is, in the Mādhyamaka,] has been explained. A glimpse of the way in which the refutation of the stance of nihilism is taught [in the Cittamātra] can be gleaned from my previous brief explanation.

Reification is of two kinds: intellectual (kun brtags) and innate (than skyes). The intellectual is of two varieties, both of which advocate [the existence] of objects (don smra ba): one is a Buddhist form and the other belongs to other religions. The innate is also twofold: one reifies a self of the person
(gang zag gi bdag) and the other a self of phenomena (chos kyi bdag). Because the way in which this first [kind of innate reification] and the nonexistence of the self of the person, which is the negation of that [innately reified self], are set forth in this system is not vastly dissimilar to [the way in which] the Svātāntrika Madhyamikas do so, [I will not go into it here], and it should instead be understood from the brief explanation I give of it later.

The way in which this system elucidates the reification of the self of phenomena, and the nature of the selflessness of phenomena which is the complete negation of that [innately reified self of phenomena] is the ultimate reality (mihar thug pa'i gnas), which is extremely difficult to understand. That being so, among these snowy mountain ranges, only our Lord, the Omniscient Tsong kha pa, made [these points] clear. Others, even those that had reputations as scholars, did nothing more than refute the fact that sensory consciousness (dbang shes) is a different substance (rdzas) from blue, the object that appears to it (rang gi snang yul). Apart from that they do not mention a word about such imputed entities as essential and specific predication (ngo bo dang khyad par du kun brtags pa'i kun brtags), nor about how it is that the selflessness of phenomena is posited as the negation of [such imputed entities] existing by virtue of their own characteristic,115 so that in the ocean of the tenets of the Vijñaptimātra, the sailor of intelligence, when grappling the oars of analysis, begins to steer afloat, which makes it useless for one to climb into the ship of the great scriptural exegesis of this system.

[Tsong kha pa’s Unique Exposition of the Yogācāra Theory of Emptiness]116

Be that as it may, our Lord, the Omniscient One, has demonstrated his kindness by his complete and utter elucidation of this system of the Mahāyāna in his treatise Essence of Eloquence: An Exposition of [the Doctrines of] Provisional and Definitive Meaning (Drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par 'byed pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po).117 Nowadays, men are extremely weak in intellectual prowess, and so, like befuddled children, thinking only of the present moment, they are incapable of elucidating even the slightest passage from such adamantine words [as those found in Essence of Eloquence]. Realizing that they cannot but become confused (gol med pa), I, with very few words, will reveal to the reader, as clearly as the lines on the palms of their own hands, this very meaning which is like a buried treasure. So lend your ear!

The Pramāṇavārttikam explains the misapprehension of the self of phenomena in terms of only the dualistic sense consciousness’ misapprehension of object and subject as different substances. It does not clearly explain the misapprehension of the self of phenomena to be the misapprehension of the fact that essential and specific predicates118 exist by virtue of their own character-
of "the four searches" (tshol ba bzhi), of the way in which one comes to understand the Vijñaptimātra based on these, or of the way in which the Prāṇāṇārāmitā teaches [this] as the antidote (gnyen po) to the ten unstable misconceptions (nnam gyeng gi nnam rtog bcu). The Samdhinirmocana explains that the dependent is not of the nature of either essential or specific predicates by virtue of its own characteristic, and hence characteristic naturelessness is explained to be the selflessness of phenomena. This in turn implies that to apprehend what is essentially and specifically predicated of the dependent as existing by virtue of its own characteristic is to apprehend the self of phenomena.

The Bodhisattvabhāmi, the Nīrṇyasamgrahāni, and the Mahāyānasamgraha also go to great extent to prove that emptiness, which is that [an entity] empty of existing the way it is apprehended, is the ultimate meaning of the Madhyamaka and also to prove that the selflessness of phenomena is the real. The Bodhisattvabhāmi and the other texts also explain that the dependent's emptiness of existing by virtue of its own characteristic as it is essentially and specifically predicated is the real, is the reality (chos nyid) which is the negation of the self of phenomena, and is that mental object (dmigs pa) which, when perceived and meditated upon, purifies the obstacles to knowledge (shes sgrub). For this reason they claim that the two śrāvakā systems do not set forth the theory that essentially and specifically predicated imaginary entities are empty of existing by virtue of their own characteristic and that in both systems those [imaginary entities] must, of necessity, be apprehended as existing by virtue of their own characteristic.

Such imaginary entities are of the nature of verbal (ming) and symbolic (rdar) predications (baags pa) [that predicate] of, for example, the aggregates, such essential qualities as "this is form," or such specific [qualities] as "this is the form of," Now because one cannot deny that the aggregates are of just such a nature, [that is, that they are the abodes or objects of such predications], what they are refuting is that they exist in this way by virtue of their own characteristic. That the self which is the object of negation (dgag bya), that is, that the object of negation which when negated establishes selflessness, cannot exist even nominally is a belief that all of the Buddhist philosophical schools that accept selflessness have in common.

[The Cittamātra] (1) refutation of the fact that mere verbal and symbolic predications, whether essential ones like "form" and so on or specific ones like "arising" and so on, exist by virtue of their own characteristic and (2) their refutation that one fact of "form's being (yin pa) the cognitive basis (tshen gzhis) of the conceptual consciousness (rtog pa) which predicates ('dogs pa) its essential and specific [qualities]" exists by virtue of its own characteristic in no way different from the Sautrāntikas' repudiation of the fact that form is, by virtue of its own characteristic, (1) the subject matter (brjod bya) of speech (sprts) and (2) the object cognized (tshen yul) by the conceptual consciousness [experiencing] form, [these being in the Sautrāntika system corollaries to their] accepting that [these latter entities] are universals (spyi mtschan).

Having correctly elucidated this fact [that in this regard there is no difference between Cittamātrins and Sautrāntikas], it is necessary to properly identify, not just theoretically, but through a multitude of examples, how it is that [things] are either essentially or specifically [predicated] either verbally or cognitively, how it is that [connection between object and predicate] appears to exist by virtue of its own characteristic, and what the object that is the cognitive basis of conceptual thought is like.

In this regard, form's being the basis (gzhis) or abode (gnyan) of the essential and specific terms (tha snyag) [predicated of it] is something that exists only by virtue of name (ming) and symbol (rda); and although form is established by valid cognition (tshad ma) to be the basis of essential and specific terms, still, form is not established by virtue of its own characteristic as being the basis of these essential and specific terms, even nominally. Therefore, though form appears to exist in that [latter] way, that it exists as it appears is something that must be repudiated even nominally; just as the fact that it exists even nominally in the way it is cognized (tshul khrus) by the cognition that conceives of it as existing in that way must be repudiated.

Form appears to conceptual consciousness as being the basis of essential and specific terms by virtue of its own characteristic and this mere appearance already has been taken as a reification of something that does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic even by the Sautrāntikas. The [Sautrāntikas] have also taken that conceptual consciousness to be a consciousness that is in error (Khrul shes) with regard to those appearances. Hence the realization (rtogs pa) that that appearance to conceptual consciousness is empty of existing as it appears, that is, empty of existing by virtue of its own characteristic, cannot possibly be what [the Cittamātras] mean by "the realization of the selflessness of phenomena."

But here [in the Cittamātra], it is the fact that form apprears to sensory perception (dbang shes) as being, by virtue of its own characteristic, the basis of essential and specific terms that is negated as existing the way it appears, even nominally; [and here, sensory perception is considered as being something] that arises in dependence upon latent potentialities (bug chags) and that the Sautrāntikas believe not to be in error with regard to its appearing object (snang yul). That [ negation] is the real (yongs grub), the negation of the self of phenomena, and the realization of that [fact] is posited [by the Cittamātras] to be the realization of the selflessness of phenomena.

Having negated that form exists as it is cognized by a conceptual consciousness, that is, as being by virtue of its own characteristic the basis of essentially and specifically predicated terms, they then repudiate the self of phenomena. But it is more difficult to understand what is to be refuted (dgag bya) in regard to the way in which [things] appear to sensory perception than
it is in regard to the way things are conceptually cognized. Therefore, if one first identifies the way in which [what is to be negated] appears [to perception], it will make a great deal of difference [pedagogically] in one’s coming to understand the method of refuting its existing as it is conceptually cognized, when it is conceptually cognized as existing in this way. [The verse that goes]: “Because there is no thought previous to the name.”128 is what principally refutes [the fact that things exist] the way in which they appear to sensory perception.

[Opponent:] How is it that an appearance, which is only a conceptual imputation (rgas pas bsags pa tsam), can appear to nonconceptual sensory perception? [Reply:] Were there a contradiction in its appearing [to sense consciousness simply by virtue of being a conceptual imputation], it would follow, absurdly, that [in the magician’s trick] the appearance of illusory horses and elephants could not possibly appear to sensory perception, as illusory horses and elephants are only conceptual imitations.129

[Opponent:] Well then it is incumbent upon you to explain (1) why form and so on appear to sensory perception as if they were the basis of essential and specific terms, (2) also why they appear to be that basis by virtue of their own characteristic, (3) in what way [form’s being the basis of such predicates is established] only verbally and symbolically, and (4) the ways in which it is posited to be the cognitive basis of a conceptual consciousness.

[Reply:] I will indeed explain. It is as it says in the Mahāyānasamgraha: “In this regard, what is the characteristic of the dependent? It is that which is possessed as seeds (sa bon) within the foundation consciousness (kun gzhi rnam par shes pa). It is that viññāpti gathered [there] by an incorrect misconception of existence.”130 Thus it explains that the incorrect object [arises] due to the latent potentialities in the foundation consciousness. It teaches that the principal dependent entity is the viññāpti that is incorrectly misconceived and that has a mistaken mode of appearance (phrin ci log gi snang tshul yod pa’i). Then, when it explains the divisions of such a viññāpti, it says that there is (1) a viññāpti that is the appearance of an object by virtue of linguistic latent potentialities (mgon par brjod pa’i bag chags), (2) a viññāpti that appears by virtue of latent potentialities which perceive the self (bdag tu la ba’i bag chags), and (3) a viññāpti that appears by virtue of the latent potentialities of the kinds of existence (srid pa’i yan lag gi ba’i bag chags).

What are these? The Mahāyānasamgraha says:

In this regard, the viññāptis of the body, embodied and the experiencer, the viññāpti of what is undertaken by that [experiencer], the viññāpti of the actual mode of undertaking it, the viññāpti of time, the viññāpti of numbers, the viññāpti of place, the viññāpti of terms, the viññāpti of the distinction between the self and others, the viññāptis of good rebirth, bad rebirth, and death.

Again, that same work says:

The viññāpti of what is undertaken by that [experiencer] should be known to be the six externa! spheres (kham) such as form and so forth, and the viññāpti of the actual mode of undertaking it should be known to be the six [internal] spheres such as the eye consciousness (mig gi rnam par shes pa) and so on.132

Hence, [we can see] that the appearance of form to the eye consciousness is a form of appearance that occurs by virtue of linguistic latent potentialities.133 It is necessary to understand this mode of appearance in this way.

Now in the Sautrāntika’s system, blue is form by virtue of its own characteristic,134 and although “blue’s being form” is the cognitive object of the conceptual consciousness that thinks “blue is form,” still, its being the cognitive object of such a conceptual consciousness is not something that exists by virtue of its own characteristic, but is instead a reification (sgro bsags). And that is not all . . . even though the cognitive object of the conceptual consciousness which cognizes that “blue is form” is not established by virtue of its own characteristic, the blue that is the cognitive object of the conceptual consciousness that apprehends the fact that “this blue is form” does exist by virtue of its own characteristic. Thus in the Sautrāntika system there is this kind of distinction, namely, that although the cognitive object of a conceptual consciousness qua category (rang ldog) is a reification, the individual members (gsi ldog) [of those categories] are not.

Now as regards the Vijñaptimātra theory, when persons well versed in linguistic symbols focus their minds during the perception of blue, then at the time that blue appears to the eye consciousness, the blue appears as blue and as an external object also. But that is not all. There also exists a mode of appearance in which that very blue appears to be the blue which is the basis or abode of such expressions as “this is blue,” “this blue is of the nature of form,” and “this is the arising of blue.”

How do we know that [mode of appearance] to be present? It is because when one makes that very appearance, that is, the way in which blue appears to the eye consciousness, the object of one’s recollection, it is cognized, and the conceptual consciousness that creates the expression “this is blue” is elicited under the influence of the eye consciousness;135 also when someone asks “what is the nature of the meaning of the word blue?” cognizing that very appearance that is the way in which the blue appears to the eye consciousness,
one answers "its nature is that it is form," where the motivating conceptual thought [for such an answer] is elicited under the influence of the eye consciousness. For that reason, when the blue that is the basis of the term blue appears to the eye consciousness there also occurs an appearance in which blue appears to be the basis of the term blue from the side of its own reality (gnas lugs) qua entity. This is what it means for the blue that is the basis of the term blue to appear to exist by virtue of its own characteristic. Likewise, there is an analogous situation as regards the meaning of the fact that form appears, by virtue of its own characteristic, to be the basis of the expressions such as "this blue is of the nature of form" and "this is its arising." Such an appearance within the eye consciousness is not an appearance that occurs under the influence of the reality (gnas tshod) of blue, nor, as is the case with the blue that appears to the eye consciousness, does it arise taking as its cause the seeds of concordant latent potentialities (rigs mthun pa'i bag chags kyi sa bon). Instead, from beginningless time we have become accustomed to repeatedly engaging in the conceptualizations of essential and specific expressions of the sort "this is blue," "this is form," and "this is the arising of form." This [above mentioned appearance], then, is an appearance that arises only by virtue of latent potentialities that have been planted [by our having accustomed ourselves in this way]. Because it is a mere appearance that arises under the influence of latent potentialities planted by the conceptual consciousness' being conditioned to the predication (sbyar ba) of terms, it is said to be an appearance that is established only by name and symbol, an appearance that is established [only] by the power of conceptual consciousness.

Form and so on appear to sensory perception to be the basis of essential and specific terms, and nominally (tha snyad da) form does exist as the basis of essential and specific terms. As for why it is established [in this way] merely nominally and conceptually [and not by virtue of its own characteristic], that has been explained earlier. Both (1) the appearance of form to sensory perception as being the basis of essential and specific terms by virtue of its own characteristic and (2) form's being, as it appears to be, established as the basis of the terms by virtue of its own characteristic, are mere imitations (baugs pa) by name and conceptual thought. How this is so is as [explained] earlier, but they do not exist even nominally as they are imputed. Hence, form's being the basis of essential and specific terms is an existent imaginary entity, whereas form's being the basis of essential and specific terms by virtue of its own characteristic is a nonexistent imaginary entity. When form appears to sensory perception, it appears as if (lha bur) it were the abode onto which expressions like "this is form" are predicated. That it exists in accordance with this mode of appearance by virtue of its own characteristic is something the Sautrantikas accept. But neither the Sautrantikas nor the Cittamatrins accept that when form appears to sensory perception it appears to be the basis of those expressions in such a way that it is the individual members [of the category] of the expressions [relating to] form that appear. Nonetheless, when form appears to sensory perception, there does exist a way in which the basis, onto which such expressions as "this is form" is predicated, appears. Therefore, the appearance of form to sensory perception is cognized in the [conceptual consciousness], and then the conceptual consciousness makes such predications as "this is form." This is a point on which both [Sautrantikas and Cittamatrins] agree. They do not agree however as to whether it exists the way it appears by virtue of its own characteristic.

Therefore [first] form appears to sensory perception as being, by virtue of its own reality qua entity, the basis onto which expressions like "this is form" are predicated. The subsequent conceptual thought then cognizes the appearance of form [in this way], after which predications such as "this is form" are made. The linguistic latent potentialities that existed previously in the mental continuum are again and again nurtured (gso par byed) by means of the process in which conceptual consciousness cognizes [form] to exist in the same way as it appears to sensory perception. Therefore, the form which appears in that way to sensory perception is called the cognitive basis of conceptual consciousness. This is what we are referring to when we say over and over again "the cognitive basis of the conceptual consciousness of form." To say, however, that this is the cognitive basis of the conceptual consciousness of form is different from simply saying that this is the cognitive object of the conceptual consciousness of form. The [Yogacāra's assertion] that form is not the cognitive basis of conceptual consciousness by virtue of its own characteristic is different from the Sautrantika's claim that form is not the cognitive object of conceptual consciousness by virtue of its own characteristic.

Let me give the reason for this in an easily understandable and brief way. These two are dissimilar. This is because when we say that form is not the cognitive basis of conceptual consciousness by virtue of its own characteristic we are not referring only to the cognitive bases of conceptual consciousness qua [universal] category (rang ldog), but instead to the individual elements of that [set], accepting that this applies to a mode of appearance in which form appears to the sensory perception that arises in dependence on latent potentialities as the basis onto which expressions like this is form are predicated, whereas in the Sautrantika system those sensory perceptions are unmistakably in regard to their appearing objects (snang yud), so that the objects of those sensory perceptions exist as they appear, that is, by virtue of their own characteristic. Thus, the Sautrantikas accept that the conceptual consciousness which apprehends [form] to exist by virtue of its own characteristic as it appears to those sensory perceptions has a mode of apprehension (dzin stangs) in accordance with its object (don mthun). Because [the Yogacāras] believe that apprehending [things] to exist by virtue of their own characteristic, as they appear
to sensory perception, is grasping at the self of phenomena, however, there is a tremendous difference [between the Yogācāra and Sautrāntika positions in this regard].

Therefore, the appearance of form to sensory perception as being in reality the basis onto which essential and specific terms are predicated is an incorrect mode of appearance that arises due to the latent potentialities of ignorance. Still, that sensory perception is not claimed to be either an obstacle to omniscience (shes sgrub) nor the grasping at the self of phenomena. It is the conceptual consciousness which apprehends [things] to exist as they appear to sensory perception that is a reification, and that is both the grasping at the self of phenomena and the manifest (ngon gyur) obstacle to omniscience, whereas on the other side there is the repudiation that even nominally [things] do not exist in the way they are conceived by, [that is, appear to,] conceptual consciousness as well as the repudiation that even nominally they do not exist in the same way as they appear to sensory perception, that is, as the basis of the terms form and so forth.

That is why the text known as The Essence of Eloquence: An Exposition of [the Doctrines of] Provisional and Definitive Meaning says:

Therefore, when terms such as form are predicated and one looks at how it is that blue appears to be the basis onto which the term form is predicated, [we find] that it appears not to be established by virtue of just name and symbol, but that it instead appears to be established by virtue of its own reality. Misapprehending the blue as existing in the way it appears is the reification that misapprehends the word form to be labeled onto [the entity] blue by virtue of its own characteristic. That this [reification] is something that the infantile possess has been established by previous explanations. The two schools that advocate the [existence] of objects, [that is, the Vaibhāsika and Sautrāntikas,] accept such a mode of apprehension to be accurate (thad ldan). Hence, although they are similar to the Cittamātrins in claiming that the referents of words (gsgra'i brjod bya) qua universal categories are conceptual imputations (rtog btags), how can they possibly be like [the Cittamātrins] in whose system there are svalaśaṇas as the elements of those [categories].

The meaning of this passage should be explained as follows. Therefore, form appears to sensory perception to be the basis onto which essential and specific terms are predicated. It is cognized [by conceptual thought] in accordance with this mode of appearance, and then there occurs a conceptual thought that creates such expressions as "this is form" and so forth. This [conceptual thought] is not a mistaken consciousness (log shes). The object as it is cognized by that [conceptual thought, that is, the appearing object,] is an imaginary entity that only nominally exists. Now just as form appears to sen-

sory perception to be the basis of essential and specific terms by virtue of its own characteristic, a conceptual consciousness cognizes [form conceptually] in just the same way as it appears [to sense perception nonconceptually]. [This conceptual thought] is a mistaken consciousness whose object does not exist as it is cognized even nominally. Hence, all conceptual thoughts are not taken as being the same.139

Although blue is not the basis of the term blue by virtue of its own nature, [in the Cittamātra system] blue is blue by virtue of its own nature. Likewise, although blue, contrary to the way in which it appears to sensory perception, does not exist as the basis of the predicated term blue by virtue of its own characteristic, still, blue does, as it appears, exist as blue by virtue of its own characteristic. It also exists by virtue of its own characteristic as it is cognized by a conceptual thought [and not just by a sense perception] that apprehends it in accordance with this latter way of appearing, [that is, of blue as blue].

[On Latent Potentialities]

Blue appears to the eye consciousness as the basis onto which the term blue is posited because of the imprints (lag rjes) of linguistic latent potentialities. Therefore, because the object of such an appearance is an object that is a mere imputation by name and conceptual thought, it is not a real entity (dngos po). However, blue's appearing as blue to the eye consciousness is not due to the imprints of linguistic latent potentialities but instead is caused by concordant latent potentialities (rigs mtha' pa'i bag chags). Because the object of such an appearance is an impermanent entity that is destroyed at each instant, it exists substantially (rdzas su grub pa) and is a dependent entity (gzhon dbang), and hence it is not an imaginary entity. For this reason it should be understood that each way in which [an object] appears to a single eye consciousness [results from] its own individual latent potentialities, just as one single sense consciousness has its own individual set of threefold conditioning imprints (kyebs gsum gyi lag rjes).140 It is also with this idea in mind that the Mahāyānasāṅgraha says:

If what appears as an object that is mere viśṇapti is a dependent entity, [someone may ask] how that is so; that is, why it is a dependent entity and why it is called a dependent entity. It is called dependent because it arises from its own latent seeds. After it has arisen, because it cannot of its very nature abide for more than an instant, it is called dependent.141

[The expression] its own latent seeds refers to concordant latent potentialities.

[Question:] What are these so-called concordant latent potentialities?
A previous consciousness has the ability to give rise to a similar later consciousness. Now when [the former] ceases, that which is left deposited upon the foundation consciousness (kun gzi nam par shes pa) [that can give rise to another similar consciousness at a later time is called the concordant latent potentiality]. Therefore, the appearance of blue to a later eye consciousness is [the result of] a latent imprint placed [in the foundation consciousness] by a previous eye consciousness to which blue has appeared. It is not the result of a latent imprint placed [in the foundation consciousness] by a conceptual consciousness.

Because blue appears to the eye consciousness to be the basis of essential and specific terms in dependence on linguistic latent potentialities, it must be the result of those latent potentialities, and if that is so, does that not make it a real entity (dngos po), [that is, the result of causes, when in actuality it is an unreal and imputed fact]?

Well then, [following the same logic,] taking the appearance of a pot even to conceptual consciousness, it follows, absurdly, that it is the result of linguistic latent potentialities because it is an appearance that arises in conceptual consciousness in dependence on those [linguistic latent imprints]. Hence, [one can see from this that] there is a difference between "arising in dependence upon latent influences" and "being born from latent seeds." As regards the concordant latent potentialities, Asanga and his brother [Va-subandhu] explain them to be the "causal condition" (rgya rkyen) from among the four types of condition.

In this way [we see that] even in regard to a single sense consciousness [54] that arises in dependence upon potentialities there is (1) an object that exists just as it appears, and this is a dependent entity (gzhan dbang) that exists by virtue of its own characteristic. (2) Then there is an object that can be posited to exist only nominally as it appears by name and symbol, and this is an imaginary entity (kun brtags). (3) Finally, there is a mere conceptual imputation that cannot be posited to exist as it appears by name and symbol even nominally. [Because the kinds of things that appear to sense perception] are divisible into these three kinds [of objects], the method in which the conceptual consciousness conceives of the object that appears to that [sense perception] is also threefold. But [in the case of conceptual thought] we are dealing with distinct conceptual thoughts, [as opposed to dealing with the different objects of a single mind as is the case in sense perception]. It is not simply that the way in which things are conceived of within a single conceptual thought can be divided into three.

Although all this could have been gathered from the previous explanations [in this text,] I have once again set it forth in this condensed fashion for those whose mental faculties are extremely dull.

Take the case of the sense consciousness of someone who is not conversant with a certain term or symbol (rda). The way in which [the direct object] appears to [such a sense consciousness] in no way differs from the way it appears to someone who is conversant with the term or symbol. Nevertheless, although the generic image (don spyi) corresponding to such an appearance arises in the conceptual consciousness following [both sense consciousnesses], because the generic linguistic image (sgna spyi) corresponding to that symbol or term does not arise [for the person not conversant with the term], there will be a difference in so far as [the latter person] will simply not know how to use such a term.

[The Proof of the Linguistic Interpretation of Emptiness]143

Form [first] appears to sense consciousness to be the basis of essential and specific terms by virtue of its own characteristic, and then a conceptual consciousness conceives of it as existing the way it appears [to that sense consciousness]. The reasoning which refutes that [form] exists as it is apprehended [by that conceptual consciousness] is explained in the Mahāyānasamgraha:

Because there is no mind before the name, Because of multiplicity and because it is indefinite, And because of the contradictions between Its very self, its many selves And its mixture of selves, thus can it be proven.144

The first reason is this. When positing "the bulbous one"145 as the basis of the term pot, it follows, absurdly, [from your premises] that it is done utterly independently of the term because that the bulbous one exists by virtue of its own characteristic, from the side of its own reality, as the [basis of that term]. Now if you accept [that the bulbous one is the basis of the term pot independent of the term,] then it follows, absurdly, that the thought (blo) which thinks "pot" of the bulbous one arises independently of the term, and if you agree to that, then it follows that the mere sight of the bulbous one should evoke the thought "this is a pot" even prior to the bulbous one’s having been given the name pot. Based on these reductions it is proven that such a thought does not arise prior to the name and thus that [the bulbous one] does not exist as the basis of that [word pot] by virtue of its own characteristic.

The second reason is this. When one being is called by several names, like Indra, Śakra, and Grāmaghātaka,147 it follows, absurdly, that being is the referential basis (jug pa’i gzi) of those names by virtue of his own real nature (dngos po’i dbang gis). Now if you accept this, it will follow, absurdly, that one single being would be as many objects as it had different names. This is yet another proof in favor of the original premise, [that a thing is not, by virtue of its own characteristic, the referential basis of the term that names it].
The third reason is this. When two beings are called by one and the same name, it follows that they are called that name by virtue of their own real nature because [according to you] those two beings are the referential bases of that single name by virtue of their own reality (dngos po'i gnas tshod kyi). If you agree to this then it follows, absurdly, that those two beings must be only one referential object just as the name by which they are called is one, and thus it would follow, absurdly, that those two beings would have their mental continua mixed up [into one].

According to Sautrāntikas, if what is actually expressed (dngos kyi brjod bya) by the word pot exists by virtue of its being a svalakṣaṇa (rang mishan) there would occur a problem in so far as there could arise a thought of that name [pot] independently of its relationship to the term. Nevertheless they claim that there is no fault in maintaining that the bulbous one exists as the referential basis of the name pot, just as it appears to sense consciousness, by virtue of its own characteristic. The Vijñānavādins, however, force through, with those [preceding reasons], the proof that such a distinction is not tenable.

Although consciousness truly exists [in this Yogācāra system], it does not truly exist as the basis onto which the term consciousness is posited; its being the basis or the abode of such a term is an imaginary entity. Nonetheless, when blue appears to sense consciousness, it appears as if that very blue were, by virtue of its own characteristic, the basis of essential and specific expressions such as this is blue. Now when such a consciousness appears to the autocognition (rang rig) which experiences that consciousness, that very consciousness does not appear to be the basis of essential and specific expressions. This is because, although the appearance of blue to sense consciousness is an appearance accompanied by the appearance of duality (gnyis snang), the autocognition that experiences consciousness experiences it without dual appearance.

The two śrāvakas schools maintain that unless the object, that appears (snang yul) to sense consciousness, which they accept as being perceived without error (ma 'khrul ba), exists by virtue of its own characteristic, it can not be posited as existing [at all]. The Vijñānavādins, on the other hand, maintain that there is an object that appears to sense consciousness in dependence on latent potentialities but that does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic, being only posited by name and symbol; but [though they accept that it does exist in this way], because it is merely posited by name and symbol, it can not be posited as [being involved in] a causal [process]. Therefore, they do not accept that it is a real entity (dngos po). Because the Prāsaṅgika Mañḍhyanikas accept that what is posited merely by name can also be posited as causal, this is the best [position]. That is why The Elucidation of the Provisional and Definitive (Drang nges rnam 'byed-LSN) says:

However, if something is merely posited by name and symbol, the [Vaibhāsikas and Sautrāntikas] accept that it cannot be causal. These two advocates of [external] objects believe that if you repudiate that form and so on is, by virtue of its own characteristic, the basis of the conceptions that conceive of it and the abode of the term that names it, then it could not exist. This does not refer to the svalakṣaṇas that are spoken of by the logicians (tshad ma). One should familiarize oneself with this point as it is expounded herein.

Even though [LSN] states that it does not refer to the svalakṣaṇas that are spoken of by the logicians, it does not mean that the two advocates of [external] objects do not accept that the object that appears as the basis of such terms as form and so on to a nonerroneous sense consciousness is a svalakṣaṇa of the kind spoken of in such passages as ‘because there are two kinds of existent entities (gzhal bya), there are two kinds of valid cognitions (tshad ma).’ This is because in that passage it explains that everything potentially efficacious (don byed nus pa) is also a svalakṣaṇa and because the Mahātmā (Dharmakīrti) explains that it is impossible for a Sautrāntika to accept that something is both the object which actually appears to a nonerroneous sense consciousness and at the same time not be potentially efficacious.

Neither does it mean that the Cittamātrins accept that the object which appears in a similar fashion, [that is, as the basis of such terms as form,] to sense consciousness is a svalakṣaṇa of the kind spoken of in the passage of the logicians, [for even the Cittamātrins do not accept this]. The reason is this: were that so, one would have to maintain that the Vijñānavādins accept that that object is both merely posited by name and symbol and potentially efficacious; and, as has been explained, the Vijñānavādins cannot envision that something merely posited by name and thought can [at the same time] be causal. So do not entertain either of these two doubts in regard to the meaning of [Tsong kha pa’s] passage.

Well then, [if those are not the meanings of the cited passage,] what is? [When he says] that if the Sautrāntikās and so forth were to negate that [things] are the abodes of the terms that name them by virtue of being svalakṣaṇas, then they would not exist, it is not referring to the svalakṣaṇas that are spoken of by the Sautrāntikās themselves in such passages as ‘because there are two kinds of existent entities.’ Because the Sautrāntikas do not accept that ‘space’s being the basis onto which the name space is posited’ is a real entity (dngos po), they do not believe that it is a svalakṣaṇa of the kind spoken of in such passages as ‘because there are two kinds of existent entities.’ Still, they do claim that it exists, and they nonetheless believe that space is the basis onto which the name space is posited by virtue of space’s own reality (rang gi gnas tshod), and that if it did not exist in such a way, space could not exist.

A Sautrāntika accepts that space and nirvāna are the abodes onto which the names space and the exhaustion of defilements are posited by virtue of
their own reality. Now although the Sautrāntikas themselves do not mention the word svālakṣaṇa, [that is, they do not explicitly say "by virtue of its being a svālakṣaṇa,"] according to the Cittamātrins, the Sautrāntikas are reduced to accepting that in that [expression “by virtue of its own reality,” the words] mean ["by virtue of its being] a svālakṣaṇa." To understand this is extremely important.

[Nonduality as a Corollary of the Linguistic Interpretation of Emptiness]

How is it that one comes to understand the Vijñaptimātratā (mind-only theory) by means of this method of refuting the extreme of reification (sgrub 'dogs pa'i mtha') as it has been explained here? When one negates the fact that all phenomena, from form up to omniscience, are ultimately the bases of conceptual cognitions (rnam rtog gi zhen pa'i gzhis) and the abode on which linguistic terms are predicated (ming gi tha snjod 'dogs pa'i gzhis), then one realizes that the object of a certain conceptual thought does not exist as it appears to [exist]. [And what is that thought?] First it appears [to sense perception] as if, based on the name, which is what expresses, the meaning, which is what is expressed, and the relationship between name and meaning, any meaning expressed, whether [predicated] essentially or specifically, exists from its own reality (rang gi gnas tshod). Then there is a mental conception which conceives that this is so. [This is the conceptual thought whose object one comes to realize does not exist as it appears to exist.] By [negating this fact] one comes to consider that the mode of perception that perceives [things] in that way is not without error, and then one enters into an understanding of the Vijñaptimātra, which is the nonexistence of the duality of subject and object. This is how it is explained in the Mahāyānasamgraha. By the very negation of [this extreme of] reification, one will [be able to] effortlessly negate the fact that subject and object qua external entity are different substances. When, [59] through reasoning, one negates the fact that form exists as it is conceived when it is conceived to be, by virtue of its own characteristic, the abode or basis onto which essential and specific terms are posited, as one is also in the process negating that it exists as it appears to the sense consciousness to which it appears in such a way, one will also realize that the object that appears to those sense consciousnesses are erroneously [perceived]. When one understands that, as one is repudiating [that such consciousness] arises under the power of a perceived object (dmigs yul) which exists externally, one is also repudiating that blue and so on exist as different substances from the sense consciousnesses to which they appear.

If one does not understand this method of refuting such an extreme of reification, then when the Mahāyānasamgraha explains that the Mother Sūtras' claims of "nonexistence" are intended [to apply to] imaginary entities, the Vijñānāvādins' own system would be reduced to many [unnecessary] absurdities. For there would of necessity arise a multitude of explanations such as this; that is, that what [these sūtras] actually mean when they say that space is nonexistent is that space does not exist as an external object, which is nothing but the refutation of a mistaken conception (log rtag) that could not possibly occur to anyone.

When one has understood this, one will have gained expertise in the proper method of interpretation, namely, that what is meant [by the nonexistence claims of the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras—PPS] such as “see no space, neither see space’s name” is that space is not, by virtue of its own characteristic, the abode of names such as space.

To hold that space is, by virtue of its own reality, the abode of terms like space is a [misconception] that exists innately (lhan skyes du) in ordinary beings, and it is also this system [the Yogācāra] takes to be the misapprehension of the self of phenomena (chos kyi bdag ‘dzin). It is impossible [however] to have an innate thought that holds space to be an external material form.

Likewise, when one has understood this, one will have gained expertise concerning the way in which the Mahāyānasamgraha and the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-piṇḍārtha explain the meaning of the Mother Sūtras when they say “a bodhisattva should not be perceived, neither should a bodhisattva’s name be perceived.” Otherwise [if this linguistic interpretation has not been grasped] one cannot say that one has grasped even the smallest portion of the meaning of the Mahāyāna scriptures.

[The Explanation of the Three Natures]

Dependent entities are the bases on which imaginary entities are predicated or imputed. They are also the subjects that possess the quality (chos can) of reality. Any real entity ( thugs po) is an example [of a dependent entity]. They are defined as those things which arise in dependence on other causes and conditions. They are divided into (1) pure dependent entities (dag pa gzhan dbang) like the worldly gnoses (‘jig rten pa’i ye shes) of the pure attainments subsequent [to the equipoise] (rjes thob dag pa) of Mahāyāna āryans, and (2) impure dependent entities (ma dag gzhan dbang) such as the incorrect misconceptions (yang dag ma yin kun rtag) of ordinary individuals.

Imaginary entities are the mere labels of the conceptual thoughts that chiefly take dependent entities as the bases of the labeling (gdags gzhis). Any
generic image (don spyi) is an example. As it says in the Elucidation of the Provisional and Definitive: "There are quite a few of those which cannot be posited by name and symbol and are not established by virtue of their own characteristic because they are merely labeled by conceptual thought."[154] What this is saying is that, for example, sound's being empty of permanence does not arise as an object in the mind, [that is, does not come to be understood,] simply on account of latent potentialities [due to] one's accustoming oneself to saying expressions such as "sound has no permanence." Although sound's being empty of permanence is not posited by the mere expression of terms like "sound has no permanence," [as it requires the elimination of reification through reasoning,] still, because it is a universal that is labeled mentally, one must consider it to be an example of an imaginary entity. The definition [of an imaginary entity] is "that which is merely labeled by conceptual thought and is also the object of an erroneous mind." It has two divisions: (1) those [61] that can be counted as imaginary entities (ttram grangs pa'i kun brtags) [but that nonetheless exist] like the fact that form is the basis of essential and specific terms, and (2) utterly nonexistent imaginary entities (yongs su chad pa'i kun brtags) such as the two selves, [that is, that of persons and of phenomena].

The real is reality [lit. thussness], that is, the fact that dependent entities are empty of existing as they are imagined by the two forms of self-grasping. This is also its definition. It has two divisions: (1) the nonerroneous real (phyin ci ma log pa'i yongs grub) such as the ārya's equipoised gnosia that perceives the selflessness of phenomena, and (2) the unchanging real (gyur med yongs grub), that is, reality (chos nyid). The former is called the real, but is [in actuality] a dependent entity in nature. In the Vijñaptimātrā it is explained that dependent entities cannot appear to the equipoised gnosia in which an āryan who has directly perceived the selflessness of phenomena trains. This is set forth and extensively explained in the tenets of the Vijñaptimātra, but fearing too lengthy an account, I will not write [about it] here.

No one has yet [to understand]
The teachings of the scriptures,
So I have opened the jewel treasure,
The intended meaning of the profound [emptiness].
Behold it and rejoice!

I have refuted those mistaken explanations of the intended meaning
And established them as the abodes of doubt.
Perfecting their [understanding] of the intended meaning of reality,
The wise abandon mistaken wishes.

These are some stanzas of intermission.[156]

[Similarity in Terminology Between the Yogācāra and Prāsaṅgika Is Not a Reflection of an Underlying Similarity in Meaning]

In [the Cittamātrins'] own system, it is accepted that imaginary entities do not exist by virtue of their own characteristic. The Cittamātrins believe that the [62] object of refutation of the Prāsaṅgikas, an object that exists by virtue of its own characteristic, is an imaginary entity. Hence, there is a merely nominal similarity [in that both Prāsaṅgikas and Cittamātrins refute the fact that the expression] "existence by virtue of own characteristic" applies to certain entities, but there is a great difference in the meaning [of what each system considers to be "existence by virtue of own characteristic" and to what it applies]. Likewise, even though other texts [of the Yogācāra] explain that the object appearing to conceptual thought (riog pa'i snang yul) and universals (spyi mshan) do not exist by virtue of their own characteristic, they nonetheless have a full-blown theory [in which other things] exist by virtue of being svalakṣanas, a fact refuted by the Prāsaṅgikas. Likewise, because the Prāsaṅgikas, Śvātantrika Madhyamikas, and Cittamātrins differ greatly as to their degree of subtlety in their determination of what it means for something to be truly existent, one should not go astray in thinking that the mere nominal [similarity of the expressions they use.] "existing by virtue of own characteristic" and "truly existent," [reflect similarities in tenets or meaning].

[Cittamātra Hermeneutics][157]

The Sandhinirmocana states that the teachings of the three stages [or turnings] of the wheel [of the doctrine] cannot be distinguished either by virtue of [there having been different] series (thebs) of entourages [of disciples], nor from the viewpoint of the [different] periods in the Teacher's, [that is, the Buddha's,] life, but instead from the viewpoint of subject matter (brjod bya). [The distinction between the three wheels] is based on the way in which the meaning of selflessness is presented. [The first wheel] does not, for the most part, refute true existence. [The middle wheel] explains that no phenomenon truly exists; and [the last wheel] perfectly elucidates which of the three natures truly exist and which do not. So it is based on the three wheels' respectively teaching such doctrines [that they are distinguished from one another].

Other sūtras do not teach such a method, [that is, do not teach a method for understanding the doctrine of emptiness,] such as those that teach that the monk's lower garment should be worn wrapped around [the body] (ziyum por). These works cannot be taken as bases on which to distinguish the definitive from the provisional because they do not distinguish the definitive from the viewpoint of the three different methods of setting forth selflessness. This is
because teachings such as the statement that the monk’s lower robe should be
worn wrapped around [the body] are not any of the three methods of teaching
selflessness. Therefore, just because a text is a scripture does not imply that it
is a sūtra of one of the three wheels. Hence, the division into three [wheels] is
a division based on points of chief [importance, and not on secondary matters,
such as how to wear the robe].

[Opponent:] The Dharanīśvararājaparīcchāṃ Sūtra says:

Oh son of good family, it is like this, for example, an expert
jeweler who is well versed in the method of cleaning jewels will first
pick out a very pure precious stone from among a variety of precious
stones. Then he cleans it by soaking it in strong salt water and cleaning
it with a hair brush. But he does not stop his efforts at merely
that. Afterwards he cleans it by soaking it in a strong organic solution
and cleaning it with a woolen cloth. Yet he does not stop his efforts at
merely that. Afterwards he cleans it by soaking it in a chemical solution
and cleaning it with a fine cotton cloth. [What results] is utterly
clean and free from impurities and is said to belong to the great family
of lapizes (vaidhūrya).

Oh son of good family, likewise does the Tathāgata make sorrow
arise in sentient beings who enjoy samsāra. For having understood
the various dispositions of beings, he teaches impermanence, suffer-
ing, selflessness, and the arising of the thought of the impurity [of
the body and so on]. He thus introduces the noble Dharma to disci-
plines. But the Tathāgata does not stop his efforts at merely that. Af-
terwards he makes them understand the way of the tathāgatas by
means of such teachings as emptiness, signlessness and wishlessness.
Yet still the Tathāgata does not stop his efforts at merely that. Af-
terwards he makes all those sentient beings who possess different natural
potentials enter into the country of the tathāgatas by means of
the utterly pure instructions of the three cycles, by means of the
teachings of the irreversible wheel. [Those beings] abide in [that ob-
ject] and when they perceive the reality (dharma) of the Tathāgata,
that is called the state of unsurpassable qualities.

This passage teaches that the three stages of the wheel [as taught in the
Samdhinirmocana] respectively cleanse the gross, subtle, and extremely subtle
obscuring stains [that adhere] to the tathāgataagarbha, and that because of this,
[that is, because the last wheel purifies the subtlest stains,] the last wheel
alone is of definitive meaning.

[Reply:] This [view arises] from improper examination of the scriptures
and is, moreover, contradictory [to what such an opponent] believes. How is
that so? [It arises from an improper examination of scripture] because if one
joins example to meaning [by means of] a common quality, one must accept
that just as only one gem is being cleansed in stages by three cleansing agents,
so the stains of three degrees of subtlety are being cleansed in the mind of only
a single disciple by the three wheels, which are the agents of the [spiritual]
purification. It is thus contradictory to explain that the disciples [within this
quote] are beings of different lineages (rīgas) [corresponding to] the three
wheels [as they are taught in the Samdhinirmocana]. [It is contradictory] (1)
because it is contradictory to [the proponent's] own views that the disciples
are of different lineages and (2) because the absurdity would follow that if one
was a disciple for whom the Buddha’s turning of the wheel of the doctrine was
meant, then one would have to enter into the three vehicles in order, [starting
with the Śrāvakāyāna first, whereas in actuality some beings can proceed to the
Mahāyāna directly].

The expression “the teachings of the irreversible wheel” [in the preceding
passage] is said to teach [the doctrine of] one final vehicle, and because, as
has already been explained, the final wheel teaches three final vehicles, there
is no relation [between the three cycles or wheels spoken of in this sūtra
and the three wheels spoken of in the Samdhinirmocana].

Thus, this sūtra says that in order to cleanse the dhātu, [that is, the
tathāgataagarbha] a ripening path consisting of impermanence, suffering, and
so forth is taught, and that then the liberating paths of the rough and subtle
selflessness of phenomena is taught, in that order, these being the only teach-
ings that cleanse stains.

[Opponent:] Because the Samdhinirmocana says that the final wheel is of
definitive meaning, the final wheel is of definitive meaning, and what is more,
the Brief, Intermediate, and Extensive Perfection of Wisdom [Sūtras] and so
forth, are all sūstras of the final wheel.

[Reply:] This is quite mistaken because the following appears in the Ex-
tensive Mother (PPS): “At that time limitless hundreds of thousands of sons of
the gods threw flowers into the air and said this in unison: ‘Alas, I and the rest
of you have today seen the second turning of the wheel of the doctrine in the
world.’ ”

It follows [from your position] that the Samdhinirmocana is of definitive
meaning because it explains itself to be of definitive meaning. This is the kind
of inference that you yourself are accepting. But if you accept this, it con-
trasts your explanation that the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras are of definitive
meaning; and it would follow, absurdly, that there is a valid cognition which
[perceives] no error in a contradiction, for [it perceives no error in claiming
that] the teaching that all phenomena do not truly exist, [which the PPS con-
tain,] and the teaching that dependent entities truly exist, [which the Samdhinir-
mocana contains], are both from sūtras of definitive meaning.

[Opponent:] A sūtra whose meaning exists as it is taught word for word
in that sūtra, is of definitive meaning, and the opposite is accepted as be-
ing the provisional meaning. Thus, sūtras of the last wheel, such as the
Samdhinirmocana, are of definitive meaning [because they can be taken literally], and those of the middle wheel, such as the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras are of provisional meaning [because they cannot]. Also, sūtras,\textsuperscript{161} such as the Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra,\textsuperscript{162} the Jñānalokaśākāra Sūtra,\textsuperscript{163} the Mahābhārata Sūtra,\textsuperscript{164} the Angulimalika Sūtra,\textsuperscript{165} the Ārya Dharaniśvaravarrājaparipṛccha Sūtra,\textsuperscript{166} the Ārya Dharanīśvaramūrti Sūtra, and the Mahānidrākṣa Sūtra\textsuperscript{167} are all sūtras of the final wheel and of definitive meaning.

[Reply:] This [view is a result of improperly investigating [scripture], because the way in which those latter sūtras teach [the doctrine] and the way the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra teaches it disagree on every point. How do they disagree? It is because the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, as cited earlier, explains that there are three final vehicles whereas those latter sūtras explain that there is only one final vehicle.

The Ārya Śrīmālā Sūtra\textsuperscript{168} explains that a śrāvaka arhat [after he dies] takes up a body that is of the nature of mind because of the latent potentialities of ignorance (ma rig bag chags)\textsuperscript{169} and undefiled karma (zag pa med pa'i las).\textsuperscript{170} Moreover, one cannot take this to be referring [merely to the arhat's body] while he still possesses a remainder, [that is, before death,] because the body of an arhat who possesses a remainder is a suffering aggregate that he has been cast into due to the karma and afflictions of his previous births. Therefore, one must take this to be referring to the arhat who has actually attained nirvāṇa without remainder, [that is, who has attained nirvāṇa and then passed away]. Now [the doctrine] that an arhat who has obtained [nirvāṇa] without remainder takes up a body is in utter contradiction [to the doctrine] of three final vehicles, [for if the arhat's vehicle was truly final he would not need to take up a body].

When the Samgrahānī comments on the meaning of the Samdhinirmocana it clearly explains, as mentioned earlier, that there are three final vehicles. The Lord [Maitreya] also makes the same point in the Sūtrālaṃkāra. When it comments on the purport of the Garbha Sūtra and the like, the Uttaratantra, root text and commentary, both explain that they teach one final vehicle.\textsuperscript{171}

If one is following the explanations of the Samdhinirmocana one must accept the exposition of definitive and provisional meaning as it was explained, [that is, the former being doctrines that can be accepted literally and the latter those that cannot]. One cannot [in the Yogācāra system] take teachings of the conventional as being of provisional meaning and teachings of the ultimate as being of definitive meaning [as the Mādhyamikas do] because, if that were so, then it would follow that the Brief, Intermediate and Extensive Mother (PPS), that is, the sūtras of the middle wheel, would be of definitive meaning. This is because [when those sūtras] explain that the teaching of the lack of characteristic [existence] means that all [things] are imaginary in nature, they [teach] that the emptiness of the imaginary nature is the real, [hence, teaching emptiness or the ultimate from the Yogācāra viewpoint and, hence, following from the opponent's premise, they would have to be of definitive meaning.]

The Jñānalokaśākāra Sūtra explains that the teachings of the ultimate are of definitive meaning, and it is therefore in accordance with the Ārya Aksaṣayamatiḥṛdaya Sūtra, for it says: "Whatever is of definitive meaning is ultimate."\textsuperscript{172}

This has been a brief explanation of the way in which the Ārya Asaṅga and his brother [Vasubandhu], following the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, set forth the [doctrines of] the definitive and the provisional.
The Doctrines of the Madhyamaka School
4.1.2. How the Father, the Ārya Nāgārjuna, and His Son [Āryadeva], Following Such Sūtras as the Akṣayamatinirdēśa, Set Forth the Doctrine of the Definitive and the Provisional\textsuperscript{723}

The Prasannapadā, the Commentary on the Prajñāpāramitāśāstra, and the Madhyamatāloka all quote the Akṣayamatinirdēśa Sūtra as a source,\textsuperscript{724} and having done so, they elucidate [the distinction] between definitive and provisional meaning according to it. This Sūtra says: ""What are the sūtras of definitive meaning and what are the sūtras of provisional meaning? The sūtras that teach the conventional are said to be of provisional meaning and those that teach the ultimate are said to be of definitive meaning.""\textsuperscript{725} Another sūtra [68] that is in accordance with this same [stance], the Samādhīrāja, also says:

The Tathāgata's teachings on emptiness
   Should be known as examples of sūtras of definitive meaning.
   Whichever ones teach about beings, personality, or man
   Should all be known as the doctrines of provisional meaning.\textsuperscript{176}

Thus, when expounding [the doctrines of the] definitive and provisional in accordance with the explanations of those [two sūtras], we see that those sūtras which directly (dngos su) teach, as their chief subject matter, only various kinds of conventional entities should be known to be the sūtras of provisional meaning. [They are called provisional] because it is necessary to search for another reality (ignas lugs) by interpreting the chief teaching expounded by those sūtras away from that nondefinitive reality, [which is their literal teaching].\textsuperscript{177} Those that directly teach emptiness, the mere elimination of proliferation (spros po), nonarising, and so forth, as their chief subject matter are the sūtras of definitive meaning. [They are called definitive] because of the reason that is the reverse of the previous one, [that is, because it is not necessary to search for another reality apart from the one taught as the principal subject matter of such a sūtra, as the emptiness that it teaches is the ultimate reality].

There are two reasons why the meaning of sūtras must be reinterpreted. With regard to reality, sūtras whose direct teachings cannot be taken to be
reality, for example, those that teach such things as the fact that wealth arises from charity, [though expressing a conventional truth,] must still be reinterpreted. This is the "reason having to do with reality." With regard to the conventional, sometimes things cannot be taken [even conventionally] as they are directly taught by certain sūtras and thus must be reinterpreted, as is the case with the passage that goes "the father and the mother should be killed." 178 It is because of this that the Madhyamakaloka says:

What exactly is the definitive meaning? It refers to whatever explanation is made based upon a valid cognition and is made with regard to the ultimate, because a [sūtra that fulfills these two conditions] cannot be interpreted by someone else in any different from that [literal meaning expressing the ultimate]. 179

Such a method of explaining the definitive and the provisional is common to all Mādhyamikas who follow the Ārya Nāgārjuna. 180

4.2. How, Step by Step, the Texts of Nāgārjuna and the Commentaries on Their Purport (dgongs pa) Arose181

4.2.1. The Explanation of the Way in Which the Scriptures of the Ārya Were Written182

The Ārya [Nāgārjuna], in accordance with a prophecy of the Victorious One, composed many [works] of both the Tantric and Prajñāpāramitā [classes], texts that clarify the essence of the teachings of sūtra and tantra. He composed many texts on medicine (gso spyad), such as the Yogācārātaka, 183 and also many treatises on topics common to both Buddhists and non-Buddhists, such as the Prajñāsātaka, [a work on grammar]. 184 His specialty, however, was the elucidation of the profound path of the Madhyamaka. He taught reality (de khyo na nyid), collecting [passages of] sūtras of definitive meaning in his Sūtrasamuccaya. 185 The scriptures [called] the logical compendium (rigs tshogs kyi gzhung) constitute his logical exposition [of emptiness]. 186 He composed

1. The Prajñāmūla (madhyamaka kārikā) 187
2. The Yuktiśāstikā 188
3. The Śūnyatāsaptati 189
4. The Vigrāhayāvartanī 190
5. The Vaidalya 191
6. The Ratnāvalī 192

The Prajñāmūla extensively teaches the reasons that refute the fact that things truly exist. The Vaidalya was composed to refute the sixteen categories of the Naiyāyikas (rtog ge tshig don bu drug) 193 which this non-Buddhist school mistakenly believes to be that which proves the fact that things truly exist. The Vigrāhayāvartanī is an excursus on the lines of the first chapter of the Prajñāmūla that go:

The essences of things
Do not exist in their causes. 194
[to which the opponent in the Vigrāhayāvartanī replies:]
If the essences of all entities
Do not exist,
Your words too would be essenceless
And they could not repudiate essences. 195

They [the realists] say that if all entities do not have essences, then your, [that is, the Mādhyamika's] words would not have an essence. They [claim], therefore, that they could work neither to refute nor to prove [the Madhyamaka thesis]. They would not refute the position held by others that essences exist, nor would they prove the [Mādhyamika's] own position that essences do not exist. It is to the elimination (vyāvartanī) of such an argument (vigrāha), that is, to showing in an extensive fashion how essenceless words can refute the opponents' position and establish our own position, that the remainder of this text, the Vigrāhayāvartanī, is dedicated.

The Śūnyatāsaptati is also an excursus on a portion of the Prajñāmūla, this time on the lines from the seventh chapter that go:

Like a dream, like an illusion,
Just like a city of fairies,
So is arising, so is abiding,
And so is destruction taught to be. 196

This text [the Śūnyatāsaptati] was composed as an answer to a refutation of this [verse]. [The opponent claims] that if arising, abiding, and cessation are essenceless, then it would contradict many of the teachings of the scriptures. This text was composed to make such an opponent understand that because [the sūtras are referring not to arising, abiding, and cessation that exist inherently, but to arising and so on] that are merely nominal things (tha snyad tsam), [the Prajñāmūla] does not contradict the teachings of the scriptures, [as it repudiates the former kind of arising but not the latter]. That is to say, it was composed to extensively [make this point] in a manifest way by demonstrating exactly how all functionality (bya byed), like arising and cessation, are mere names (ming tsam).

The remaining two texts [the Yuktiśāstikā and the Ratnāvalī] teach chiefly that it is impossible to even free oneself from saṃsāra, much less to attain omniscience, on paths which adhere to the extremist views of existence and
non-existence, and hence that, if one desires to free oneself from samsāra, it is necessary to understand reality exactly as it is, this being the counteractive measure to the grasping at [these two] extremes. The Yuktisāṅkikā says:

Because [we grasp at the extreme of] existence we are not liberated,
And by [grasping at the extreme of nonexistence] there would be no liberation from the existential state (srid pa).197

thence teaching that by grasping at the extremes of existence and nonexistence one cannot be liberated from the existential state [of samsāra]. [It goes on to say:]

Because of his or her knowledge of the entity (dngos) and the nonentity (dngos med)

The mahātma becomes liberated.198

This shows that those who know the reality of both samsāra, which is an entity, and nirvāṇa, which is a nonentity, are mahātmas; that is, aryans, who liberate themselves from samsāra. The actualization of the cessation [of suffering and its causes] at the time of the effect [that is, on the attainment of liberation] by a gnosis (ye shes) which understands that the existential state, samsāra, does not arise inherently, is called “the attainment of nirvāṇa.” It refutes the opposite view, the position that would claim [that someone had attained nirvāṇa] because his or her afflictions (nyon mong) qua things that exist by virtue of their own characteristic have been exhausted, and because the subsequent [continuity] of his or her aggregates did not arise. It therefore claims that it is impossible for this to be what is meant either by the actualization of cessation or the exhaustion of the aggregates and the afflictions. Because this very interpretation is explained to be the one offered by the texts that teach the Hinayāna form of nirvāṇa, the remainder of this work [the Yuktisāṅkikā] is then devoted to proving [that such an interpretation is incorrect].199

The Ratnāvalī extensively explains that the cause of higher rebirth (mngon mtho) is faith (dad pa); that is, belief in karma and its effects (las 'bras). It says that with such [faith] as a prerequisite one becomes a suitable vessel for meditating on the path of the definitive good (nges legs).200 Moreover, [it states that] based on the wisdom (shes rab) that perceives emptiness, which is the [fact that] “I” and “mine” do not ultimately exist, one accustoms oneself to the understanding that the aggregates are threadless (bden med), and in this way one exhausts one’s grasping to the “I”; [it states that] until one stops grasping at the truth of the aggregates, samsāra cannot be overturned. To be liberated from samsāra, [it goes on,] it is also necessary to understand the “perfect object” (yang dag pa'i don = emptiness), an [understanding] that does not view things in terms of the extremes of either existence or nonexistence. By understanding such an object one will be liberated from samsāra. [Finally,] it explains in great detail the exact stages of the path for attaining the achievement of omniscience.

Therefore, these texts of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] teach, by means of extensive scriptural citation (lung) and reasoning (rigs pa), that all functionalities (bya byed), such as the refutations and proofs [in which they engage], are conventionalities (kan rdzob), merely nominally labeled [entities] (ming du baags pa tsam), as it is unsuitable to consider them as existing by virtue of their own characteristic. They extensively set forth the ultimate truth (don dam pa'i bden pa nyid), which is reality, the fact that no phenomenon whatsoever has the slightest essence. [They explain] that if there is no need to say that understanding things in this way is necessary for the attainment of buddhahood, how much more so that it be a sine qua non for liberation from samsāra. Hence, this is the refounding of the system of the chariot in which this Mahātma [Nāgārjuna] taught to the fortunate, exactly as the Conqueror intended it, the path to emancipation and omniscience.

4.2.2. The Explanation of How the Individual Commentaries on the Purport [of Nāgārjuna’s Treatises] Arose201

Although many texts of both the sūtra and tantra [classes] comment on the purport of the Ārya, here we will offer only a brief account of how there arose commentaries on their purport, which set forth the right view [of emptiness] (yang dag pa'i lta ba).

The Acārya Āryadeva202 (second century C.E.) set forth the profound emptiness in accordance with the purport of the Ārya in his Yogācārya Caturśataka.203 All the others who came after this Acārya accept that he is a trustworthy source and that there is no difference between himself and the Ārya. That is why former Tibetan masters (bla ma) call this father and spiritual son pair the Mādhyamikas of the Great Scriptures. Although Āryadeva is a Prāsaṅgika (thab 'gyur pa) in his intention, he does not explicitly make a distinction between Prāsaṅgika and Svātantrika (rang rgyud pa);204 nor does he set forth anything like a refutation of the Svātantrikas.

After him, the Acārya Buddhāpālita205 (c. 500 C.E.) composed his Vṛtti206 on the Prajñāpāramitā, where he comments on the purport of the father and spiritual son as a Prāsaṅgika. After him, the Acārya Bhāvaviveka207 (c. 500–570 C.E.) composed his commentary on the Prajñāpāramitā208 and offered an extensive refutation of Buddhāpālita’s Prāsaṅgika commentary. He was the first to open up the system of the Svātantrikas. Thus, those who follow either of these two came to be called parissan Mādhyamikas by the Tibetans of old. Bhāvaviveka’s fundamental text, which he composed in an independent and synthetic manner
The Venerable Āryadeva also explains this:

A listener, that which is heard
And a speaker [of the doctrine] arise so rarely.
So, to put it briefly, sansāra
Has no end nor does it lack an end. 238

[So the Akutobhayā could not have been written by Nāgārjuna because it [75] quotes his disciple, Āryadeva.]

[Opponent:] This is not correct, for Avalokitavrata considers [the Akutobhayā] to be an auto commentary.

[Reply:] Anyone who thinks that the omniscient Lord [Tsong kha pa] did not get that study that commentary [in his rejection of the authenticity of the text] is making himself known as a real fool. Even though that [commentary of Avalokitavrata] explains it in that way, if it were in fact an auto commentary, not only would it suffer from the just-mentioned fault concerning the citation [from Āryadeva], but it would be incumbent upon the commentaries of all three sages, Buddhāpālita, Candrakirti and Bhāvaviveka, to explain as incorrect the inconsistencies [between their own texts] and those of the Ārya [who wrote the Akutobhayā] that occur at many points in the Prajñāmāla.

For example, in that commentary [in the Akutobhayā] it states in the section of homage (mchod brjod) that there is no cessation because there is no arising. Then, to prove the reason, [that is, that there is no arising.] It cites [the first verse of the Prajñāmāla]:

No entity whatsoever
Arises ever or in any way
From self or other
From both or causelessly.

And to prove this reason it explains that the passage:

The essence of entities do not exist
In their causal conditions...

proves that arising from self is not possible; that the passage:

If an essence [lit. self-existence] does not exist
How can its opposite [lit. other existence]?

proves that arising from another is not possible; and that from both of these [proofs] it follows that there is no arising from both [self and other]. Then it, [the Akutobhayā, states that the Prajñāmāla] presents arguments so as to refute [an opponent’s rebuttal] presented in the four lines of the verse: “Causal conditions are fourfold: (1) cause...” 242 and that as the reply to that, the first two lines of the verse that goes: “Action does not possess causal conditions...” 243 refute the fact that an action which gives rise to an entity...
by means of those four causal conditions neither possesses nor is it devoid of causal conditions. [It continues that] the latter two lines refute the fact that causal conditions do not possess an action, nor do they lack one, nor both, nor neither.

The way this text [the Akutobhayā] explains the layout of the scripture [the Prajñāpāramitā], that is, the relationship between previous and later passages, does not in the least resemble the way in which the other three commentaries do so, [this being yet another reason to challenge the authenticity of the Akutobhayā]. If one minutely analyzes [the Akutobhayā] in this way, [these anomalies] will multiply greatly, and many instances will appear in which the difficult-to-understand points of subtle reasoning of this text [the Prajñāpāramitā, which expresses them in] verse, are merely put into prose without being properly explained.

Were this [Akutobhayā] an autocommentary [then why does Candrakīrti not quote it]? Candra does, to the extent that the proper explanations of Bhāvaviveka are acceptable, cite him. He also extensively quotes all of the scriptures of the Ārya such as his autocommentary to the Vigrahavyāvartanī. Therefore, because he does not deem fit [to cite] even the smallest passage of this [purported] autocommentary [the Akutobhayā], it is quite clear that he does not accept that it is an autocommentary.

Also, in the field of tantra, quite a few scriptures and commentaries are attributed to the Ārya; and, as in the case of the Akutobhayā, there are also Indian commentaries accepted as having been composed by the Ārya but which are just as apocryphal as this one [the Akutobhayā]. That is to say, there are those who, without examining either words or meaning, trust the explanation of any commentary whatsoever on just a slight perusal of the words. How can such [people] be considered as anything but the dumbest of the dumb?

[Question:] Well then, was Candrakīrti a direct disciple of the Ārya Nāgārjuna or not?
[Reply:] Some teaching lineages renowned among certain former Tibetan Mādhyaṃikas hold that he was not his direct disciple. Even though those who follow [these previous masters] accept this, it is quite correct for the masters of the Samājā [lineage] ('dus pa'i bla ma), namely, the precious Lord [Tsong kha pa], [the translator] 'Gos and so forth, to accept him [Candrakīrti] as a direct disciple of the Ārya. The Great Lord, the Glorious Atīśa, says:

Candrakīrti is Nāgārjuna's disciple
And as regards the instructions that descend from him
There is Buddha246 and none else.247

The Pradīpodyotana also says: "I have found out from Nāgārjuna the seal for abiding in the two stages [of generation and completion] of all the Buddhas. It is having paid homage to the all-pervasive Lord, the glorious Vajrasattva, that I, Candrakīrti, systematically explain this."248 The Pandit Bhavyakīrti (sKal ldan grags pa) has also said: "He has found this out from the glorious Nāgārjuna." This demonstrates that Candrakīrti in fact was the actual, face-to-face disciple of the glorious Nāgārjuna and not a mere lineage descendant.

The Brahmin called Rāhulabhadra (sGra gcen 'dzin bsang po), that is, Sarahapa,249 explained it to Nāgārjuna, and he [in turn] explained it to Candrakīrti. How this occurred is mentioned in the Pradīpodyotana:

In the city of Kongka
On top of Śrīparvata
He first made his home
In a place free of men.

A lord of men and gods,
The highest doctrine he preached,
And [having heard it] in Rāhula's presence
He spread it throughout the earth.

Then having found that, he studied reality
By means of the yoga of the Mahāyāna.
Obtaining the bhūmi, he exerted himself in the welfare of others.
May the glorious Nāgārjuna prosper!

Obtaining these precious teachings from him,
He made them known in the three worlds.
He has crossed the ocean of Samāja.
May the elucidator Candrakīrti prosper!250

The Pandit Kumāra, a disciple of the sage Bīṣṣomkāra, also explains that: "Because they [Candrakīrti and so on] are the face-to-face disciples of Nāgārjuna, they are taught to be actual holders of his quintessential instructions (man nṣag)."251 Therefore, the siddha Kṛṣṇācārya (Nag po sphyo pa),252 Nāropa253 (c. 1016–1100 c.e.), the Prabhu Maitripa (tenth–eleventh century),254 Abhayākāra255 (twelfth century), Karunāśripāda (Thugs rje dpal 'zhabs), the Kaśmirī Lakṣmi (Kha che las smi), Munīśrībhadrā (Thub pa dpal bsang po), Bhavyakīrti,256 Kumāra,257 Kuladhāra, Tathāgataśrītṛ258 (late tenth century?) and Lilavajra259 (eleventh century) and so forth all believe in Candrapāda, [that is, in Candrakīrti,] and hold him [to have views] similar to the Ārya Nāgārjuna's. Even though Abhayākāra is not accepted as being Praśangika in his viewpoint, he does not attempt a refutation of Candrapāda, holding the view that he is in opposition to him. Moreover, when he sets forth his viewpoint, there are several instances in which he actually quotes the [Madhyamaka] Avatāra as a source.
Maitripa, both in his root text and in the commentary on the *Dasatattva* explains that in no other system, except for that of Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, is reality understood.

Therefore, those who hold some of the followers of Candra as objects of faith and as siddhas that cannot in the least [be refuted] by opponents, and yet claim that the Candrakīrti of whom they were followers has been refuted [by other Indian scholars], are fools who have destroyed [their chances for a good] afterlife. They, without having bothered to even read the vast scriptural exegesis of sūtras and tantras, and impelled by the demon of jealousy, blather away these incoherent formulations. They have lost all self-control, their minds having been transformed by the demonic gods of the dark side, who grasp [at every chance] to oppose the essence of the teachings. Anyone who is intelligent and who desires only the best for himself or herself will cover their ears to these doctrines.

Another idiot who claims that "it is not so astonishing that we should refute Candrakīrti as some former Tibetan sages did in fact do just that," might as well be claiming that "because in former times patricide and matricide were rampant, it should not be so astonishing when such bad karma occurs today." Go right ahead then and take up this advice of the "holy" in its entirety, [that is, go out and commit patricide and matricide just because some fool did before you, just as you refute Candrakīrti simply because a former Tibetan did]. There have been several cases of this in the past, where, though the quintessential instructions and scriptures of someone who is indisputably considered a siddha in Tibet are held in high esteem, they have actually refuted the Arya Nāgārjuna.

[In a similar case], bCom Idan ral gris in his *Ṭikā* to the *Pramāṇa-samuccaya*, being himself unable to explain the harmony that exists between [the *Pramāṇa-samuccaya*] and the *Pramāṇavārttikā*, explains that whatever points he [cannot harmonize in this way] are cases in which Dharmakīrti erred in his interpretation of the *Samuccaya*, in this way refuting [Dharmakīrti].

There also seem to be instances in the history of the exegesis of the *Prajñāpāramitā* where some former Tibetans, renowned as sages, write, though not in so many words, about the faults of the Lord Maitreyanātha [whom they imply] is not in accordance with the [Prajñāpāramitā] Sūtras. How can anyone, taking as their reason the indubitable blitheries spoken by these "great celebrities," seek to become an ally of rumor mongers? Stop praising the logic of fools!

Someone else claims that whether or not Candrakīrti is a pandit is disputable, but that Nāropa is [without a doubt] a perfected pandit. Nāropa states:

Following the *Pradīpodyotana* have I explained  
The quintessential instructions of Nāgārjuna.

Relying upon the stages of the quintessential instructions  
Of the Acāryas Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva,  
Nāgabodhi and Śakyamitrā.  
Candrakīrti and so forth  
Have I composed [this work].

So [the person who distinguishes in this way between Nāropa and Candrakīrti] is just blithering nonsense without realizing that Nāropa himself accepts that he is a follower of Candrakīrti.

Moreover, to say that Candrakīrti did not understand the definitive meaning before he entered the tantric [path] but understood it after he entered it are [80] words to bring shame upon the scholars [who say them], for they are sheer nonsense. This is because the *Pradīpodyotana* commentary on the *Guhyasamājā* states:

[Question:] Is there anything that is a different entity from the mind?

[Reply:] It is said that there is no such phenomenon; that is, entities are without nature (ngo bo nyid med pa).

[Question:] Is there any such thing as reality (chos nyid)?

[Reply:] There is no reality. Here it is saying that all phenomena from [the list] "aggregates (phung po), elements (khaṃs), sense objects (skyed mched), sense organs (dbang po) and so forth" are like a dream. They are neither true nor false.

This teaches us in an extensive way that the subject (chos can) [lit. what possesses the attribute] and reality (chos nyid), [which is the attribute], being like dreams, have no true essence. Likewise, in the section on the Madhyamaka it extensively explains [many Madhyamaka doctrines,] such as the fact that essencelessness does not contradict functionality. Such explanations it makes over and over again, but without looking over even the mere letters of all of these expositions, [these individuals,] in a state of total unawareness and themselves filled with ignorance, unabashedly spout off what it is that these Mahāyānists accept.

The sages of the Noble Land [India] are extremely skilled in discerning which [doctrines] are to be refuted and which are not to be refuted. They analyze them in an extremely impartial way with all of their intellectual acumen; and, because they take into account both their own and others’ mental capacities, they are never in a hurry to actually refute the greats simply because [their views] do not coincide with their own. For example, although Śānti’s own system is the Cittamātra, he does not refute the Ārya Nāgārjuna simply because he is a Madhyamika. Instead, he consistently explains the Cittamātra by showing that both Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga are similarly Cittamātrins in their viewpoint. Great men, such as the Elder Dharmapāla of [81]
old, also take the purport of the Ārya Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva as being Cittamātrin, so that Candrapāda, in his Catuḥśatākāṭikā states that he [Dharmapāla] comments on the Catuḥśataka as a Cittamātrin would.²⁶⁶

Nonetheless, Śāntipa does criticize Ārya [Vimuktasena] and Haribhadra, actually mentioning them by name. Abhayakara and others, although they criticize Haribhadra, mentioning him by name, do not find the Ārya Vimuktasena the least bit objectionable. And yet, [although they criticize other scholars like the Ārya and Haribhadra,] come time to set forth their own philosophical viewpoint, they all seem to take the scriptures of Candrakīrti as a source they quote.

Although I could go on more extensively, [let me just say] that there are no Indians who criticize either Candrakīrti or Āryadeva, actually mentioning them by name.²⁶⁷ Within no scripture of an Indian sage has he been refuted in this way. Nevertheless, when he is made the object of refutation by some foolish Tibetans, it does not nowadays diminish either [these Tibetans'] finances and reputation nor the [size of] the entourage that gathers [around them]. So now it seems that unless they get “refuted” with sticks to the body, they might even get up the gall to criticize the Buddha himself, mentioning even him by name; but when they see that they are going to get “refuted,” it seems that they are unashamed to take up the life-style of laymen.²⁶⁸ Those who want only the best for themselves should know that it is fitting to exert themselves at banishing these nonvirtuous friends to far away places.

[A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE MADHYAMAKA]

[On the Classification of Mādhyamikas²⁶⁹]

Another former Tibetan master claims that there are two kinds of Mādhyamikas who are given [different] names depending upon how they accept the ultimate. (One is called) an utterly nonabiding Mādhyamika, [the other,] a Mādhyamika who establishes the logic of illusion.²⁷⁰ The first [category] is said to be comprised of Candrakīrti and so forth who believe that the nonaffirming negation (med dgag), which is the refutation of there being any truth to appearances, is the ultimate truth. The second [category] is said to consist of Śāntarakṣita, Ārya [Vimuktasena], and Haribhadra who, [it is claimed] believe that the illusorylike conjunction (tshogs) of appearance (snang) and emptiness (stong) is the ultimate truth.²⁷¹ In regard to this, the translator nGog (bLo ldan shes rab, c. 1059–1109 c.e.)²⁷² repeatedly explained in An Epistle Called a Drop of Nectar that: “To divide them in this way is to posit something that will astonish even the foolish.”²⁷³ Because the illusorylike conjunction of appearance and emptiness in fact is a conventional truth, there is no single Great Mādhyamika who accepts it as the ultimate truth. Were it an ultimate truth, it would follow, absurdly, that everything that exists (gzhis grub) would be an ultimate truth, for it is impossible that a phenomenon not be empty of truth.²⁷⁴ It seems that those who posit this believe that the direct object (gngos kyi gsal bya) of an inferential cognition [of emptiness] (rigs shes rjes dpag)²⁷⁵ is itself the ultimate truth. The direct object of an inferential cognition, that is, the illusorylike conjunction of the subject [of the syllogism] (chos can) such as a sprout, and the predicate (bya'i chos), truthlessness (bden med), is concordant (thun pa) with the ultimate in so far as they, [the ultimate and this conjunction] are both negations of [the same] object of refutation, namely true existence.²⁷⁶ For this reason both the Madhyamakālamkāra and the Madhyamakāloka explain that it is [merely] labeled ultimate [without actually being so], and so not even Śāntarakṣita and his followers accept that such [an entity] is the ultimate truth.

A later Tibetan said that Bhāvaviveka, Jñānagarbha, and so forth are Sautrāntika Mādhyamikas because they are Mādhyamikas who nominally
accept outer objects and who believe that the mind possesses aspects (rnam bcas). He says that Sāntarakṣita, the father, and his son [Kamalaśīla] are Yogācāra Mādhyamikas because, as they accept that external objects do not exist even nominally and that autocognition substantially exists (rdzad su grub pa), they accord with the Cittamātra in the use of terminology. He says that Candrakīrti and so forth are Mādhyamikas who use language in accordance with worldly conventions (jig rten grags sde spyod pa) because they do not accord with any philosophical schools in their use of terminology, instead positing things in accordance with the world.

This is also incorrect. It would follow that Candrakīrti and [his followers] are Mādhyamikas who use a system of terminology similar to the Vaibhāṣikas because they are Mādhyamikas who accept external objects nominally and who do not believe in autocognition. You have accepted the three cycles. Neither Bhāvaviveka nor Jñānagarbha agree with what the Sautrāntikas accept nominally because there are many major disagreements [between them and the Sautrāntikas], that [the former] do not believe even nominally in autocognition being just one. Now if you claim that they are in accord simply because they agree on one point, then it would follow, absurdly, that every philosophical school would be in accord with every other, [as most schools agree on at least one point].

[The Meaning of the Claim That Prāsaṅgikas Accord with the World]

What kind of a worldly being is it that the Prāsaṅgikas accept when they expound their accordance with worldly beings (jig rten pa dang bzhin pa)? Does worldly being refer to ordinary beings (so skye), “beings who have gone beyond the world,” thereby referring to āryaṃs, or does worldly being refer to the common person (skye bo rang dga’ ba) who is untrained in philosophy? As for the first case, there is no way [that a Prāsaṅgika could accept] being in accordance with the way that things appear and are conceived of by such ordinary beings because [the Prāsaṅgikas] believe that it is impossible for the consciousness of that being to lack the appearance of true existence.

[Opponent:] Just as ordinary beings use terms like phenomena and personality without logically searching for the referent objects (btags don) onto which the terms are labeled, likewise, the Prāsaṅgikas also posit [things without analyzing or examining terms, and this is why they are said to be in accordance with ordinary beings.

[Reply:] Now although this much is something that we ourselves could accept, [we must add] that not only [the usage] of ordinary beings [must be taken into account when explaining “according with worldly usage”], one must also consider, [as instances of “according with the world,”] all of the instances in which the innate language-using mind of the āryaṃ still in training uses terminology.

As for those who claim that [the Prāsaṅgikas believe in being in accordance with] those who are untrained in philosophy, they are quite mistaken. This is because no one untrained in philosophy could accept the majority of the special ways Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas use terminology, such as when they posit functionality (bya byes) via a repetition of the even nominal existence of svalakṣaṇas (rang mthban), and when they hold that there is no such thing as autocognition, even nominally.

Tibetan Opponent: The Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas use their system of terminology in a way that accords with the Vaibhāṣikas.

[Reply:] This is quite incorrect because what the Vaibhāṣikas accept within their system of terminology the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas accept to be nonexistent even nominally; and this is because the realists’ entire exposition of the two truths (bdudryn) for example, is an exposition based upon [the presupposition that everything] exists by virtue of its own characteristic (rang gi mthban nyid khyis grub pa), whereas the Prāsaṅgikas do not believe that even nominally there is such a thing as an entity that exists by virtue of its own characteristic. Moreover, the Prāsaṅgikas cannot be said to accord with the Vaibhāṣikas in the conventional sphere] because, though they agree with the Vaibhāṣikas in that they accept outer objects, the Prāsaṅgikas believe that outer objects do not exist as substances (rdzad su ma grub pa), [a fundamental Vaibhāṣika tenet]. The Prāsaṅgikas] also do not accept spatially partless particles even nominally; and although both are similar in their merely vocalizing “we do not accept autocognition,” the reason why the Prāsaṅgikas do not accept autocognition has ultimately to do with their not accepting svalakṣaṇas even nominally. Moreover, although the Prāsaṅgikas believe that thought has aspects (blo rnam bcas), the Vaibhāṣikas believe that the objects of thought have no aspects. Therefore, a certain Tibetan’s claim that what the lower philosophical schools accept as ultimate the higher schools accept as conventional is the doctrine of one who has no training in the system of the glorious Candrakīrti, for his Avatārabhāṣya says:

Therefore those who say that what the Sautrāntika system claims is ultimate is the conventional of the Mādhyamikas are speaking without any understanding of reality as it is [taught] in the Madhyamaka treatises. Thus should it be known. Those who think that what the Vaibhāṣikas say is ultimate is the conventional of the Mādhyamikas are simply ignorant of the reality which is the meaning of the treatises, for it is not right to say that a supramundane doctrine is similar to a mundane doctrine. This is how the wise should understand what
4.2.3. Setting Forth Emptiness by Following Those [Madhyamaka Scriptures]

4.2.3.1. Identifying What Is to Be Refuted by the Reasoning Which Analyzes the Ultimate (don dam dpyod pa'i rtags)

4.2.3.1.1. Why It Is Necessary to Identify What Is to Be Refuted

It is first necessary to ascertain what the object to be refuted is like. This object to be refuted is that [entity] whose negation (rnam par bchos pa) is what the ascertaining of reality must be based on, the reason being that without the appearance of the universal (spytin), [that is, the mental image,] of what is to be refuted, the universal of the refutation of that [object, namely, emptiness or reality] will not appear. As it is explained in the Bodhicaryavatara:

Without a feeling for the labeled entity
One cannot apprehend that it is entityless.

Moreover, unless one exactly grasps the extent of what is being refuted, either one refutes what should not be refuted, in which case one will fall into the extreme of nihilism, or else one does not refute some of the most subtle [aspects] that should be refuted, and hence, without seeing a fault in grasping at some kind of true existence, some portion [of the misapprehension of reality] remains, and one will fall into the extreme of reification.

4.2.3.1.2. Refuting the Scriptural Exegesis of Those Who [Proceed in the] Refutation without Identifying [the Object to Be Refuted]

4.2.3.1.2.1. Refuting the One Who Overextends (khyab ches ba) Himself or Herself in the Identification of What Is to Be Refuted

4.2.3.1.2.1.1. Stating What They Believe

Most of those who consider themselves Madhyamikas today claim that the logic which establishes the emptiness of the Madhyamikas refutes every phenomenon, from form up to omniscience, as follows.

[1] They ask whether there exists a phenomenon that, when logically examined, is able to bear the analysis (rigs pas brtags na dpyod bchos pa). If it does exist, it follows, absurdly, that it must truly exist. If there is no such phenomenon, then it has been logically repudiated.

[2] Moreover, [quoting this scriptural passage]:

Neither existence nor nonexistence
Nor both, nor is it not of the nature of both.
It is freedom from these four extremes (miha' bzhis)
That the Madhyamika understands.

They claim that it is because the majority of the scriptures of definitive meaning refute all four of these possibilities (mu bzhis)—existence, nonexistence, both, and neither—and because there is nothing that is not included in these four, that all phenomena are the objects of the logical refutation. That is, [they claim] why [the Yuktisastika] says:

Because we grasp at the extreme of existence we are not liberated.
And by [grasping at the extreme of nonexistence] there would also be no liberation from the existential state (srid pa).

And also:

The advocates of existence go to heaven;
The advocates of nonexistence go to hell;
And they who rely on neither will be free.

And also:

To claim "existence" is to grasp at eternalism.
To claim "nonexistence" is to grasp at nihilism.
That is why the sage must abide
In neither existence nor nonexistence.

The Arya Ratnakuta Sutra also says:

Oh Kasyapa, the end of all the extensive teachings
Is expressed by these two lines:
That existence is one extreme
And nonexistence the other.

After which it is stated:

Existence and nonexistence are one extreme;
Purity and impurity are also extremes.
And so, eliminating both of these extremes,
The sage should stop abiding, even in the Middle [Way].
[They hold to this position] because of such teachings as these, which expound that it is improper to in any way apprehend existence, nonexistence, or even the Middle [Way], which is the elimination of both, and also because the Prajñāpāramitā says:

If the nonempty existed in the least,
Then emptiness too could have some slight existence.
But when there is no such thing as the nonempty,
How could emptiness exist?\textsuperscript{300}

which is to say that, as even emptiness is said not to exist,\textsuperscript{301} because whatever is to be apprehended is to be refuted, [these opponents claim that] no phenomenon whatsoever exists.

[3] Moreover, they ask whether, if one accepts arising and so forth as existing, one does so without [its existence] being established by a valid cognition or whether it is only after having been established by a valid cognition that it can be said to exist. In the first case one has gone beyond the methodology of logic-epistemology.\textsuperscript{302} In the second case, it would have to be either that it, [arising and so on,] was established [as existing] by the gnosis of an ārya, or else that it was established by a nominal valid cognition (thā snyad pa'i tshad ma)\textsuperscript{303} such as the eye consciousness and so forth. It cannot be the first because the gnosis of an ārya perceives arising and so forth to be nonexistent;\textsuperscript{304} but neither is the second [possibility] correct, because the eye consciousness and so forth are not valid cognitions, as it says in the Samādhīrāja:

The eye, the ear and the nose too are not valid cognitions.
The tongue, the body, and even the mind are not valid cognitions.
If those organs were valid cognitions
Who would need to rely on the āryan path?\textsuperscript{305}

[4] Again they ask: is the way that entities arise describable (kha tshon chod pa) as [one among] the four ways of arising, from self, from other, from both, or causelessly, or do these not exhaust [all of the possibilities]? If the latter, then it contradicts the fact that when [Nāgārjuna] refutes the realists he refutes them assuming that these four [options] exhaust [all possible modes of arising].\textsuperscript{306} In the former case, [that is, if it was the case that arising’s existence implied that it must be describable in terms of one of the four possibilities,] then as none of these four is correct even nominally there is no arising, for [Candrakirti] has said: “There is no arising from another even from the world’s [point of view].”\textsuperscript{307} And also because the Avatara has said:

When on the subject of reality, by whatever reasons [it is demonstrated]
That arising from self and other are incorrect,
By those same reasons [it is shown] that they are incorrect even nominally;

And if this is so, how can your [concept of] arising be [possible]\textsuperscript{308} which [this opponent] explains as meaning that just as the logic which refutes arising via any of the four extremes repudiates real arising (de khor na skye ba), in the same way it repudiates arising even nominally. Hence, [they claim that] there is no arising, for the Anavatapatanāgāraṇaparipṛcchā Sūtra states:

Whatever arises from conditions does not arise.
In it there is no arising essence.
Whatever depends upon conditions is explained to be empty.
It is the understanding of emptiness that is true piety.\textsuperscript{309}

[5] Again, [this one who overextends himself or herself in what is to be negated claims that according to our own position] it would follow, absolutely, [89] that [the fact that a thing] does not ultimately exist does not imply its nonexistence, and that its nominal existence implies its existence,\textsuperscript{310} because [according to us] although no phenomenon ultimately exists, it is not correct to accept that any phenomenon is nonexistent; on the contrary, it is correct to accept them as existing. If the [original premise] is accepted, [as indeed we do,] then [they claim] that the Lord should have actually taught the opposite of the four reliances (brjor pa bszi) when, in these lines from the Aksayasamtenirdēsa Sūtra, he says:

Do not rely on the person, rely on the doctrine.
Do not rely on the words, rely on the meaning.
Do not rely on the provisional meaning, rely on the definitive meaning.
Do not rely on consciousness, rely on gnosis.\textsuperscript{311}

because the provisional meaning’s existing conventionally implies its existence, whereas the definitive meaning’s not existing ultimately does not imply its nonexistence,\textsuperscript{312} so that it would follow, absurdly, that it would be fitting not to rely on the definitive meaning but on the provisional meaning. Likewise, the existence [of something] within the purview of erroneous consciousness (raam shes ‘khrul pa’i ngor) implies its existence, whereas the nonexistence [of something] within the purview of nonerroneous gnosis (ye shes ma ‘khrul pa’i ngor) does not imply its nonexistence,\textsuperscript{313} so that it would follow, absurdly, that it would be fitting not to rely on gnosis but on consciousness. [These criticisms] they put forward in great detail.

Now in this regard, some also claim that no phenomenon exists even nominally, whereas others claim that they do nominally exist. If one asks these [latter ones] whether nominal existence implies or does not imply existence, they reply that nominal existence implies nominal existence and does not imply ultimate existence; and if you ask then about a kind of existence that is not qualified by either “nominal” or “ultimate,” they reply that it is impossible for there to exist a third kind of existence that is not contained within the two truths, [thereby skirting the question].
4.2.3.1.2.1.2. Refuting Them

4.2.3.1.2.1.2.1. Demonstrating That They Have Refuted the Principal and Special Quality of the Praśāṅgika Mādhyamikas [90]

4.2.3.1.2.1.2.1.1. Identifying That Chief Quality ²⁷⁴

The Yuktisāṅkikā says:
By the virtue [of this act] may all beings
Complete the accumulations of merit and gnosis.
May they obtain the two holy [bodies]
That arise from merit and gnosis. ³¹⁵

The ultimate goal toward which every Mahāyānist strives is the unity of the dharma or non-erroneous way in which the two truths are brought together into a combined whole within the exposition of the basic view (gezhi i lla bā). Moreover, unless one has truly found certainty in regards to the workings of dependent arising (rten ’brel), whereby individual causes give rise in an orderly way to their individual effects, the accumulation of one’s mass of merit will not be accomplished faithfully and from the heart, as profound certainty that the mass of merit will give rise to the desired effect will not have arisen. ³¹⁷

If one has not found certainty as to the fact that no phenomenon whatsoever has even the smallest atom of inherent existence even nominally, one will not be able to accumulate the true (mishan nyid tshang ba) mass of gnosis, though one may desire to do so. This is because there is no way to accumulate the true mass of gnosis without unmistakenly ascertaining emptiness. Therefore, if one does not find certainty in harmonizing (1) the fact that it is proper to accept the validity of all causality and functionality (bya byed) with (2) the fact that inherent existence is to be repudiated even nominally, there is no way that one will be able to assimilate the two masses into a combined whole. Such also is the fate as regards the accumulation of the [two] masses [in that they will not be able to be accomplished] for those who proclaim that “in our own system we accept no causality whatsoever, it being a temporary expedient for the sake of others.” So finding this certainty, which is the deep belief in the ways of causality, is what the sūtras call the mundane correct view (jig rten pa’i yang dag pa’i lla ba); and the unmistak ascertained emptiness is called the supramundane correct view (jig rten las ‘das pa’i yang dag pa’i lla ba). The word mundane within this context has been described as follows: “The mundane is the conventional truth.” So because it refers to a correct view based on conventional truth, it is called by that name, [that is, mundane correct view].
in so far as he taught emptiness and dependent arising in a harmonious way. As it has been said:

Homage to the incomparable Buddha
Who taught the supreme doctrine
That on the middle path, emptiness
And dependent arising are synonyms. 319

In this way understand that this method [of harmonizing emptiness and dependent arising] is the principal and special quality of the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas.

4.2.3.1.2 / 2.1.2. How They Have Refuted That [Special Quality] by Their System [of Interpretation] 320

You have managed to refute this principal quality [of the Prāsaṅgikas] as follows. As mentioned earlier, by virtue [of the fact that things] do not inherently exist it is possible to posit functionality, such as causality and so forth, and this is the principal quality [of the Prāsaṅgika system]; but you claim that, because things are empty of inherent existence, causality and so forth do not exist. Therefore, according to you it is necessary to claim the reverse [of this scriptural passage]:

It is this reason, dependent arising,
That cuts through the extensive net of wrong views. 321

for you claim that to cut through the extensive net of wrong views one must refute dependent arising. When proving that the sprout does not truly exist using as a reason that it arises dependently, [according to you] there would be a contradictory pervasion (khyab pa), 322 for you claim that whatever arises dependently cannot be empty and that whatever is empty cannot arise dependently.

The realists think that emptiness prohibits functionality. They urge absurdities on the Mādhyamikas such as this:

If all things are empty
They could not arise nor cease.
And it would follow that for you
There would be no four noble truths. 323

but according to you, it would be correct to simply agree with [the realist's accusation]. The Ārya Nāgārjuna, however, [instead of agreeing with him] reverses the opponent's argument and urges [the same absurdity on him]:

If everything was not empty
Nothing could arise or cease.

And it would follow that for you
There would be no four noble truths. 324

thenceby accusing [the opponent] of a contradictory pervasion. 325 Both sides, [that is, both realists and Mādhyamikas], believe that no matter what philosophical point [is being discussed], to preclude the existence of any soteriologically valid doctrine (kun byang gi chos), 326 such as the four noble truths, is an unbearably huge mistake. For this reason they mutually urge the same [fault] on each other. So why not wait at least until others actually acquire you of this fault before you spout off that there is no such thing as functionality? 327

It is because of this that the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] has said:

Where emptiness is possible
There everything is possible. 328

He is saying that in whatever philosophical system emptiness is possible, all phenomena are possible, and in whatever philosophical system emptiness is not possible, no phenomenon is possible. It follows according to you, however, that the opposite view should be set forth; that is, that "where emptiness is possible, there nothing is possible."

To say "everything is possible" means that everything exists. [The verse] is saying that in the Madhyamaka system, which advocates that [things] are empty of inherent existence, everything, like the four truths and so on, exist.

The Prasānnapādī's commentary on the verse that goes "where emptiness is possible" says:

Wherever the fact that "all things are empty of inherent existence" is possible, there it has been said that all becomes possible. How so? It is because we call dependent arising "emptiness." Therefore, wherever this emptiness is possible, there dependent origination is possible, and wherever dependent origination is possible, there it logically follows that the four noble truths [must exist]. How so? It is because it is dependent origination itself that brings about pain; without arising dependently, [pain] could not [come about]. Because that [suffering] is essenceless, it is taken to be empty. If suffering exists, then the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path which leads to the cessation of suffering are possible. Hence, the understanding of suffering, the abandonment of the cause, the realization of cessation and meditation on the path also become possible; and if the understanding of the truth of suffering etc. exist, then [their] fruits become possible. If the fruits exist, then those who abide in the fruits are possible, and if those who abide in the fruits exist, those who enter them become possible. Where there exist those who enter and abide in the fruits, there the saṅgha is possible. If the noble truths exist, then the holy Dharma also becomes possible. When the holy
Dharma and the holy sangha exist, then the Buddha is also possible. All of the distinct understandings of all things, both mundane and supramundane, are also possible. Dharma, nondharma, and their results, as well as all worldly terminology (jig rten pa'i tha snyad) become possible. Where emptiness is not possible, since there dependent arising would not be possible, nothing would be possible.\[96\]

Again the Prasannapadā says: "Not only do we not suffer from the fault of disallowing such things as arising and destruction etc., we also allow for the four truths etc."\[329\] And the Avatāra also says:

Empty things, such as a reflection etc.,
Are known to depend on the collection [of their parts],
Just as there can arise an image from an empty reflection,
Likewise, while all phenomena are empty.
They arise from empty [causes].\[331\]

So when you hold a position in contradiction to so many scriptural passages, do not be so ready to claim, "we are Madhyamikas who do not even advocate the Madhyamaka."

4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2. Demonstrating Those Reasons to Be Faulty\[332\]

4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1. Demonstrating That Their Examination of What It Means for Something to "Withstand or Not Withstand Logical Analysis" Is Faulty.\[333\]

Just because a phenomenon cannot withstand logical analysis [of the kind] that analyzes the ultimate (don dam dpyod byed kyi rigs pas dpyod pa) does not mean that it is negated (khegs pa) by the logical reasoning (rigs pa) that analyzes the ultimate.\[334\] This is because when a phenomenon is not found by a valid cognition which analyzes the ultimate that does not mean that [such a valid cognition finds] the nonexistence of that phenomenon. This follows because a phenomenon's not being verified by a certain valid cognition does not imply that that valid cognition perceives that phenomenon to be nonexistent.

[Opponent:] I do not accept [the latter claim].

[Reply:] It follows then, absurdly, that sound must be perceived by a visual valid cognition to be nonexistent, as that visual valid cognition does not perceive [sound].\[335\] If you accept this, it follows, absurdly, that sound does not exist, because it is perceived to be nonexistent by a valid cognition; and if you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that the direct perception [of the senses] must be repudiated. It also contradicts your accepting the claim that no phenomenon whatever is to be apprehended as either existent or nonexistent.

Therefore, there is a very great difference between logical reasoning not finding something and it finding it to be nonexistent.

What does it mean, then, to engage in a logical analysis that analyzes the ultimate, and what does it mean to find or not find [what one is analyzing]? Suppose one is dissatisfied (ma tshim par) with considering the variety of phenomenal (chos) and personal (gang sag) conventionalities (tha snyad) such as the pot, the cloth, and so on, and Devadatta, Yajña, and so on as only the labels of nominal conventionalities (ming gi tha snyad biugs pa tsam); and one then engages in a search for how it is that the referent objects onto which those names are labeled exist [by analyzing] whether [the referents] are the same substantive or different substances from their parts. This is called engaging in thinking about the essence (rang bzhi sems pa la zhugs pa) or engaging in an ultimate analysis (don dam dpyod pa la zhugs pa). If, when one performs such an analysis, something should be found within the purview of the mind that analyzes the possibilities concerning the nature (sod lugs) of the object, that is, whether it is of the same nature as or different from its parts, for example, then this analytical logic will have gone afoul; and the mind which relies on that logic must be considered a mistaken consciousness (log shes). If the object existed from its own side (don stengs na grub) as it had been found by that [faulty] logical reasoning within the purview of that mind, then it would truly exist, whether or not one calls it truly existent.

When one engages in correct reasoning such as [the logic that establishes things as being] devoid of being the same as or different [from its parts], or such as the search for the chariot in terms of the seven aspects,\[336\] if one finds that the object does not exist in any of these [ways], that is, it is not the same or different [from its parts] and so forth, this is what we mean by "not finding [the object] such as the pot and so on when one searches for it by means of reasoning that analyzes the ultimate." It does not mean that the pot and so on has been found to be nonexistent by a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate. Not finding the pot, for example, when one searches for it by means of valid cognitions that analyze the ultimate indicates that the pot does not exist ultimately. How could it possibly be indicative of the fact that the pot does not [in general] exist?

When one searches for [the pot] in this manner, to find that it does not exist in terms of any [of the possibilities] is said to be "finding the reality (gnas lugs) of the pot" or "finding its essence (rang bzhi)" or "finding the ultimate (don dam)." One should also know that the fact that the referent object labeled by the term pot does not exist in any of these different ways when it is searched for by means of the logical reasoning which analyzes the ultimate is finding that the pot does not ultimately exist, and the pot's not existing ultimately is said to be "the ultimate (don dam pa) [nature] of the pot," "the essence of the pot," and "the reality of the pot."
4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2. Demonstrating That Their Analysis into the
Four Possibilities, Existence, Nonexistence, and So Forth, Is
Faulty: [The Law of Excluded Middle and the Question
Whether the Madhyamaka Has a Viewpoint]337

By advocating that the sprout and so on does not exist, one is advocating that
it is nonexistent; and by advocating that it is not nonexistent, one is advocating
that it exists. This is in direct contradiction to what you believe.338 Likewise,
having stated that it is not both existent and nonexistent, to advocate that it
is neither existent nor nonexistent is to directly contradict your claim that it is
not both.

[Opponent:] These two are not in direct contradiction, for although the
Śvātantrikas and all lower schools understand reality (rnal ma go ba) in terms
of the law of excluded middle (dgag pa gnyis),339 in the Prāsaṅgika system
reality is not understood in terms of the law of excluded middle. Hence, there
is no fault.

[Reply:] Then it would follow, absurdly, that [two things] could never be
in direct contradiction, that they could never mutually exclude each other
(phan tshun spangs pa'i dangs 'gal), for [according to you] one is unable to
[99] understand something to be nonexistent by negating (rnam par bcad pas) its
existence.

[Opponent:] [Your reason] is not established.

[Reply:] Desist [then in your claim] that reality is not understood in terms
of the law of excluded middle, [because our reason, that negating the existence
of something brings an understanding of its nonexistent, is based on this very
premise].

[Opponent:] [Very well.] I accept [the original premise that direct contra-
diction qua mutual exclusion is impossible].

[Reply:] Then desist [in claiming] that the Prāsaṅgika refutes the realist by
relying on internal contradiction (nang 'gal).340

It follows, absurdly, [from your views] that there is no difference whatsoever
two tenets and wrong ones, whether they be the tenets of the Prāsaṅgikas, realists, or whomever. This is because [for you] the point [expressed by] a tenet can neither be disproven by a valid cognition nor established
by one.

[Opponent:] The former of the two reasons is unfounded, [that is, tenets
can be disproven by a valid cognition]

[Reply:] Then desist [in claiming] that contradiction is impossible.

[Opponent:] The latter is unfounded, [that is, tenets can be proven].

[Reply:] Then desist [in your claim] that it is incorrect for any point whatsoever to be proven by a valid cognition.

According to you it would follow, absurdly, that existence and nonexistent
are not contradictory because all phenomena belong in a third category
(phung gsum pa) that is neither existence nor nonexistence. Again, it follows,
absurdly, [from your views] that it is not correct to say of any phenomenon
that it either positively (mthag gcig tu) is x or is not x, for [according to you]
it is not right to say of any phenomenon that it definitely either exists or does
not exist.

When we put forth such arguments, what reply can there be? If you accept
[this consequence of your position, that it is not correct to predicate anything
of anything else] then it follows that it is not correct to advocate that (1) "all
phenomena are free of mental proliferation (spros bral)" or that (2) "they are
not any of the four [alternatives] such as existent, nonexistent, and so forth."

If all phenomena belong to a third alternative that is neither existence nor
nonexistence, then they similarly would belong to a third alternative that was
neither sprout nor nonsprout, to one that was neither arising nor nonarising, the
neither entity nor nonentity, and so forth ad infinitum. Because of this it fol-
lows that there is no certainty to be had [about anything], where by [certainty
we mean that] something comes to be positively determined to be something
else. In essence what you are holding is a radical and all-pervasive skepticism
(gang la'ang the thsom za ba 'ba' zhiig).

Following a line of reasoning similar to this, if to apprehend [something] as
existing is an eternalistic view, to apprehend something to be an entity
(ding po), or to apprehend it to be a sprout and so on would likewise be an
extreme of reification, [which is absurd]. Also, what is taught and what is repudiated by the scriptures (lang) would have to be the same, for just as it says
that existence and also nonexistence are one extreme, it also says: "Purity
and also impurity are an extreme."341

When one analyzes anything to determine whether it has an essence, it is
necessary to accept that one of the two [results] is determinable, [that is, ei-
ther it does or does not have one]. But let us suppose that a third alternative
did exist, which is neither of those two; if it were still correct to examine [the
object] in this way, [that is, in terms of these two categories that do not ex-
haust all of the possible options concerning the object,] then it would follow,
absurdly, that it would not be the slightest bit unreasonable to conduct this
type of examination: "If a sprout is an entity then is it a pot or a pillar?"342
Therefore, it would follow, absurdly, that there would be no basis on which the
Prāsaṅgika Madhyamikas could rest hypotheses such as the fact that all
phenomena are ascertained to be one of the two truths, for the notion of two
contradictory categories that exclude the possibility of a third is impossible
[according to you].

It also follows, absurdly, that the wisdom (shes rab) which understands
truthlessness (bden med) is a nihilistic view, because to apprehend something
as truthless is a nihilistic view [according to you].

[Opponent:] We accept [that wisdom is a nihilistic view].

[Reply:] Then tell me, you Madhyamika the likes of which has never been
seen before, who advocates the logical refutation of truthlessness and the fact that ārya gnosis (phags pa'i ye shes) is nihilism . . . tell me what kind of logic: it is that refutes truthlessness?

The Ārya Nāgarjuna has clearly taught that reality is understood in terms of the law of excluded middle and that when one refutes essencelessness one [implicitly accepts] the existence of essences. In the Vīgraḥavāyāvartani he says:

When one opposes essencelessness

One will be establishing essentialism (rang bzhin nyid).\(^{343}\)

The Autocommentary on this passage says: ""If essenceless words refute the [101] essencelessness of things, then because they would have refuted essencelessness, things would come to possess essences, and because they would possess essences, they could not be empty.""\(^{344}\) Hence, when Śāriputra asks Avalokiteśvara how one should practice the profound perfection of wisdom, the latter replies: ""One should thoroughly perceive even the five aggregates to be empty of essence.""\(^{345}\) And the Sāmcāya also says:

The thorough understanding of phenomena as essenceless
Is the supreme activity of the perfection of wisdom.\(^{346}\)

The Avatāra also says:

Thus, by perceiving the emptiness of ""I"" and ""mine,""
The yogi becomes liberated.\(^{347}\)

We thus can see that [the scriptures] teach in an extensive way [that the law of excluded middle is operative even within the Madhyamaka and that the understanding of the emptiness of inherent existence can be affirmed as the ultimate liberative force without reservation]. So you had better not claim, in opposition [to all of these scriptures], that even essencelessness is not a proper view.

[Question:] Then how do you interpret this passage:

When there is no such thing as the nonempty
How could emptiness exist?\(^{348}\)

and also this passage from the Ratnāvali:

Thus, the Great Victor opposed
Both the view of self and that of selflessness.\(^{349}\)

as well as the Catuḥśataka passage that goes:

When there is nothing that is not empty
How could emptiness be said to exist?\(^{350}\)

[Reply:] You are taking as the refuge of all your desires only the mere words of the scriptures. That such a doubt should arise in you, who have no understanding whatsoever of the logical analysis of the meaning of the scriptures, should be no surprise to anyone. To explain [the meaning of these passages] in this way, namely, to claim that [they are advocating that] because there is no true existence, there is no emptiness of true existence, is truly laughable. It is like saying ""rabbit horns do not exist because the horns of rabbits do not exist,"" [that is, it is no explanation of the meaning of scripture at all].\(^{351}\) Therefore, when there is no true existence (bden grub med), there must exist truthlessness (bden med yod), and hence your pervasion [that the lack of true existence implies the nonexistence of the emptiness of true existence] is just the opposite of what it should be.

Now the meaning [of these scriptures] is as follows. To counteract that emptiness, that is, that things are empty of true existence, be apprehended as truly existent, [the Catuḥśataka] is saying that emptiness is not truly existent because there is not the slightest phenomenon that is truly existent. Therefore, by means of the reason, which is the pervading category (kyab byed), that is, the repudiation of true existence in general, the pervaded category (kyab bya), the true existence of emptiness [in particular], is refuted. How could [this passage] possibly be teaching that by means of the reason, which is the repudiation of true existence, the object to be refuted (dgag bya), truthlessness, which is the very negation of that [object], does not exist? The Catuḥśatakāṭikā says:

If what we call "emptiness" had any sort of existence by virtue of its own nature (rang gi ngo bos), then things would also possess essences. This [verse] has been explained for the purpose of demonstrating that it has no such existence:

When there is nothing that is not empty
How could emptiness be said to exist?
In the absence of something
How can its opposite exist?\(^{352}\)

Immediately after the line "how could emptiness exist," the Prajñāmālā continues:

The Conquerors have taught emptiness
To be the eradication of all views,
For they have taught that those who perceive emptiness
Have nothing to prove.\(^{353}\)

Buddhāpālita's Vṛtti has this to say:

It is to those that conceive that ""things exist by virtue of their own nature"" that we teach ""emptiness.""\(^{354}\) This is dependent arising and it is predicated of entities by virtue of the fact that [they arise in dependence on] causes and conditions. To say that things do not exist
by virtue of their [own] nature is to demonstrate that the nature of things is emptiness.\textsuperscript{355} When [this is taught] it has the ability to counteract that misconception. Nothing else, however, has the ability to counteract the misconception in the case of those who conceive that emptiness itself is real (\textit{dngos po nyid du}). For example, it is just like the following case: how can anyone be said to have understood the meaning of “nonexistence” when, after someone has said “I have nothing at all,” he replies “give me some of that nothing at all.”\textsuperscript{356}

According to you, this example is not appropriate, for the following reason. When someone says to someone else “get the money,” and the other person answers “there is no money whatsoever,” there is no fault if there arises [in that first person] the thought that apprehends that there is no money whatsoever. If, however, this person apprehends the nonexistence to be [a kind of] money, there is no way for that person to come to an understanding that there is no money. Likewise, the apprehension of true existence is counteracted by the teaching of emptiness. However, it is taught that if one apprehends emptiness itself to truly exist, then the apprehension of the true existence of that [emptiness] is very difficult to reverse. According to you, however, the analogy must be explained by saying that there is a fault both in apprehending a lack of money to be money and in apprehending it to be worthless.\textsuperscript{357}

[Opponent:] Then how do you, who have argued against us in so many meaningless ways, interpret the meaning of the definitive scriptures that refute the four extremes of existence, nonexistence, both, and neither?

[Reply:] Fearing the fault of advocating direct contradiction, as explained earlier, one individual claims that [the refutation of the four extremes must each be qualified by the word \textit{ultimately}] that is, that things are not ultimately existent, not ultimately nonexistent, not ultimately both existent and nonexistent, and not ultimately neither existent nor nonexistent, but this does not free him from the fault of direct contradiction, for after advocating that things are not ultimately both, by claiming that they are not ultimately neither, one is [essentially] advocating that they are ultimately both.

Hence the meaning is this, that existence does not truly exist, nonexistence does not truly exist, a third alternative which is both does not truly exist, and a third alternative which is neither does not truly exist.\textsuperscript{358} This causes us no problems, and in fact, it is going to take us straight to heaven!

Because errors [in interpretation] such as the one mentioned earlier occur due to misunderstanding such scriptural passages as: “existence is an eternalistic view,”\textsuperscript{359} I will explain [how the passage is to be interpreted]. “Existence” is a far cry from the “extreme of existence,” and “nonexistence” a far cry from the “extreme of nonexistence.” Without understanding this, to apprehend any existence as the extreme of existence is to go very far astray indeed.\textsuperscript{360}

[Opponent:] Well then, what difference is there between these two?

[Reply:] In general, an “extreme” or “edge” is explained in the world as any boundary that, when overstepped, causes one to fall and hurt oneself. To [the border of] such a precipice, we apply the term extreme. Likewise, in this case we apply the term extreme to anything that, when apprehended, causes one to fall into the pit of false views and to degenerate.

Extremes are of two kinds: the extreme of existence and the extreme of nonexistence. The former [as is follows]. For example, non-Buddhists take the self to be permanent, they apprehend \textit{pradhana} and \textit{iśvara} [God] to be permanent entities (\textit{ttag dngos}).\textsuperscript{362} The \textit{Vaibhāṣikās}’ belief that space is a permanent substance (\textit{ttag rdzas})\textsuperscript{363} is also a view that makes them fall into the extreme of eternalism. Nonetheless, realists [like the \textit{Vaibhāṣikās}] never explicitly state \textsuperscript{105} that their view that things inherently exist is tantamount [to the view] that things are permanent; and as regards the way in which their minds apprehend [this eternalism], it is true that it involves no apprehension of things to be permanent. However, they have fallen into the extreme of eternalism because if a pot inherently existed then it must be permanent.

[Opponent:] Why must it?

[Reply:] It follows, absurdly, that the existence of the pot is its existence in terms of its own nature (\textit{khyod kyi rang bzhin du grub}) because it inherently exists (\textit{khyod rang bzhin gyes yod}).\textsuperscript{363}

[Opponent:] I accept [the premise that the existence of the pot is tantamount to its existence qua essence].

[Reply:] Then it follows, absurdly, that it is impossible for it to ever not exist, because of what you have accepted. This follows because it is impossible for any phenomenon to suppress its own nature. If you accept that it is impossible for it to ever not exist, then it follows, absurdly, that it must always exist; and if you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that it is permanent. That is why the \textit{Prajñāpāramitā} says:

Because whatever inherently exists
Is never nonexistent, it is permanent.\textsuperscript{364}

As for the latter, the extreme of nihilism (\textit{med pa'i mtha'}), [it is as follows]. According to [some] non-Buddhists there is no emancipation or omniscience.\textsuperscript{365} There are also views such as [the one advocating] that things have no cause. In our own system, [that is, among Buddhist schools,] the view expressed by some that the intermediate state (\textit{bar srid}) does not exist is a nihilistic view.\textsuperscript{366} Nor is that all. The view expressed by the realists that the inherent existence of things are annihilated (\textit{rgyan chad}) in their second moment is also a nihilistic view (\textit{chad lta}).\textsuperscript{367} This is because if a pot inherently exists, that existence must be the pot's reality (\textit{gnas lugs}), and when it is cut off at the second instant, it becomes tantamount to annihilating its reality [This is also a nihilistic view] because, as explained earlier, if something
inherently exists, it must be permanent, and if one advocates that it is destroyed in the second moment, one would have to be advocating the annihilation of something permanent. That is why the Prajināmūla says:

To say that what previously arose does not presently exist
Reduces one to the absurdity of nihilism.\textsuperscript{168}

These are all examples of the ways in which one may fall into the extremes of eternalism and nihilism.

One does not come to have an eternalistic view simply by apprehending [something] to exist. Likewise, one does not come to have a nihilistic view simply by apprehending [something] to be nonexistent. If apprehending that a pot exists, that a rabbit’s horn does not exist, that space is permanent, and that a thing is destroyed in the second moment\textsuperscript{169} are cases of falling into the extremes of eternalism and nihilism, then the extremely absurd conclusion would follow that apprehending that the Buddha has no faults and that the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka view does not fall into the extremes of eternalism and nihilism are [both] nihilistic views [because they both advocate the nonexistence of something].

The Prasannapadā, commenting on the lines:

Because whatever inherently exists
Can never be nonexistent, it is permanent.\textsuperscript{370}
says:

When something inherently exists, as its essence cannot be overturned (ldog pa), it can never not exist. Thus, it follows that to accept the existence of essences in this way is an eternalistic view; and to accept an essence during the time that it existed previously, and then to accept that now, at a later time, because it has been destroyed, it no longer exists entails the absurdity of a nihilistic view.\textsuperscript{371}

Now because the Prasannapadā explains that the sloka, “Because whatever inherently exists,” is to be applied in the case of passages that explain reasons such as “[To apprehend] ‘existence’ is to apprehend eternalism,” it is quite clear that passages such as “[To apprehend] ‘existence’ is to apprehend eternalism” do not refer merely to existence and nonexistence, but are referring instead to inherent existence and to the apprehension of that very [inherent existence] as being annihilated; that is, as coming to an end.

Therefore, if things existed inherently, their existence would have to be their reality because the existence of things would be independent of causes \textsuperscript{107} and conditions. The Prajināmūla says:

If one holds the view that things exist
Due to their essences.

Then all things that exist in this way
Would have to be seen by you as devoid of causes and conditions.\textsuperscript{372}

This is said in reference to a multitude of things. Therefore, by reason of the fact that things are empty of essence,\textsuperscript{373} the possibility of their functioning is perfectly established. There are many instances in which the Acārya [Candrakīrti] has clearly stated that there is a difference between existence and inherent existence and between nonexistence and the nonexistence of self-nature (rang gi ngo bos med pa). In the Prasannapadā he says:

[Opponent:] If one posits, as you do, that things have no essences, then this method [of yours] would do away with all that the Lord [Buddha] has taught, [contradicting, for example] his teaching that “one must oneself experience the ripening of the karma which one has oneself created.” Because you would be annihilating karma and its effects, you would be the worst of nihilists (med pa pa).

[Reply:] One should reply [as follows]. We are not nihilists. We refute the position that [things] can be dichotomized into existent and nonexistent, and having done so, we elucidate the way to the city of emancipation, the path of nonduality. We do not, however, advocate that there is no karma, or producer [of karma] or result [of karma]. Why is that so? We advocate that those [entities] have no essence.

[Opponent:] I wonder whether this leads to a fault, for when [things] have no essence, they cannot possibly function.

[Reply:] Even this [fault] does not occur, for it is only when things have essences that action is not seen [to take place], and it is only when [things] are essenceless that action is seen [to occur].\textsuperscript{374}

The Catuhsāraṭakaṭā also says:

The self is not advocated to be unreal (dnigos po med pa) because it is advocated as arising dependently.

[Opponent:] Are you then advocating that it is real (dnigos po)?

[Reply:] No, because of the fact that we advocate that it arises dependently.

[Opponent:] What then do you advocate that it is?

[Reply:] We advocate it to arise dependently. And again, what is the meaning of dependent arising? It refers to essencelessness. It refers to the fact that [things] do not arise inherently. It refers to the arising of an effect whose characteristic is that it resembles an illusion, a mirage, a reflection, a fairy city, an emanation, or a dream. It refers to emptiness and selflessness.\textsuperscript{375}

Again, the Catuhsāraṭakaṭā states:

[Opponent:] Does memory that has as its object something past not exist?
[Reply:] Who says that it does not exist? We do not repudiate dependent arising. Then how does it exist? As follows:

Therefore, what we call memory is mistaken (log pa).
Since it arises only with respect to false objects.\textsuperscript{376}

This the Acārya has himself posited.\textsuperscript{377} Therefore, the mental object (dmigs pa) of a memory is a past object. If it existed by virtue of its own nature, because the memory of that object would have to be perceiving an existing object, [the memory] too would exist by virtue of its own nature. When the past entity is essenceless, however, the memory that perceives it is also essenceless, and for this reason it is called mistaken. [In this case] to say that it is mistaken is no different from saying that it is essenceless or that it arises dependently. By mistaken we do not [here] mean that the [perceived] entity does not exist.\textsuperscript{378}

It is not that the past entity is utterly nonexistent, for it is something to be remembered, and its effects are perceived; nor does it exist by virtue of its own nature, for it would follow, absurdly, that it was permanent and that it could be directly apprehended (drugs su ‘dzin pa).\textsuperscript{379} In this way it distinguishes in a very detailed way between utter nonexistence and nonexistence by virtue of own nature. Again, the Catuḥṣṭatakatikā states:

The view of the realists is as follows. To the extent that something is its existence, to that extent it is its own nature. When they are devoid of their own nature, because those entities would be utterly nonexistent, they would resemble the horns of a rabbit. Hence, because they have not transcended dualistic views, it is difficult for the totality of their beliefs to harmonize.\textsuperscript{380}

In this way it teaches that the realists go astray by asserting that if an entity does not exist by virtue of its own nature, it must of necessity be nonexistent.

Nowadays it seems that quite a few Madhyamikas also accept, as do the realists, that if something is essenceless, it must be nonexistent. However, the realists, being experts, accept that things exist inherently without being nihilists in regard to karma and its effects. The Madhyamikas of today, however, advocate that karma and its effects do not exist, and yet these idiots consider theirs the higher view! [The realists and present-day Madhyamikas] resemble each other in that neither of them can reconcile dependent arising and emptiness. There exists only one difference [between them], that the latter are nihilists in regard to karma and its effects whereas the former are not.

In opposition to the realists’ view that the Madhyamikas resemble nihilists, the glorious Candra does not say, “because the nihilists have a view they are at fault, and because I have none I am not at fault,” nor does he say, [110] ‘nihilists espouse nonexistence, but because we advocate that things do not exist (yod pa ma yin pa) and not that things are nonexistent (med pa), we are not at fault.’\textsuperscript{381} Instead, [in his rebuttal] he says that a Madhyamika advocates that because past and future births arise dependently, they are essenceless, but that he does not advocate that they are nonexistent. Nihilists, he says, do not advocate this, instead claiming that coming from a previous birth to this one or going to a future one from this one is something that is not witnessed, and hence nonexistent. Hence, [Madhyamikas and realists] do not resemble each other. The Prasannapāda says:

Here, an opponent may criticize us as follows: there is no difference between a Madhyamika and a nihilist as [the former] advocates that virtuous and nonvirtuous karma, its doer, its effects, and all the worlds are empty of essence. Nihilists also say that these do not exist. Hence, claim these opponents, there is no difference between a Madhyamika and a nihilist. But this is not so. Madhyamikas advocate dependent arising. They claim that because things arise dependently, everything, both this world and the one beyond, are essenceless. Nihilists have not realized the unreality (drugs po med pa) of the world beyond from the vantage point of [the fact] that, as it arises dependently, it is empty of essence. How so? They perceive the aspect of the reality of this world in terms of an essence, and then, when they do not witness [the process] of coming from the world beyond to this world, and of going from this world to the one beyond, they become skeptical in regard to other [worlds] whose reality should be similar to the reality that is perceived in this world.\textsuperscript{382}

[Question:] Do not the nihilist and the Madhyamikas resemble one another [111] in so far as [they both advocate] the essencelessness of entities?

[Reply:] No, they do not resemble each other, and as his reason [Candrakirti] says that the Lokāyatikas [the Materialists] take essencelessness to mean utter nonexistence, whereas the Madhyamikas believe that, although [things] are essenceless, they conventionally exist. The Prasannapāda says:

[Opponent:] Though that may be so, they resemble each other from this point of view: when one perceives the nonexistence of a thing’s own nature, one perceives it as [a kind of] nonexistence.

[Reply:] No, they do not resemble each other because the Madhyamikas accept that [things, that is, past and future lives and so on,] exist conventionally, while those [nihilists] do not accept this.\textsuperscript{383}

In this way he clearly explains that there is no difference between the Madhyamikas who believe that no phenomenon exists even nominally, those who believe that even though they do exist nominally that this does not imply existence, and the Lokāyatikas. That is why the Bodhicittavivarana says:
Having realized that all phenomena are empty,
We still rely on [the doctrine of] karma and its effects.
Among all amazing things, this is the most amazing.
Among all astonishing things, this is the most astonishing. 384

The ability to posit the compatibility of [on the one hand] karma with its effects
and [on the other] emptiness is a wonderful thing. It is said that because
this is so difficult to understand the Conqueror himself, after demonstrating
the act of [attaining] buddhahood, [seeing that] reality was so difficult to
understand, it found extremely difficult to agree to turn the wheel of the
discipline. 385 The Ratnavālī says:

Because the discipline was so profound, he realized
That it was difficult for men to understand.
Thus the Conqueror, upon [attaining] buddhahood,
At first turned away from teaching the discipline. 386

[A Critique of Quietism] 387

In contradistinction to this, suppose that we search for what consciousness is
by means of some sort of faulty reasoning such as the kind that analyzes
whether it is color or shape. 388 When one does not find that it can be pin-
pointed in terms of any of these categories, turning to the mind that is doing
the analysis, one does not find that even it can be identified at all. Hence, [the
mind enters] into a state in which no identification takes place; that is, neither
asserting nor denying anything about anything else. Because placing the mind
so that it apprehends nothing is so simple, however, how could the Buddha
have said of such a practice that it was the most difficult thing to understand?

It seems that because this interpretation is extremely easy to understand, a
multitude [of scholars] from this Land of Snows have understood this to be the
significance [of meditation on emptiness]. 389 How can I possibly mention each
of these individually? There are those "very learned" in the sūtras and tan-
tras, those proud of their mastery of logical methodology, those who believe
they possess some kind of special instructions (man ngag) concerning pro-
found subjects . . . but when one analyzes them, all of their [views are filled
with] exceedingly many inconsistent tenets. All of these great dialecticians
who argue on a variety of topics, such as the emptiness of self (rang stong)
and the emptiness of other (gzhban stong), 390 and on whether reality truly ex-
ists, do not differ in the least when it comes to practicing the meaning of the
profound [emptiness]. Whether they believe that they are practicing the idiot's
meditation of not training in anything whatsoever, the practice of the Great
Master of the Tripitaka, or that they are practicing the profound completion
stage (rdo gsum) of the anuttarayoga tantra, they all concur on this one point:
they posit that no [mental] object should be established, that the mind should
apprehend nothing. This will be seen to be a great den of iniquity when looked
upon by those of sharp faculties.

Among the many things renowned as "Tibetan teachings," are a variety
of concocted practices such as "preliminary visualizations" (smon 'gro'i
dmigs pa), and "bodily postures and exercises" (lus 'gnas dang 'khrul khor);
granting that they can be distinguished as the teachings of various lineages,
still, it does not seem that there is any difference between them as regards the
way in which they meditate on the definitive meaning. Although one can make
some slight distinctions between the variety of tenets of these so-called sages,
come time to set forth their views [concerning emptiness] they do not meditate
in accordance with the distinctions that have been made. Instead they all,
without distinction, meditate on creating nothing within their minds. Hence,
there are strong indications that all of these [views] are on the periphery of the
system of the Chinese Hwa shang.

Therefore, they hold [to the doctrine] that to create nothing within the
mind is to meditate on reality, and thus they err in so far as they end up not
being able to meditate on selflessness. They repudiate the practice of the path
that is the counteractive measure against the way in which [we grasp at a self
(bdag 'dzin), the root of cyclic existence. They exert themselves in a kind of
practice that does not the slightest harm to the way we grasp at the self.
Hence, one should be aware of the fact that although many of our own Tibetan
practitioners pride themselves on having meditated assiduously on reality for
the whole of their lives, that they have not managed to put even the slightest
dent in their grasping at a self is a valid effectual reason (bras rtags yang
dag) proving that their practice is faulty. 391 Although they may have attained
some level of expertise concerning the proofs and refutations involved in set-
ning forth the view [of emptiness] at the time of study, when it comes to prac-
ticing the profound meaning (slob don), they teach a kind of idiot's meditation
saying, "create nothing at all in your mind. . . . See for yourself, is there any-
thing to be identified?" As soon as they find some belief of the sort, "this
alone is the reality of the mind," they immediately abandon analysis in the
logical sphere. This too should be understood to be a valid reason for proving
the cause from the effect; that is, for proving that no matter how much training
they may have had in the study and elucidation of tenets, their method of
setting forth reality is in error.

Because they believe that when it comes down to meditating on reality
one ought not to create anything in the mind, they must of necessity believe
that when they set forth reality they ought not to set it forth even in terms of
selflessness. In the same way, they must accept that one ought not to put forth
even a theory of reality. Although this is an infinite source of faults, fearing
that it will lengthen [this work excessively] I discuss it no further here.

By holding to such a view there arises a nihilistic attitude in regard to all
of the aspects of method (shabs). For example, [there arises] the view that
because charity and moral conduct, prostration and offerings, all require conceptualization (rtog pas bya dagos pas), they are things to be abandoned; and also the view that in the case of tantra the generation stage (bskyed rim) is not the cause of buddhahood, [as it too involves mental images]. Hence, no position is worse than this view, namely, the view that nothing at all should be apprehended.

Therefore, there are three possibilities as regards the mind: (1) there is the apprehension that the self exists, (2) the apprehension that the self does not exist, and (3) that which apprehends that neither of the two [is true]. The first of these is the root of cyclic existence and as its antidote it is necessary to generate within one’s mental continuum the second mind and then meditate. To generate that understanding of selflessness in one’s mental continuum it is necessary to lead one’s mind to certainty (nges pa’i dren pa) by being aware of the logical faults that ensue when (one holds) that the object [of self-grasping, that is, the self] exists as it is apprehended by a mode in which self-grasping is operative. That is why [the Madhyamakavāda] says:

Insight should lead one to an awareness of the fact that all afflictions and faults
Arise from a [mistaken] view in regard to the collection of perishable [aggregates] (’jig tshogs la lta ba).
So realizing that the self is the object of this mind,
The yogi repudiates the self.392

If this is not [done] one will wander in cyclic existence due to the grasping at a self. To merely prohibit the mind from engaging in [mental] activity in regard to both the existence and nonexistence of a self, [the third of the three minds described earlier,] will not harm [self-grasping] in the least. For example, a man is traveling along a road and is fearful of thieves. If based on his [115] belief in the reason that there are no thieves he comes to generate an ascertaining consciousness (nges pa’i shes pa) that there are no thieves, then he can eliminate the mind that fears the thieves. He will not be able to eliminate this fear-ridden mind, however, by simply avoiding thoughts of either the existence or the nonexistence of the thieves.

It is not necessary to have as a prerequisite the establishment of the view [of emptiness] before generating in one’s mental continuum this third kind of mind.393 [We can see this to be the case] because nowadays there are idiots who understand nothing at all of the view of emptiness and yet who understand the perfect method of meditation in terms of the teaching that one should remain lucid and clear without creating anything in the mind.394
Such meditative practices which claim that one should not apprehend either the existence or the nonexistence of a self and that one should abandon whatever is apprehended are in no way different from the meditation of the asamjña (sāmāpatti).395 There is no being whatsoever who has not generated [this trance state] in his or her mental continuum at some past time.396 So please distinguish carefully between not meditating on a self and meditating on selflessness!

[Opponent:] To apprehend that there is no self, it is not necessary to set forth the view [of emptiness] by means of logical reasoning. We know from our own experience that even without establishing the view by means of logical reasoning we can still come to apprehend selflessness.

[Reply:] We believe that it is necessary to generate the ascertaining consciousness397 (nges shes) which determines that there is no self by relying on logical reasoning, but we do not believe that the mere apprehension of selflessness must be generated from reasoning. Reification, that is, grasping at a self, must be undermined (gcod) by means of an ascertaining consciousness. Reification cannot be cleared away by mere belief (mos pa) without generating an ascertaining consciousness. As it says [in the Pramāṇavārttika]:

Since the ascertaining and reifying minds
Are of such a nature that they mutually oppose each other,
One should realize that this [ascertaining mind]
Engages in the elimination of reification.398

[Opponent:] Well then, what about a kind of meditation in which one [116] thinks, without negating doubts, that all phenomena are selfless, but which, being based on belief in the words of one’s holy spiritual master, [arises] from hearsay [and not from logical analysis]?

[Reply:] Although it is true that in this case there need not precede the establishment of the view by means of reasoning, this [kind of apprehension] is only a belief aroused by faith; it is not a full-blown ascertaining consciousness. Were it an ascertaining consciousness, one would have to claim that it arises from either of the two kinds of valid cognition, [and it does not]. If this were an instance of an ascertaining consciousness arising from [hearing] the words of the spiritual master, then there would be an instance of words validly verifying a fact that [could be proven by] direct means (dngos stob kyi yul),399 [whereas this is impossible].

Therefore, if this [belief based on words] were an ascertaining consciousness that was induced by a valid verifying cognition, then, until one forgets the object (dngigs) and aspect (’rnam) [of, for example, the fact that a pot, the object, is selfless, the aspect,] then one will not come to believe in the opposite fact (bskyogs) [that the pot has a self] that contradicts (’gal ba) the way in which [the ascertaining consciousness] apprehended [the fact]. [We know that those who generate faith based on mere hearsay,] when they generate faith in another spiritual master’s tenets which do not accord with the first, again, under the power of the words alone, abandon that previous false certainty, thereby proving that it was not irreprovable knowledge, and hence not ascertainment to begin with]. Therefore, if one accustoms oneself correctly to that
mind which thinks that all phenomena are devoid of self and which is induced by faith in the mere words of the spiritual master, it is possible to slightly reduce attachment and so forth, but one will not in the least bring harm to the seeds of self-grasping.

Therefore, those who desire the best for themselves should induce [within themselves] by means of logical reasoning, a certainty of the fact that selflessness is the real nature of all phenomena. They should avoid becoming sophists who exert themselves in discourse without any personal experience. Instead, by properly meditating, [following] the prescribed divisions of the meditation, they should exert themselves at destroying the afflictions that [infect] their own mental continua. Hence, if one does not understand the difference between refuting the existence of all phenomena and refuting, by means of logical reasoning, that any phenomenon whatsoever has the characteristic of being established by virtue of its own nature, then one will without a doubt fall into the abyss of wrong views (ita ba ngan pa). Therefore, it is necessary to [117] distinguish [these two views] in accordance with what the noble father [Nāgārjuna] and his spiritual son [Āryadeva] have clearly taught. As it says in the *Catuḥṣatakāṭikā*:

If one examines [the object] by means of logical reasoning in this way, because the sense organs, their objects, and the consciousness [that perceive them] have no existing natures, they are said to not exist by virtue of their own natures. If these things did exist by virtue of their own nature, then, when correctly analyzed, one should be able to perceive quite clearly that they exist by virtue of their own nature, that this is how they exist. But this is in fact not perceived, and so they are said to be empty of essence (rang bzhi gnas stong pa).400

And again, the *Catuḥṣatakāṭikā* states:

[Question:] If the eye and so forth are not possible, then how can the eye and so on sense organs be posited to be of the nature of the ripened karma?

[Answer:] Do we refute that they are of the nature of the ripened [karmic causes]? [Of course not!]

[Question:] As you establish your refutation in regard to the eye and so forth, how can you avoid not refuting [that the eye organ and so forth are the result of karmic causality]?  

[Answer:] It is because our analysis is preoccupied with (lhus byed pa) the search for essences. Here we are refuting that things exist by virtue of their own nature. We are not refuting the functioning (byas) of the eye and so on, or the [fact that they are the] ripening of karma; that is, that they dependently arise. Therefore, because they exist, they must be found to be the ripening of some [cause]. The eye and so forth do indeed exist.401

In addition, the Acārya Buddhāpālita states in the commentary to the twentieth chapter of the *Prajñāpāramitā*:

[An opponent] has said: If even time does not exist, and cause, effect, and the whole do not exist, then what else is there that does exist? You are therefore actually advocating nihilism! Let me explain. This is not so. Why? There is no validity whatsoever to your conception that time and so on exist because of their nature. Because they are dependent, they exist as labels (thigs pa).402

It would be pointless to continue to press those who incorrectly maintain that to advocate that [something] does not exist is not to advocate that it is nonexistent. We have already explained it with reference to such scriptures as the *Prasannapadā*, as well as through reasoning.

4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3. Demonstrating That Their Analysis of [What It Means for Something] to Be Established or Not Established by a Valid Cognition, and Their Subsequent Refutation, Is Faulty403

When we accept that arising exists, we accept that it exists as something established by a valid cognition.404 Hence, we accept that arising exists because it is established by a nominal valid cognition (*tha snyad pa'i  tshad ma*) such as the eye consciousness and so on. We believe that the ultimate truth [emptiness] exists as something established by a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate (don dam spyod pa'i tshad ma).405

[Opponent:] Well then, how do you interpret such [scriptural passages] as “the eye, the ear and the nose too are not valid cognition”406 [if, as you claim, the notion of valid cognitions acting as sources for the verification of the existence of entities is a valid one]?

[Reply:] If one were to explain the meaning of these [scriptures] as you do, [namely, as a general repudiation of valid cognition and of their role as verifying agents,] then an utterly contradictory pervasion would follow. You would end up explaining that “if the eye and the ear consciousnesses exist and are valid cognitions in regard to form and sound and so forth, then the āryan path would be purposeless.”407 If this were the case, then you would have to say that if valid cognitions which analyze the nominal are valid cognitions in regard to the conventional, then the valid cognitions which analyze the ultimate are pointless when it comes to perceiving the ultimate. So please do not make a contradictory pervasion the explanation of the purport of *sūtras*.

The meaning of that *sūtra* passage is this. If the eye consciousness and so forth were valid cognitions in regard to reality, it would follow, absurdly, that all sentient beings from beginningless time would have directly perceived
valid cognition, for then it would follow that all consciousnesses are valid cognitions." 414

[Reply:] This passage is more difficult to understand than the previous one. Its meaning is taught in the [portion of the] Catuḥṣatakajñāka in which the opponent’s position is presented:

Because the logician (rtog pa) is utterly inexperienced in worldly meaning (rigs rien pa'i don), he must practice it from the very beginning like a young child. But when it comes to demonstrating this, your notion of what it means for something to be a direct perception is contradictory and must be examined. You claim that there is consciousness which is direct perception. What kind of consciousness? The kind that is devoid of conceptualization. Then what is conceptualization? It is a rough kind of recognition (du shes gyer po) that engages in reifying an object in terms of name (ming) and classification (rigs). Because they are devoid of this [reification], that is, because the five sense consciousnesses come to understand the own characteristic of their object in a strictly ineffable way, they are given the name direct perception. 415

This is refuting the exposition of valid cognitions as it appears in works such as the Seven Logical Treatises [of the logicians]; it is not refuting that valid cognitions are possible [in general]. If I explain each word [of these citations], it will lengthen this work excessively and so for the moment I will only mention their meaning in brief. 416

The realists believe that if something is a valid cognition it cannot be a consciousness that is in error (khrul pa) as to the object in regard to which it is considered a valid cognition. Now because what is apprehended in an ordinary person’s valid cognition appears to be an object that exists from its own side, the realists accept the pervasion that if something is a valid cognition, then it must be a valid cognition even in regard to that object’s existing by virtue of its own characteristic.

To refute this, take the eye consciousness, for example. It follows [according to you, the realist,] that it is not mistaken (mi slu ba) as to the nature (rang bzhin) of form because it is a valid cognition in regard to it. You accept the reason [that the eye consciousness is a valid cognition, in regard to form] and the pervasion [that if it is a valid cognition, then it must be unmistakable as to the ultimate nature of form,] because you claim that a valid cognition has as its characteristic that it is unmistakable. If you accept that [the eye consciousness is unmistakable in regard to the nature of form, then I refute you by saying that] the eye consciousness is mistaken in regard to the nature of form because form appears to it as if it existed by virtue of its own characteristic, whereas in actuality the nature of form is such that it is empty of existing by virtue of its own characteristic. This [is the meaning of the earlier quote].
Now in our own system, there would have to be a nonerroneous (ma 'khrul pa) valid cognition in regard to truly existing phenomena [if such phenomena existed]. The fact [that no such valid cognition exists], however, does not contradict the fact that a false phenomenon can be posited by an erroneous valid cognition. Hence, it is not necessarily follow that if something is a valid cognition in regard to x, then it is a nonerroneous consciousness in regard to x.\footnote{147} Also, the valid cognitions and phenomena of our own system do not exist by virtue of their own nature because we believe that they have only a labeled existence (btags yod tsam), that they exist one in dependence on another. The Caturśatakajñikā says:

Even these two exist in mutual dependence. If the two [kinds of] valid cognition exist, then so would the two [kinds of] perceived objects; and if the two [kinds of] perceived objects exist, then so would the two [kinds of] valid cognition. Neither valid cognitions nor phenomena exist by virtue of their own nature.\footnote{148}

The extensive explanation of the refutation of the realists' [conception of] valid cognitions in the Prasannapāda is difficult to understand, has many technical commentarial words, and is exceedingly long. To explain it here would take too many words and so I will not discuss it. Those who might wish to compose a commentary that explains in a detailed way the words of the digest, that is, the Prasannapāda, should refer to that treatment. The remainder of our [122] own system's exposition of valid cognitions I will explain later.

4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.4. Demonstrating That [Their] Examination of Whether Arising Can Be Determined to Exist in Any One of the Four Ways, Such as Arising from Self, Is Faulty\footnote{149}

The realists and the Prāśaṅgikas resemble one another in that they both accept arising. They differ, however, in that [the Prāśaṅgikas believe] that one can refute [inherent arising] by analyzing it into the four [possibilities], such as arising from self, whereas [the realists maintain that] one cannot. It is as follows. It is not correct to accept that realists, when they accept arising, analyze it into the four possibilities such as arising from self because realists accept that (1) arising is true arising (bden skye), and that (2) all true arising must be one of the four possibilities when the way in which [things] arise is logically analyzed.\footnote{140} This second reason is true because a form of arising that can withstand logical analysis implies the existence or the nonexistence of a cause, and it implies either that the cause is a different object from the effect or that it is not.

The arising that the Prāśaṅgikas accept is not refuted by the analysis into the four possibilities because the Prāśaṅgikas accept a merely nominal arising [that is found to exist only] so long as it is not analyzed or investigated; and because that unanalyzed, uninvestigated arising, when logically analyzed, need not fall into any of the four possibilities; and, finally, because unanalyzed existence does not imply analyzed existence.\footnote{121}

From another viewpoint [we can say that] the Prāśaṅgikas use dependent arising to refute arising via [any of] the four possibilities. The Avatāra says:

Because things arise interdependently,
Concepts cannot be analyzed.
And so, by the logical reason of dependent arising,
The infinite net of wrong views is cut.\footnote{122}

And also:

Because things are neither uncaused nor caused
By God or by the two [possibilities]
Of (1) a cause identical [with its effect] or (2) a cause different from it,
They therefore arise interdependently.\footnote{123}

This shows that because things do not arise by means of [any one of] the four [123] extremes, they arise interdependently. So do not, claiming the opposite of what Candrakirti has explained [to be true], then claim that a form of arising devoid of the four extremes, [which is what we and Candrakirti accept as conventional arising,] is a form of arising that is one of the four extremes.

The [Madhyamakāvatāra] verse that goes: ‘‘The reasoning at the time of [analyzing] reality’’\footnote{1424} does not teach that nominal arising does not exist but that even nominally there is no arising by virtue of [a thing's] own characteristic because, at the time of analyzing reality, the reasoning that refutes arising via the four extremes refutes arising from the four extremes even nominally. That is why the Bhāṣya on that very verse says: ‘‘Thus, the claim that arising by virtue of own characteristic cannot be considered to be true on either of the two levels’ is something that you [the opponent] must accept though you may not wish to do so’’\footnote{1425} and it is why the Avatāra says:

Just as the son of a barren woman
Does not arise by virtue of its own nature (bdag nyid) even worldly [convention],
Likewise there is no entity that arises
By virtue of its own nature (ngo bo nyid).\footnote{1426}

Inherent (rang bzhin gyis) arising cannot be considered to be true on either of the two levels of truth [conventional or ultimate], but one must understand that there does exist arising that is dependent and that exists as long as one does not analyze or examine it. The glorious Candrakīrti has said that to not distinguish mere arising from inherent arising is lunacy in the extreme. The Yuktiśāṣṭikā says:
A Dose of Emptiness

Arising in dependence [on other things] is nonarising. This has been taught by the Supreme Sage [the Buddha].

In [Candrakīrti’s Vṛtti] it says:

[Opponent:] Is it not the case that what arises in dependence [on other things] is just [another kind of] arising? If so, then how can you call it nonarising? But if you [insist] on calling it nonarising then do not call it arising in dependence. As these two are mutually contradictory, it is not right [to consider something to be both].

[Reply:] Oh my goodness (kye ma kyi hud)! Even though you have neither lent your ear nor given thought [to what we have said, you think] that your opposition confronts us with a difficulty. But how can there be an opportunity for you to oppose us when we claim that what arises in dependence [on other things] does not arise inherently, like a reflection.

Because [these opponents] have neither heard the word inherently nor understood its significance, [a qualifier] that has been stated on many occasions previously in such phrases as not arising inherently, he says that they have neither ears nor minds. This is also the point made by the Ārya Anavataptañgardāpariprcchā Sūtra when it says: ‘Whatever arises from conditions does not arise.’ Then it explains why it does not arise: ‘It has no arising essence (rāng bzhin),’ thereby explaining that the meaning of not arising is ‘not arising inherently (rāng bzhin gyis).’

The Lankāvatāra Sūtra is also quoted in the Prasannapāda: ‘Mahamati, I have said that no phenomenon arises, intending [by these words to mean that] they do not arise inherently.’ Hence, it is with no understanding whatsoever of such a distinction that [the opponent thinks] that it is mere [unqualified] arising that [Prajñāpāramitā claims concerning] nonarising [is referring to], that it is mere dependence [is referring to], and that it is mere seeing that nonseeing is referring to [instead of their referring to noninherent arising and so on]. So do not think you are espousing such a high view when [all you actually have] is a big mouthful of mutually contradictory assertions.

4.2.3.1.2.2.2.5. Demonstrating That It Is Incorrect to Urge on Us the Absurdity That What We Advocate Goes Against the Four Reliances

[Opponent:] Which is it that takes precedence (dbang btsan) [in determining the ontological status of form]? Is it (1) the fact that form and so on is perceived by a conventional valid cognition as existing or (2) the fact that the gnosia of an āryan perceives it as nonexistent?

[Reply:] This is not something that should be asked of us. Although āryans do not perceive conventional phenomena with the gnosia that perceives things as they are, they do not perceive them as nonexistent. Even though they are not perceived, it is not because they do not exist that they are not perceived. Even though they do exist, because they are not the objects (yul) of that gnosia, they are not perceived [by it]. There is also a reason for why they are not the objects [of āryan gnosia]. It is because form and so on are conventional entities and the āryan gnosia that perceives things as they are is a valid cognition that examines the ultimate [that the former is not perceived by the latter]. Thus, when analyzing the ultimate, āryan gnosia takes precedence, and when analyzing the nominal, worldly consciousness takes precedence. An āryan’s vision does not oppose [the existence of] an object that is established by a valid cognition which analyzes the nominal; and a nominal consciousness does not oppose the object which is established by āryan gnosia, [namely, emptiness]. Otherwise, the ultimate would refute the conventional, and reality qua attribute (chos nyid) would refute phenomena qua possessor of the attribute (chos can); and so it would follow, absurdly, that the two truths could not be harmonized.

According to you, it is not correct to make distinctions such as ‘rely not on the provisional meaning but on the definitive meaning’ because both the provisional and the definitive are objects that reasoning refutes. [If you claim that] it does not follow, [that is, that the fact that both the provisional and definitive are repudiated through reasoning does not vitiate against whether one should be relied upon over the other,] then you are reduced to the absurdity that such distinctions are ‘rely not on the self of persons but on the self of phenomena,’ [in which both entities are repudiated through reasoning,] are valid.

It follows, absurdly, [from your position] that the fact, ‘no phenomenon exists,’ itself exists because it is perceived by a valid cognition. If you reject the reason, [that is, if you claim that it is not perceived by a valid cognition,] then desist from claiming that [the fact that all phenomena do not exist] is something that is perceived by the nonconceptual gnosia of an āryan. If you accept [that it is perceived by a valid cognition and therefore exists,] then it contradicts your claim that nothing whatsoever exists. Moreover, it would follow, absurdly, that what is nonexistent would exist, and that what is not a phenomenon (gzhis ma grub pa) is a phenomenon (gzhis grub pa).

It also follows, absurdly, that the distinction, ‘rely not on consciousness but on gnosia,’ is not a valid one because [all minds], whether consciousness or gnosia, exist in contradistinction to valid cognitions. If you reject [the reason, that is, that consciousnesses and valid cognitions are mutually contradictory things], then you must admit to the possibility of valid cognitions,
[something you repudiated earlier]. If valid cognitions are possible, then [by definition] so is existence. But once you admit to "existence," then you are caught in the horns of a dilemma. Because we predicate the term existent of anything that is perceived by a valid cognition, to accept that something is established by a valid cognition and yet deny that it exists is to quibble about definitions. If you do not accept [the notion of things being] established by a valid cognition, then in a way anathema [to your own views you must accept] that even āryan gnos is not a valid cognition.

In conclusion, except for Tibetan scholars such as yourself, there is no one else who advocates [this position]. Although the Buddhist philosophers of the Noble Land of India may claim that their presentation of the two truths contradicts that of another school, none of them, accepting that the presentation of the two truths which they themselves expound is internally contradictory, then go on to claim that the conventional is refuted by valid cognitions which analyze the ultimate.

In our own system the presentation of the four reliances is extremely well-founded. Not to rely on the provisional, but to rely on the definitive and not to rely on the conventional, but to rely on the ultimate means that we should not accept that what appears as the variety of conventional entities is their reality and to accept instead that their reality is that ultimate entity which is that they are empty of existing as they appear; that is, [empty of] existing truly.

To accept that the way [things] appear to an ordinary person's consciousness is not reality, but that the way [things] are perceived by the non-conceptual gnos (mi rtag pa'i ye shes) of an āryan is reality, is what is meant by not relying on consciousness but relying on gnosis. This is how it should be explained.

4.2.3.1.2.2. How We Refute the One Who Does Not Go Far Enough (khyab cung ba) in the Identification of the Object of Refutation

Opponent: The object of refutation that is to be negated in the ascertainment of the ultimate view of the Madhyamaka is [a type of] essence that possesses three characteristics: (1) its nature is such that it is not produced by means of causes and conditions, (2) it does not change into something else, and (3) it does not depend on something else for its existence. That is why the Mūla says:

- It is not possible for an essence to arise from causes and conditions.
- An essence that arises from causes and conditions must be endowed with [the quality of being] produced (byas pa can);

But how can one possibly say that an essence is endowed [with the quality of] production? An essence is not created, Nor does it depend on other [entities].

[Reply:] Well then, it follows, absurdly, [from your stance] that the Cittamārtins ascertain that all entities are truthless because the Cittamārtins ascertain that all entities are empty of this kind of essence that possesses the three qualities. This follows because they ascertain that all entities arise from causes and conditions and that on different occasions they change into something different.

Again, you cannot posit that the mere ascertainment that phenomena are empty of an essence possessing these three qualities is the ultimate view of the Madhyamaka because the ascertainment [that things are] empty of an essence which possesses the three qualities is not the actual antithesis of the way that the innate (ihan skyes) grasping at truth grasps [things]. This is so because it is not possible that this way of apprehending the object, that is, apprehending it in terms of an essence that possesses these three qualities, exists in the mental continua [of creatures incapable of this kind of conceptual thought], like ants.

[Opponent]: It follows that if one ascertains the emptiness of an essence that possesses the three qualities, one necessarily ascertains complete and full-blown truthlessness. This is because if something truly exists, it must exist in terms of an essence that possesses the three qualities.

[Reply]: Well then, it follows, absurdly, that if one ascertains the emptiness of a permanent entity (trag dngos), one must ascertain complete and full-blown truthlessness. This is because if something truly exists, it must be a permanent entity. Therefore, even though truly existing things must necessarily be partless, the Prāsaṅgikas do not believe that partlessness is their chief object of refutation. Because this [position] is a special tenet of the philosopher, it cannot be the most basic [cause] that binds beings to samsāra.

[Opponent]: Well then, what is the meaning of the previously cited passage from the Prajñāmāla?

[Reply]: That [passage] is not identifying an essence as the object of refutation. Instead, it is teaching that in our own system we explain that which must definitely be accepted, that is, the reality of all phenomena, to be their "essence." The Prajñāmāla [itself] posits reality to be the essence [of phenomena]:

- An essence is not created.
- Nor does it depend on other [entities].

This speaks of reality as having two qualities: (1) Noncreation [means that] it is an essence that without fail, always exists within a phenomenon, unlike the
heat of water,"\(^{439}\) that it is not newly created by causes and conditions. (2) The second quality does not refer to independence from causes and conditions, for [if it did,] it would be redundant [with the first quality]. It also does not refer to the mere fact that it is not necessary to posit [a phenomenon] based on another phenomenon, [that is, "independence" in this case does not mean independence from having to rely on other phenomena,] for [were that so,] it would follow, absurdly, that reality is not interdependent.\(^{440}\)

Let us consider how we determine something to be "long" or "short." When we consider a rope the length of a lower arm span to be long, we must do so in dependence on [a shorter length, say that of] a finger span. We do not ascertain it to be long one-sidedly without depending upon such [a standard,] because in dependence upon a rope a full arm span in length, our notion of "long" vanishes and we would instead determine [that original rope] to be short. The case of "over there" and "over here" is analogous.\(^{441}\)

Even though the heat of fire, relative to the heat of water, is recognized, and in fact determined, to be the essence of fire, when one finds truthlessness to be the essence of fire by means of a valid cognition, one abandons holding the fact that heat is the essence of fire. When we determine that truthlessness is the essence of fire, we do not do so relative to another quality of fire; it can be posited to be the essence of fire one-sidedly. Because it is not merely posited relative to this or that standard (loṣa sa) but is one-sidedly the [real] substratum (gzhis) of fire, it is the essence of fire. This is what is meant [by the passage that characterizes the essence of phenomena, that is, reality, to be independent]. The reference to "its not being like a possession which has been borrowed from someone."\(^{442}\) means that one cannot make reference to it one-sidedly, saying "such and such a possession" without depending on the fact that it was lent by someone else. In contradistinction to that, here we are dealing with an object that must be able to be determined as the essence one-sidedly. In this vein, the Avatāra-bhāṣya says:

In particular, is an essence of such a kind something that the Acārya [Nāgārjuna] accepts or not? It depends on one's point of view. The Lord has extensively taught that no matter whether or not there arise tathā-gatas, the reality of phenomena still remains, that is, this reality, will exist. What is this reality? It is the essence of such [phenomena] as the eye and so on. And what is the essence of these [phenomena]? It is their noncreation; it is their nondependence. It is its own nature that is to be understood by the consciousness which is free of the eye disease (rab rib) of ignorance. This, then, do I reply to those who ask whether or not that [reality qua essence of phenomena] exists: if it does not exist, then for what purpose do the bodhisattvas meditate on the path of the perfections. It is for the purpose of understanding reality that bodhisattvas undertake a multitude of difficulties.\(^{443}\)

So even though reality is the essence of phenomena, reality is posited by means of a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate; it is not posited by means of a conventional valid cognition. The "existence of reality" or "something's being the essence of phenomena" [are conventional phenomena and hence] are posited by means of a nominal valid cognition and not by means of a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate, for even though reality is an ultimate [truth], the existence of reality should be understood to be conventional. The fact that "reality" and "all phenomena" are [in the relationship of] quality to qualified is [a fact] not perceived by the gnosics that understands reality. It instead is perceived by a nominal valid cognition.

In this same vein, the Prasannapadā says:

That uncreated [or nonadventitious] primordial nature that without fail exists within fire during the three times, that is not such that it does not arise earlier but does arise later, that does not possess a dependence upon causes and conditions, as is the case with the heat of water, here and there, and long and short, is said to be the essence [of fire]. Does such an own nature of fire exist? It neither exists nor is it nonexistent by virtue of its own nature. Though this be so, to eliminate fear within the listeners, reifying, we say "it does exist conventionally."\(^{444}\)

If you are thinking that because it says "reifying it, we say 'it exists,'" "[existence can be considered only as a form of reification and hence that] in our own school we do not accept existence, you are mistaken, for [it would mean that you] do not know how to determine that all phenomena have only a labeled existence, that they are only mere names. The method of determining this I will explain later.

The Avatāra-bhāṣya also says: "Thus I call it noncreated and not dependent upon others by comparison to conventional truths."\(^{445}\)

4.2.3.1.3. The Explanation of What Our Own System [Considers] to Be the Extent of What Is to Be Refuted\(^{446}\)

4.2.3.1.3.1. Explaining in a General Way the Layout of What Is to Be Refuted

In general there are two [kinds of] objects to be refuted, the "soteriological object of refutation" (lam gyi dgag bya) and the "logical object of the refutation" (rigs pa'i dgag bya). The former is of two kinds, the obsessions that are affictions (nyon mong pa'i sgrub pa) and the obscurations [that prohibit knowledge of all] phenomena (shes bya'i sgrub pa). To say that there is a way of ending ('gog) [these obscurations] by the path does not mean that we
repudiate ('gog) their existence in fact, [as in general they do exist within the minds of beings until they are uprooted]. [Here] to “end” them means to make their further arising in one’s mental continuum an impossibility. In this case, [that is, in the case of the obscurations,] the object that is to be refuted is something that in general must be possible. In fact, were it not possible, then it would not be necessary to meditate on the path.

The logical object of refutation [or the object to be refuted by reasoning] is not an object to be refuted by the analytical reasoning engaged in nominal analysis. It is identified instead as the object to be refuted by the reasoning that analyzes the ultimate. In this regard both (1) the mistaken conception (log rtog) that mistakenly reifies the nature of phenomena [into something it is not] and (2) the way in which that mistaken conception [takes things to exist, that is, true existence,] are objects to be refuted. As it says in the Vigrahavyāvartanāvṛtti:

Some men may mistakenly grasp an illusory woman that is essentially empty and think, “this woman exists ultimately,” so that attachment arises due to this mistaken apprehension. The Tathāgata or one of his śrāvakas will do away with this man’s mistaken apprehension by evoking an illusory body. Likewise, by means of my empty words, which are like an illusory manifestation, one can do away with any apprehension of the existence of essence, [so that one comes to see] all things to be empty and without essence, as is the illusory woman.447

Nonetheless, from among these two, [that is, from among the subjective aspect eliminated by means of the path and the objective one refuted by means of reasoning,] the chief thing to be refuted is the object (yul), [that is, the incorrect mode of existence,] and not the subject, [the mind grasping at this incorrect mode of existence,] for unless one undermines this mode of existence as it is grasped by mistaken conceptualization no other method brings an end [132] to this mistaken conceptualization. Having witnessed the undermining of that [mode of existence], one ascertains that in fact [things] do not exist as they are apprehended by the mistaken conception; and by the force of constantly meditating on this, one is able to destroy from the root the very seeds of mistaken conceptions.

[Innate and Philosophical Misconceptions]448

There are two kinds of mistaken conceptions: the philosophical (kun brtags) and the innate (ihan skyes). The philosophical [kind] refers to the philosopher’s belief (dam bcsha’ ba) regarding the variety of ways in which things could inherently exist, arrived at through the invention (sgro brtags) of a host of reasons that [they claim] prove that things inherently exist. The innate kind is something that has been part and parcel of every sentient being without distinction since beginningless time. It is that on account of which any phenomenon, when it becomes the object of our mind, is apprehended to be an object existing from its own side by a mind that arises from its own sphere, without our having to reflect on it.

Even though the apprehended object of those two minds [innate and philosophical] are both to be refuted, the chief one is the fact that [things] exist as they are apprehended by the innate mind. The refutation that [things] exist as they are apprehended by the philosophical [mind] is a stepping stone (yan lag) to the refutation [of the innate object,] but to strive to refute only the philosophical [aspect] without making the least effort at refuting [the fact that] things exist as they are apprehended by the innate [mind] is an enterprise that cannot possibly liberate one from cyclic existence. The reason is as follows. When one studies and thinks [about emptiness] and sets forth the view [of emptiness] through reasoning, one is refuting only existence as it is apprehended by a philosophical mind. Come time to meditate, one must meditate only on the refutation of existence as it has been apprehended by the philosophical [mind, for this is all one has learned]. But even though one might very well meditate in this way to the point of directly realizing the refutation of existence as it is apprehended by the philosophical [mind], one will not be able to make the innate [form of misconception], still actually present, subside in the least. This being the case, what need is there to mention that one will not be able to rid oneself of the latent potentialities which are the foundation that give rise to such innate misconceptions? Were it otherwise, it would follow, absurdly, that by merely accustoming oneself to the direct understanding of the fact that elementary point particles (rdul phren phyogs kyi cha med) are impossible, [a philosophical misconception,] one should be able to rid oneself of the innate latent potentialities [that give rise to] the apprehension of physical matter as something true.449

It is for this reason that the Acārya [Candrakirti] has said in the Avatāra that in setting forth the selflessness of the person, it is not correct to refute only [the existence of] a person who is permanent (rthags pa), unitary (geg), and independent (rang dbang can). As for the reason why it is not correct, [that is, not sufficient to refute the existence of a person with these three qualities and consider it to be the selflessness of the person, it is as follows]. It would follow, absurdly, that a śrāvaka arhat has not fully rid himself of the view [which apprehends] a self of persons because (1) [according to you] what it means for that arhat to have perfected his understanding of the selflessness of the person is his merely having perfected his understanding of the fact that there is no permanent, unitary, and independent person; and (2) this understanding alone cannot fully rid him of the innate view that the self of the person [exists]. The latter of the two reasons follows because none of those who have without interruption taken rebirth as animals for many eons possess a mode of apprehending (’dzin stangs) a permanent, unitary, and independent
person, although they do possess the innate mode that apprehends [the existence] of a self of the person.

[Opponent:] Even though [psychologically] the innate mode of apprehending a self of the person does not contain an apprehension of the person as permanent, unitary, and independent, still, if [the person] were to exist as he or she is apprehended by that innate [mind], [simply as a logical corollary,] he or she would have to be permanent, unitary, and independent. For this reason, by merely accustoming oneself to the understanding that there is no permanent, unitary, and independent person, one rid oneself fully of the innate apprehension of a self of the person.

[Reply:] Well then, it follows, absurdly, that it is possible to fully rid oneself of the innate apprehension of [things as] truly existent (bden 'dzin) simply by understanding that entities are impermanent and meditating on that, for if entities existed as they are apprehended by the innate [mind] that apprehends [things as] true, they would have to be permanent. Part (1) of the original reason is accepted by the realists. They believe that the refutation of a permanent, unitary, and independent person is the only meaning of the selflessness of the person. Hence, not only must they [according to us] believe that accustoming oneself to this very understanding, [that is, to the understanding that there is no permanent, unitary, and independent person,] fully rid oneself of the innate apprehension of the self of the person, but, in fact, they accept this themselves. That is why we find passages such as this in the Avatāra:

At the time of realizing selflessness, the notion of a permanent self is eliminated;
But in this regard we do not in the least regard [the apprehension of the self to be permanent] as the apprehension of an ego (ngar 'dzin).
Hence, it is quite surprising that you should claim that understanding such a naive kind of selflessness can subsequently destroy the view of a self.
It is just like the case of seeing a snake along the far wall of one's house.
[And then claiming] that [to think to oneself] that there is no elephant there clears away doubt and even rids one of the fear of the snake.
Alas! This will be sure to bring about the laughter of others.

This passage from the Avatāra and also:

Those who spend many eons as animals do not perceive [the self] to be unborn and permanent.

all point to the fact that there are some Buddhists who accept that the apprehension of a permanent, unitary, and independent person is the innate view (lta bo) of the self of the person, whereas others accept that though this [itself] is a philosophical [view], one can rid oneself of even the innate view of a self of the person simply by perfecting one's understanding [of the fact that the person does not exist as it is apprehended by that philosophical mind]. To counteract these two misconceptions he teaches, respectively, that (1) the innate mode of apprehension has no such philosophical aspect, and that (2) there is a fault [as much as their position] resembles the view that [perceiving] the absence of an elephant eliminates the fear of the snake. [Let me make it clear,] however, that neither the root text nor the commentary to the Avatāra at all imply that refuting the philosophical self does not aid in the refutation of the innate self. So it is not right [to claim] that Candrakīrti believes this, that is, that the repudiation of the philosophical object is totally unrelated to the elimination of innate ignorance.

This being the case, the claim that those scriptures suffer from the fault that their refutation of arising via the four extremes does not refute true arising is expounded without [these opponents] in the least understanding what it is that the Mahāyāna accepts. By urging this absurdity that is unrelated to what is accepted, this fool is making his own nature [as an incompetent] clearly known. Those who imitate these [fools do so] simply because they have come under the influence of these sinful friends devoid of intelligence.

This fault that you mention, namely, that [the refutation of a permanent, unitary, and independent person] is similar to the refutation via the four extremes, [so that if the former is but a mere refutation of a philosophical attitude, then so is the latter,] falls squarely upon yourself, not on us. Because you believe in refuting the scriptures of Candrā, not only must you, but in fact you do [willingly], accept that the mere understanding of the nonexistence of a permanent, unitary, and independent person is the complete understanding of the selflessness of the person. This is because in your writings you yourself have expressed the view that if one refutes the three [qualities] of permanence, unitarity and independence as they are apprehended by the philosophical [mind], one refutes the more general notion (sphyi ldog nas) of the self that is refuted (btags) by the innate [mind] by means of refuting the characteristics (mthstan nyid) of the self refuted by the innate [mind]. You also claim that if one repudiates permanence, unitarity, and independence, one refutes the general characteristics of the self, and that, whether one is proving or refuting the existence or nonexistence of a self, one can do so only before a philosopher and not with reference to someone who has no experience (blo kha ma phyogs pa) in philosophy, for those who accept a permanent, unitary, and independent self accept that the three qualities of permanence, unitarity, and independence are characteristics of the self.

If this were so, it would follow, absurdly, that if one ascertains that there is no arising from self, then one must ascertain that there is no arising, for [according to you] (1) the refutation or proof of the existence or nonexistence
of arising is done with reference to a philosopher and not with reference to someone unexperienced in philosophy, and (2) those who accept arising from self accept that self-arising is a kind of arising. You accept all the pervasions (khyab po) and reasons (rgags). If you accept [the premise, that is, that to ascertain that there is no arising from self is to ascertain that there is no arising,] then it follows, absurdly, that all of the realists, [who do in fact refute the Śāṃkha notion of arising from self,] ascertain that there is no arising, [which is absurd, as they accept true causality].

Again, it follows, absurdly, [from your position] that by merely ascertaining the nonexistence of self-arising one would ascertain full-blown truthlessness, for (1) by merely ascertaining that there is no permanent, unitary, and independent person, one fully ascertains the selflessness of the person, and just as the apprehension of [something] arising from itself is a philosophical reification of a phenomenon, likewise, the apprehension of a permanent, unitary, and independent person is a philosophical viewpoint in regard to the self of the person; just as there is a philosophical reification of phenomena apart from the apprehension of self-arising, likewise, there is also a philosophical viewpoint that accepts the existence of the self of the person [while] not being an apprehension of the permanence, unitarity, and independence of the person; and (3) just as the existence of the self as it is is grasped by the innate apprehension of the self of the person implies the existence of a permanent, unitary, and independent self, likewise, if things existed as they are grasped by the innate apprehension of truth, then they would also have to arise from their own selves. The middle reason (2) follows because there exists a philosophical viewpoint [which maintains that there exists] a self that cannot be expressed to be either permanent or impermanent. Therefore, these two positions [that the repudiation of a permanent, unitary, and independent self is equivalent to the understanding of selflessness, and that the repudiation of arising from self is equivalent to the understanding of the selflessness of phenomena or truthlessness] are in every respect alike, [so that if one accepts the former, as you do, one must also accept the latter]. The refutation or affirmation of the existence or nonexistence of a self is not carried out for or by one who is not experienced in philosophy; hence, it is mere blithering to say that by merely refuting philosophical [misapprehension], something that is lacking in the way in which the innate misapprehension of the self within the mental continua of animals operates, one opposes the innate [form of misapprehension]. When those who believe in the philosophical position that advocates that the person is permanent, unitary, and independent set forth their own position, they come to apprehend the person as permanent, unitary, and independent only after having mentally created [this position] by means of philosophical [speculation]. Even when the ordinary mind is not involved in speculation, however, the thought “I” still occurs in such a way that it is apprehended as existing from its own side (rang ngos nas grub pa). At such a time, how [can it be claimed] that the “I” is being apprehended by an advocate of a philosophical school who thinks of it as permanent, unitary, and independent.

The apprehension of the “I” when such an ordinary mind, even that of a philosopher, is not engaged in philosophical analysis is said to be the innate apprehension of the “I.” There is not the slightest difference between this kind of [mind in a philosopher] and the way that the “I” is innately apprehended in the continuum of an animal. Hence, were the philosopher’s innate apprehension of the “I” to contain the special mode in which it is [apprehended] as being permanent, unitary, and independent, then this would lead to the absurdity that the innate apprehension of the “I” by animals who have been continuously reborn throughout many eons as animals also contains this special apprehension [of the “I’] as a permanent, unitary, and independent entity.

Likewise, even those who accept arising from self and arising from another, and so forth, are not always engaged in philosophical analysis. Still, even when they are eating and drinking, they grasp whatever entity becomes the object of this mind, which, although free of philosophical analysis, grasps [things] to be true, and then apprehends that object as if it existed under its own power. How can one say that [at such a time] there is an apprehension of the sort “this entity arises from another.” It was with the intention of repudiating that arising from another exists in the way that the worldly innate mind apprehends it that the glorious Candrakīrti says: “Even from the worldly point of view there is no arising from another.”

Therefore, as regards those who engage in philosophical [speculation], there is one mode of mental apprehension that creates philosophical positions at the time that it engages in philosophical analysis, and another, the mode of apprehension of their ordinary mind (blo rang dga’ ba), that is, the mind when it is not actually engaged in philosophical analysis. That this latter kind of mind [even in a philosopher] is in no way different from the mode of mental apprehension of those who do not engage in philosophy is something that can be established by means of one’s own experience. You, however, idiot that you are, think that any conceptual thought in the mental continuum of a philosopher must apprehend things as they are set forth in that person’s own set of philosophical positions. How can you be said to have understood even the smallest portion of the exposition of the distinctions [between innate and philosophical misconceptions]?

Therefore, let the wise understand [this distinction] in the following way. The consciousness that ascertains that entities do not truly arise is born in dependence upon the precondition (byed las) of ascertaining that entities do not arise via any of the four extremes and upon the precondition of ascertaining that if something truly arises, it must be included within the four extremes. Although ascertaining that things do not truly arise opposes ('gal) a mode of apprehension in which the innate mind apprehends [things to be] true, the
apprehension that things do not arise from themselves, from others, and so on, which is that in dependence upon which that [apprehension of the truthlessness of arising] is born, does not go against a mode of apprehension in which the innate mind apprehends [things] to be true.\textsuperscript{564} This is why meditation on the fact that entities do not truly arise acts as the direct antidote to the innate apprehension of true existence, and why meditation on the fact that [entities] do not arise from another and so on does not. Likewise, the mind which ascertains that the person does not inherently exist is born in dependence upon the understanding that the person is not permanent, unitary, or independent, [and upon the understanding] that the person is neither the same substance as nor a different substance from the aggregates and so forth. Although accustomed oneself to that mind [which ascertains that the person does not inherently exist] is the antidote that goes against the innate mode that apprehends the self of the person, however, the ascertainment that the person is not of the same substance as the aggregates, not of a different substance from them, and so forth, which are [the stepping stones] based upon which that mind [which ascertains the selflessness of the person] arises, are not antidotes that go against the innate mode of apprehension that views the self (bdag lta).

For example, the ascertainment that sound is impermanent arises from the [139] ascertainment that sound is a product.\textsuperscript{465} Although the ascertainment that sound is impermanent is the antidote that goes against the mode that apprehends sound as permanent, however, the ascertainment that sound is a product is not the antidote which directly goes against the mode that apprehends sound as permanent.

Therefore, what the glorious Candragrabhiti has refuted is the fact that the ascertainment that [things] do not exist as they are apprehended by philosophical self-grasping (bdag 'dzin) is the antidote against the mode of innate self-grasping. The glorious Candras has on no occasion claimed that the refutation of the philosophical self is not a stepping stone to the refutation of the innate self. Neither has our glorious and holy master made such a claim, for the Lord [Tsong kha pa] has himself said in The Great Exposition of Insight (Lhag mthong gi yi ge chen mo):

Thus, when one is setting forth the view [of emptiness], one must chiefly set forth the fact that objects as they are apprehended by innate ignorance do not exist. Yet, as a stepping stone to that, unless one understands the repudiation of objects as they are apprehended by the philosophical [mind], it is impossible to eradicate the mode of apprehension of innate ignorance. To think that the refutation of the self of the person is a refutation of the self of a person who is permanent, unitary, and independent, or that the refutation of the self within phenomena is the refutation of the inventions of philosophers, like partless atom qua object, partless moment of consciousness qua sub-

ject, or an essence that possesses the three qualities... [to think that the refutation of the self of the person or of phenomena consists solely in the repudiation of these strictly philosophical entities] is utterly misguided.\textsuperscript{466} Thus, he explicitly states that the refutation of the philosophical [object] is a stepping stone to the refutation of the innate one. Therefore, do not urge on us absurdities [that are the outcome of premises] we never accepted, like the fact that the refutation of the philosophical does not aid in the refutation of the innate.

Therefore, unless one meditates on the antidote that counteracts the innate mode of apprehension that grasps at a self, under whose power we have been bound to cyclic existence since beginningless time, one will not be able in the least to oppose this mode of apprehension. Hence, to set forth only the refutation of an object invented by philosophers and then to meditate only on this is to subject oneself to purposeless hardship.

One Tibetan idiot, although accepting that we wander in cyclic existence because we err in regard to the conventional, refutes the notion that one is to meditate on the fact that, contrary to the way it appears, the conventional is empty of truth. He believes, instead, that by meditating on the fact that the ultimate truth is permanent and stable (rtag brten) one is liberated from cyclic existence.\textsuperscript{467} This, however, is like saying that to eliminate the suffering of fear [that arises] from thinking that there is a snake in the east, even though there is none, one should not think that there is no snake in the eastern direction, but that instead by thinking that there is a tree in the western direction, that the suffering will be eliminated. This [latter thought] is unrelated [to the fear], and [the claim that it can eliminate it] is a source of laughter for the sage. Those who desire the best for themselves will banish to a far off place this view, which falls outside of any system, both Mahayana and Hinayana.

In this way [we see] that from among the philosophical and innate forms of refication, it is the fact that things exist as they are apprehended by the innate [mind] that one should principally refute.
The Doctrines of the Svātantrika School
[THE LOGIC OF THE
SVĀTANTRIKA
CRITIQUE]

4.2.3.1.3.2. The Explanation of the Measure of the
Svātantrikas' Object of Refutation

If one does not understand the differences between the Svātantrika and
Praśāntika Madhyamikas as regards the extent of the refutation, one will not
be able to understand in the least the differences between the Svātantrika and
Praśāntika views. Therefore, I will first of all explain in brief the measure or
extent of the objects of refutation of the Praśāntikas and the Svātantrikas.

[The Analysis of the Svātantrikas' Object of Refutation
Based on the Example of the Illusion]

In the exposition of the Madhyamaka view it is well known that all phenomena
are to be ascertained as lacking truth by depending on the example of the
illusion (gyu ma), so let me here explain this point by using the example of
the illusion.

When a magician conjures up a horse or an elephant out of stones and
sticks, which are the things that act as the basis of his conjuring (sprul sgam),
different people are affected in different ways. Three types of individuals
are to be considered: (1) the magician, (2) the spectators whose eyes are af-
fected by the spells (sngags) and substances (rdzas) of the illusion, and (3) the
person who arrives there after [the incantations have been performed]. Al-
though the horse and the elephant appear to the first individual, [the magi-
cian,] he does not conceive of them as a horse and an elephant. The second
individual has both the appearance and the conception [of a horse or elephant];
whereas the third individual has neither the appearance nor the conception.

In this regard, it is not correct to maintain that the basis of the conjuring
of the illusion appears to be a horse or an elephant to an erroneous conscious-
ness but does not appear to be a horse or an elephant in general. This is be-
cause were it otherwise, it would follow, absurdly, that there could be no error in regard to the appearing object (snang yul la 'khrul pa).\footnote{570}

Thus, although the basis of the conjuring of the illusion appears to be a horse or an elephant from the magician's perspective, the basis of the conjuring of the illusion does not appear to him as a horse or an elephant \textit{under the sole influence of the object's own reality} (sdom lugs), depending also on a mind that has been affected by spells and substances, [namely, his own]. From the perspective of the spectator whose eyes have been affected by spells and substances, the object exists as a horse or an elephant in its own right without being something that is posited by the mind internally.

Now let us draw the analogy between the example and its meaning. Just like the spectator of the illusion whose eyes have been affected, when phenomena appear to common ordinary beings as existing, they are apprehended as existing in their own right (sdom lugs su yod pa), without being posited by virtue of the fact that they appear to the mind. This is called the \textit{innate apprehension of true [existence]} and it has been present since beginningless time. Yet, in comparison to what it is that the Prāsaṅgikas consider the object to be refuted, what the Svātantrika here posits is much more crude (shin tu rag pa). It is not the subtle innate apprehension of true [existence].

When one finds the correct philosophical viewpoint (lta ba), which is the \textit{logical refutation of the true existence that is grasped by the innate apprehension of true [existence]}, then, like the magician, one no longer apprehends either \textit{outer} or \textit{inner} phenomena, [that is, external things or the mind,] to exist in their own right without being posited\footnote{471} by the power of the mind internally; one comes to understand that in reality they are posited by the power of the mind.

Those things posited by the power of a mind that is not opposed by a valid cognition are accepted as nominally existent [entities]. Not everything posited by the power of \textit{any} mind is accepted as being nominally existent. Even though the fact that the sprout arises from the seed is established by the power of the mind, this does not vitiate against the fact that the sprout, from its own side (rang gi ngos nas),\footnote{472} arises from the seed. This is similar to the fact that [within the example] the basis of the illusion appears to its own nature to be a horse or an elephant.\footnote{473}

Reality is also posited as existing by the power of the mind to which it appears, but although reality is posited as existing because it appears to the gnosis that perceives [things] the way they are, the gnosis that perceives [things] as they are does not [itself] posit reality as existing;\footnote{474} it is instead posited as existing by a different, nominal mind that [thinks] "reality exists by virtue of the fact that it appears to the gnosis of an āryan."

Just as other people, whose eyes have not been affected, have neither the appearance nor the conception of a horse or an elephant, likewise, the gnosis of an āryan, which is unaffected by ignorance and perceives [things] as they are, does not contain even the appearance of those conventional objects in regard to which it understands reality. How could it possibly be said to apprehend that things really exist without their being posited by the mind?\footnote{475}

Such is the method for interpreting the analogy between the fact that all phenomena are illusions and the example.

[Opponent:] Though the illusion appears as a horse or an elephant, it is empty of being a horse or an elephant. Likewise, though the pot appears to be a pot, it is empty of being a pot. This is what it means for things to be like illusions. That example is to be taken as meaning that things are empty of [being] themselves (rang stong).

[Reply:] [Though this is their basic view], some [of the opponents] claim that \textit{all} phenomena are empty of being themselves, whereas others claim that [only] conventional, produced things (\textit{'du byed}) are empty of being themselves. Both of these [positions] are highly nihilistic views. Were it so, it \textit{would} follow, absurdly, that no phenomenon could be itself, and if you accept that, no phenomenon would be possible. The same would be true in regard to produced things [if it were the case that only \textit{they} were claimed to be empty of being themselves]. Also, it would follow, absurdly, that the "emptiness of being itself" could not be itself because it is empty of being itself. You have accepted the three cycles!

Therefore, in the Svātantrika system sprouts and so on are both really existent in their own right (yul rang gi sdom lugs su grub pa) and dependent upon being mentally posited. [That something] really exists in its own right, without it being posited by the power of the mind, is the final object their reasoning refutes.

\[The Analysis of the Svātantrikas' Object of Refutation Based on Scriptural Sources]\footnote{476}

In this regard the Madhyamakāla\textit{ka} clearly and explicitly explains how it is that [things] are to be posited as conventionally existing. If we reverse this, we implicitly determine what [it means for something] to truly exist. Hence, [as true existence is what is to be refuted], we can [in this way] determine the size of the object of refutation [according to the Svātantrika system]. TheĀloka says:

Things are really (yang dag par) natureless (ngo bo nyid med par); and the erroneous ('khrul pa) mind that reifies [things by thinking] the opposite of that, [that is, that things do have real natures,] is called the conventional (kun rdzob) [lit. the concealer] because it is as if it obscured (hsgrub pa) reality (de kho na nyid,) as if it covered it over ('gebs pa). As the [Lāṅkāvatāra Śūra] says:
Conventionally things arise
But ultimately they are essenceless.
That which is mistaken as to this essencelessness
Is accepted as being a concealer of the truth (yang dag kun rdzob).\[147\]

Because it arises from this conventional [mind], what this reveals are
perceived things, being all false, and belonging only to the conven-
tional [sphere]. What is more, these arise by virtue of the ripening of
the latent potentialities (bag chags) of error that [have been deposited
on one’s mental continuum] since beginningless time. That [mind] re-
veals things to all living beings as if they were real in nature. There-
fore, things that are false in their nature, that [are posited] by virtue
of these [mistaken] thoughts, are said to exist only conventionally
(kun rdzob tu yod pa kha nu).\[478\]

This is saying that things exist by virtue of thought, and that the fact
that things appear to all beings to exist as if they were real in nature, and not as if
they existed by virtue of thought, is due to the ignorance which is the ripening
of the latent potentialities of error that [have been deposited in the mind] since
beginningless time.

[Opponent:] But the Madhyamakaloka also says: “To say that ultimately
there is no arising is to explain [as meaning] that things are not [per-
ceived] to arise by a correct (yang dag pa’) consciousness.”\[479\] So should you
not be explaining the measure of, that is, what it means for something to have,
true existence in terms of whether the thing is established as existing
by means of the knowledge (rig shes)\[480\] that perceives reality?

[Reply:] It is extremely important to realize that in the context of both the
Svatantrika and Prasangika [systems] there are two interpretations of [the
word] ultimate in the expression ultimately nonexistent (don dam par med pa).
In one interpretation, [conventional things] are said to be “ultimately nonexistent”
[or “nonexistent within the ultimate”] because [here] ultimate refers to the
threecold study-contemplative-meditative knowledge\[481\] that analyzes reality;
and conventional things do not exist within the purview (ngor), [that is, as
the objects,] of that [knowledge]. In the second interpretation truth is called
ultimate. Hence, what does not truly exist is called ultimately nonexistent.

According to the first interpretation it is possible for something to be ul-
timate; that is, something, [namely, emptiness,] can exist within the purview
of that knowledge.\[482\] According to the second interpretation it is impossible
for anything to be “ultimate” or to “exist in that ultimate [way]” according
to either [the Prasangika or the Svatantrika systems].

If something truly exists, it must exist within the purview of the knowl-
edge that analyzes reality because if something truly exists it must be reality
(gnas lugs su grub) [lit. it must exist as or in reality]. Though something be
reality, however, it need not be truly existent. Hence, even though something
exists within the purview of the knowledge that analyzes reality, it need not
truly exist. Therefore, taking that knowledge as “the ultimate,” because
[145]
the sprout does not exist within the purview of that knowledge, the sprout can
be posited as not ultimately existing, but although reality does exist within
the purview of that knowledge, one cannot posit reality as ultimately existing,
for a sprout’s not being the object of that knowledge implies that it is not
reality, and if it is not reality, it cannot truly exist; but as reality (chos nyid)
is the object of that knowledge, it ends up being reality (gnas lugs su grub
par song,) although simply because it is reality does not imply that it must
truly exist.

Without making these kinds of distinctions, some have fallen into such
errors as believing that the measure of that which is to be refuted (dgag bya’i
rtshad) [is determined by whether something “can withstand analysis by
reasoning” (rigs pas dpayad bzad). They do not distinguish between something
“withstanding the analysis by reasoning that examines reality” and some-
thing “being established by reasoning.” Hence, the sages of old, like the
translator RNgog (1059–1109 C.E.),\[483\] believe that the ultimate truth is not a
knowable phenomenon (shes bya), whereas others, like Cha pa (1109–1169
C.E.),\[485\] assert that the “absence of true existence” truly exists. Yes, errors as
huge as these have arisen.\[486\]

[The Correct Identification of the Svatantrikas’ Object
of Refutation]

Now I will explain what kind of “existence by virtue of own characteristic”
the Svatantrikas accept on the nominal level.\[487\] It is quite clear that the
Acarya Bhavaviveka accepts that nominally things exist by virtue of their own
characteristic, for he refutes the Vijnana [vadins]’ claim that the fact that im-
puted entities (kun brags) do not exist by virtue of their own characteristic is
the meaning of the Samdhinirmocana [passage that states that] imputed enti-
ties are essentially natureless (mtshan nyid ngo bo nyid med pa), that
dependent entities (gzhon dbang) are causally natureless (skyi ba no bo nyid
med pa), and that reality (yongs grub) is ultimately natureless (don dam pa
ngo bo nyid med pa),\[488\] In [refuting this claim] he analyzes [the situation and
determines] that imputed entities are of two types, those that do the labeling
(‘dogs byed) and those that are labeled by them, [that is, by those that label]
(des brags pa). He explains that to accept that the word or conceptual thought,\[146]
which is what predicates, does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic is
nihilism (skur 'debs). His Prajñāpāramitāsūtra, commenting on the twenty-fifth chapter of the Prajñāpāramitā, says: "In regard to that, to say that mentally labeling form or labeling it in speech, which are imputed entities by nature, do not exist is nihilism because it is the repudiation of mental and vocal labeling."\(^{489}\)

In his commentary to this Avalokiteśvara says:

The Yogācāras say that what is imputed in nature is natureless in so far as it is characteristically natureless. To claim that the specific (khyad par du) or essential (ngo bo) labelings [of the word] form in the mind, that is, in conceptual thought, or its labeling in speech, [in short, to claim that] all that is of the nature of verbal labeling is natureless in so far as it is characteristically natureless, is to repudiate [the existence of] conventional dependent entities. Hence, it is taught to be incorrect.\(^{490}\)

This therefore clearly explains that conventionally things do have characteristic natures.

What is more, if in Bhāvaviveka's system there were a belief that [even] nominally things do not exist by virtue of their own characteristic, that they are essenceless and do not exist by virtue of their own natures (rang gi ngo bos ma grub pa), [as the Prāsaṅgikas maintain,] then they would also have to accept that even nominally things do not substantially exist. This is because (1) otherwise, it would follow, absurdly, that substantially existing phenomena (rdozas yod) and labeled phenomena (bangs yod) would not be mutually exclusive [categories]\(^{491}\) and because (2) there is no philosopher, Buddhist or otherwise, who accepts that a substantially existing phenomenon is essenceless. Bhāvaviveka does not accept that things do not substantially exist, [that is, he accepts that they do substantially exist.] for he says in his Tarkajāvalā:

No syllogism can be valid when one takes matter qua accumulation of appropriate (rigs mthun) atoms (rdul phra rab) as the predicate [of the syllogism] and then [proves it by means of] the reason that [such matter] does not substantially exist. But such a syllogism is in no way valid. How so? It is as follows. It is accepted that an object, by nature, is the joining together, that is, the accumulation, of appropriate atoms into [a whole]; and [this is confirmed by the fact that] in the mind to which the [gross object] appears there is born this aspect, namely, that [the object] is the accumulation of atoms.

We believe that pots and so forth, which are the accumulation of appropriate atoms, and even atoms themselves are conventionally substances. It is because an atom is by nature composed of eight substances [earth, air, fire, and so on] that we accept these [atoms] themselves as substances. Likewise, pots and so forth, which are by nature composed [of those substantial atoms], are themselves substances.\(^{492}\)

Therefore, it is because the Acārya Candrakīrti does not accept that things exist by virtue of their own characteristic, that they exist by virtue of their own nature even nominally, that he says that one should strike out against the fact that causality substantially exists in his commentary to the stanza:

In this context, the logic [which proves]
[That things do not arise from themselves or others,
That (same) logic invalidates (these forms of causality) even nominally . . . ]\(^{493}\)

I will explain later in a very elaborate way how it is that [Candrakīrti] refutes [that things] substantially exist even nominally.

Bhāvaviveka has said that direct perceptual consciousness (mgon sum gyi shes pa) perceives the thing's own characteristic, and that it is devoid of conceptual thought and the misconception to which it leads.\(^{494}\) Here he is saying that a thing's own characteristic appears to direct perception. He has explained over and over again that direct perceptual valid cognitions are nonerroneous (ma 'khrul pa'i) consciousnesses. Hence, it is self-evident that he accepts that nominally things exist by virtue of their own characteristic.

The Acārya Kamalaśīla [another Svātantrika] also accepts that nominally things exist by virtue of their own characteristic, for when he explains the meaning of the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra [he says] that the fact that the dependent has an ultimate nature is an imputed entity and hence is ultimately natureless, but that as nominally the dependent possesses its own characteristic, this eliminates [the possibility of its interpretation being] nihilistic. [In this way] he interprets the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra. He also explains at great length in his Madhyamakāloka that the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra correctly sets forth that the extensive, intermediate, and brief Mother, [that is, the Perfection of Wisdom.] Sūtras are of definitive meaning. This he does by interpreting such expressions as the nonarising of all phenomena in the extensive, intermediate, and brief Mothers as expressions that cannot be taken literally, instead referring to "ultimate nonarising." Because the passage from this source, [that is, from the Madhyamakāloka], is extensive, \(\text{\[147\]}\) will not quote it here.\(^{495}\)

In addition to this, it is certain that Sāntarakṣita, the father, and his son [Kamalaśīla] accept that things exist by virtue of their own characteristic because they explain in the Mahāprāṇamaṇḍana and in the Madhyamakāloka that most of the reasoning used in the Seven Logical Treatises [of Dharmakīrti] is something held in common by Mādhyamikas and Cittamātrins.

The Acārya Jñānagarbha [another Svātantrika] also has this to say in his Satyadāya:

Every entity (dngos po) down to the last has the ability to perform a function in accordance with the way it appears. One should understand the correct conventional truth (yang dag pa'i kun rdoz kyi
Although similar in that they appear to consciousness in a clear way (gseg ba'i 'rnam pa), one comes to understand that things like water appear to consciousness in a clear way (gseg ba'i 'rnam pa), one comes to understand that things like water are correct and that things like mirages are not correct by ascertaining that one is not in error as regards [the capacity of the former] to function in accordance with the way it appears, and that one is in error [as regards the latter's capacity to function]. Both really, [however,] have the same nature in so far as they are both natureless.\textsuperscript{505}

The word really (dngos su) means "ultimately," and hence, although similar in that they are both ultimately natureless, conventionally there is a difference as regards whether they are of a mistaken or nonmispoken nature. In this way, he very clearly distinguishes between correct and incorrect [conventional entities]. It should be very evident that because all Svatantrika Mādhyamikas accept [that there are] correct conventional entities, they accept that nominally things exist by virtue of their own characteristic and by virtue of their own nature. How so? Because the incorrect in the expression incorrect conventional entity refers to the erroneous (phyin ci log); vise versa, correct must refer to the nonerroneous. Hence, because the conventional is divided into correct and incorrect, the conventional is also said to be twofold, either erroneous or nonerroneous. Now if one accepts that all conventional [entities] have not the slightest semblance of existence from their own side [as the Prasangikas do], one cannot escape accepting that they are solely conceptual labels (tros ba brug 'ba zhih.), but there is no one who has given any thought to logical methodology who believes [on the one hand that all] conventional entities resemble one another in being strictly conceptual labels [and on the other] that the erroneous-nonerroneous, or correct-incorrect distinction is a valid one.\textsuperscript{506} Hence, in the very act of accepting correct conventional entities and substantially existent things, the advocate of these positions cannot escape accepting that nominally things exist by virtue of their own natures.

[The Reasoning of the One and the Many]\textsuperscript{507}

Having in this way finished explaining the object that the Svatantrika's reasoning refutes, I will now briefly mention the chief reasoning that the Svatantrikas themselves consider most important in the repudiation of that object.

The father, Śantaraksita, and his [spiritual] son, Kamaśīla, explain with special emphasis the reasoning of "being devoid of being a unity or a plurality" (gcig dang du bral). They base their explanation on the Pitāputra-samāgama Sūtra, on the Lankāvatāra Sūtra, and on the line from Āryadeva that goes:

There is no finger apart from the joints.\textsuperscript{508}
Granted that [Kamalaśīla's] Āloka explains many other [types of] reasoning, yet it seems that among Tibetans this one is the most renowned. Hence, I will briefly mention [how] this reasoning is set forth.

I. Citing the reason

Subject: the person

Predicate: does not truly exist

Reason: because he or she is devoid of being a true unity or plurality.

Example: like the reflection of a thing that appears in the mirror.

II. How the criteria [for it's being a valid reason] are established

II.A. The valid cognitions that establish the pervasion (khyab pa)

To ascertain that that reason (rtags) exists exclusively in things concordant [with the predicate] (mthun phyogs) and is strictly nonexistent in things discordant with it (mi mthun phyogs) three valid cognitions are necessary.

1. A valid cognition that ascertains the absence of being a true unity or plurality.
2. A valid cognition that ascertains that there can be no common locus (gshi mthun) between, [that is, nothing that is both,] that reason and a thing discordant [with its predicate].
3. A valid cognition that ascertains that true existence (bden par yod pa) and truthlessness (bden par med pa) are mutually exclusive (dngos ’gal).

By ascertaining that existence and nonexistence are mutually exclusive, that is, [by ascertaining] that through the elimination of one the other is affirmed, one does away with the reifying [misconception] (sgrugs ’dog) that there could exist a third possibility besides true existence and nonexistence, and then it becomes possible to ascertain intuitively (blo ka phyogs pa isam) that they are mutually exclusive.

[Question:] False existence is devoid of being a true unity or a true plurality, so does not the reason coincide with something that is discordant [with the predicate]?

[Answer:] For the reason to coincide with something that is discordant more than just this is required. For the reason to coincide [with the predicate] more than just this is required. The valid cognition which with something that is discordant must exist the possibility of a common with something that is discordant there must exist the possibility of a common locus (gshi mthun) that is both the object to be refuted [true existence] and the locus ["the absence of being a true unity or plurality"].

Because there can reason ["the absence of being a true unity or plurality"].

regard to just [unqualified] plain existence. [By means of this] one then does away with the reifying [misconception] that even in regard to true existence there might be a third possibility that is both [a true unity and plurality] or neither. Then one can intuitively ascertain that it is impossible for there to be a common locus between what is "devoid of being a true unity or plurality" and true existence.

II.B. Establishing [the relation] between subject and reason (phyogs chos)

II.B.1. Establishing [the subject] to be devoid of being a true unity

If something is a true unity, it must be partless. Hence, the refutation of partlessness does away with the notion of true unity.

II.B.1.a. The refutation of the partlessness of composite phenomena (’du byed)

One should refute the spatial partlessness of physical (gzugs can) composite things, and the temporal partlessness of the nonphysical.

In the first case, it follows that two adjacent atoms (rdul phren) with no space between them (bar med,) which [you the opponent] accept as being partless, meet, [that is, touch,] because they are distinct physical entities that occupy their own positions and have no space between them. If you accept [that they meet], then do they meet everywhere, or do they meet only on one side? In the first case, it would follow, absurdly, that their spatial positions would be intermixed. If you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that no matter how many atoms come together, the size of the composite would not increase. If they touch only on one side, and do not touch on the other, then it undermines the hypothesis that they are partless, [for they would have more than one side.]

The refutation of the temporal partlessness of consciousness (shes pa) and so forth [is as follows].

You accept that the first and second moments of visual consciousness are direct cause (dngos rgyu) and direct effect (dngos ’bras) respectively.

Now are these two moments interrupted or not interrupted by another moment? If they are, then it undermines the hypothesis that they are direct cause and effect. If they are not, then they are completely uninterrupted in all ways, or are they interrupted in one sense and not in another. If the former [is true], then temporal sequences would become all intermixed. If you accept that, then [you would also have to accept] that the effect existed at the time of the cause. If the latter [is true], then it undermines the hypothesis of partlessness.

II.B.1.b. The refutation of the partlessness of the noncomposite (’du ma byed)

Does the part of space that extends throughout the empty inner cavity of a western pot also extend throughout the empty inner cavity of an eastern pot or not? If it does extend, then it would be no different from the empty inner cavity of the eastern pot. Were that so, when you pour water into the eastern pot, the western pot should fill up with water. If it does not extend, it undermines the hypothesis of space's being partless, for there would exist [at least
two] distinct parts, the space that extends throughout the empty cavity of the eastern and western pots, [respectively].

Likewise, this same reasoning easily establishes that even reality has parts. Is the part of reality that is the essence of a pillar also the essence of the pot or not? If it is, then the essence of a pillar and the essence of a pot would not be distinct, so that the pot and the pillar would become one. If it is not, then it undermines the hypothesis that reality is partless.

And again, is the part of reality that is the object of Buddha’s wisdom also the object of the Mahāyāna path of insight (mthong lam) or not? If it is, it would follow, absurdly, that the Mahāyāna path of insight directly perceives the Buddha’s essence body (ngo bo ngyid sku) which possesses the two purities. If you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that all of the Lord Maitreyanātha’s explanations of the different ways in which the gnosises of the ten [bo-dhīsattva stages], free from adventitious defilements, perceive reality are incorrect. If it is not, it undermines the hypothesis that reality is partless.

Opponent:] There are no parts to the nature (ngo bo) of reality, though there do exist parts that can be distinguished depending on the basis (rten) and so forth.

Reply:] What does it mean to say that it has no essential parts? Does it refer to the lack of parts that exist by virtue of their own nature? Does it refer to the fact that the parts [or aspects] on the basis of which one posits something as being reality have no divisions that are different in kind? Or does it refer to the fact that if something is of the nature of reality, then it can have no distinctions?

In the first case, it follows, absurdly, that the nature of all phenomena is that they have no parts, [as no phenomenon can have parts that truly exist, so that not only emptiness, but everything would be partless in nature, thereby doing away with the distinction that you, the opponent, are trying to make].

In the second case, it follows, absurdly, that the nature of all phenomena is that they have no parts because the parts [or aspects] on the basis of which one posits something as being a phenomenon have no divisions that are different in kind, and this is because they are all identical in being able to be taken as objects of the mind.

In the third case, it follows that the set of “the nonexistence of true arising (bden pa’i skye ba med pa) and the nonexistence of true cessation (bden pa’i dag po med pa)” does not have distinct parts because if something is of the nature of reality it cannot have distinct parts. If you accept [the premise], then it follows, absurdly, that nonarising and noncessation, [which are also permanent entities,] are also not distinct. If you accept that, if it follows, absurdly, that nonentity (ding gnos med) and nonpot (bum med) are also not distinct and that all negations must, of necessity, be one.

Again, it follows that the truth of cessation (’gog bden) in the mental continuum of a śrāvaka arhat and the essence body [of a buddha] are not different because [they are both forms of reality], and there are no divisions to the nature of reality. If you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that all of the nihilist forms of nirvāṇa, [that is, those of the Hinayāna śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas,] would be the nonabiding nirvāṇas [of buddhas].

It follows that the parts of the nature of reality which correspond to pillars are the parts which correspond to pots because the nature of reality corresponds to both pillars and pots and it has no parts. If you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that pillars and pots are one.

These are just to exemplify [the arguments that can be used against this position]. If one becomes well versed in logic, then even in one’s dreams, there will never be an occasion on which one will accept that reality is partless.

II.B.2. Establishing [the subject] to be devoid of being a true plurality
The person is not a true plurality because it is not a true unity. This follows because a plurality can be posited only as the accumulation of unities. So the reason is established as valid by the preceding refutation of partlessness.

In this way, if all phenomena have parts, it follows that each phenomenon must have parts and a whole. Though in general the parts and the whole are of the same nature, when they appear to the mind they appear to be of different natures. Such a discord between the way that things appear (snang tshul) and the way that they are (gnas tshul) makes them false phenomena (chos rdzun pa). If, however, [these phenomena] existed objectively (yul kyi sdom lugs su), without their being posited by virtue of their appearing to the mind, it would contradict this mode [of discord between appearance and reality], for false means that the mode of existence is one, whereas the mode of appearance is another, and if they truly existed, they would have to exist devoid of falsehood in all aspects.

If that which has parts truly existed, the mind to which the parts and the whole appeared to be of different natures would not be mistaken. If you accept [that it is not mistaken], then it follows, absurdly, that the pot and its spout and so on are of different natures, [just as they appear to be].

The same reasoning easily repudiates [the claim] that reality truly exists. Hence it is pointless [for me to say anymore], for [if despite my exposition] someone accepts reality as being truly existent, it will just be a sign of his being a fool who has acquainted his aural tract (rnam lam) and [not his mind] in a merely superficial way with reasoning such as “the absence of being a unity or plurality.”

[How the Example of the Reflection in the Mirror Is Understood]
As regards the analogy (dper byed pa) of the thing’s reflection [in the mirror], the reflection of the thing is not a concordant example (mthun dpe)
by reason of the fact that the realist [to whom the syllogism is presented] has already ascertained its truthlessness by means of a valid cognition, for if one has established the Madhyamaka view by means of a valid cognition in regard to one basis, [say a pot,] employing that same [cognition], one can intuit truthlessness in regard to all phenomena without having to depend on another [separate] valid cognition.\footnote{527}

[Question:] Well then, how does the concordant example work?

[Answer:] Whoever accepts that the sprout and so forth is true accepts that the sprout appears to be true and that it exists in accordance with this appearance. Now such a person, who has not understood the Madhyamaka view, has nonetheless realized that a thing’s reflection is not true, [that is, that it is not] as it appears to be. The analogy works in this very way.

If, to understand how that [analogy functions] it is necessary for one to have already ascertained that the thing’s reflection is not truly existent in the Madhyamaka sense [of the term], then one needs to have ascertained that that reflection is also not true. But no one, from the realists on down, have ascertained such truthlessness, [and as these must all be considered possible recipients of this reasoning, we are led to the conclusion that the analogy cannot possibly work in this way]. However, because all beings, from those experienced in terminology (rda la byang ba) on up, have ascertained that a reflection appears to be the reflected thing but is not truly the reflected thing, they have thus ascertained that the reflection of the thing is not as it appears to be. Because they do not, however, ascertain the fact that a sprout and a pot are not truly as they appear to be, there is therefore a great difference in the degrees of difficulty in ascertaining the truthlessness of sprouts and so on and that of a reflection. Without understanding this, this fool, devoid of knowledge, appears to have a very difficult time with the establishment of the concordant example.

When one understands that the reflection is not truly as it appears to be, it is not necessary to ascertain that it is not truly as it appears to be in regard to [the appearance of] true existence, for were it necessary then one would not be able to posit the distinction between correct and incorrect [conventional] entities based on the world.\footnote{528} The reasoning from “being devoid of being a unity or plurality” is explained in [Kamalaśīla’s] Ājokā as a case of “nonperception of a more extensive category” (khyab byed ma dmigs pa).\footnote{529} Without a reifying misconception of the sort that a phenomenon x must be a true unity or a true plurality, there is no place for the reifying misconception of an object that is a third possibility [apart from unity and plurality], that is, of a true object. Hence, [this form of reasoning] establishes only the term (tha snyad ba’ zhi gzugs) and therefore “[reasons] that establish only the term” need not necessarily be “reasoning from the nonperception of essence” (rang bcīn ma dmigs pa’i rtags).\footnote{530}

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**Translation**

[The Diamond-Granule Reasoning and the Question of the Qualification of the Object of Refutation]\footnote{531}

Since the Madhyamakāloka and other Svātantrika texts, following such lines in the Prajñāmāla as “not from themselves, not from another,” also explain the reasoning that refutes arising via the four extremes, known [under the name of] the reasoning of the diamond-granule (rdo rje gzugs ma’i gstan tshigs), I will explain briefly the uncommon Svātantrika [interpretation] of this [form of reasoning].

The Svātantrikas explain that the following syllogism is implied by the lines of the Prajñāmāla that go “not from themselves and not from another”:

Subject: the sprout
Predicate: is not something that truly arises
Reason: because it does not ultimately arise from itself, from another, from both, or causelessly.

The Prasannapadā refutes that such [a way of] positing the syllogism is the [correct interpretation of] the meaning of the lines of that text, [that is, the Prajñāmāla]. Candrakīrti believes that it is possible to posit the reason in a more general way:

Subject: the sprout
Predicate: is not something that truly arises
Reason: because it does not arise from itself, from another, or causelessly

[without having to qualify the four extremes repudiated within the reason with the word ultimately].

Although the Svātantrikas and Prāsaṅgikas agree that the three forms of arising, from self, [both, and neither,] are impossible even nominally, [only] the Prāsaṅgikas believe that arising from another is impossible even nominally. However, because the Svātantrikas accept arising from another nominally, they believe that it is necessary to affix the qualifier ultimately when refuting arising from another. No Svātantrika scriptures whatsoever deny arising from another nominally. It is quite clear from the scriptures of the father Sāntarakṣīta and his [spiritual] son [Kamalaśīla] as well as from those of Ārya [Vimuktatasa] and Haribhadra that they believe cause and effect to be different substances (rdzas gzhan). Therefore, [by referring to these works,] those whose minds and eyes are affected by the poisonous waters of jealousy will come to understand that there exists this difference between the Prāsaṅgikas and Svātantrikas: [the latter] accepting that nominally things exist inherently and [the former] not [accepting inherent existence even nominally].
As for the way in which the syllogism is to be posited, the Madhyamakālīka says:

Whatever is devoid of ultimately arising from itself, from another, from both, and causelessly is in reality (yang dag par) natureless (ngo bo nyid med pa). It is, for example, like a lotus in the sky and so forth. All of the entities that are advocated as really existing by our own and others' [philosophical schools] are just like that [lotus in the sky].532

In this regard it is easier to understand the refutation of the three [positions, namely, the repudiation of the fact that things arise from themselves, from both, and causelessly], which other schools, [that is, non-Buddhist schools,] advocate. As I will explain later that it is not right to affix the qualifier ultimately when refuting arising from another, I take the present opportunity to mention the reasoning for refuting arising from another533 as it is explained in the Madhyamakālīka, [that is, according to the Svātantra school which does affix the qualifier].

If things ultimately arise from other [things], then do they arise from permanent causes or do they arise from impermanent causes?534 In the former case, things could not arise sequentially (rim can du,) arising instead in one [159] simultaneous whole (rii cig char du). Also, a thing would either arise perpetually or else it could not arise even once.535

If they arise from impermanent causes, are they, at the time of the effect, born from a cause that has perished or are they, at the time of the effect, born from something that has not perished? In the former case, because that which has perished is a nonentity (dngos med,) it cannot be a cause. Hence, the effect would arise causelessly. In the latter case, because cause and effect would occur simultaneously, it contradicts their being, [respectively,] "what has arisen" (bskyed bya) and "what gives rise to it" (bskyed byed).

[Opponent:] Well then, let the first moment of the visual consciousness be the present entity. The second moment of the visual consciousness arises from that [first moment] at the second instant. Hence, even though the cause has perished at the time of the effect, we do not suffer from the absurdity [of accepting] a cause that is a nonentity.

[Reply:] If so, then is this arising, which is uninterrupted from one moment to the next, uninterrupted in every respect or only in one respect? In the former case, it would follow, absurdly, that the [two moments would be] co-temporal. This is just as before.536 In the latter case, as they would be only partially co-temporal, this undermines their being partless. Therefore, as this undermines true existence, it refutes the fact that cause and effect are ultimately different. This is a summarized version of a more extensive explanation.

Along these [same lines], the Ālokā, in the section dealing with the refutation of arising from another, says: "The two moments of a partless entity uninterrupted by another [moment] cannot but exist simultaneously. They cannot have different aspects because the two [moments] are uninterrupted in every respect."537 And also: "If you think [to reply] 'they are uninterrupted in one respect, not in all respects,' then it follows that the thing was momentary and had parts [all along]. Therefore the characteristic of the ultimately smallest moment (dus mtha') is not undermined."538 At the end of this long explanation he repudiates the fact that arising from another ultimately exists by saying: "In this way ultimately arising, even from another, is incorrect."539 Again, the Āloka says:

That is why a certain Acārya's,[ that is, Bhāvaviveka's,] reasoning that goes "[the eye consciousness] does not ultimately arise from another, that is, from internal organs (nang gi skye mchad,) because they are other" is [claimed by an opponent to be] without a doubt revokable because it is possible for a valid cognition to exist that opposes the discordant side (mi mthun phyogs,)540 like proving impermanence from existence.541 Fools have said that in [the context of] this proof, because there is no valid cognition whatsoever that can repudiate [the existence] of [the reason], "otherness," in the discordant side, the [reason] is indefinite (ma rgyas pa). There is no valid cognition that repudiates [the existence] of what is to be proven, that is, the refutation of arising, in the discordant side.

Because otherness itself is established nominally, the reason is also not nonestablished (ma sgrub pa). So, because the reason is a correct [logical entity, that is, because it has no faults,] it should not be characterized by any such term [as indefinite and nonestablished]. This is something I have already taught. Therefore, all that this party [Candrakīrti] asserts in regard to this reason, that is, that it is indefinite, nonestablished and so on, is meaningless ("brel ba med pa).

The Acārya [Nāgarjuna addresses] those heterodox parties who claim that nominal causes, that is, causes other [than their effects], refer only to those entities which are really (dngos su) other. He expounds their refutation in the lines:

The nature of entities
Does not allow for causal conditions (rkyen) . . .

Hence, because the otherness [advocated] by their scriptural tradition is not established, [Nāgarjuna] teaches that "there is no arising from another."542

This clearly shows that [in the Svātantra system] nominally there is arising from another, and that it is because there is no arising from another as it is [161] imagined within the scriptural system of the heterodox that Nāgarjuna explained that there was no arising from another.
The certain Acārya refers to Bhāvaviveka. Hence, it is evident that he is referring to Candra’s critique within the Prasannapadā of the faults of Bhāva-viveka’s syllogism when he says, “therefore, all that this party asserts in regard to this reason, that is, that it is indefinite and nonestablished and so on…”

In this way [we can see] that the difference as to whether or not they nominally accept arising from another is strictly due to a difference in the subtlety of what they take to be the object of refutation of the syllogism. 543

[The Reasoning Refuting Arising via the Four Extremes] 544

Moreover, the Madhyamaka Satyadvaya says:

A plurality cannot create a single entity.
Nor can a plurality create a plurality.
A unity cannot create a plural entity.
Nor can a unity create a unity. 545

To explain the meaning of the Svātantrika’s famous “reasoning that refutes arising via the four extremes” (mu bzhī skye ’gog gi rigs pa), let us first cite the syllogism:

Subject: the sprout
Predicate: does not ultimately arise
Reason: because (1) ultimately a single lone effect does not arise from a single lone cause, (2) many effects do not arise from a single lone cause, (3) ultimately a single effect does not arise from many causes, (4) nor do many effects ultimately arise from many causes.

As regards the proof of the trimodal (rshul gsum) criterion, the proof of the pervasion (khyab pa) is carried out along the same lines as the proof of the pervasion in the case of the “being devoid of being a unity or plurality” syllogism. As regards the proof of [the relationship] between subject and reason (phyo gs chos), [it is as follows]. The refutation of the first two extremes is explained in terms of the three conditions (rkyen gsum). 546

Hence, does the eye organ [the predominant condition for the arising of the eye consciousness] act only as the cause of a second, [that is, of the next moment of the] eye organ, or does it act only as the cause of the eye consciousness alone? In the former case it would follow, absurdly, that all sentient beings would have to be blind, as eye consciousnesses could not arise from eye organs. In the latter case as well it would follow, absurdly, that all sentient beings would have to be blind because the eye organ could not be made to abide a second instant. 547

The refutation of the third extreme [is as follows]. If many causes give rise to only one effect, then it would follow, absurdly, that among the three parts [of the eye consciousness], (1) the part that is the experience of the eye consciousness (mig shes kyi myong ba’i cha,) (2) the part of the appearance (rnam par shar ba’i cha,) and (3) the part that can apprehend the kind of object it is (rigs su chad pa’i dzin nus kyi cha,) one alone would be the imprint of three conditions of the eye consciousness, [instead of each of the three parts being the imprint of its own condition, as is actually the case]; and it would follow, absurdly, that the other two qualities of the eye consciousness would either be impossible or would arise without causes.

The refutation of the fourth extreme [is as follows]. If the three different aspects of the eye consciousness that come about due to the three conditions just described arise due to the combination of the three conditions in an ultimate way, 548 then do the three imprints posited by the three conditions of the eye consciousness simply appear to be different to the mind without their being ultimately different, or do they not appear to any mind as being different, or [finally,] are they ultimately different? In the first case, because their mode of existence would be one and their mode of appearance another, they would be false things, thereby undermining their true existence. In the second case, because the three imprints of the three conditions would end up as one, its being a case of many causes creating many effects is undermined. In the third case, it follows, absurdly, that the eye consciousness and the three qualities of the eye consciousness would also be ultimately different. If you accept that, then [we reply that] the eye consciousness and its three qualities are not ultimately different because (1) if they were ultimately different, the dryon gnosia that understands reality would have to perceive them as different, and (2) it does not perceive them as different. Part (1) is true because if something ultimately exists, it must be reality (gnas lungs su grub). By means of this reasoning we repudiate their being ultimately different, and by repudiating that, we repudi ate that they are ultimately many, thereby repudiating that ultimately many causes can create many effects.

[The Reasoning Refuting the Arising of the Existent and Nonexistent]

Now let me explain the meaning of [the reasoning] known as “the reasoning that refutes the arising of the existent and nonexistent” (yod med skye dgag gi rig pa,), which finds its scriptural source in the lines:

The arising of what exists is not correct
And what does not exist is like a flower in the sky. 549

It is not at all correct to interpret this as meaning that “the existent does not arise nor does the nonexistent arise,” as in fact one person does, for every
Buddhist realist has already established for himself or herself by means of a valid cognition that what [already] exists does not arise and that what does not exist does not arise, so that no opponent whatsoever would accept that [already existing] phenomena and nonexistent things arise from causes. Another person, wanting to extricate himself or herself from this problem analyzes it as the arising of something that exists or the arising of something that does not exist at the time of the cause, but this [suffers] from a similar [fault], for no Buddhist would accept these two [forms of] arising.

Therefore, when we analyze whether the sprout that arises is existent or nonexistent, we find that there is no difference between realists and Mādhyamikas in so far as they both accept that a sprout that exists later arises, and that a sprout that does not exist at the time of the seed arises. However, if the sprout truly existed, this would not be possible, for if the sprout truly existed, it would have to exist at all times, and so would have to exist even at the time of its cause, and hence it could not be created by its cause. If its nonexistence at the time of its cause were a truth (gyu dus na med par bden na,) it would have to be nonexistent at all times, and there would ensue the problem that it could not be created by a cause, like the flower in the sky. Therefore, there is no true arising. This is how [this verse and this form of reasoning] is to be explained.

The reasoning from interdependent origination (rten ’brel) will be explained in the Prāsaṅgika section.

And now, a verse of intermission:

All the distinctions between the Prāsaṅgika and Svātantra tenets [that they make]
Are like the analysis of the elephant by so many blind men.
Yet still they proclaim themselves as Mādhyamikas.
How amazing are these pseudo-scholars who possess the intellect of cattle!
[A GENERAL EXPOSITION OF PRĀSAṬGIKA TENETS]

4.2.3.1.3.3. Explaining the Extent (tshad) of the Prāsaṅgikas' Object of Refutation (dgag bya)\textsuperscript{552}

If you would know how it is that in the Prāsaṅgika system all phenomena are posited as being the mere labels of conceptual thought,\textsuperscript{553} then you must understand how it is that we apprehend [things] as [truly] existing and not as the mere labels of conceptual thought. That [things] exist as they are apprehended by such [a mistaken consciousness] is what ultimately determines something to be the logical object of refutation (rugs kyi dgag bya'i tshad mthar thugs). It is therefore necessary to explain at the outset how it is that all phenomena are posited by virtue of conceptual thought, and so we turn to the Catuhṣatata:

Without conceptualization, attachments and so on
Have no existence.
So how could anyone with half a mind grasp at them
As if they were real objects (yang dag don) and conceptualizations (rtogs pa)?\textsuperscript{554}

The Tikā says:

It is only because there exists conceptualization that there is such a thing as existence. Without conceptualization there is no existence.
Just as the snake that we label onto a coiled rope [is truthless], just so are those [conceptualized things] ascertained to have no self-nature.\textsuperscript{555}

Because attachments and so on are mere examples, [it is clear that] the purport [of the passage] is to be explained [as being] that all phenomena are the mere labels of conceptual thought. When the color [of the rope] is variegated [and it has been set down] in a winding fashion like a snake, and is not clearly visible [because of poor lighting and so forth], at that time there is born a conceptual thought that thinks of the rope "this is a snake."
At that time neither the color of the rope nor its shape, neither the parts of the rope nor the collection [of those parts] can in any way be apprehended as being an example of the snake. Hence the snake is something that is only labeled onto the rope by conceptual thought.

Likewise, based on the aggregates there is born a mind that thinks "I." Neither the collection of former and later moments of the continuity, nor the collection of former and later moments at one particular time, nor the individual moments, nor the parts divided, nor the shape of the aggregates and so forth can be posited as being examples of the "I." Why is it illogical [to claim that any one of these is an example of the self] will be explained later. Moreover, because there is no example of the self that is of a different nature from the parts and the whole of the aggregates, when it is not analyzed, the term I is applied [to these parts or whole]. If, however, one analyzes what is the basis onto which the term I is applied, one does not find anything at all. Therefore, there is only one possibility, that the "I" is merely the label of conceptual thought.

What this means is explained in the Madhyamaka Ratnāvali, which says:

Man is not earth, nor is he water.
He is not fire, nor wind, nor space.
He is not consciousness nor all [of these elements together].

But apart from these, what man could there be?²⁵⁶

In this way it teaches [this same point]. In this [passage] man refers to the "person" or to the "I." [The portion that goes] "he is not earth" up to "he is not consciousness" is repudiating that any of the parts, that is, the six elements, of sentient beings can be posited as the personality, and [the words] not all are repudiating that the assembled composite of the six elements can be posited as the personality.

If one understands that the person is posited by conceptual thought in such a manner, [one can apply] it to all phenomena, that also are posited by conceptual thought in a similar way. The Samādhīhiraja Sātra says:

Just as you have recognized ("du shes") it in regard to the self
You should apply that same understanding (shes pa) to all things.²⁵⁷

The Āryasamcaya says:

Know that just as I [exist] so do all beings exist.
Know that just as all beings exist so do all phenomena exist.
To not conceptualize about either birth or no birth,
This is the supreme activity of the Prajñāpāramitā.²⁵⁸

Having searched for how the object onto which we label the term I exists, we find no example of the I. In this same way, if we analyze how the objects onto which we label the terms pot and pillar exist, they all resemble one another in [166] that neither their individual parts nor the collection [of those parts] are found to be examples of the pot, [the pillar, and so forth].

[Does Reality Truly Exist or Is It Too a Mere Label?]²⁵⁹

[Question:] Well then, is reality (chos nyid) also said to be a mere label of conceptual thought?

[Answer:] It is most emphatically accepted as such because, although it is theoretically possible for reality (chos nyid) [lit. the quality itself] to ultimately exist whereas what possesses that quality (chos can) does not ultimately exist, that is, [though it is theoretically possible] for conventional phenomena, which are what possess this quality, to be the mere labels of conceptual thought whereas reality is not, in actual fact, what possesses the quality and reality, [the quality itself,] have not the slightest difference as regards whether or not they truly exist, [as in fact both are truthless].

[Question:] Why are they not [different]?

[Answer:] This is because logic such as the reasoning from "being devoid of being a unity or plurality," that proves truthlessness in regard to a [mundane phenomenon] the likes of a pot has its tridomal (tsül gsum) criterion established by a valid cognition even in regard to [more supramundane] phenomena like reality, omniscience, and so on. In this sense they all resemble one another. This is because, as has already been explained earlier,²⁶⁰ there is no difference as to the extent of difficulty in proving that a pot has parts and in proving that reality has parts. Likewise, there is for the most part no difference whatsoever in proving the truthlessness [of different things] by means of the reasoning of dependent arising.

It would follow, absurdly, that the fact that reality (chos nyid) is the quality (chos nyid) of conventional phenomena is something that is truly established because [according to you] reality is truly established [or truly exists]. If you accept [the premise], then it follows that reality and the conventional have at all times the relationship of basis (riten) and what depends (brten pa) [on that basis] because their basis-dependent relationship truly exists. This reason you accept [by having accepted that reality’s being the quality of the conventional is a truly existent fact]. The pervasion, [that if the relationship is truly existent it must always exist,] holds because if something truly exists, it must exist at all times. This is so because if it existed at some times and not at others, it would be adventitious. If it were adventitious, it would contradict its being the way things are (gnyan lugs). If you accept [that the relationship] always exists, then it follows that the basis-dependent relationship exists even at the time when it is being analyzed by reasoning that analyzes the ultimate [167] because [reality and the conventional] are always [in the relationship] of basis and dependent. If you accept this, then it follows, absurdly, that the conven-
tional truly exists because it is in this basis-dependent [relationship] with a truly existent quality. The reasoning used here is the same type used in the Prajñāpāramitā passage that goes: "Action possesses no causal conditions" and in the Avalokiteśvara passage that goes: "This arising is not of a correct nature without a creator."

What is more, it follows, absurdly, that there must exist a valid cognition that ultimately perceives reality because [according to you] it ultimately exists. You cannot deny the pervasion, for to accept that something is the case even though it is not established by a valid cognition is a source of laughter for the sage. If you accept the premise, then your talk lies nonsense. Your beliefs that ultimately things do not exist and that ultimately the doctrine does not exist, [as ultimately the perception of reality exists],

[Opponent:] Even though composite consciousness (sust byed kyi shes pa) does not ultimately exist, noncomposite consciousness does, and hence it is by a noncomposite valid cognition that reality is ultimately perceived.

[Reply:] Does “noncomposite valid cognition” refer to the equipped gnosis of an aryan who directly realizes reality, or does it refer to reality itself? Within this context there ought not to be any [alternatives] other than these two. In the former case, it would follow, absurdly, that the truth of the path is noncomposite. This would be to advertise oneself as someone who is unfamiliar with even the mere terminology of the sūtras, tantras, and their commentaries. In the latter case, if one form of reality were a valid cognition, then all forms of reality would likewise be valid cognitions. From this it would follow that if something were reality, it would itself be a valid cognition that perceives itself. If you accept this, it would follow that all sentient beings would be accomplished buddhas, for all sentient beings would at all times directly realize reality with the valid cognitions of their own mental continua. All those who advocate that any form of reality is an essence body (ngo bo nyid sku) and that all essence bodies are noncomposite valid cognitions that directly perceive reality are left breathless by this reasoning.

[An Excursus on the Essence Body of the Buddha]

[Opponent:] There is no problem because the essence body is not contained within the mental continua of sentient beings.

[Reply:] Well then, it follows, absurdly, that the essence body is not contained within the mental continuum of a buddha because the reality of the mind of sentient beings is not contained within the mental continua of sentient beings. If you accept the premise, then it would be impossible for the ultimate cessation [nonabiding nirvāṇa] to exist within the mental continuum of a perfect buddha.

Moreover, what is your reason [for claiming] that [the essence body] is not contained within the continua of sentient beings? Are you saying that it is not contained within the continua of sentient beings because it is a buddha or because it is noncomposite? In the first case, for the reality of the mind of sentient beings to be their essence body would depend on it not being contained within the continua of sentient beings, whereas that, [that is, the fact that it is not contained within their mental continua,] depends upon it’s being an essence body, [that is, a buddha]. Hence, we are involved in circular reasoning (riogs pa phan tshun bren).

If the latter is true, [that is, that it is not contained within the mental continua of sentient beings because it is conditioned,] then the cessation achieved by the mental continuum of a bodhisattva on the path of seeing (mthong lam) would also not be possible, [as this too is uncompounded]. Moreover, it follows, absurdly, [from your position] that it is not necessary to newly accomplish the essence body by means of meditation on the path because it has existed from beginningless time [in the continua of all sentient beings].

[Opponent:] It is not true [that it has existed from beginningless time in the continua of beings].

[Reply:] Then give up [your claim] that it truly exists.

[Opponent:] Very well, I accept [that it need not be newly accomplished].

[Reply:] Then it follows, absurdly, that the effort one makes in meditating on the path is meaningless.

[The Argument Concerning Reality Continues]

[Opponent:] If reality has parts, then it would preclude its true existence. If it has no parts, then one would not be able to divide it into the twenty emptinesses. There is no such paradox [in our own system] because, although allowing for its divisibility due to the conventional subjects [which are the bases of the emptiness] and are twenty in number, we believe that there is no dividing the actual nature (ngo bo) of reality.

[Reply:] Please tell us how it is that “ultimate emptiness” (don dam par stong pa nyid), “the emptiness of essence” (rang bzhin stong pa nyid), and “the emptiness of emptiness” (stong pa nyid stong pa nyid), [all forms of the emptiness of reality,] are divided on the basis of conventional subjects, the bases of their emptiness, [when all of the subjects in the three preceding examples are themselves forms of reality, that is, of emptiness].

Moreover, [ask yourself this:] ultimately do things that are mere nontentities (sngos med sams) exist or do they not? If they do, then this precludes your assertion that ultimately the merely conventional is repudiated. If
they do not, [then consider this argument]. X's being ultimate must preclude x's being reality because it precludes its being a mere nonentity, [as emptiness is itself a mere nonentity]. Both the reason and the predicate are correct. If [you claim] that [the reason] does not imply [the predicate, that whatever precludes nonentities does not necessarily preclude emptiness], then it follows that precluding a larger category (khyab byed) does not preclude a subset (khyab bya) [of that category].

Although there are an infinite number of contradictions (gnod byed) to be enunciated in regard to the [position that] reality truly exists, I will say no more than this slight [bit I have just explained], lest this work become too lengthy.

[The Reasoning Used to Prove That One Phenomenon Is Empty Applies to All Phenomena, Including Emptiness]572

If one proves by means of reasoning that any one phenomenon, such as a pot, is truthless, then that reasoning will prove truthlessness in regard to all phenomena, both conventional and ultimate. With this in mind [the following] has been stated:

What is said in regard to one thing
Is said in regard to them all.
The emptiness of one
Is the emptiness of them all.573

The Gaganagamjasamādhi Sūtra also says: "By means of one phenomenon one can understand (rjes su rtogs) that all phenomena are like illusions and mirages, that there is nothing to be grasped, that they are essenceless, lies and old wives' tales. He [who understands this] will, before long, enter the essence of enlightenment."574 The Samādhirajā says:

Just as you have recognized it in regard to the self,
You should apply that same understanding to all [things].
All phenomena are of this [same] nature.
They are pure, like space.
By means of one one understands all;
By means of one one sees all.
Though [things] as they appear are too many to explain,
Doubt [as to their cognizability] does not arise.575

And also:

One thing is of the nature of all things.
All things are of the nature of one thing.
He who sees the reality of the two truths576 Sees all things as they are.

Hence, [to show] that even reality is considered to be truthless, the Sūtra says:

Subhūti spoke: Oh sons of the gods, if we say that even nirvāṇa is like an illusion, then what need is there to mention other phenomena?
The sons of the gods spoke: Noble Subhūti, do we say that even nirvāṇa is like an illusion, is like a dream?
Subhūti spoke: Oh sons of the gods, I say [to you] that even if there were anything more noble or special than nirvāṇa, I would say that too was like an illusion, was like a dream.577

The Ārya Nāgārjuna has also said:

Since the compounded does not exist
How can the uncompounded exist?578

This is saying that if it is impossible for the compounded to truly exist, then there is no way for the uncompounded to truly exist. One must be of extremely dull faculties to claim that [the scriptural claims of truthlessness] apply to the existence of all the things that aid man in establishing his needs, and then to claim insistently that a uncompounded phenomenon [like emptiness], which cannot in the least help or harm man in establishing his needs, is truly existent.579 If one says that reality is truly existent, they consider it "oh so good," and if one says that it is not truly existent, they consider it evil. In this way, like dumb sheep who cannot distinguish right from wrong, the world follows such idiocy. [Those who do follow it] will have their mental continua [171] utterly bound up by the many ropes of the latent potentialities that have been accustomed to apprehending true [existence] since beginningless time. This is an evil system whose [followers] resemble lustful beings who [uselessly] discuss whether or not a hermaphrodite [who could not satisfy their desires anyway] is beautiful.

In the Noble Land of India they accepted that all entities (dngos po) lacked true existence, so to come along and claim that there is one kind of nonentity (dngos med), [that is, emptiness] that truly exists [is to show] that one is unlearned both in Buddhist and non-Buddhist tenets. Therefore, this is considered to be even worse than [accepting] all the tenets to which the heterodox adhere.

[As It Does Not Truly Exist, Emptiness Is Only a Mental Label]

Because reality does not truly exist, it is fitting that it should definitely be accepted to be only something labeled by conceptual thought (rtog pas braogs po tshams). There exists the mere term reality, but this term does not occur by itself without someone to make use (sbyor ba) of it. Because nonconceptual
consciousness (rtog med shes pa) does not engage in the use of linguistic symbols.\textsuperscript{580} [reality] is said to be a mere linguistic usage on the part of conceptual thought. If following the mere linguistic usage by conceptual thought of the term reality one does not analyze it, then one can posit the existence of reality [in this very loose way]. If, however, unsatisfied with the fact that the term reality is only something labeled by conceptual thought, one logically searches for how it is that the basis (gzhis) onto which that term is affixed exists, one finds nothing at all. Hence, as reality cannot be posited if one searches in this way, the positing of reality is the mere labeling of the term reality by conceptual thought, and it depends upon understanding it without subsequently logically analyzing it. That is why we say that even reality is something that is merely labeled by conceptual thought.

Because all phenomena are things labeled by conceptual thought, all phenomena are said to be mere names. What does mere name mean, however?\textsuperscript{[172]} When we focus on (dmigs pa) the various terms for persons or phenomena, as we can engage in effective action (gliang dor) [literally taking up what is desired and avoiding what is not] based upon the mere labeling of names like pot and Devadatta, [language] is conventionally unmistakable. Were it necessary, however, to [first] search for the referent (don) onto which those names are labeled and then engage [in action], nothing could be effectively accomplished. For example, suppose there is someone who desires to meet Devadatta. If that person follows, [that is, acts in accordance with,] the mere words "Devadatta is in that house on the top of which the crow is crying," then he will be able to meet the Devadatta who lives inside that house. If, however, he were to analyze how he exists, that is, whether the basis of the name of the Devadatta who is in the house is of the same or of different substances from the aggregates, in other words, were it [first] necessary to find that [Devadatta] existed in such and such a way before meeting him, then meeting Devadatta would be impossible, for if we search for him in this manner, he is not found to exist in any way. [The example] of "please bring water in the pot" should be understood in the same way.

In a similar way, suppose that after the mind affixes the mere name pot onto a phenomenon we do not avoid engaging in analysis. It is because when we examine it [in this way] we do not find any referent basis onto which that name is posited, that all phenomena are said to be only names.

\textbf{[The Meaning of "According with the World" in the Prāsaṅgika System]}\textsuperscript{587}

What do we mean by saying that the Prāsaṅgikas set forth the conventional in accordance with the world? All ordinary beings and āryans still in training (phags pa slob pa) have innate mundane minds,\textsuperscript{582} and following mere names they engage in effective action without analysis.\textsuperscript{583} Likewise, the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas set forth the conventional following mere words, without analysis. [But suppose one interprets "according with worldly conventions" to mean that] what worldly idiots who are ignorant of tenets claim as existing one should also claim to exist and what they regard as nonexistent one should claim to not exist; if one takes this as the meaning of "positing things in accordance with the world," then one has gone far astray. Understanding that the fact that things are established by name only and are established by this kind of [worldly] conventional mind is not contradictory to, and indeed is compatible with, the doctrines of karma and its effects and the doctrines of saṃsāra and nirvāna is a special feature of the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamikas and the ultimate point of view.\textsuperscript{584} Hence, one should exert oneself at understanding these [two points] by seeing them as noncontradictory in one's own mind.

The way in which we label all phenomena by conceptual thought resembles the way we label a rope as a snake. Yet they are utterly different in that [the former] exist nominally as they are labeled whereas [the latter] does not. This is because when one accepts that things are the labels of conceptual thought [there can in general still] be a difference [between these labels] in that some are contradicted (gnod) by nominal valid cognitions and some are not.

Even though the terms stage, path, and fruit [in their technical senses] are not widespread in the world, and though their linguistic symbols (rda) were not at first predicated by worldly ordinary conceptual thought, nonetheless, the Buddha created these linguistic symbols to introduce them to the world [by preaching] his doctrine in accordance with the way that the worldly conceptual thought that possesses the erroneous (khru{l pa'i}) appearance of duality predicates linguistic symbols. After this, the disciples who followed him [predicated] the mere names such as stage, path, and so on, using soteriological (gliang dor) terminology without subsequently analyzing it with conceptual thought.

If one searches for the referent object (don) [onto which] the name is labeled, because the object is not found even in the case of the stages and the paths, even they exist only by virtue of their names. Though the Buddha, in [174] whose mental continuum there are no conceptual thoughts, [originally] predicated linguistic symbols such as "stages" and "paths," he created the linguistic symbols such as "stages" and "paths" based upon the conceptual thought of the disciples, so there does not occur the fault of not positing [these phenomena] based on conceptual thought.\textsuperscript{585}

\textbf{[The Scriptural Basis for Nominalism]}

Many scriptures of definitive meaning and their commentaries teach that all phenomena are only labeled by conceptual thought and are posited only by virtue of their names.
The Upāpariprccha Sūtra states:

I have taught that the mind should fear hell;
That many thousands of beings are made miserable there;
And yet those beings who die and go to a fierce lower realm
Have never existed.
They are not harmed
By the huge swords and arrows of [hell’s] guardians.
Those lower realms exist due to conceptual thought.
In these [states] there are no weapons that actually strike the body.
[Likewise,] the various pleasing things like flowers in bloom
And radiant places of gold that bring happiness to the mind,
They too have no creator whatever.
They exist only by virtue of conceptual thought,
But the childish differentiate them with the grasping of discrimination.
When neither grasping nor non-grasping arise
The understanding [sees things] as if they were dreams and illusions.\textsuperscript{586}

Again, a sūtra says:

The nature of attachment, anger, excrement [mind] (rgyags pa) and obsecration (gti mugs)
Is that they arise due to misconception (kun riogs) and that they understand [their object] incorrectly.
All things [come about] due to our having accustomed ourselves
[To mental states] that are neither free from misconceptions nor devoid of attachment.\textsuperscript{587}

Again, a sūtra says:

This doctrine has from previous times been taught, namely, the nonexistence of a self, the nonexistence of sentient beings.
But although this is taught, it does not imply the exhaustion [of all phenomena].
For I have said this after having determined them to be mere labels.\textsuperscript{588}

And also:

The childish ones who think about the phenomena of peace and utter peace
Are abiding in a wrong path,
But to speak of phenomena in terms of the word emptiness
Is to teach with words that those phenomena are wordless.
There has never been a bodhisattva
Who has thought about the phenomena of peace and utter peace.
All verbal elaborations (spros pa) are misconceptions of the mind
And so one should think of phenomena as being thoughts.\textsuperscript{589}

The Samādhīrāja Sūtra says:

Even though nirvāṇa is profound,
It is expressed by words.
Nirvāṇa is not to be found
And neither is the word nirvāṇa findable.
Neither the word nor nirvāṇa
Can be found.
In this way it is empty phenomena
That reveal nirvāṇa.\textsuperscript{590}

The Pitāpatrasamāgama Sūtra says:

It is like this: a fairy city does not exist as it appears
In any of the cities of the ten directions or of any other [direction].
It is a city that exists only by virtue of its name.
In the same way does the Tathāgata see beings.\textsuperscript{591}

The Prajināpatamitā Sūtra says:

It is like this: this so-called bodhisattva is a mere name. And like this:
this so-called perfection of wisdom is a mere name. And like this:
these so-called forms, feelings, discriminations, composites, and consciousnesses are mere names.
And like this: forms are like an illusion.
Feelings, discriminations, composites, and consciousnesses are like illusions. Illusions and mere names do not correspond to their objects.
They do not exist in any direction.\textsuperscript{592}

And from there it goes on to explain it in more detail:

Why is that so? It is like this: names are created in regard to individual phenomena and they label them. Names are terms (tha snyad) created adventitiously (glu bur bas). All names are nominally (tha snyad da) created. When a great being, a bodhisattva, examines the perfection of wisdom, he does not even see a name (yang dag par rje su ma mthong), and because he does not see it, he does not conceptualize (mgon par ma zhen pa) it. And again, Śāriputra, when a great being, a bodhisattva, analyzes the perfection of wisdom, he understands it to be thus. It is like this: this so-called bodhisattva is a mere name. It is like this: this so-called perfection of wisdom is a mere name. It is like this: these so-called forms are mere names. It is like this: these so-called feelings, discriminations, composites, and consciousnesses are mere names. Śāriputra, it is like this: for example, even though we express the I in language, in the expression I, yet, there is no I to be perceived.\textsuperscript{593}
The Yuktīśastikā says:
The perfect Buddha says
That the world is conditioned by ignorance.
So why can’t we say
That this world is misconception (rnam rtog)?

Commenting on the meaning of this passage [Candrakīrti] explains that the
world is only something labeled by conceptual thought.
The Ratnavali says:
Because the nature of form is that it is a mere name
Space is also a mere name.
When the elements do not exist, how can form exist?
Hence, even the mere name does not exist.
Likewise feelings, discriminations, composites,
And consciousnesses are like the elements.
They should be thought of as the self is.
Therefore the six sphere (kham drug) have no self.

And also:
What can exist as an object in a world
Whose only ontological status
Is that it is labeled nominally?

This is stating that ultimately even names do not exist and that, except for
what is posited nominally by means of a name, nothing else exists.

[True Existence, the Opposite of Nominal Existence]

As it was explained [in preceding passages], to apprehend that all phenomena
exist in such a way that they are not posited only by name and conceptual
thought is the innate apprehension of true existence. If things existed the way
they are apprehended by this [innate form of ignorance,] then they would (1)
truly exist (bden par grub pa), (2) ultimately exist (don dam par grub pa),
(3) really exist (yang dag par grub pa), (4) inherently exist (rang bzhin gyis
grub pa), (5) exist by virtue of their own characteristic (rang gi mshan nyid
grub pa), (6) exist by virtue of their own nature (rang gi ngoi bos grub
kyis grub pa), (7) exist under their own power (rang dbang du grub pa), and (8) exist
substantially (rtsas su grub pa). Here, these all fit the description of what
the logical reason (rtags) refutes by means of a hypothetical (mtha’ gzung)
examination. The Catuḥśataka says:

These all lack self-power (rang dbang)
And so they are natureless (bdag nyid yod ma yin).

The commentary on [these lines] enumerates them: “Here we are referring to
own nature (rang gi ngo bo), essence (rang bzhin), and independence from
other things (gszan la rag ma las pa).” Independence from other things
does not mean “independence from other causes and conditions.” It refers in
stead to “existence from its own side” (rang gi ngoi nas yod pa), [that is, an
existence where the object is] not posited by means of a consciousness that is
other than it.

In this regard according to the Svātantrikas one must accept that even
nominally there is no such thing as ultimate existence or true existence. Yet
they believe that nominally things do inherently exist and that they exist by
virtue of their own characteristic. They believe that if something exists by
virtue of its own characteristic, it need not truly exist. Hence, there is a very
great difference in the subtlety of the object that their reasoning refutes, [the
Svātantrikas’ object being more limited and less subtle than the Prāṣaṅgikas].

4.2.3.1.3.4. Refuting Misconceptions in Regard to the
[Distinction between Svātantrikas and Prāṣaṅgikas]

[Opponent:] It is quite incorrect to maintain that the Svātantrika and [178]
Prāṣaṅgika Madhyamikas differ [in the way you claim they do]. That is, it is
not the case that the former accept that [things] nominally exist by virtue of
their own characteristic [whereas the latter do not]. Do you believe that [a
thing’s] “own characteristic” refers to the definition (jog byed) [of a thing] or
that it refers to true existence? If the former, then it follows, absurdly, that
even the Acārya Candrakīrti, [a sworn Prāṣaṅgika,] taught the own-
characteristic of [everything] from form to omniscience, [for he is not at all opposed to
things having definitions]. The latter [position] is also not correct because the
Acārya Haribhadra, [a Svātantrika,] has, by means of such passages as
“empty of self, that is, labeled, and the external world,” taught that every-
thing is a mere label. Also, [what you claim is incorrect] because
Jñānagarbha, [a Svātantrika,] teaches that even nominally there is no arising
that can withstand logical analysis. As he says:

If examined under the power of logical reasoning,
Even conventionally things do not arise.
This is a statement of the truth and that is why it is said
That all this is as it appears to be.

Were you to claim that [the Svātantrikas] accept that objects exist from
their own side because they believe that they can perform the functions (don
byed nus pa) of the entities they appear [to be], then even the Acārya Candra
would have to accept that objects exist from their own side when he accepts
that a pillar can perform the function of the pillar it appears to be. If you claim that he does not accept [this latter position], then this utterly undermines [the Madhyamaka stance that] conventional existence implies existence.

It also follows [from your view] that there would be no difference even between a Svātantrika and a realist [because according to you they both accept existence by virtue of own characteristic,] and in this way you undermine even what the Madhyamikas themselves believe.

It is also incorrect [for you] to claim that there is a difference in what they believe to be ultimate and what they accept as conventional because, beyond a mere semantic difference, [according to you] the Svātantrikas do not accept anything beyond the truly existing objects that the realists themselves [accept].

[It also follows according to your view] that the Svātantrikas, accepting that things exist by virtue of their own natures and also accepting that they cannot withstand logical analysis, are inferior to the realists because on top of accepting truly existing entities, as they do, they also accept a proposition contradictory to this, [that is, that they cannot withstand logical analysis].

Therefore, there is no difference between the Svātantrikas and Prāsaṅgikas in this regard. They both accept that nominally [things] do not exist by virtue of their own characteristic. They resemble one another in not accepting that nominally [things] do not inherently exist and exist of their own nature. Therefore, there is not the slightest difference as regards the object that their reasoning refutes.

[Reply:] This is utterly incorrect. Although the Svātantra Madhyamikas accept that things exist from the object’s own side, they do not accept that this is [what it means for something] to truly exist. The Prāsaṅgikas [on the other hand] accept that if something exists in this way, [that is, from its own side,] then it must truly exist. Hence, they are dissimilar. [You obviously realize that this is what we mean,] as is evidenced by your repeatedly stating that both [schools] similarly deny that things exist from the objects’ own side or that they exist by virtue of their own characteristic. So to then ask whether existence by virtue of own characteristic refers to a definition or to true existence is an indication that you cannot be in your right mind.

Tell us why it is that the following: “it follows, absurdly, that a pillar is able to function as it appears because, just as it appears to be a pillar, it can perform the function of a pillar” is a reductio that harms the [following reductio:] “it follows, absurdly, that the pillar is potentially efficacious from its own objective side because the pillar appears to be efficacious from its own objective side and because the pillar is potentially efficacious as it appears”? [If it is a valid reductio,] then it follows, absurdly, that in reply to the following reductio: “it follows, absurdly, that the sensory perception to which two moons appear verifies that one moon is two because it is a nonerroneous perception and because one moon appears to it to be two’ it would be correct to urge one that goes: “it follows, absurdly, that [that sense perception] is a nonerroneous perception because the moon is white just as it appears to it.”

Again, it is just blathering on your part to say that if [the Svātantrikas] accept that objects exist from their own sides, then they are in no way different from the realists. [According to this line of reasoning] it would follow, absurdly, that the Cittamātrins are in no way different from the realists because [they believe that the pot-pillar [combination] and so on are objects that have the ability to occupy space (yul go sa gnon nus). The pervasion (khyab pa) and predicate (gsal ba) are in every way similar [to the reductio you urged on us]. If you force them into it through reasoning, then [the Svātantrikas] must accept that objects that exist from their own side truly exist, just as if you force them into it through reasoning, [a Yogācāra] must accept that if a pot-pillar [combination] is an object that occupies space it must be an outer object. [But this does not mean that either the Svātantrika or Yogācāra systems will accept these two statements respectively of their own free will].

You claim that by accepting that objects exist from their own side the Svātantrikas would not go beyond even the realist position of [accepting] ultimately existing objects. By this statement you are implicitly saying, “if I have not examined the scriptures of the realists, then how can I even possess the mere symbols [much less the meaning] of these profound [Madhyamaka] scriptures?” [In other words, you are showing us that you have mastered neither set of scriptural exegesis].

It follows [from what you claim] that in the Sautrāntika system the difference between the production of sound (sgra’i byas pa) and its impermanence (mi rtag pa) ultimately (don dam du) exists because the production of sound and its impermanence are different from their own side (rang ngos nas). The latter is true because sound, by virtue of its own nature, is the opposite of all of the different things that it is not (log sa tha dad las log pa), such as nonproduct, permanent, and so forth. [Were this not so] then how would you explain [the following verse from the Pramāṇavārttikam]:

Since all things abide inherently (rang bzhin gis) in their own natures (rang gi ngo bo la),

They are dependent upon being the opposites of all concordant and discordant entities. Think about what the word inherently implies!

Therefore, in the Sautrāntika system something need not exist by virtue of its own characteristic simply because it exists from its own side. When something exists from its own side, without at all depending on being posited by conceptual thought, then it can be considered to exist by virtue of its own characteristic. That is why they say that universals (spyi mchshn) and [conceptual entities like] “the difference between the production of sound and the impermanence of sound” and so forth do not exist by virtue of their own
characteristic. Nonetheless, according to the Prasangikas [the Sautrantikas] can be logically forced [into the position] that one is in effect accepting [that even conceptually posited entities like "difference"] are svataksanas, [or exist by virtue of their own characteristic,] by merely positing such an object to exist from its own side, [though the Sautrantikas may want to make a distinction between these two types of existence].

Again, even though [the Sautrantikas] expression "posited by conceptual thought" is verbally similar [to the Prasangikas' equivalent expression], what it entails [jog 'tshams] is not similar. According to the Prasangikas if one searches for the referent object of which conceptual thought has created linguistic terms, one finds nothing at all. Hence, they explain that things are posited only by name and conceptual thought. According to the Sautrantikas, one must claim that something is posited by virtue of conceptual thought when it is posited in dependence upon a conceptual thought that is in accordance with its object (rigs pa don mthun), [that is, a nonmistaken conceptual thought]. They accept that in accordance with its objects means "in accordance with the way it exists based upon an objective referent." Therefore, a conceptual thought that is in accordance with its object must definitely have a connection, albeit indirectly (brgyud nas), to svataksanas, [that is, it must have its origins in the sense perception of a svataksana].

This is repeatedly explained in such passages as: "Because [conception] has a basis that is not an entity." And also:

The conceptual thought that apprehends the nature of something
Does not have an apprehending object (gsung ba'i don), though it does
have an object similar to it, [that is, similar to the entity].
The [actual object] is not the cause of that [conception].
Instead, it is something that ultimately arises from something different
from the object.

So a pot appears as the opposite of non-pot to conceptual thought, and although this appearance is a reified entity (gsro brtags) and a universal (spis mthun), [the Sautrantikas] accept that it is not a contradiction to assert that that [appearance] exists within the very core (gnas tshod) of the object, [in this case] the pot. According to the Prasangika Madhyamikas, however, it is taught that something existing at an object's very core and its being a reified entity are contradictory assertions. One should be aware that this same method [of interpretation] can be applied to the Cittamatrins and so forth.

When one claims that the Cittamatrins accept that consciousness truly exists and also that it is evanescent (jigs po), [according to you, the opponent,] it would follow that the Cittamatrins are lower than the Vaisesikas because (1) [they both] similarly accept consciousness to be permanent and (2) [the Cittamatrins] accept a contradiction on top of that, [namely, that it is also evanescent]. [We are not placed in this position because we maintain that the Cittamatrins] are forced [to accept], through reasoning, that if consciousness truly existed then it must be permanent. In actuality the Cittamatrins do not accept that consciousness is permanent.

[In this same way] we also claim to be able to force the Svaantrikas [into the position] of having to accept that if things existed from their own objective side, then they must also be able to withstand logical analysis (rigs pas dpal bzod). Who is claiming, then, that the Svaantrikas Madhyamikas do [themselves willingly] accept that things withstand logical analysis? The fault of there being an internal contradiction in what they [actually accept, [a fault that you urge on our interpretation,] occurs when [there is a contradiction in what they actually do] accept. It cannot be said to occur in regard to what they [are forced to, but in actuality] do not accept. Hence, the Svaantrikas do not suffer from the fault of "accepting a contradiction to boot." Therefore, when someone accepts that things exist from their own side one can force them, through reasoning, into the necessity of their accepting that [those things] also must withstand logical analysis. It is not that by virtue of advocating that things exist from their own side they [actually] accept that [those things] withstand logical analysis. Otherwise, it would follow, absurdly, that by virtue of believing that a pot is an entity (dngos po) one would have to believe it to be material (bems po), for if a pot is an entity, then it must be material. So do not engage in reasoning in the dark without distinguishing between [what a school of thought] actually accepts and what it must accept [as a logical consequence of a position it actually holds].

Now I ask you this: according to you, how is one to interpret the words own characteristic (svataksana), which is explained as not even nominally existent in such passages as: "In the case of reality by whatever reasoning." In whose Bhaivya it says: "Thus, arising by virtue of own characteristic is true on neither level [of truth, ultimate or conventional]." And also:

Because both of these [cause and effect] are like an illusion, therefore
There is no fault on my part, for the entities of worldly beings still exist.

And in the Bhaivya to this it says: "On account of which this analysis will be directed to an effect that is own characteristic and a cause that is own characteristic." And also:

Whatever two [people, one in a past and one in a future life,] are distinct by virtue of their own characteristic
Cannot be understood to be of the same mental continuum.

Do you accept [that the own characteristic spoken of in these passages] refer to "existence by virtue of own characteristic," that it refers to the definition (jog byed) or that it refers to true existence (bden grub)? In the first case, as I have just finished pointing out at great length that Chandrakirti does not ac-
cept existence by virtue of own characteristic even nominally and that the Svātāntrikas do accept existence by virtue of own characteristic nominally, it would contradict [your belief] that there is no difference in what these two [schools] accept.\(^{618}\) In the second case, [if you take the own characteristic refuted in these passages to refer to the definition,] then you are contradicting your own claim that even Candrakīrti accepts definitions. In the third case, [that is, if it refers to true existence,] it is utterly contradictory to [your] claim that both Prāśāntikas and Svātāntrikas do not accept true existence, for you are taking own characteristic to mean true existence.\(^{619}\)

Again, [the Madhyamakāvatāra] states:

If own characteristic is the basis [of phenomena]
Then, because [the equipoise of an āryan] would destroy entities by annihilating them, [as it perceives the lack of own characteristic.]

Empitness would become the cause of the destruction of entities.
But that is not correct, therefore entities do not exist [by virtue of their own characteristic].\(^{620}\)

And in the Bhāṣya to this it says:

If the own characteristic, that is, own nature (rang gi ngo bo), of entities like form and feeling and so on arise by virtue of causes and condition, then when the yogis sees things as inherently empty, that is, when he realizes that all phenomena are essenceless, he must definitely be annihilating the essence that arises in this way, [that is, due to causes and conditions]. Hence, his understanding of emptiness, like the hammer which is the cause of the destruction of the pot and so forth, would become the cause for the annihilation of the essence of entities.
This [of course] is not possible. Therefore the own characteristic of entities should not be accepted as everlasting arising.\(^{621}\)

So the root text and commentary are saying that it follows that the gnosis, which is the yogis’s realization that all phenomena are essenceless, realizes emptiness by, in the process, annihilating the essence of entities, for [by hypothesis] entities exist by virtue of their own characteristic, although that [gnosis] understands entities to be essenceless, [that is, without own characteristic].\(^{622}\) Now tell me what opponent this reductio is refuting? Were it refuting a realist there would arise the fault of having no basis of disputation (rtsod gzhi).\(^{623}\) No realist accepts [such a thing] as an āryan gnosis that understands the essencelessness of all phenomena. Because the opponent [to which this syllogism is directed] must have already understood the Madhyamaka view when he understood the subject [of the syllogism, that is, the gnosis, the Madhyamakāvatāra] could not mean [to direct this syllogism] at a realist.
Thus, only [in a state of] insanity would anyone deny that this reductio argument is a refutation directed at a Mādhyamika who accepts that entities exist by virtue of their own characteristic and who accepts that āryan gnosis understands that entities lack a true essence (bden pa'i rang bzhin med da). Therefore, [this opponent can be none other than the Svātāntrika, for both of us are in agreement that there are no Mādhyamikas aside from Prāśāntikas and Svātāntrikas. Therefore, I have easily proven that there exists a difference between Prāśāntikas and Svātāntrikas in regard to whether they accept entities to exist by virtue of their own characteristic.

Moreover, [another opponent’s] view is implicit in the following scriptural passage [from Madhyamakāvatāra]: “For, if you examine these entities,”\(^{624}\) and his views are set forth in the Bhāṣya:

Opponent: Because ultimately there is no arising, it is permissible to refute arising from self and from another. Yet, the essence of objects perceived by direct perception and inference, such as form, feeling, and so on, is such that they arise, without a doubt, from other entities. If one does not accept this, then why say that there are two truths, for there would in fact be only one truth. Therefore, there is no such thing as arising from self.\(^{625}\)

The passage explains in extremely lucid terms that the opponent is one who accepts that ultimately there is no arising and that conventionally [things] arise inherently from other [things]. What is more, [this position is held by] none other than the Svātāntrikas, for there is no realist who accepts that ultimately there is no arising. Hence, it is quite clearly ascertainable that there is a difference between the Prāśāntikas and the Svātāntrikas in regard to whether they accept inherent arising, arising by virtue of own nature, and arising from other entities, [all of which are synonyms].

Some Svātāntrika Madhyamaka scriptures do mention essencelessness and naturelessness on quite a number of occasions, but it is impossible merely on the basis of those [citations] to even come close to proving that [they accept that] [things] do not inherently exist even nominally. Even though the Prāśāntikas say over and over again that [even] nominally all phenomena are essenceless (tha snyad du rang bzhin med), they do not accept that essences are nominally nonexistent (rang bzhin tha snyad du ang med).\(^{626}\) It is even nominal absence of an "essence qua existing by virtue of own characteristic" that is said to be [what is meant by] the even nominal lack of essence.

Likewise, the Svātāntrikas do not say that there is no essence because [things] do not inherently exist (rang bzhin gyis grub pa med pa). They say that there is no essence because there is no true essence (bden pa'i rang bzhin med pa). That is why [we find] in the Svātāntrika scriptures the expression ultimately natureless (don dam par ngo bo nyid med pa) repeated over and over again, conjoining [the qualifying predicate ultimately to the more general expression natureless], so that if it is not actually conjoined in this way on one or two occasions, one should intuit by context that it is necessary to conjoin
the predicate *ultimately* to the expression *natureless*, [for a Svātantrika does not accept "naturelessness," "essencelessness," and so on nominally, that is, without qualification, but only ultimately].

[On "Withstanding Logical Analysis"]

It is necessary to understand the various kinds of distinctions in the delineation of what counts or does not count as "logical analysis" [in the expression "able to withstand logical analysis"]. In the Prāsaṅgika system the analysis of how the basis onto which the name *pot* is posited exists in regard to (stengs na) the object [the pot itself] is [considered] to be reasoning that contemplates [or analyzes] the essence, [that is, the ultimate nature of a thing]. If, when one searches [for the object] in this way, one finds that there is something that exists in this way, [that is, if the pot is found,] then it must be said to withstand logical analysis. In the Svātantrika system this [criterion] alone does not make something count [as an entity] that can withstand logical analysis. Hence, [according to the Svātantrikas] the objective referent (don) of [a word] such as *pot* is posited after it has been determined (bcos) by reasoning as existing in this way or that. They believe, as [can be seen] from the lucid scriptures I have cited, that pots and so forth substantially exist (rdzas su grub pa). Except for those who accept an "ineffable self" (brjod du med pa'i bdag, [that is, the Vātsiputriyas],) there are no philosophers, Buddhist or non-Buddhist, who accept that a pot substantially exists and then go on to advocate that the basis onto which the name *pot* is posited, from its own side, is found to be neither of the same nor of different substances from the parts that make up the pot, when it is analyzed in this way.

Even though the realists [posit] their own system's brand of essencelessness in regard to nonaffirming negations (med dgag) such as "non-pot," "non-entity," and so forth, [they claim] that the essencelessness which the Mādhyamikas exclusively posit as essencelessness is not established by a valid cognition even in the case of such entities as "non-pot" and so on. Hence, [for the realist] that essencelessness is not established by a valid cognition [and therefore is not true] of any basis, [that is, of any phenomenon].

In reply to this, [one opponent has this to say].

[Opponent:] To claim that all phenomena are things that are merely labeled by conceptual consciousness is a nihilistic view and extremely heavy sinful karma. Because even the ultimate would be merely posited by the mind, it would become a mental creation and hence could not be the essence [of phenomena]. Even interdependent [arising] would be a conceptual label. If you accept this then it follows that it is a mental proliferation (spros pa), and if you accept *this*, then it follows, absurdly, that it is not free from mental proliferation. Therefore, because that which is born from causes and conditions is not a mental label, it is the portion [of the causal process] that appears to truly exist, the [notion of] an effect that depends on a previous [entity] and the notion of a cause that depends on a future [entity] that are the mental labels.

[Reply:] Well then, how do you interpret this passage?

Whatever arises interdependently
That is empty
And is labeled in dependence [on other entities].

[Opponent:] This explains that all phenomena are labeled, one depending on the other. It is not claiming that phenomena are mental labels.

On top of this we claim that there is reasoning that refutes [three types of labeling]: (1) that labeled by a philosophical misapprehension (kun brtags kyi 'dzin pas btags pa), (2) that labeled by an innate misapprehension (lhan skyes kyi 'dzin pas btags pa), and (3) that labeled by a yogi's mind (rnal 'byor pa'i blo btags pa). The first two kinds of reasoning, in reliance on an object of refutation, posit emptiness as the ultimate, whereas the third kind of reasoning establishes even emptiness as a false thing (rdzun pa) based on reasoning such as [that found in the MMK verse that goes]: "We're there anything at all that is not empty," for emptiness exists nominally while being truthless, like, for example, a dream. Therefore, it is with the intention [of explaining] reality, [that is, emptiness,] to be a conventional [phenomenon] that the Yukiṣṭākāvyārtti says: "It is the ultimate truth from the viewpoint of worldly terminology ('jig rten pa'i thag sna)." And again, that same [text] also says: "Is nirvāṇa also a conventional truth? It is so." And again, the sūtras say that nirvāṇa is like a dream, is like an illusion. Thus, in the process of refuting that emptiness does not truly exist, that it is like a dream, it is established as being a false [thing], and hence as being conventional.

Even though [this opponent] claims this, he still maintains that all phenomena are divided into two truths, that a conventional [entity] is defined as the object found by a mind that does not abide in reality (gnas lugs), and that an ultimate truth is defined as the object found by a mind that does abide in reality. [He says that] the word *truth* has two meanings: (1) the "nonerogeneous" (mi sla ba) is called true and (2) what "exists in reality" (gnas tshul la grub pa) is called true. From the point of view of the first [meaning, he continues,] to call emptiness "the truth" has nothing to do with the object of refutation. To apprehend the object of refutation it is the latter significance that must be [invoked]. Whatever is conventional is a conventional truth and even in the Prāsaṅgika system the conventional truth is, when divided, of two kinds, right (yang dag) and wrong (log pa).

[Reply:] This type of blithering has appeared in an extensive way, but when this huge pot filled with the vile vomit is poured out before an honorable
man, what special purpose can it have except to, in effect, make him vomit? Therefore, let me say just this much in regard to such a teeming mass of contradictions.

All of those who are advocates of this view do nothing more than undermine their own positions, as we shall see. It follows, absurdly, [from their views] that if something is an ultimate truth, it must be posited to be something that is found by a mind that abides in reality because "that which is found by such a mind" is [according to them] the definition of that [ultimate truth]. If you accept this, then it follows, absurdly, that [an ultimate truth] is something that is created (bcos ma) because [according to your own definition an ultimate truth] is something posited by the mind.636 Three cycles!

It follows, absurdly, that if something is a conventional truth then it is to be posited as something found by a mind that does not abide in reality because "that which is found by such a mind" is the definition of that [conventional truth]. If you accept this, then it follows, absurdly, that the inner and outer forms of dependent arising637 are established by way of their being mentally posited because they are conventional truths. Again, three cycles!

We have already mentioned the way in which reality is considered to be a conceptual label (riog brtags). We do not say that it is a conceptual label because it is labeled by conceptual consciousness as being an object that it is not.638

As regards it being "created," which contradicts its being the essence [of things], [here created does not mean simply "created by the mind," as you would have it, but instead, if something is "created" in this sense.] it must be created by a mind to which things appear as if they really existed even though they do not really exist. It is in this sense of the word created [that the MMK] says: "Essences are not created."639 In this regard, the Avatāra-bhāṣya says:

It is necessary to understand this in accordance with the explanation of how the three natures are to be posited, and this I will do later. When you say that all phenomena are labeled in dependence [on other phenomena], are they labeled by existing labeling entities or by nonexistent ones? If they are labeled by nonexistent ones, it would follow, absurdly, that knowledge without a knower and an effect without a cause would also be possible. If the labeling entity exists, then tell me what kind of labeling entity there could be besides the mind?

[Opponent:] It is the person that labels.

[Reply:] When a person sees something with his eye consciousness we say [for convenience] that the person has seen [something]. Likewise, when the person’s mind labels [something], we say [for convenience] that the person has labeled it. Aside from this, tell me what can it mean for a person to label something? If you admit that the labeling entity is the mind, then tell me how you can avoid ac-
cepting the contradiction that all phenomena are mental labels and that they are not labeled by the mind.640

Again, what are you calling mental proliferation (spros pa)? Does it refer to the appearance of duality, [which does exist], or does it refer to the “extreme of mental proliferation,” [which does not exist]? In the former case, one would have to accept that dependent arising was not free from the appearance of duality, for otherwise, [as everything that exists is interdependent, were the interdependent to be free of appearing dualistically] then the appearance of duality could not exist, [for nothing would be left that could appear dualistically]. In the latter case, [that is, if it refers to the extreme of mental proliferation or inherent existence,] then it follows that it could not possibly be a conceptual label [as you claim earlier], for (1) were it a conceptual label [it would exist, hence] contradicting its being the extreme of mental proliferation, [which does not exist,] and (2) it would follow that if something exists then it would have to be devoid of the extreme of mental proliferation, [which weakens the concept to the point of triviality]. You accept reason (1), and reason (2) follows because both the extremes of eternalism and nihilism are nonexistent.

[Another opponent] replies to this by saying that mental proliferation refers both to speech and to conceptual thought, so that conceptual thought is what mentally proliferates, and speech is what is mentally proliferated by conceptual thought.

[Reply:] Only those not in their right minds would claim that speech641 is a conceptual label and then claim that the view that other entities (dngos po) like form and so on are posited by conceptual thought is a nihilistic view. To claim that speech and conceptual thought are mental proliferations and [also] to claim that what arises interdependently is free from mental proliferation is utterly contradictory.

It follows, absurdly, that emptiness is a conventional truth because it is a conventional [phenomenon]. You actually accept both the reason, [that it is a conventional phenomenon,] and the pervasion, [that if something is a conventional phenomenon then it must be a conventional truth]. If you accept the premise, [that it is a conventional truth], then it follows that it is an object found by a mind that does not abide in reality because that is what you accept [as the definition of a conventional truth]. Again, you quite literally accept both the reason and the pervasion. If you accept [the premise, then you have accepted a contradiction, for] it follows [from your other assertions] that it is an object found by a mind that abides in reality, as it is an ultimate. You have accepted the three cycles!

Again, it follows, absurdly, that emptiness is an erroneous phenomenon (mi sla ba'i chos) because it is a phenomenon and it is not nonerroneous. If you claim that the pervasion does not hold, [that is, that just because something is a phenomenon and not nonerroneous it need not be an erroneous phe-
nomenon,] then desist [from asserting] the pervasion that if something [191] nominally exists and does not truly exist, then it must exist as a falsity. If you accept [the premise that emptiness is erroneous,] then you are in direct contradiction [to your own beliefs]. The first part of the reason, [that is, that emptiness is a phenomenon, is something that you yourself consider] to be correct. So desist [from the view] that if something is nonerroneous, it is false. [If you claim that] this pervasion does not hold, a sūtra says: "Monks, all composite entities (dus byas) possess false and erroneous qualities. They are said to be false." Also, the Prajñāpāramitā says:

The Lord has said that any phenomenon that is deceiving is false.

All composite entities are deceiving phenomena and hence false. The Praśannapadā says: "Because they possess erroneous qualities (bslu ba'i chos can) they are false." So [by holding this position] you are in contradiction to all of these teachings that extensively [expound that what is erroneous is false].

You must have a falling memory if on the one hand you claim that reality is conventional and then [go on to say] that the āryan equipose that understands emptiness has no appearances [of conventional entities].

Moreover, when you say "that which is labeled by a yogi’s mind," are you referring to reality’s being labeled by the yogi’s mind or are you referring to reality’s being truly labeled by the yogi’s mind? In the former case you are in direct contradiction to your claim that reality is not labeled by the mind. In the latter case let us search for some other humpback creature beside your venerable self who would dare to claim that āryan gnosis labels reality as truly existing. And so I say:

The sophistry of one who refutes Candra
Has spoiled the vast teachings of the Conqueror.
It is the banner of demons, the messenger of evil spirits,
Which deteriorate the vastness of one’s faith.

The profound doctrine is like a diamond [piercing] his heart
Which, though claiming that conventional entities are labels, he cannot resist.
This thief of the doctrine spreads his demonic words in all directions.
Bellowing that reality [too] is conventional.

His mind is constantly drunk with the evil fluids of jealousy.
He strives eternally to recite [the mantras] that harm the holy.
Fooled by the devils, mistaken are the beings
Who consider such explanations to be the scriptural sources of a virtuous friend.

These are stanzas of intermission.

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4.2.3.1.3.5. An Explanation of the Implications of This

4.2.3.1.3.5.1. An Explanation of (1) the Two Kinds of Selflessness to Be Refuted and (2) the Selflessness That Is the Refutation

4.2.3.1.3.5.1.1. A Brief Mention of the Tenets Advocated by Other Systems

4.2.3.1.3.5.1.1.1. Identifying the Self That Is the Perceived Object (dmigs yul) of the Innate View of a Self As Accepted by Both Buddhists and Others

No matter which of the four Buddhist systems of tenets [one considers], they all definitely accept that the "person," "self," or "ego," who is the perceived object of the innate apprehension of an ego (ngar 'dzin lhan skye), exists nominally; for otherwise, all of the following expressions would be unfounded: "I experience the ripening of the karma I create," "I have come from a previous birth to this one and will go from this one to a future one," "This person is superior, that person inferior," and also expressions like "I see form," "I hear [193] sound," and so forth. This is why the Avatārabhāṣya also says:

"Even though a creator of karma (las byed pa po) is not perceived (ma dmigs), still, there does exist karma and there does exist its ripening." From this passage one should understand that it is an essentially existing (rang bzhin du gyur po) creator that is refuted. Do not think that what is labeled in dependence on nominal parts has been refuted. As [the sūtras] say, "the person who has interdependently [arisen from] ignorance and actualized (mngon par 'du byed po) the merit (bsod rnam) that ought to be actualized." This point has been taught in extenso.

Therefore, even though it is necessary to nominally accept a person, a self, a being (skyes bu) who is the baris of karma and its result, the self of the person is not accepted even nominally, for the existence of the selves of the person and of phenomena are to be refuted as existing things. If by virtue of nominally accepting a person and a self it were necessary to nominally accept the "self of the person," then it would follow that by virtue of nominally accepting existence and the ultimate it would be necessary to accept ultimate existence, the logic [in both cases] being in all ways similar.

[Question:] Well then, what is it that [the different schools] posit as exemplifications (mthun gnzhis) of the self that is the perceived object of the innate view of the self?
In this way even we actually call consciousness "the self."  
Consciousness is also the self because it is what takes rebirth.  
It is labeled onto both: the body and the collection of sense organs.  

In explaining this he gives his proof based on (1) the two passages cited earlier, such as "one is one's own protector" and so on, and (2) the reasoning that the self takes up [new] aggregates [in rebirth] and consciousness also takes rebirth. Because the Acārya [Bhavya] does not accept the foundation consciousness (kun gzhi), he has no other choice but to accept the mental consciousness as the consciousness that takes up [a new] body.  
The majority of Cittamātrins believe that the exemplification of the self that is the perceived object of the innate view of the self is that very foundation consciousness. The special perceived object of the afflicted mind (nyon yid) and its fourfold retnue, the view of self, attachment to the self, and so forth, is explained to be the foundation consciousness, whereas the aspect (rnam pa) is explained to be the aspect that thinks the foundation consciousness itself to be the self. [One of their] stūras says:

The consciousness that takes rebirth is deep and subtle.
All the seeds fall on it as if on a falling stream.
The childish have not understood this.
They say "it would not be right for the self to be consciousness (rgog pa)."

In this way we see that the majority of Buddhist realists accept the self or person to be a labeled entity. But the idea that the exemplification of the self or person is the five aggregates or consciousness and the belief that consciousness and so forth are substantial entities are not contradictory in their system.  
This is because, though they accept that the set (rang ldog) "person" is a labeled entity, they do not accept that if something is a person, [that is, a member of the set,] it must be a labeled entity. For example, though a pot is an exemplification of gross materiality, gross materiality is not a substance whereas the pot is a substance. The belief is similar [in both cases]. Otherwise, those who advocate that the composite entities that are neither [form nor consciousness] (ldan min 'du byed) are labeled entities, [namely, the Sautrantikas,] would be forced into accepting that all composite entities are labeled entities when they explain that arising, abiding, and destruction are these composite entities that are neither [form nor consciousness].

4.2.3.1.3.5.1.1.2. What Faults the Glorious Candra  
 Finds in These [Views]

If, having accepted the aggregates as inherently existing, one accepts them to be of the same nature as the self, it would be necessary to accept that the self and the aggregates are one and not at all different. Being the same nature,
however, if they appear to the mind as though they were different, [it would mean] that they existed in one way while appearing in another. Hence, they would be utterly false [things], which undermines their inherent existence. One should understand that this reasoning forces one to accept that whatever phenomenon is accepted as being inherently one in nature must also be accepted as being indivisibly one. Hence, if the self and the aggregates were one, it would follow, absurdly, that just as according to their own views there exist five separate substances, the aggregates, simultaneously in the continuum of one person, they must also find it correct to accept that the self too has five separate substances within it. This is the fault of accepting the five aggregates to be the exemplification of the self.

Whether one accepts the aggregates, only the mental consciousness, or only the foundation consciousness to be the exemplification of the self, it would follow, absurdly, that the innate view of the self is not a mistaken mind (log pa’i blo), for the self [according to all of these realists] exists substantially just as it is apprehended by the mind.662

What is more, should it be the case that whatever is posited as an exemplification of the self or person also exists substantially, then it would contradict such sūtra passages as these: “Oh monks, these five are mere names (ming tsam), mere terms (sha snyad tsam), mere labels (btags pa tsam), and these five are the past, the future, space, nirvāṇa, and the person.”663 And also: “Just as we call something a chariot in dependence on the collection of parts, likewise we call someone a being in dependence on the aggregates.”664

Moreover, because according to you the five aggregates are annihilated at the time of nirvāṇa without remainder, the self would definitely be annihilated. That in turn would be an extreme nihilistic view, for even you admit that having an eternalistic or a nihilistic attitude in regard to that basis that, when perceived, is apprehended as the self by “the view in regard to the perishable [group of aggregates]” (’jig lla) is a view that apprehends an extreme.

Again, if, as you believe, the former and latter moments of the aggregates or consciousness even before one obtains nirvāṇa are inherently different, it would follow, absurdly, that the former and latter moments of the self too would be inherently different. If you accept this, then, as they would be mutually different in the sense of being independent (lto med), they would be different objects that are completely unrelated. Were that so, [the Lord Buddha] would not have said such things as “at that time, at that period of time, I was the King Manghāta.”665 It would also follow, absurdly, that the fruits of actions accumulated by one person would be experienced by another and so forth.

It may occur to you [to say] that “although former and latter moments are inherently different, there is no problem since they belong to one continuity.” Were it not contradictory [to say that] two different unrelated objects are in the same continuum, then it would follow, absurdly, that everything would be in the same continuum as everything else. Hence, to accept on the one hand that the former and latter moments of the aggregates are inherently different objects and on the other to believe that the person is the continuity of the aggregates is like believing that a cloak of tortoise skin666 can protect one from the cold. Through this example [one can see] that [the former claim] is completely pointless [as a way of extricating oneself from the previously mentioned predicament].

Again, [how do you reply] when we ask, “does the self and the world (’jig rien) have an end or not?”667 If by the word world one understands the aggregates, then, because it is your own belief that the aggregates arise and are destroyed, it would have been necessary [for the Lord Buddha] to have declared the world to be impermanent; and because according to you there are no aggregates after nirvāṇa, the world would have an end. It would also imply that he should have also declared that the Tathāgata does not exist after death, thereby undermining his having set forth the fourteen undeclared views (lung ma bstan gyi lla ba).668

Moreover, according to you when a yogi directly perceives all phenomena to have no self, it would follow that he perceives selflessness by perceiving entities, either the aggregates or consciousness, as nonexistent, as he accepts that the self and these [aggregates or consciousness] are undifferentiated. The Avatāra gives an explanation [of all of these faults] from [the verse] that goes:

If the aggregates are the self,
As they are many, the self too would be many.

up to [the verse that goes]:

For you, when a yogi perceives selflessness
He must definitely perceive entities to be nonexistent.669

[Opponent:] Well, if it were necessary that in the systems which accept the aggregates or consciousness to be exemplifications of the self a yogi’s perception of selflessness amounts to his direct perception of the aggregates or consciousness to be nonexistent, then it would follow that in your system, where the “I” that is a mere label based on the aggregates is accepted to be the exemplification of the self, when a yogi directly perceives selflessness he would also have to perceive the “I” that is labeled in dependence [on the aggregates] to be nonexistent. The reasoning [in both cases] is similar.

[Reply:] This is not a problem [for us]. The opponents’ beliefs that the aggregates and consciousness are the exemplifications of the self are posited from the viewpoint not of a self or person that exists by virtue of [being labeled] by a mere nominal term, but from the viewpoint of [a self that is found] when the referent object labeled by that term is searched for by reasoning. In this way we see that it is necessary that the aggregates or consciousness be a self that is established by virtue of its own nature. However, when
yogis directly perceive selflessness it is impossible that they come to an understanding of a self that in the least bit exists by virtue of its own nature. Hence, they would incur the fault of having to perceive the aggregates and consciousness to be nonexistent. How is it that we, who accept that the personality is posited only nominally, without searching for it with reasoning, incur the fault that when yogis perceive the nonexistence of a self that exists by virtue of its own nature they would also have to perceive the nonexistence of a self that is posited only nominally? Nonetheless, for those who lack the power of intellect that analyzes the subtle logic of this system, such points as these will be extremely difficult to understand.

Again, if the aggregates or consciousness alone is the self, there would be no difference between what is taken up [in rebirth, that is, the aggregates] and what takes them up, [that is, the self]. Hence it would follow, absurdly, that subject and object would be one. Although such faults are prevalent, to write of all of them here would make my text too wordy, and so I will not. They are presented in detail in the Mālā [Madhyamakakārikās], the [Madhyamaka] Avatāra, and their commentaries.

[Opponent:] Well, if the aggregates are not the perceived object (dmigs po) of the view of the self, then how do you interpret such sūtra passages as this: “Those who reflect on the self taught by the Blessed One when he spoke of bhikṣus, śramaṇas, and of brahmāns are reflecting merely on the five aggregates.”

[Reply:] This is the meaning: the word only is refuting that there is a perceived object of the self which is a different entity from the aggregates. It does not teach that the aggregates are the self. Were that so it would contradict another sūtra that extensively refutes the fact that the aggregates are the self when it says “form is not the self, feeling is not the self,” and so forth.

Hence, in the former sūtra refutes [the notion of] a self that is a different entity from the aggregates, whereas the latter refutes [the position] that the aggregates are the self. The words “they are perceiving only those five aggregates which are taken up” enables us to posit, in a strictly nominal way, a self that is labeled with respect to those five aggregates, and that self is the perceived object of the innate view of the self. This is the amazing [quality] of this system of the glorious Candra, namely, that having perfectly arranged all of the scriptural sources of the sūtras, he has set this forth after having clearly elucidated by means of unerring scripture and reasoning the true intention of the sūtras that, though they may attempt [to make it clear], does not come out clearly [in the treatises] of the great forders of the way of our own superior and inferior divisions of the great vehicle.

[Opponent:] It follows then that the innate view of the self of the person is not a view in regard to the perishable group, for the words perishable group refer to the aggregates and they [according to you] are not the perceived object of the innate view of the self.

[Reply:] There is no problem here, for “the view in regard to the perishable group” refers to viewing a self that is labeled with respect to the perishable group and not to a view that actually takes them as its perceived object.

Another person has claimed that Candrakīrti explains that if the innate apprehension of the self takes the aggregates to be the self, the aggregates must be the self. This, however, is completely wrong, for though the aggregates are not the self, because they are apprehended to be the self, it is necessary to posit the innate apprehension of the self to be erroneous (khrul pa). Otherwise, since it would be necessary [to maintain that things] existed as they were apprehended by that [mind, that is, by the innate view of a self,] it would not be erroneous. Were this so, it would mean that all of the preceding expositions of contradictions, such as the absurdity that just as the aggregates are many] the self too would have to be many in number, would be meaningless. This is a great fault, and, like firing the arrow of refutation without noticing where the target has been standing, it is bound to take [a path] that is far afield [of one’s intended target].

As was explained, all of the superior and inferior Buddhist schools accept in common a merely nominal self that is the basis of karma and its effects. There is also no disagreement among the four philosophical schools as regards the belief that although the [merely nominal self] is not the direct object (dzig stangs kyi yul) of the innate apprehension of the “I,” it is nonetheless the self that is the perceived object. However, they do disagree as to what they take to be the exemplification of this self that is the basis of karma and its effects and the perceived object of the innate apprehension of the “I.” Hence, Candrakīrti refutes the belief that the five aggregates or consciousness is its exemplification. In this way [we can see] that both our own and others’ [schools] accept the mere nominal existence of a self that is the perceived object of the innate view of a self, but Candrakīrti advocates that to take the five aggregates or consciousness as the exemplification of that self is to open oneself to the faults explained earlier. He never claims even once that if the aggregates are taken to be the self by the innate view of a self, that the aggregates must be the self. Hence, those who urge reductio arguments when [the premises] are not even accepted [by the other party] tire themselves out, the only effect [of their efforts] being mere self-inflicted suffering.

Those who claim that the innate apprehension of the “I” takes the five aggregates or consciousness to be the self have never looked within themselves or examined [this claim] in any detail. Hence, they are undermining the evidence of their own direct experience [by making such a claim]. Whether child or sage, we all have spontaneous thoughts such as “my body,” and “my mind.” But the fact that the thoughts “this body is me,” “this mind is me” do not arise even once of their own accord is something that is proven by experience.
Those who claim Bhavya to be correct in taking mental consciousness to be the exemplification of the person that is the basis of karmas and its effects should think about, absurdly, that when one is born in the state of ‘nondiscrimination’ (‘du shes med pa’) and when one is abiding equipoised in the cessation of consciousness (‘gog pa la snyom par zhus pa’) there is nothing that can be posited as an exemplification of the self.”675 Though you may [attempt to escape this predicament] by claiming that the mere continuum of consciousness is apprehended as being the exemplification of the person, on those two occasions mentioned earlier the continuum of consciousness was itself annihilated and so there would be no way [for you] to avoid the absurd conclusion that the continuity of the person is also annihilated.

[Opponent:] At that time it is the continuity of the form aggregate alone that is the exemplification of the person.

[Reply:] This analysis of yours in which you claim that a mere physical continuum devoid of all mind and mental events is a sentient being is even more surprising than the claims of the Materialists (Tshu rol mdzes pa pa).

But suppose that the consciousness or the continuity of the consciousness is the exemplification of the person. When the śrāvakārya who has been born into the realm of nothingness676 actualizes the transcendent path (‘das lam’), it would follow, absurdly, that he who is in equipoise as a person who belongs to the state of nothingness annihilated, for the transcendent path itself cannot be the exemplification of that person, and at that time there are no other phena, whether form, mind, or mental events, at all present.

[Opponent:] At that time there is the foundation consciousness, and this is the exemplification of the self.

[Reply:] Were that so, it would utterly undermine what is advocated both by the Abhidharma and by the system of Bhāvaviveka, for no one with any intelligence would claim that in either of these two systems there is a belief in the foundation consciousness.

4.2.3.1.3.5.1.1.3. How the Other Buddhist Schools Posit the Self That Is the Direct Object of the Two Views of the Self [the Person and Phenomena] and How That Self, Which Is Something to Be Refuted, Is Posited as Nonexistent

The Lord, in the sūtras of the Hinayāna, has said that by merely accustoming oneself to, [that is, by meditating on,] the direct perception of the sixteen aspects of the four truths, one attains nirvāṇa. Many times did he teach the selflessness of the person, which is the refutation of the self-sufficient (rang skya thub pa’i), substantial (rddas) existence of the person. All Buddhists, from the Vaibhāṣikas up to and including the Svātāntika Madhyamikas, believe that even the Mahāyāna sūtra pājaka does not teach a form of selflessness of the person over and above this one. Hence, there are no inconsistencies between how these different schools posit the selflessness of the person.

The Acārya Haribhadra says, for example: “In this regard, total knowledge (thams cad shes pa) [as follows]: [it is the perception] of qualities, such as that of impermanence and so on, within such phenomena as form and so forth, as the result of which one comes to abandon delusions as to the self.”679 The Madhyamakāloka says: “Because they come to understand selflessness by means of their understanding of the nature of arising and destruction, from the point of view of the śrāvakas, it is said with the intention of establishing the person’s lack of self.”680 The Abhidharmasamuccaya says: “What is the characteristic of selflessness? It is the aggregates’, elements’ (khaṃs) and spheres’ (skyed mcheds) lack of those characteristics labeled as a self by those who advocate the self.”681 The Pramāṇavyārtti says:

Based on the four noble truths
[We identify] sixteen incorrect [attitudes],
Such as attractiveness, “I,” “mine,” and so forth.
When [these are] imputed, we desire.
Those [four noble truths] are the objects which oppose that [desire].
By possessing an understanding of the aspects of those [four truths] And by correctly perceiving them through proper meditation
Desire and what follows it are destroyed.682

The Tarkajñāla says: [This citation is missing in the text]. Many explanations are in accordance with these [just cited], but were I to quote them here in their complete form [as they appear in] the original sources, it would be excessive, so I will refrain from doing so.

Hence, [we can see that] no matter what Buddhist system we consider, whether Mahāyāna or Hinayāna, from the Vaibhāṣikas up to the Svātāntika Madhyamikas, they all believe that the very apprehension of the person as being a self-sufficient substance is the way that the innate apprehension of the self of the person operates. As to the way it apprehends [a self-sufficient and substantial self], it takes the self that is the basis of the apprehension “I” to be like the master (ri po) of the aggregates, and it takes the aggregates to be like its servants (khol po), for through such expressions as “my body,” “my feelings,” and so on, [we can see that] we take the aggregates to be under the influence of the self. Hence, just like the master and the servant, the self appears to be independent, that is, of a nature that is not concordant with the aggregates. [The self’s] appearing to exist in such a way is the apprehension of a substantially existing self.
Now suppose one analyzes the self that is the perceived object of the thought "I," asking oneself how it exists; that is, whether it is permanent or impermanent, one or many, and so on. Based on faulty reasoning, to apprehend [that self] as a permanent entity neither born nor destroyed and to apprehend it to be a partless unitary and so forth is accepted as being the apprehension of a permanent, unitary, and independent (riṭag cing rạng dbang can) self that is a philosophical (kun brtags) mode of the apprehension of a self. However, there is no Buddhist philosopher whatsoever who believes that the mode of operation of the innate apprehension of the self consists of apprehending [the self] to be permanent, unitary, and independent as [described earlier].

Nonetheless, if [the self] existed as it is grasped by the innate apprehension of a self, it would have to be such a permanent, unitary, and independent [entity]. Hence, if one negates the existence of such a permanent, unitary, and independent [self], one also negates the existence of a person who is a self-sufficient, substantial [entity]. The very negation of the person's being a self-sufficient substantial entity whose nature is not concordant with the aggregate is the meaning of the selflessness of the person, and the object to be realized. In this regard [the lower schools] do not differ. They believe that by realizing this alone one realizes the actual full-blown selflessness of the person. They also believe that by the power of customizing oneself to, [that is, meditating on] the direct perception of that [fact] alone, one is able to dispel all of the afflictions. These beliefs are tenets held in common by Vaibhāṣikas, Sautrāntikas, Yogācāras, and Śvātāntika Madhyamikas.

[Opponent:] All of the minds that directly realize the impermanence and so forth, that is, the sixteen aspects of the four truths, are minds that directly realize the selflessness of the person.

[Reply:] This [shows] a great lack of analysis. Were this so, it would follow, absurdly, that the mind which perceives the impermanent aspect of the truth of suffering is a mind which perceives the aspect of selflessness. If you accept that then it would follow, absurdly, that there is no difference between how the realization of subtle momentariness apprehends things and how the realization that the person is not a self-sufficient substance operates. If you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that there is no difference between the aspect of impermanence and the aspect of selflessness.

The Pramāṇavārttikā states:

By perceiving emptiness one will be liberated.

All the remaining meditations are for its benefit.

The mind that realizes the aspect of selflessness arises based on the minds that realize the aspect of suffering and the aspect of impermanence. By customizing oneself to the former, one will liberate oneself from cyclic existence. This method of explaining [this passage] is something that [you the opponent] have obviously never comprehended.

Moreover, in the Viśuddhiṣṭha and Sautrāntika systems the Mahāyāna is not accepted as being the word of the Buddha; and they do not accept that the Mahāyāna pīṭaka teaches the selflessness of phenomena. Hence, they do not set forth the selflessness of phenomena nor that by the power of meditating on that [principle] the obscurations to omniscience (śhes bya'i sgrib pa) are abandoned. Therefore, no scripture that teaches the tenets of the two śrāvakas schools, be it the Pramāṇavārttikā, the Kośa, or any other deal with such doctrines when they are explaining the tenets of the two śrāvakas schools.

In the system of the two śrāvakas schools the person of definite śrāvaka type (nyan thos rigs nges) practices the selflessness of the person described earlier, conjointed with a method of accumulating stores of merit that are [comparatively] limited in their extent. At the very least it takes them three lifetimes to obtain śrāvaka enlightenment. The pratyekabuddha of the type that is like a rhinoceros, and who is definitely of this type, practices by conjointing his realization of selflessness with a method of accumulating the stores of merit that are intermediate [in their extent]. He obtains pratyekabuddha enlightenment within 100 eons. Although both of these types of arhants abandon the afflictions completely, they do not abandon the nonafflicted latent potentialities of unknowing, extreme forms of unclarity that block the direct perception of all phenomena.

A person of the Mahāyāna lineage generates the mind of the Mahāyāna, that is, bodhicitta, and meditates on that very selflessness of the person, conjointing it with a skill in method that in a very extensive way, for three countess eons, accumulates merit. They obtain the state of complete buddhahood by abandoning even the nonafflicted seeds of unknowing in their entirety. This is what [the śrāvaka schools] accept. They claim that all but [the last life's worth] of the accumulation of the stores of merit during the three countess eons [that it takes for someone to attain buddhahood] is [accomplished] only while one abides in the "portion concordant to emancipation" (hart pa cha mithun). They also claim that one ascends [all of the stages] from the "heat [stage]" (drod) of the path of preparation (sbyor lam) up to the gnosia that cognizes the exhaustion and nonarising of all [obscurations], that is, complete buddhahood, within one meditative sitting (rten gcig) by relying upon the mind of the fourth absorption.

The Kośa explains:

The Teacher and rhinoceroses attain enlightenment,
Doing it all in a single life [based on] the final absorption, [that is, the fourth].
Before that, they are on the path concordant to emancipation.
What is more, they say that of the twelve deeds\textsuperscript{691} everything from the "taming of the Māras at dusk" on down were [performed] by an ordinary being.\textsuperscript{692} From the actualization of complete buddhahood up to showing the nirvāṇa [he is considered being abiding in the state of nirvāṇa with remainder], and after leaving behind the composite that is his body, he is said to actualize nirvāṇa without remainder, which, like the extinguishing of a lamp, is the annihilation of the continuity of both physical and mental [aggregates].

Both śrāvaka schools have in common that they do not at all accept the hypothesis of the "body of complete enjoyment" (longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku). The Vaibhāṣikas claim that the form body, which is the supreme emanation body (mchog gi yi sprul sku), is the continuity of the [form] aggregate of an ordinary being and therefore is a form of true suffering. Hence, they claim that it is not a perfected buddha. The Sautrāntikas, however, attack this position. Although there is much to be said about such topics, that is, as to whether [the form body] is accepted as being a real perfected buddha and so forth, as it would break the flow of my presentation, I will not write [anything further on this point].

Both the Cittamātrins and the Svātantrika Mādhyamikas accept that the *piṭaka* of the Hinayāna does not in the least teach the selflessness of phenomena. They do not differ on this point. Also, I have explained in an extensive manner above what Mahāyāna sūtras these two schools follow and how they posit the selflessness of phenomena.

4.2.3.1.3.5.1.1.4. How the Glorious Candra’s Critique Is to Be Expounded

I have already explained\textsuperscript{693} [Candrikirti’s] critique of the position that the way the innate apprehension of a self of persons apprehends its object contains the apprehension of the person as a self-sufficient, substantial entity, and the meaning of the [verse in the Madhyamakāvatāra that goes:] Your yogi could not understand the nature (de nyid) of form and so on With his insight into selflessness. From his perceiving form, attachments and so forth arise Because he does not realize its nature.\textsuperscript{694}

4.2.3.1.3.5.1.2. The Exposition of the System of the Prāśāṅgikas as a Distinct [System in Its Own Right]\textsuperscript{695}

As was explained, the Yogācāras and the Svātantrika Mādhyamikas accept (1) that when they set forth [the doctrine of] selflessness two kinds of selves are to be refuted, the self of the person and that of phenomena, and (2) that there are two ways that these appear. These [two selves] they believe to be of quite different types. The glorious Candra, however, states that, although selflessness is divided into parts depending upon the basis, [that is, either person or phenomena], the self that is refuted [in each case] is not of different types. The Avadīra says:

This selflessness is divided into the two kinds, of the person and that of phenomena.

It was taught to be of two kinds so as to liberate beings.\textsuperscript{696}

Hence, to refute inherent existence, which is the object to be refuted, with regard to the basis that is the person is the selflessness of the person, and to refute it with regard to the basis that is phenomena is [accepted as being the meaning of] the selflessness of phenomena. The Catuḥśātaṅkaśāstra says:

Now the "self" refers to an essence which can be characterized as the fact that things do not depend on other [things]. The nonexistence of such an essence is selflessness. It is divided into [the selflessness] of the person and that of phenomena, and hence it should be understood to be twofold: "the selflessness of the person" and "the selflessness of phenomena."\textsuperscript{697}

The Acārya Buddhāpāliśa also believes that the self which is to be refuted is strictly "existence by virtue of own nature." In the section that explains how the Hinayāna piṭaka teaches the selflessness of phenomena, the commentary Buddhāpāliśa says:

The Lord taught as examples of the selflessness of composite things [the following:] an illusion, an echo, a reflection, a mirage, a dream, a ball of foam, a bubble, and the plantain tree. But within these is not to be found either reality (de bzhin nyid) or the nonerroneous reality (ma nor ba de bzhin nyid). "For these are proliferations (spros pa), they are false!" So did he also say. When we say "the selflessness of all phenomena," the word selflessness refers to "natureless," for the word self refers to "nature."\textsuperscript{698}

Hence, [we see] that there is not the slightest difference between what these two Acāryas, [that is, Candrikirti and Buddhāpāliśa,] accept.

In general the Lord actually taught the selflessness of phenomena to two kinds of disciples. There are those who for the time being are not fit vessels for the actual teachings of the subtle emptiness of phenomena because their mental continua are not completely ripe. Still, they are even then fit vessels for receiving the actual teachings of a somewhat rougher form of the selflessness of phenomena. The continua [of other disciples], however, are completely
ripe. Hence, they are persons who from the very outset are fit vessels to be actually taught the subtle selflessness of phenomena.

To the first type [the Lord] taught, in the sūtras of the final wheel, [that is, in the Yogācāra sūtras,] a selflessness of phenomena that is the mere refutation of the fact that subject and object are different substances, [that is, the doctrine of nonduality]. To the second he taught, in such [scriptures] as the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras, a selflessness of phenomena that is a refutation of the inherent existence of all phenomena. Though he taught these two systems, meditation only on the rough form of selflessness without meditation on the subtle one cannot bring about the most minimal elimination of the seeds of the obscurations to knowledge.

Likewise, in the pījaka of the Hinayāna, [the Lord] taught those who are of the śrāvaka type (nyan thos rigs can) but whose continuia are not completely ripe; that is, [he taught] disciples who were for the time being not fit vessels for the actual teachings of the selflessness of the person. He taught them a form of the selflessness of the person that implies only the negation of the person’s being a self-sufficient substantial entity. This he did by teaching them principally the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths such as impermanence and so on. To those who are of the śrāvaka type whose mental continuia are ripe he taught a selflessness of the person that is a refutation of an inherently existing person. Though he taught them two forms of selflessness, a subtle one and a gross one, the latter is principally a method to generate renunciation from cyclic existence and is taught for the purpose of suppressing the active ensnarements such as attachment. It is only a path for ripening [the disciples]. It is not a path that can actually liberate one from the seeds of the affictions. This is something that both the Acāryas believe.

All sentient beings, from children to sages, equally have had the thought ‘I’ since beginningless time; and within that thought, the I that is the basis onto which the term I is posited appears to exist from the object’s own side. To conceive (shen) of [this I] in accordance with that mode of appearance is the way that the apprehension of inherent existence operates. That is the mode in which the innate apprehension of the ‘I’ operates.

Therefore, the inherent existence of the ‘I’ is the direct object of the innate apprehension of a self, and it is designated by the term self of the person. The fact that it does not exist even nominally is what is refuted by the reasoning which analyzes the ultimate. This negation is the selflessness of the person, and it is the ultimate truth. The Cittamātrins and the Svātantrika Madhyamikas do not accept the selflessness of the person to be an ultimate truth. What is more, they believe that the reasoning that refutes the self of the person is reasoning that analyzes the conventional.

The perceived object (dmigs pa'i yul)⁹⁹⁹ of the innate apprehension of the ‘I,’ nominally, is the basis of karma and its results. The exemplification [of that self that is the perceived object of the innate apprehension of the ‘I’] is the nominality (sha snyad pa), [that is, the nominal entity,] that is the mere label based on the aggregates: either the collection of the aggregates, each individually, or an object that is no different from the aggregates. For example, this is what [the Buddha] had in mind when he said that we label something a chariot based upon either (1) only the collection of the parts of the chariot, (2) each part individually, (3) an object other than the parts, or (4) a part that is not the chariot. For this reason the sūtras say:

Just as we call something a chariot
In dependence on the collection of its parts,
Likewise conventionally we say ‘sentient being’
In dependence upon the aggregates.⁷⁰⁰

And also: “Oh Great King, man, the person, is the conjunction of the six elements, the six bases of touch, and the eighteen functions of mind.”⁷⁰¹

[A Brief Explanation of the Differences between the Selflessness of the Person and of Phenomena]

When distinguished as either person or phenomena, one’s own aggregates, eyes, ears, and so on, are considered to be phenomena and to apprehend them as existing inherently is the apprehension of a self of phenomena. The eyes and ears contained within one’s own continuum⁷⁰² are exemplifications of mineness (ngo yis byo)⁷⁰³ and are also exemplifications of the phenomena referred to when we distinguish between the pair, “person and phenomena.” The [eyes and so on] appear to the innate mind, however, to be a kind of “mine” that exists from its own side. Perceiving that specific “mine,” to conceive of it as existing by virtue of its own characteristic is the innate apprehension of mineness. Still, perceiving the eyes and so on that are contained within one’s own continuum and then apprehending them as existing by virtue of their own characteristic does not necessarily operate as does the apprehension of mineness.⁷⁰⁴ This is something that, if one introspects, will be quite clearly established by experience. Hence, though the eye and so on are exemplifications of mine, [that is, they are mine,] it is quite clear that, when one perceives them, to apprehend them as existing by virtue of their own characteristic need not be the “apprehension of mine.”⁷⁰⁵ Therefore, those apprehensions that perceive the eye and so forth contained within one’s own continuum and then do apprehend them as existing by virtue of their own characteristic, but that do not operate as does the apprehension of mineness, are all apprehensions of a self of phenomena and not apprehensions of mineness. When they appear to be mine and the mineness is apprehended as existing by virtue of its own characteristic, however, then it is the apprehension of mineness and not the apprehension of the self of phenomena.
Simply apprehending things that are not contained within one’s own continuum and [other] objects as being inherently my utilities (longs spyad bya) is not [what is meant technically] by the apprehension of ‘mine.’ Moreover, all innate apprehensions of an ‘I’ are both apprehensions of the self of the person and the view in regard to the perishable (jig la). But if something is these two, it does not follow that it is the apprehension of the ‘I.’ for, perceiving other persons, to apprehend them as existing by virtue of their own characteristic is the apprehension of the self of the person, but is neither the [215] apprehension of the ‘I’ nor the apprehension of ‘mine.’ Also, the apprehension of ‘mine’ is both the view in regard to the perishable [aggregates] and the apprehension of the self of the person, but it is not the apprehension of the ‘I.’

[ŚRĀVAKAS AND PRATYEKABUDDHAS UNDERSTAND REALITY]

4.2.3.1.3.5.2. The Explanation of Whether Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Understand the Selflessness of Phenomena

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.1. How the Glorious Candra Goes About Explaining This

The glorious Candra proves that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do indeed understand the selflessness of phenomena using both scripture and reasoning. As for the scriptural proof, the Daśabhūmika Sūtra says:

Oh children of the Conqueror, it is like this. Take for example the case of the prince who is born into the family of a king and who possesses the marks of royalty. As soon as he is born he surpasses in status all of the assembly of ministers by virtue of his being royalty, but not from the viewpoint of his intellectual prowess. But when he has grown up, he generates his own intellectual prowess and greatly supercedes all the activities of the ministers.

Oh children of the Conqueror, likewise the bodhisattva, as soon as he has generated the [awakening] mind, surpasses all of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas because of the greatness of his superior thought (lhaṅ pa’i bsmam pa), but not from the viewpoint of his intellectual prowess. But the bodhisattva who abides in the seventh stage of a bodhisattva supercedes all of the activities of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddhas because of the greatness of the understanding of his object.

Having quoted this source, the Avatārabhāṣya says: “From this scriptural [citation] one can clearly ascertain that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have the understanding that all phenomena are essenceless.” Moreover, the words first generates the [awakening] mind refers to the generation of the first ultimate mind and thus refers to the first instance [in which one comes to a direct understanding of emptiness, the ultimate truth, that is, at the first bhūmi]. At that time, it says, this [bodhisattva] cannot surpass the śrāvaka and prat-
ekabuddha from the viewpoint of his intellectual prowess. This proves that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena, for otherwise, because [the bodhisattva] directly understands the selflessness of phenomena at the first bhūmi, and because the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhants do not [according to you] understand the selflessness of phenomena, even from the first bhūmi, the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas would have to be surpassed by his intellectual prowess. This is what Candrakīrti intends [by the preceding passage].

As for [the three principal] logical arguments (rīgs pa), the Avatārābhāṣya says:

Were it not so, because [śrāvakas and so forth] would be devoid of a complete understanding of the essencelessness of things, just as [the bodhisattva surpasses the heterodox] who are devoid of worldly attachment, so too would the bodhisattva who has generated the first mind also surpass them, [the śrāvakas and so forth] by virtue of his intellect. Just like the heterodox, [the śrāvakas] too would not have abandoned all of the proclivities for activity (spyod pa'i phra rgyas), [that is, the affections], in the three spheres.

Because they misperceive the own nature of form and so on, they are mistaken. Hence, they could not have even understood the selflessness of the person, as they misperceive the aggregates, that is, the cause of labeling something as the self.  

This citation teaches three logical arguments [that prove that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas must have understood reality]. The first logical argument is this. The bodhisattvas who abide on the first level can surpass those who are devoid of worldly attachment  by virtue of their intellect, but they cannot surpass the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhants. However, this distinction would not be correct according to you for [the bodhisattva] directly understands the reality of all phenomena, whereas neither [śrāvakas nor non-Buddhist yogis] in the least understand the reality of things, [so that they would have to surpass the śrāvakas] just as they surpass the non-Buddhist yogis]. This is the meaning of the first paragraph above. To this one opponent argues as follows.

[Opponent:] Although those who are devoid of worldly attachment resemble śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhants in so far as neither [group] understands reality, they do not resemble each other in so far as [the latter] understand the selflessness of the person, which can bring an end to all afflictions, whereas the former do not. Hence, there is no problem [in the bodhisattva's surpassing the former but not the latter].

[Reply:] Whosoever would claim that this is a plausible response [to Candrakīrti's criticism] is in utter darkness, for, as this is an instance in which we are engaged in the following refutation, namely, that "if śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas arhants do not understand the selflessness of phenomena it is not possible for them to understand the selflessness of the person," [by assuming the opposite of this in their rebuttal] they are confusing the proof for what is to be proved.

The second logical argument is this. It follows, absurdly, that it is not right for śrāvakas and pratyekabuddha arhants to have eliminated all of the afflictions of the three spheres because, like the non-Buddhist ascetic, for example, they have not generated within their mental continua the antidote, whose operation actually opposes the ignorance that is the root of all the negative emotions.

[Opponent:] There is no problem. The afflicted ignorance that is the root of cyclic existence is not the apprehension of true [existence] but the view in regard to the perishable [group of aggregates], which apprehends the person to be permanent, unitary, and independent.

[Reply:] Were that so, there would be nothing with which you could counteract the absurd conclusion that animals and so forth, whose minds are not influenced by philosophical principles, have no ignorance, the root of cyclic existence.

This is the meaning of the second paragraph.

The third logical argument, which is taught in the remainder of that passage, is this. It follows, absurdly, that śrāvaka arhants do not completely understand the actual selflessness of the person because they have not generated within their mental continua the antidote whose operation actually opposes the mind that incorrectly understands the nature of the person and the aggregates, the basis labeled as the person. This demonstrates that without destroying the object (chen yul) of the conceptual thought that conceives of the basis of the labeling (buags gshi), the aggregates, to be truly [existent entities], one cannot destroy the object of the conceptual thought that apprehends the labeled phenomenon (buags chos), the person, to be truly [existent]. Hence, without directly understanding the reality of the person, it is not possible to directly realize the actual full-blown selflessness of the person.

To prove that this method [of interpretation] is what the Acārya Nāgārjuna had in mind, the Avatārābhāṣya quotes these lines from the Ratnāvalī:

To whatever extent one has an apprehension of the aggregates
To that extent does this give rise to an apprehension of the "I."
If one has an apprehension of the "I," again there is karma.
And from that again there is birth.

The three paths cannot be ordered in terms of first, last, or intermediate, And [as these three] mutually impel each other.
The wheel of cyclic existence turns Like a firebrand [which when turned appears as a continuous circle].
Because this [samsāra] does not apply (thob),
Either in regard to [notions like] self, other, both, or the three times,
The apprehension of an "I" is exhausted
And so too karma and rebirth.  \footnote{212}

The meaning of the first four lines is this. Suppose one does not have in one's [219] mental continuum the antidote that actually opposes the operation of the apprehension of the aggregates as truly [existent]. To whatever extent [such an apprehension of the aggregates as real things] exists, to that extent will there exist unabatedly the innate apprehension of the "I," [that is, to that extent] will one not have generated the antidote that actually opposes the operation of [such an innate apprehension of the "I"]. If that exists, under its influence one accumulates karma and takes rebirth in cyclic existence. This is what it is teaching.

Although it is claiming that the apprehension of the "I" must arise in dependence on the apprehension of the aggregates as truly [existent], it does not teach that if person X has within his or her mental continuum the apprehension of the aggregates as truly [existent], then he or she must also have the apprehension of the "I," or that if he or she has that, then he or she must accumulate karma and take rebirth in cyclic existence. For example, it is just like this. If we say that the barley sprout must arise in dependence on the barley, this in and of itself does not imply that when the barley exists so too must there exist the barley sprout.  \footnote{713}

The meaning of the middle stanza is this. The three paths, that is, the afflictions and the extreme afflictions of karma and rebirth, have no definite sequence in terms of one being first, one last, and one intermediate. Each instead arises based mutually on another, turning, like the wheel of a fire-brand.

The meaning of the third stanza is this. The inherent birth of the aggregates, in terms of either self, other, or in the three times, does not obtain; it is perceived to be nonexistent. Hence, by the power of this the apprehension of the "I" will exhaust itself and so too will the karma and birth that [arise] from it.

Again, [this is stated in] the Ratnāvali section from: "Just as the eye is mistaken" up to

Knowing the nonobjective existence of beings
Truly and as they are,
Like a fire without a cause
There is no abiding, no taking [birth], just nirvāna.  \footnote{714}

\footnote{[Opponent:] This is said only in regard to bodhisattvas.
[Reply:] It is not, for immediately after nirvāna it says:
Likewise, bodhisattvas too
Perceive it and desire enlightenment.}

Nonetheless, because of their compassion
They continue to take rebirth until enlightenment.

The words likewise and too imply that the previous [lines] were indeed referring to the śrāvakas.

[Question:] Well then, if the śrāvakas understand the selflessness of phenomena, then does the pījaka of the śrāvakas, which is the basis of their study, contemplation, and eventual understanding of selflessness, also teach the selflessness of phenomena?

[Reply:] To prove that it does teach it the Avatāraḥbhāṣya explains it in this way:

For the purpose of eliminating the afflicted obscurations of the śrāvakas, the sūtras taught to the śrāvakas also elucidate [the nature of] compounded phenomena by means of such examples as a ball of foam, a bubble, a mirage, a plantain tree, and an illusion. Take for example this passage:

The Friend of the Sun, [Buddha,] has said
That form is like a ball of foam,
Feeling like a bubble,
Recognition like a mirage,
Composition like a plantain tree,
And consciousness like an illusion.  \footnote{715}

To demonstrate this very point the Acārya [Nāgārjuna] has himself said:

The Mahāyāna teaches nonarising,
The other [yuddha teaches] extinction.
But as both extinction and nonarising have the same meaning, emptiness,
Forbear (bzd) from [disparaging either teaching].  \footnote{716}

Likewise, [Nāgārjuna has said in MMK]:

The Lord, with his knowledge of nonentitiveness,
In his Advice to Kātyāyana
Refuted [all of the extremes]
Of existence, nonexistence, and both.  \footnote{717}

Because the meaning of the second scriptural citation [Ratnāvali (IV, 86)] is more difficult to understand, I will explain it. The commentary says:

Someone thinks that if the lack of a self within phenomena is also taught in the Śrāvakayāna, then the Mahāyāna teachings would be purposeless, but whatever system holds such an opinion should be understood to be in contradiction to the scripture and reasoning presented here.  \footnote{718}
The opponent being referred to here is Bhāvaviveka, for in the Prajñāpradīpa he refutes Buddhāpālita’s explanation in the commentary to the seventh chapter of [MMK], where the latter claims that the Hinayāna sūtras teach the selflessness of phenomena, by saying that that was so, the teachings of the Mahāyāna would become purposeless. To this one must ask, “Does it make the teachings of the Mahāyāna purposeless in general or is it that it makes the teachings of the selflessness of phenomena in the Mahāyāna purposeless?” In the former case, that is, were one reduced to the absurdity [that all the Mahāyāna teachings are purposeless simply because the Hinayāna sūtras also teach the selflessness of phenomena], then it would imply that the only reason [for the Buddha’s] teaching the Mahāyāna was to teach the selflessness of phenomena. This is not so, however, for in the Mahāyāna is also taught [concepts such as] the bodhisattva bhūmis, [the perfections] such as giving and so forth, prayer, dedication, compassion, and other such aspects of method (bhāvo), not to speak of the inconceivable powers of the bodhisattvas. The Raināvali says:

Because the Śrāvakayāna
Does not explain the prayers of the bodhisattva,
Nor their activities, nor their dedication,
How [can those who follow this yāna] become bodhisattvas?

The goal of abiding within the activities of the bodhisattva
Is not spoken of in those sūtras.
It is spoken of in the Mahāyāna;
That is why the sage will take it up.

In the latter case it also does not follow, [that is, it does not follow that the Mahāyāna teachings of the selflessness of phenomena are purposeless simply because this is also taught in the Śrāvakayāna:] for there exists the difference that the śrāvaka pāṭika teaches a very condensed form of the selflessness of phenomena that eliminates only the afflicted obscurations, whereas the Mahāyāna teaches in an extensive fashion the selflessness of phenomena so as to eliminate every last obstacle to knowledge. The Lokāṭita Sūtra says:

You taught that without understanding the signless
There is no emancipation.
That is why in the Mahāyāna
You taught this fully.

[Question:] Well then, in the system of the Ācārya [Nāgārjuna] what is meant by the claims that there exist the following differences: (1) between the Mahāyāna pāṭika teaching the selflessness of phenomena in a complete fashion, although the Hinayāna does not and (2) as regards the paths of these two systems, between whether or not the selflessness of phenomena is meditated upon in a complete fashion?

[Answer:] It does not mean that in the Mahāyāna one establishes truthlessness in regard to all phenomena and then meditates upon this, whereas in the Hinayāna one establishes truthlessness only in regard to a few phenomena and then meditates upon it. This is because when one has ascertained by means of a valid cognition the truthlessness of one phenomenon in dependence on a correct logical reason (rīgs pa), one is able to ascertain the truthlessness of any other phenomenon intuitively at will (blo kha phyogs pa tsam gyis) simply by relying on that very same reasoning. This I have already explained.

Therefore, as was explained in the Prajñāmālā, in the Mahāyāna one comes to ascertain the truthlessness of each and every basis, [that is, of every phenomenon.] in reliance upon all sorts of different kinds of logical reasoning; and even in regard to a single basis, one comes to ascertain truthlessness based upon “many doors”; that is, based upon different logical reasons. For this reason [in the Mahāyāna] the mind becomes much better versed in reality. In the Hinayāna reality is established by means of a very condensed form of logical reasoning. Hence, the mind does not become as well versed in reality as in the previous case where [the understanding] is based upon “the many different doors” of reasoning. For this reason there is said to be a difference in the extent and completeness of the meditation on the selflessness of phenomena. Also, the existence of such a difference is a reflection of the fact that [in the Mahāyāna] one strives to eliminate the obscurations to omniscience (shes drub) whereas [in the Hinayāna] one does not. This completes the exposition of how the glorious Candakirti explains [these points].

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.2. The Refutation of the Misconception That Believes That [Exposition] to Be Incorrect

One raving lunatic has made the following claims. (1) It is not correct for Candakirti to claim that without understanding the selflessness of phenomena it is also not possible to understand the selflessness of the person because the Sautrāntikas perfectly ascertain the selflessness of the person, setting it forth according to both scripture and reasoning, but do not ascertain the essencelessness of the aggregates.

(2) It does not follow that in order to ascertain the essencelessness of the labeled phenomenon (biags chos) it is necessary to also ascertain the essencelessness of the basis of the labeling (biags gzhis) because the sect of the Vatsūpītriyas understand the pot to be a labeled entity but reify the atoms, which are the basis of the label, considering them substantial entities.

(3) The following claims are mutually contradictory: (a) śrāvaka arhants understand the selflessness of phenomena, (b) all the apprehensions of true existence are afflictions and śrāvaka arhants eliminate all of the afflictions, and (c) [bodhisattvas] do not eliminate their afflictions completely at the sev-
enth bhāmi, but from the seventh bhāmi on they can surpass the śrāvaka arhan by virtue of the wisdom which understands the selflessness of phenomena. This being the case, it follows, absurdly, that even [the bodhisattva of] the seventh bhāmi could not surpass the śrāvaka arhat by virtue of his intellect because in that seventh bhāmi he has not obtained the ability to eliminate all of the afflictions by the power of his wisdom, whereas the śrāvaka arhat has obtained it.

(4) It follows, absurdly, that the śrāvaka arhat has even eliminated all of the “affirmative misunderstandings” (’jug pa gzung rtogs) that are to be abandoned [during the path] of seeing (mthong spangs) [of the Mahāyāna] because he has completely abandoned apprehending things as truly [existent]. If you accept this, it follows, absurdly, that he would have obtained the “peak junction” (rtse sbyor)722 of the path of seeing (mthong lam), and it would be completely absurd to accept that.

(5) It is not proper to accept that if one apprehends the aggregates to be truly [existent], one must accumulate karma via the apprehension of the “I” and must take rebirth in cyclic existence. [Were it so,] it would follow, absurdly, that the stream enterer who sees the four dharmas723 takes birth in cyclic existence under the power of karma because he apprehends the aggregates to be truly [existent].

(6) The meaning of the Daśabhūmika Sūtra is also not [as you claim]. Instead it is to be explained as follows. From the sixth bhāmi on down the power of the wisdom that understands selflessness does not have the most perfect ability to eliminate the subconscious (bag la nyal) afflicted obscurations (snyon sgrib). That is why [the bodhisattvas on those levels] do not surpass the śrāvaka arhats by virtue of the power of their intellect and [why], obtaining that in the seventh level, they surpass them [from that point on]. When the śrāvaka obtains arhatship he abandons the afflicted obscurations that bind him to cyclic existence but he does not obtain the ability to eliminate the subconscious afflicted obscurations.

What is more, the meaning of the scriptural citation from the Ratnāvali [is not as you claim but is instead as follows]. The greater one’s apprehension of the true existence of the aggregates, the greater will be one’s apprehension of the “I”; and the greater one’s apprehension of the “I,” the greater will be one’s accumulation of karma and the greater will be the [likelihood of] birth that depends on that karma.

[The Response to the Preceding Criticism]725

(1) The first reductio is meaningless. For someone who believes that “if the selflessness of phenomena has not been understood, then neither has the selflessness of the person,” the claim that Sâtârântikas correctly establish, [that is, understand] the selflessness of the person by means of valid cognitions remains but a hypothesis to be proven. Hence, it is quite clear that your reductio has not measured up to the standards of valid logical argumentation, for you posit to your opponent something that has yet to be proven [to him or her] as if it were a correct refutation [of his or her position]. Just ask yourself, do we [believe] that anyone from the Svâtantrikas Mâdhâyamikas on down understands by means of a valid cognition the full-blown actual selflessness of the person? [Of course not!] Just as ordinary beings who do not have even a rough idea of philosophical tenets have not destroyed the operation of the innate apprehension of the self of the person, neither have these Buddhists [from the Svâtantrikas on down]. Moreover, on top of that [mere lack of understanding], these Buddhists possess in their respective systems a belief in the self of the person that is imputed by the philosophical (kun btrags) apprehension of the self of the person, for they accept that the person exists by virtue of its own characteristic, that is, that the referent labeled by the term person, if searched for with logical reasoning, can be posited. Hence, when looked at from this point of view, if you have anything to show us that can refute us and that does not itself require proof, some reason that is not itself disputed, then let it out! [226]

(2) What do you mean when you say that the śrâvaka Vâtsiputriyas understand the pot to be a labeled entity? Do you mean that they merely accept it to be a labeled entity or do you mean to say that they actually ascertain it to be a full-blown labeled entity by means of a valid cognition? In the former case, it would follow, absurdly, that the Cârvâkas, who are materialists and who claim that there is no rebirth, would also understand past and future births to be nonexistent [for they accept that]. This [alternative] is a meaningless response to our original claim.

In the latter case, do you mean to say, taking the pot [as an example], that the ascertainment by a valid cognition that each of the parts of the pot is not a pot, and that a pot which is a different substance from all of those [parts] does not exist, that such a mere partial [understanding of] labeled entity is what you mean when you say that [the Vâtsiputriyas understand] the pot to be a labeled entity? Or instead, do you mean to say, taking the pot [as the example again], that it is the ascertainment by a valid cognition that, except for its being merely linguistically posited as a name pot, when searched for by logical reasoning, the referent of the name (ming don) cannot be posited, that such a full-blown understanding of “being a labeled entity” is what you mean by saying [that they understand the pot] to be a labeled entity? If the former [is what you mean], that alone cannot be posited as “the ascertainment by a valid cognition that the pot is a labeled entity,” for were it possible, it would follow, absurdly, that the Sâtârântikas ascertain by a valid cognition the truthlessness of universals (spyi mshun) because they ascertain by means of valid cognition the partial truthlessness of universals.726 If you challenge [this latter reason,] then forsake your view that the Vâtsiputriyas understand by valid cognition the
fact that a pot is a labeled entity. If you accept [that the Sautrāntikas understand the selflessness of universals,] it follows that they ascertain by a valid cognition the selflessness of phenomena in regard to universals, for that is what you are accepting. If you accept that, it contradicts your belief that they do not understand selflessness. You accept both the reason and the pervasion.

What we claim is that when it comes to ascertaining by means of a valid cognition the full-blown labeled nature [of a phenomenon], if one ascertains the essencelessness of the labeled phenomenon, one must ascertain the essencelessness of the basis of the label. We do not believe that when one ascertains [the basis] to be a labeled entity, where the definition of labeled entity is taken as it is posited by any system, one is necessarily ascertaining the basis of the label to be a labeled entity. So this does not present the least problem for us, [as we simply do not consider the Vatsitputriya understanding of what it means for something to be a labeled entity to be a complete and accurate one].

Were this not so, it would follow, absurdly, that the Sautrāntika [whose position] is explained in the Seven Logical Treatises is of an inferior viewpoint to the śrāvaka Vatsitputriyas because [they accept the following contradiction, namely,] they understand [according to the premise] that the pot is a full-blown labeled entity, while at the same time being logicians who reify the pot into a substantial entity. You have accepted the three cycles!

If one ascertains by means of a valid cognition the full-blown essencelessness of the person, it is not possible to have the belief that the aggregates exist by virtue of an essence, [that is, that they exist inherently,] because no matter what logical reasoning one utilizes to ascertain the ultimate view of the Madhyamaka in regard to the person, one can, simply by setting one’s mind [on the new object], ascertain the truthlessness of the aggregates. Otherwise, to ascertain the truthlessness of all phenomena by the power of logical reasoning it would be necessary to establish with a reason that each and every particular phenomenon is truthless. Were this the case, it would be impossible to ascertain by the power of logical reasoning the truthlessness of all phenomena until one obtained buddhahood [and was omniscient].

If you accept the second [possibility in the] preceding analysis, it would follow, absurdly, that the Vatsitputrias ascertain by means of a valid cognition the ultimate view of the Madhyamaka in regard to a pot.

(3–4) Think of how you would answer if we say, "It follows, absurdly, that [the bodhisattva] of the first bhumi is able to surpass the śrāvaka arhat by virtue of his wisdom that understands selflessness because (a) his wisdom, the wisdom that directly understands selflessness, is able to eliminate every obscuration to omniscience that is to be abandoned during the path of seeing (mthong svangs she sgrigs), whereas the śrāvaka arhat has no such antidote, and also because (b) the gnosia that directly understands selflessness within the continuum of a first bhumi [bodhisattva] has the ability to lead to an aftermath state (rjes thob) which has 112 good qualities, whereas again the śrāvaka and pratye kabuddha arhants lack this ability." You must accept the first reason because you have written in your own treatises that you believe that by abiding in the path of seeing [the bodhisattva] completely obtains a path of seeing that understands the selflessness of phenomena as the antidote to the 108 obscurations to omniscience, obscurations that are to be abandoned during the path of seeing, whereas, the śrāvakas and pratye kabuddhas have no such recourse. You must also definitely accept that when the wisdom that understands the selflessness of phenomena within the a person’s continuum eliminates [those obscurations], obscurations that are to be abandoned during the path of seeing, then the wisdom that understands selflessness in one’s continuum does the eliminating. Otherwise, you would not be able to posit, absurdly, that when the inferential valid cognition that understands the impermanence of sound in the continuum of a person clears away the reification (sgro’ dogs) that apprehends sound to be permanent, it is the valid cognition in the continuum of that person that does the clearing away of the reification that apprehends sound to be permanent. Hence, to make the distinction that the first bhumi [bodhisattva] cannot surpass the śrāvaka arhat by virtue of his wisdom, that is, that wisdom understanding selflessness, but that the first [229] bhumi [bodhisattva] can surpass him by virtue of his wisdom that understands the selflessness of phenomena, is only a cause for laughter.

(6) Again [they say] that from the sixth bhumi on down [the bodhisattva] cannot surpass [the śrāvaka arhat] from the viewpoint of his understanding of the selflessness of the person as a whole (ldog pa nas) because below that [stage] he has not obtained the ability to eliminate the subconscious afflicted obscurations (synon sgrib bag la nyal), but [they claim] that from the seventh bhumi on up he does have the ability to surpass [the śrāvaka arhat], even from the viewpoint of the individual aspects (-ldog- cha nas) of his understanding of the selflessness of the person, for at that point he obtains the ability to eliminate the subconscious afflictions even from the viewpoint of the individual aspects of his understanding of the selflessness of the person. But all this is just blithering!

It follows, absurdly, [from this view] that the first bhumi [bodhisattva] can surpass the śrāvaka arhat even from the viewpoint of the individual aspects of his understanding of the selflessness of the person because the wisdom that understands the selflessness of the person in such a bodhisattva is a wisdom not bound by the apprehension of signs (mthshan ’dzin), whereas the wisdom that understands the selflessness of the person in the continuum of a śrāvaka arhat is a wisdom that is bound by the apprehension of signs. When we put it in this way, what option have you but to accept the three cycles? You yourself believe that the śrāvaka and pratye kabuddha arhants do not in the least eliminate the apprehension of true existence and that the "knowledge of the basis" (gzi shes) in their continuas is a "knowledge of the basis" that apprehends signs.
Why is it that [the bodhisattva] can eliminate the subconscious afflicted obstructions at the seventh bhūmi? Is the gnosia of the seventh bhūmi the [230] direct antidote of the subconscious afflicted obstructions, or does it lead directly into the gnosia of the eighth bhūmi, which is the direct antidote to those [obstructions]? The first alternative contradicts your belief that they are not eliminated until the eighth bhūmi is attained. In the second case, it follows, absurdly, that the “Great” [division of the the] “Supreme Dharma” [stage of the] Mahāyāna path of preparation can eliminate everything abandoned through the path of seeing because that [last stage of the path of preparation, coming as it does just before the path of seeing] is what actually leads to the Mahāyāna path of seeing, which is what actually eliminates everything abandoned by the path of seeing (mthong spung). If you accept this, it follows, absurdly, that one can see reality directly for the first time during the “Great” [division of the] “Supreme Dharma” stage of the Mahāyāna path of preparation, for [at that time] one can eliminate everything to be abandoned during the path of seeing. If this were accepted, one would have to accept such absurdities as the possibility of someone’s being an āryan while still an ordinary being, an effect’s existing at the time of the cause, and so forth. Desist, therefore, from leading those who are not knowledgeable in logical analysis onto incorrect paths with your lies.

To claim that śrāvaka arhants do not completely eliminate the afflicted obstructions is a form of skepticism in regard to emancipation. It would follow, absurdly, [from this claim] that someone who is on the śrāvaka path of seeing does not completely eliminate the philosophical afflicted obstructions (nyon sgrib kun brtags) because the śrāvaka arhant does not completely eliminate the innate afflicted obstructions (nyon sgrib bhan skyes). If that is accepted, it follows, absurdly, that it would not be possible to consider śrāvaka āryans as belonging to the jewel of the sangha because they would not have utterly eliminated the seeds of ambivalent doubt in regard to the source of refuge. If you claim that the reason is not established, then you are contradicting [your claim that] they have not completely eliminated the afflicted obstructions abandoned during the path of seeing (nyon sgrib mthong spung).

What is more, let us consider whether the subconscious afflicted obstructions are chiefly entities that obstruct the attainment of emancipation or whether they chiefly obstruct omniscience. In the first case, it would follow, absurdly, that śrāvaka arhants do not obtain omniscience. If you accept that, it contradicts your belief that they have completely eliminated the afflicted obstructions that bind them to sansāra. In the second case, it follows that the subconscious afflicted obstructions are obstructions to omniscience (shes sgrib) because they are chiefly obstructions that impede the knowledge of all phenomena. If you claim that [the predicate] does not follow [from the reason], then how would you go about refuting the claim that “even though something arises from causes and conditions it is not produced.” [in other words, in both cases it is a question of definition].

[Opponent:] “That it is an obstruction which chiefly impedes the knowledge of all phenomena” is the etymology of the term obscuration to omniscience but is not its definition.

[Reply:] Then how would you react to my saying that “arising from causes and conditions” is the etymology of produced but not its definition?

[Opponent:] There are more types of obstructions than simply those two, [that is, obstructions to emancipation and to omniscience].

[Reply:] It would follow, absurdly, that there are more than the two types of enlightenment, that is, more than just emancipation and omniscience, as far as goals are concerned. This is because there are more types of obstructions than simply the two, those that chiefly impede emancipation and those that chiefly impede omniscience, where these obstructions are what impede the attainment of the enlightenments.

What is more, let us consider the definition of a subconscious afflicted obstruction.

[Opponent:] We believe that it refers to the ground of nescient latent potentials (ma rig bag chags kyi sa).731

[Reply:] If that were so, then it would be quite inappropriate for you to accept that they are completely eliminated from the eighth bhūmi on. This is because it contradicts both the root text and the commentary to the Uttaratantra which explain that [a bodhisattva’s] taking a body of the nature of mind is something conditioned by the ground of nescient latent potentials and pure karma (zas pa med pa’i las) and is not abandoned until the tenth bhūmi. It is also [inappropriate] because it contradicts the many instances during which Mahāyāna scholars and texts, texts the likes of the root text and commentary to the Uttaratantra, explain that the elimination of the ground of nescient latent potentialities is something especially eliminated only by a perfect buddha, whose abandonments surpass those of any bodhisattva. What is more, if they were eliminated during the eighth bhūmi, then it would contradict the Årya Šrīmālā Sūtra when it explains that an empowered bodhisattva, [that is, a bodhisattva on one of the bhūmis.] takes up a body of the nature of mind because it possesses the ground of nescient latent potentialities and pure karma.

What is more, it follows, absurdly, that the bodhisattva who abides on the eighth bhūmi would have obtained the limpid perfection, the quality of a tathāgata’s dharmakāya, because he or she has completely eliminated the ground of nescient latent potentialities. If you claim that [the predicate] does not follow [from the reason], then you have strayed very far from the root text and commentary to the Uttaratantra when it says:

Because of his inherent purity and also
Because of having eliminated the potentialities, he is limpid.732

What is more, the ground of nescient latent potentialities refers to those latent potentialities that cause the error of the appearance of duality (gnyis snang 'khrul po), or refers to those that cause the proliferation of the marks of
the appearance of true [existence]. Until those are completely eliminated one cannot obtain the perfection of the self, which is the pacification of all of the proliferations of the appearance of duality. In this vein the commentary to the *Uttaratantra* states:

> It is based on that very ground of nescient latent potentialities that one comes to possess the subtle misbehavior (kuṇ tu spyod pa), the proliferation of marks. Because of this one cannot obtain the extreme noncomposed state, the perfection of the self.\(^{733}\)

Therefore, the ground of nescient latent potentialities refers exclusively to the obscurations to omniscience. That the ground of nescient latent potentialities refers to the obscurations qua afflictions is something that is not the belief of any Mahāyānaist, either Mādhyamika or Yogācāra. Likewise, the claim that *śrāvaka* and *pratyekabuddha arhants* do not eliminate the obscurations qua afflictions is something that is not believed by any valid text of either of the four schools of tenets. In the section of the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* that explains the result of the Hinayāna path it says:

> What is the result? It is the positive, it is making others understand, it is making others believe, it is the purification of the obscurations qua afflictions, it is the purification of the obscurations qua subsidiary afflictions, it is the purification of what obstructs special qualities.\(^{734}\)

The purification of the afflicted obscurations in the mental continuance of *śrāvaka* and *pratyekabuddha arhants* is explained to be the fruit of the eightfold *āryan* path of the Hinayāna. Both the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and the *Bodhisattvabhumi* explain that the difference [between the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna paths is this]: the realization (*mngon rtags*) of the *śrāvakas* purify the obscurations qua afflictions, whereas the bodhisattva’s realizations purify the knowledge obscurations. The *Abhisamayālamkāra* also says:

> From the subsiding of the three [types of obscurations], the afflictions, those [impeding] omniscience and those [impeding] the path, there come about, [respectively,] the purifications of the trainee [śrāvaka], rhinoceros [pratyekabuddha], and that of the Son of the Conqueror [bodhisattva].\(^{735}\)

In the commentary to this the *Pañcavimsīṭikāloka* says: “The purification of the śrāvaka’s afflicted obscurations refers to the purification of desire, anger and ignorance.”\(^{736}\) Many such scriptures, both Mādhyamika and Cittamātrin, explain over and over again that *śrāvaka arhants* do indeed eliminate the afflicted obscurations. Both the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna scriptures and their commentaries explain that the cessation [achieved by] *śrāvaka arhants* is an utterly complete cessation, that their extrasensory perception (*mngon shes*) is a form of extrasensory perception that has exhausted all defilements, and that their gnosis is a gnosis that has exhausted impurities and that knows that [these impurities] will not arise anew. You, however, discarding this great common path that is so widely renowned, are about to enter into the thick forest, the slander of *āryan* beings. Desist!

If the person who accepts this view, [that is, the view that the arhat has not completely purified himself], possesses the bodhisattva vows, he or she incurs a root downfall (*risa ltaung*) as explained in these lines:

> He who holds [the view] that the path of the trainees, [that is, the Śrāvakayāna,]

Does not eliminate desire and so on [has committed this downfall].\(^{737}\)

(4) What is more, in the section of the *Abhisamayālamkāra* that teaches about the affirmative misunderstandings and the negative misunderstandings that are to be abandoned [during the path of] seeing and so forth, the teaching that *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* lack an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena is posited only as a belief to *some* disciples, but it is not a position that, were we [to analyze] which belief he actually accepts, would reflect the views of the Lord [Maitreya] himself. There is no problem, therefore, if in this instance [what the Lord Maitreya said in the *Abhisamayālamkāra*] should contradict [what we have said earlier, as it was not ultimately his own view that he was expounding]. Otherwise, [were you to claim that all of the Lord Maitreya’s words are to be taken literally,] think about how you would respond to the following situation. [Suppose an opponent] were to say that on the one hand you accept the selflessness of phenomena and that on the other hand you contradict the Lord Maitreyanatha’s explanation in the *Madhyāntavibhanga* that dependent phenomena and the real truly exist, [that is, you have no alternative but to admit that not all of the Lord’s words—here the latter—are meant to be taken literally].

(5) As has already been explained, we claim that the apprehension of the aggregates to be truly [existent] is the chief cause of the apprehension of the “I.” We do not claim, however, that if one has the apprehension of the true [existence] of the aggregates that one must also have the apprehension of the “I.” Hence, when you urge on us the absurdity that the stream enterer who sees the four dharmas must be reborn in cyclic existence under the influence of karma, it is a case of a reductio argument [whose original premise] was never accepted [by your opponent].

When you state that the following two statements are in direct contradiction, namely, that (a) the Acārya’s explanation that in the sixth bhūmi the perfection of wisdom excels [the other perfections] and that (b) his explanation that the sixth bhūmi [bodhisattva] cannot even surpass śrāvaka arhants by virtue of his intellect, then you must be thinking to yourself that the Lord [Buddha himself] has made a mistake. The *Dasābhimānika Sūtra* explains that the [bodhisattva] on the sixth bhūmi or below cannot surpass śrāvakas and praty-
ekabuddhas and that very sūtra also explains that in the sixth bhūmi it is the perfection of wisdom that excels [over the other perfections]. Yet you claim that these two facts are mutually contradictory. Are you not denying what is directly evident, namely, that the sūtra itself is explaining this to be the case?

What is more, your explanation of the meaning of the Rasāvatī passage is quite amazing. I will explain. Does the intensity of one's apprehension of the aggregates as truly existent decrease from the time one is an ordinary being to the time one is a stream enterer who sees the four dharmas, or does it not? If it does not, it follows, absurdly, that the stream enterer who sees the four dharmas is born more into samsāra under the power of karma because his apprehension of the aggregates as truly existent increases. You have accepted the three cycles! If it decreases, then is it that it decreases in and of itself without depending upon an antidote or does it decrease due to an antidote? In the first case it would follow, absurdly, that even without having meditated on the path it would be possible for the obscurations to decrease in and of themselves and that [in this way] one can eventually become enlightened. In the second case, [if it decreases due to an antidote,] then does it decrease due to meditation on truthlessness, that is, this the antidote, or is it that by meditating on the fact that there is no permanent, unitary, and independent person the apprehension of the aggregates as truly [existing] decreases? In the first case, you have strayed from your original thesis, that it is impossible for śrāvakas to have an understanding of truthlessness. In the second case, it follows, absurdly, that by meditating merely on the nonexistence of a permanent, unitary, and independent person it is possible to completely eliminate the apprehension of true existence. It also contradicts your belief that all cases of the apprehension of true [existence] are obscurations to omniscience. Also, it is contradictory to claim that during the path of training of the śrāvaka the apprehension of the aggregates as truly [existing] decreases, and yet to claim that in the śrāvaka path of no-training, [that is, in the state of arhatship,] the elimination of the apprehension of the aggregates as truly [existent things] is impossible. To conclude, I offer this stanzas of intermission:

With strong pride as its motivating force a thought arises,
And very diligently working it over in their minds, night and day, in the end
They see such a method to be the way of interpreting this scripture.
At such a time they can arouse only the disgust, the pity or the astonishment of scholars.

Now in our own system what does it mean to say that the [bodhisattva] of the sixth bhūmi or below cannot surpass the śrāvaka and pratyekebuddha, and what does it mean to say that from the seventh bhūmi on they can? We [explain it] from the viewpoint of how [the mind] comes to equipoise (snyom par 'jug) on reality, for at the seventh bhūmi [the bodhisattva] obtains the perfection of "skill in means" (thabs mkhas). Hence, as it says [in the Madhyamakāvatāra]:

In this stage called "Gone Afar," in one instant
He will enter into cessation and in one instant [emerge].

At each moment he can enter and arise from the equipoise on the "perfect end" (yang dag pa'i mtha'), cessation. Whereas from the sixth bhūmi on down [neither they] nor śrāvaka and pratyekebuddhas have such an ability. So the section from the Daśabhūmikā Śūtra that goes, "because of the greatness of the understanding of his object," refers to the greatness of the bodhisattva's understanding of his own object, the "perfect end," cessation.

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3. The Exposition of the Valid Scriptural Evidence Explaining That Śrāvaka and Pratyekebuddhas Have an Understanding of the Selflessness of Phenomena

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.1. The Exposition of the System of the Son of the Conqueror, Śāntideva

The Bodhicaryāvatāra [sets forth the opponents position in] the line:

They become liberated by seeing the truths
Why should it be by seeing emptiness?

The meaning is this. [The opponent is claiming that] by accustomed themselves to the direct perception of the sixteen aspects of the [four noble] truths such as impermanence and so on they become liberated from cyclic existence, so why should they have to make an effort at seeing the emptiness of the true existence of all phenomena? In reply it says:

Because scripture explains
That without this path there is no enlightenment.

Without this path that sees [things to be] empty of inherent existence it is taught that none of the three enlightenments can be obtained. As for it is taught in scripture, the Great Commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra interprets [this verse] by saying that the Mātā Śūtras, [that is, the Prajñāpāramitā Śūtras,] teach that for those who possess a discrimination of things (angs po'i 'du shes) there is no emancipation and that [all of the Hinayāna fruits] of the three times, from that of the stream enterer to that of the pratyekebuddha, are obtained in dependence on the perfection of wisdom. It does not interpret [the word enlightenment in the verse] to refer only to the complete enlightenment of a Buddha. Then (the Bodhicaryāvatāra) says:
Even though monkhood is the root of the doctrine, It is difficult; For those whose minds possess an object Can hardly be said [to have obtained] nirvāṇa.\textsuperscript{745}

The meaning is this. It teaches that if one has not understood truthlessness, one cannot be considered an "ultimate monk," that is, an āryan being, and that the path which possesses an object, that is, a mind apprehending true [existence], cannot obtain emancipation. This, therefore, is the meaning of the lines that go:

What if [the opponent says] that one achieves liberation through the elimination of the afflictions? Then as soon as that happens that would occur.\textsuperscript{746}

The opponent’s position is this: What if [I say that] one can become emancipated and eliminate the afflictions by meditating on the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths such as impermanence and so forth. The refutation is this: Well then, it would be necessary to say that one had attained liberation, that is, the exhaustion of the afflictions, when one had temporarily suppressed, by meditating on the sixteen aspects such as impermanence, the root [afflictions] such as desire and the subsidiary afflictions taught in the Abhidharma, that is to say, everything considered an affliction. This is because no matter how long one meditates on that path one will not have understood the reality of things, so that one will not be able to do away with any of the seeds of the afflictions. If one accepts that, it would imply that as soon as one directly perceived the sixteen aspects such as impermanence one would obtain emancipation. This, however, cannot be accepted because even though the manifest (mngon gyur) afflictions may be temporarily absent at that time, those beings are seen to throw themselves into another future existence by the force of their karma. And to demonstrate this it says:

But though they lack afflictions They are seen to have karmic potential.\textsuperscript{747}

[Opponent:] This passage should not be taken to mean that Maudgalyāyana and Arya Āṅgulimālī and so on have no afflictions, but that [due to] the karmic potentials of their past [lives] they suffer.

[Reply:] To explain it in this way is to miss the point, for if this were [the meaning], it would be unrelated to the arguments that come both before and after it. [It is also to misunderstand the point] for, if this were the meaning, since it would be necessary to consider it as a response to [the first part of] the verse, "What if [the opponent says] that one achieves liberation through the elimination of the afflictions?" one would have to accept that Maudgalyāyana had not obtained liberation, [which is absurd].

Now should the opponent answer that the reason, "they are seen to have karmic potential," is not proven. [Śāntideva] shows it to be the case by demonstrating that the path which understands the sixteen [aspects] such as impermanence and so forth cannot annihilate the craving (sred pa), which is the chief cause of taking a future existence:

If he says that it is quite certain that he lacks The craving for taking any further [existence].\textsuperscript{748}

To teach the reply to that he says:

This craving is not an afflicted one. Why shouldn’t [there be two kinds], just like delusion? Craving comes about due to the condition of feeling And feeling is something which even they have.\textsuperscript{749}

The meaning is as follows. The first two lines of the verse teach this. Craving is of two kinds: one is a kind of craving that is afflicted and this refers to the [craving that is one among] the afflictions as they are explained in the Abhidharma; then there is a second type of craving, which is not afflicted in such a way. Now it is correct to accept these two [types of craving] because in the case of ignorance, that is, in the case of the delusion that is the root of existence, there are also two kinds, one that is afflicted and one that is not. The two cases are not dissimilar. The reason [that in the case of delusion, there are these two types] is accepted by the realist [opponent], for this division into two forms of ignorance, one afflicted and one nonafflicted, is a tenet of all Buddhist schools, both the superior and the inferior ones.

This [verse] teaches that there is a nonafflicted type of craving that is different from the afflictions held in common by both the Abhidharma and the Madhyamaka. It does not teach that there is a craving that is nonafflicted, where being afflicted, [that is, where being an affliction,] is taken as the apprehension of true existence.\textsuperscript{750}

If craving is of two kinds, how is this [division] made? In this way. Although the path that understands the sixteen [aspects], such as impermanence, can temporarily suppress the manifest craving that is one of the common afflictions, it cannot suppress even the slightest manifest craving derived from the apprehension of true [existence]. Hence, [these first two lines] are objecting [to the opponent's] reason, that this path completely eliminates the craving that is the chief cause of taking rebirth.

The meaning of the last two lines is this. If one is devoid of the view that understands reality, it is impossible to stop taking rebirth in the world. This is because as long as one is devoid of this [understanding], under the power of apprehending true existence there will arise, without a doubt, the craving for pleasant feelings [zhākar ba] and the craving for ridding oneself of painful feelings. This is so because, as it has been said, "when a cause contains all of the
conducive conditions and lacks all of the opposing conditions [for ripening], it is certain to give rise to its effect.

How do we, in our own system, turn back the tide of this craving for feeling? [The Bodhicaryāvatāra] then says:

When the one who feels does not exist
And neither does the feeling exist
Then how can one but reverse this craving
When one sees things in this light?^{751}

It is saying that by the power of accustoming oneself to the insight that the one [241] who feels and the feeling are empty of inherent existence, one, of necessity, turns back the tide of craving. Implicitly it is teaching that if one does not perceive the selflessness of phenomena, the craving cannot be turned back. This is making the same point as the Yukiṣaṣṭikā when it says:

How can one who possesses a mind with abiding
Avoid the arising of the great poison of the afflictions?^{752}

Then it explains that unless one destroys the object conceived of (zhen yul) in the perception of true [existence], one will conceive of the object as truly existent and that by the force of abiding [in such a thought] the manifest afflictions that have been temporarily suppressed by meditating on the sixteen aspects once again are born within one’s mental continuum. To teach this through an example [the Bodhicaryāvatāra] says:

The mind that possesses an object
Abides within something.
This mind, which is devoid of emptiness,
May have stopped them but again they are born,
As in the equipoise of nondiscrimination.
Hence, meditate on emptiness.^{753}

Be aware, therefore, that the Son of the Conqueror, Sāntideva, and the glorious Candrakīrti are singing the same tune (dbyangs) and are of one and the same intention (dgongs pa)! In every respect, whether it concerns the fact that śrāvakas and pratyeṣakabuddhas understand the selflessness of phenomena, or whether it concerns their exposition of the common and uncommon afflictions, [they both hold] the special tenets of the Prāsaṅgika school.

In regard to the line “craving comes about due to the condition of feeling,” Cha pa [Chos kyi seng ge]^{754} and brTseg dBang phug seng ge^{755} claim that were that so one could prove the existence of the effect by reason of the existence of the cause. In this way they urge the absurdity of contradiction upon the Bodhicaryāvatāra. In so doing, they are just blithering without knowing whom their actual opponent is, for even in the sūtras, in the teaching on the twelve branches of dependent arising, it says “craving is conditioned by feeling.” Hence, [the Bodhicaryāvatāra’s presentation] is completely identical [to that in the sūtras]. Such behavior, [that is, the repudiation of the Buddha’s word,] is quite prevalent among Tibetan scholars.

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.2. The Explanations of This Point
According to the Abhisamayālaṃkāra, the Uttaratantra, and Their Commentaries

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.2.1. How the Abhisamayālaṃkāra and Its Commentaries Explain This Point^{757}

The [verse]:

[Opponent:] Because there are no distinctions in the dharmadhatu
The lineages cannot be different.
[Reply:] It is because of the peculiarities of the dependent (brten pa) phenomenon
That we express their division.^{758}

proves that śrāvakas and pratyeṣakabuddhas have an understanding of reality.

In this case, the basis for the perception (dmigs rten), [that is, the object,] is called basis (rten). It is not [a distinction into] “basis (rten) and what is based [or dependent = brten pa] phenomenon” in the sense of “what is caused and cause” [but instead in the sense of “object perceived and perceiver”]. Therefore, even though the division of the āryan beings of the three vehicles into different lineages is not made in regard to reality qua perceived basis or perceived object (dmigs yul) of their respective gnosces, [as these are all identical, in each case being reality,] the division into the three lineages of the three vehicles is made with regard to reality in so far as the three gnosces, which are the dependent [phenomena, that is, “the based” = brten pa], the perceivers that take reality as their object. When meditated on, these act as the causes of the different āryan states, hence the division into three lineages. This is the meaning.

To explain a little more extensively the way that Ārya [Vimuktasena] and Haribhadra deal with such a point, in the section of the Pañcavimsatikāloka on the verse, ["Since there are no distinctions in the dharmadhatu," it says:

Conception (rtog pa) and misconception (rnam par rtog pa) refer to the conceptualization (mgon par zhen pa) of entities (dgongs po) and their marks (mishn ma), respectively. As they do not exist, they should be understood within nonattachment itself. This very nonexistence is the reality of all phenomena. Hence, this [work, the AA.] is
teaching us that the dharmadātū, being the cause of the qualities of the āryan, is the "inherently abiding lineage" (rang bzhin du gnas pa'i rigs), the basis for spiritual accomplishment (sgrub pa'i rian). 759

This explains that the emptiness of truth (bden stong), that is, the nonexistence of entities and their signs as they are grasped by the attachment that conceives of them as truly existent, is the dharmadātū.

Then the following objection is raised: "If such a dharmadātū were the lineage (rigs), it would follow that all sentient beings abide within the lineage because that dharmadātū is something that generally abides in us all," but when we say "so and so abides in the lineage" we are thinking of a lineage during the time [that person is on] the path [and not something possessed by all beings]. In response to this, the Pañcaviṃśatikāloka says: "To the extent that x, when perceived, acts as the cause of the qualities of the ārya, to that extent is x said to be the lineage. Hence, how can you urge such an absurdity in this case?" 760 For this same reason the Acārya Haribhadra also says: "Just as it is perceived in the stages of the realization of the śrāvaka vehicle, likewise, for the purpose of realizing the qualities of the ārya, the dharmadātū is considered to be the cause. It is in this way that it is given the name lineage." 761

These sources are making the point that just because [beings] have reality (chos nyid) does not qualify them as abiding in the lineage at the time of the path, [that is, it does not make them fully enlightened beings]. Instead, it is specifically referring to the lineage of the individual vehicles, that is, the dharmadātū, which, when perceived and meditated upon by the paths of each of the three vehicles, acts as the specific cause for obtaining the qualities of [24] the ārya. Hence, by means of these texts that explain explicitly that the gnosia of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha āryans perceive the dharmadātū, we can prove indisputably that they accept the position that śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha āryas understand selflessness.

Moreover, as proof that the dharmadātū is the lineage of all three vehicles, we find that both the Pañcaviṃśatikāloka and the Great Commentary on the Asaṅgāhasārika 762 say: "Therefore it is said that all āryan personalities are distinguished by means of the noncomposite (du ma byas) [emptiness]." 763 The meaning is this. Distinguished refers to the act of explanation. What is being distinguished? "All āryan personalities." From what [are they being distinguished]? From all ordinary beings. How [are they being distinguished]? By means of whether or not they directly perceive the noncomposite dharmadātū. Were this not so, and instead were one to explain [the quote] as distinguishing [āryans from ordinary beings] on the basis of whether they have the dharmadātū, then you may be able to distinguish āryans from nonexistent phenomena [in this way], 764 but you could not distinguish āryans from any other existing phenomena whatsoever, [as all existing phenomena, like āryans, possess the dharmadātū].

Just as [the previous works] have expressed [this point], the Vajracchedikā also says: "It is for the purpose of distinguishing the āryan personalities by means of the uncompounded." 765

[Opponent:] Then how do you interpret the following citation from the Abhisamāyālaṁkāra, which explains that though the pratyekabuddha path eliminates the "misconceptualization of the object" (gzung rtog) it does not eliminate the "misconceptualization of the subject" (‘dzin rtog):

The path of the rhinoceroslike one, [that is, of the pratyekabuddha,] should be understood, in brief, to be based [on two conditions]: (a) that a misunderstanding of the object (gzung don rtog pa) has been eliminated, and (b) that a misunderstanding of the subject (‘dzin don rtog pa) has not been eliminated. 766

[Reply:] The meaning of this scriptural citation is this. It is not correct to say that though the pratyekabuddha establishes by means of a valid cognition that external objects exist in general, by refuting through valid cognition the fact that external objects truly exist, they eliminate misconceptualization of the object. Were that so, the misconceptualization of the subject would also have had to have been eliminated because, as I have explained over and over again, if one ascertains by means of ultimate reasoning the truthlessness of one phenomenon, one must have the ability to ascertain the truthlessness of any other phenomenon whatsoever simply by turning one's mind toward it at will. If on the other hand one claims that by refuting with valid cognition even the nominal existence of external objects one ascertains the object to be truthless, and that by refuting with valid cognition even the nominal existence of the subject one eliminates misconceptualizing the subject, then the claim that the āryan bodhisattva eliminates the misconceptualization of the subject, [that is, of consciousness,] is tantamount to ascertaining with valid cognition that consciousness does not exist even nominally. This is utter nihilism.

Hence, because it is the only plausible choice, we propose the following interpretation of this scriptural passage. By understanding that external objects do not exist even nominally, the misconceptualization of the object is eliminated, and because consciousness, although being established by a valid cognition as existing nominally, is not ascertained by a valid cognition to be truthless, the misconceptualization of the subject is not abandoned. The commentarial traditions of both Ārya [Vimuktasena] and Haribhadra also interpret it in this way. Therefore, to say:

How amazing the scholar who understands there to be a similarity Between pratyekabuddhas, who advocate the truth of the subject, And the Vijñānavādin, who advocates that ultimately Subject and object are not two.

is a cause for laughter. 767
Therefore, the Abhisamayālakāra repeatedly states on the one hand that, because śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have no understanding of the selflessness of phenomena, śrāvaka āryans understand merely the sixteen [aspects] of the four noble truths such as impermanence and so on, that pratyekabuddhas understand that external objects do not exist while not understanding that consciousness is truthless, and that the bodhisattvas understands that even consciousness is truthless. On the other hand it states that all of the āryan persons [śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas as well as bodhisattvas] of the three vehicles equally understand the selflessness of phenomena.

Not only does the Abhisamayālakāra teach this, but even the Hinayāna sūtraśastra explains these two [apparently contradictory] possibilities. What is the purpose of stating these [two contradictory stances]? Even among the disciples who possess the lineage of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas there are two types: namely, those whose faculties are utterly ripe and those whose faculties are not. Hence, as I have already explained, [these two different claims are expounded in the scriptures] so as to accommodate both of these [types of disciples]. Though these two sets of two explanations are put forth, one must realize that the explanation that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not understand the selflessness of phenomena is set forth only for the sake of select disciples [whose mental faculties are not completely ripe], whereas the explanation that they do understand it must be taken to be the correct one. This, for example, should be understood in the same light as the Pramāṇavārttika’s explaining that external objects both do and do not exist.

Nonetheless, in the system of Ārya [Vimuktsena] and Haribhadra the understanding that “the person is not an independent substance that shares no characteristics with the aggregates” is accepted as being the full-blown understanding of the selflessness of the person. It is because of this that they accept that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena. They do not, however, accept that “to understand the full-blown selflessness of the person” means “to understand the person’s being empty of truly existing,” [as do the Prāsaṅgikas, for example]. Be aware, however, that the ultimate intention of the root text of the Abhisamayālakāra, [as opposed to the interpretations offered by the preceding two commentators.] is a Prāsaṅgika one, as it accepts (1) that the person’s being empty of true existence is the meaning of the selflessness of the person, and (2) that there is no such thing as “inherent existence,” even nominally. This method [of interpretation] will be explained more extensively elsewhere.

What is more, as it says in the Great Exposition of the Avatāra:

The meaning of saying that one should realize that in their system, that is, in the commentaries on the Alamkāra, there are two types [of interpretation] is this. It does not mean that in the system of Ārya [Vimuktsena] and Haribhadra there is taught [the existence] of two kinds of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha āryans, some of which do understand the selflessness of phenomena and some of which do not. Instead, in a previous section, the possibility of these two kinds [of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha āryans] is taught in the Abhisaṃyālakāra in the context of the path knowledge which cognizes the path of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha (nyan rang gi lam shes pa’i lam shes), and as it is taught for the purpose of accommodating those [disciples] who possess the lineage of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha, it implies that even in the Hinayāna there are both fit and unfit vessels for the profound [doctrine of emptiness] who are to be accommodated. Because, [from among these two, the fit and unfit,] the latter outnumbers the former, for the most part their path is more extensively taught.

So, as it says here, come time to teach the profound [doctrine of emptiness] to those of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha lineage whose minds are not yet ripe, there exist in the Abhisamayālakāra many instances in which the sixteen aspects [of the four noble truths] such as impermanence and so on and only the rough selflessness of the person are taught, these being paths that ripen those who are unfit vessels. To accommodate those of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha lineage who are fit vessels for actually receiving the teachings of the profound [doctrine of emptiness], however, once their minds have become ripe the Abhisamayālakāra sets forth an exposition [of emptiness] based on the premise that even śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha must come to an understanding of selflessness. In this way [we also see that the preceding citation] teaches us that even Ārya [Vimuktsena] and Haribhadra accept that there exist these two ways of teaching [this point in the AA]. How could anyone with half a mind believe that the distinction between “those whose minds are ripe” and “those whose minds are not” is made in regard to ordinary sentient beings, but that the āryans’ minds are not ripe?

If one were to accept that in the system of the Ārya [Vimuktsena] and Haribhadra there are some śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who do not understand reality, it would follow that some āryans would be “distinguished by means of the noncomposite” whereas others would not be so distinguished. Were this so, how could [the texts] explain that “all āryans are distinguished by means of the noncomposite”? What is more, to take that to be the purport of [Tsong kha pa’s] Exposition (rNam bshad) makes it seem as though [the work] is the misconceptualization of a moron who has never learned to think subtly; and so here do not explain [this gloss] as being more subtle, just explain it as being wrong (zhib par ma bshad kyi log drs bshad par bya’o!).

Now [it is true that] other Svātantrikas such as Bhavya believe that the Hinayāna arhat does not [in general] have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena, that is, that those whose lineages as śrāvakas and pratye-
buddhas are definite (rigs nges pa), first study the Hinayāna path, need not understand the selflessness of phenomena, and in this way, without entering another path, obtain arhanthship by means of their own path. It is not, however, right to accept that in their system they hold the position that no śrāvaka or pratyekabuddha has an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena. This is because in the system of any Svaśāntika it is held that there are such things as bodhisattvas who, being of indefinite lineage (ma nges pa'i rigs can), first, when they abide in the Mahāyāna path, set themselves to studying and contemplating the selflessness of phenomena and after having meditated on it fall from their own path and come to abide in the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha paths; and because it is necessary to consider as a possibility their ever having come to perfect the continuity of the meditation on that selflessness which had been previously understood, one must also accept that they can come to understand it even directly.

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.2.2. The Explanation of the Meaning of the Uttaratantra and Its Commentary

Others have used [the following two citations] to substantiate the claim that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lack an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena. The Uttaratantra says: "Someone who lacks eyes cannot see the radiating orb of the sun." And the Commentary states:

In brief, four kinds of personalities are said not to possess the eye that sees the tathāgatagarbha. What are these four? They are as follows: ordinary beings, śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have newly entered the vehicle. As it has been said: "Oh Lord, this tathāgatagarbha is not an object that can be understood by those who have fallen into the view in regard to the permissible group [of aggregates] (jigs tshogs la lta ba), by those who delight in the distorted, and by those whose minds waver in regard to emptiness." [The interpretation of this passage, however, is not [as they would have it], for by explaining it in that way it would imply, absurdly, that no ordinary being, nor even a bodhisattva who has newly entered the path, could have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena, for this same explanation must [according to them] be interpreted to mean that no śrāvaka or pratyekabuddha has an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena [and as all four are mentioned in the citation, what applies to the latter two must also apply to the former two]. If it is accepted [that no ordinary being or bodhisattva has such an understanding], then it follows, absurdly, that even a bodhisattva on the path of preparation (sbyor lam) could not understand the selflessness of phenomena.

Moreover, were [this interpretation correct] it would follow, absurdly, that the root text and commentary suffer from the fault of actually being self-contradictory in so far as they say [on the one hand] that:

The self-arisen ultimate
Is to be understood by means of faith, whereby explaining that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do understand the tathāgatagarbha by means of their faith in the Tathāgata, whereas [according to you the previous passage is stating] that they do not understand it at all. This follows because if the Tathāgata is understood by means of faith, he must have been understood.

Therefore, while those scriptural passages are saying is as follows. That "they fall 'into the view in regard to the permissible group [of aggregates]' " means that some sentient beings have not generated within their minds the valid cognition that counteracts the way in which the self of the person is viewed. That "they delight in the distorted" means that some śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not understand the subtle selflessness of the person due to their misconceptualization of impermanence and so on as truly [existing]. Because they do not possess the fortune of understanding, as yet, the subtleties of the selflessness of phenomena, [emptiness] is said not to be the object of those bodhisattvas who have newly entered the path and "whose minds waver in regard to emptiness."

In what way are they not objects experienced [by those individuals]? Those beings who lack eyesight cannot understand what the orb of the sun [is like] under their own power, that is, seeing it with their own eyes. Still, following the explanations of other beings they can come to ascertain that "the orb of the sun must be somewhat like this." Likewise, those persons [described earlier] cannot employ reasoning under their own power to understand the tathāgatagarbha, but following the teachings of the Tathāgata they are said to come to an understanding of it gradually by means of faith. Were one to explain [these citations] as teaching that no ordinary being, śrāvaka, or pratyekabuddha understands reality at all, it would make no sense.

What is more, in the Commentary to [the stanza] that goes:

There are four types of stains: that of the justful, that of the heterodox, that of the śrāvaka, and that of the pratyekabuddha.

where it explains the three types of misguidedness (thabs ma yin pa la zhus pa) it says:

The proud misperceive emptiness, and those who misperceive emptiness also misperceive emptiness even as regards the door of libera-
tion. Overpowered by this, it is easy for a mountain of misperception [to occur] in regard to the person, Kāśyapa. But the proud’s misperception of emptiness is not so.\textsuperscript{779}

If this is saying that misconceptualizing emptiness to truly exist is misguided, what need is there to claim that it must also be saying that misconceptualizing things to truly exist is misguided. Hence, this scripture is teaching us that they are misguided who seek liberation and yet have misconceptions [concerning the nature of phenomena], [thinking that things] truly exist, lacking as they do an understanding of the full-blown [doctrine of] selflessness. Hence, in our system all realists are misguided.

Immediately following [that latter] citation, it says:

There are two ways to be on the right track: (1) abiding within the ascertainment of the real (yang dag pa nges pa nyid du zhugs pa) that is associated with the vehicle of the śrāvakas, and (2) that associated with the vehicle of the pratyekabuddhas.\textsuperscript{780}

Now because such an explanation that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are on the right track does not mean that they are on the right track with regard to compassion and the arising of the altruistic mind (sams bskyed pa), [instead it must be claiming that they are on the right track] with regard to the wisdom that understands selflessness. Specifically, it must be referring to the fact that they realize full-blown truthlessness, for within the present context, that is, when put in terms of being on the right track or on the wrong track, it is not understanding truthlessness that is here explained to be “being on the wrong track.” Hence, these scriptures make it quite clear that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena.

[Opponent:] Well then, why does the Commentary on this section say:

that is, except for those beings who abide in the Mahāyāna and who have stainless understanding. Besides these, there are four kinds of beings, and they are (1) the lustful, (2) the heterodox, (3) śrāvakas, and (4) pratyekabuddhas. They do not understand the tathāgatagarbha; and the stains that do not allow [the tathāgatagarbha] to become manifest are also fourfold.\textsuperscript{781}

[Reply:] This is an explanation of the fact that they do not understand the stainless tathāgatagarbha and that it is not manifest [within them], where what it means by “having the tathāgatagarbha become manifest by means of the elimination of the four stains” is the attainment of the dharmakāya, for the Commentary on this section says:

Those four dharmas, such as trust and so forth, that is, the antidotes, are what when meditated on bring about for the bodhisattvas the attainment of the perfection of the incomparable dharmakāya. The fourfold stains of these kinds of beings are the fourfold stains.\textsuperscript{782}

And again, the Commentary to the Uttaraāntara says:

From the cause, which is the improper mentation in which the childish who possess subconscious [obscurations] and who possess the apprehension of signs engage in objectification, there arises the afflictions. From the cause, the afflictions, there arises karma. From the cause, karma, there arises birth. And all of these afflictions, and karma, and afflictions of birth that belong to the childish come about due to improperly understanding this one element [the tathāgatagarbha].\textsuperscript{783}

This is explaining that all of the afflictions of the childish arise under the influence of their not understanding the ultimate truthlessness [of things]. The words the apprehension of signs refers to the apprehension of true [existence], and the words improper mentation refer to apprehending things as inherently either pleasant or unpleasant, under the influence of that apprehension of true [existence]. It explains that based on that [improper mentation] all of the afflictions arise and that due to that one accumulates karma and is reborn in samsāra. This explanation is not the slightest bit different from the meaning of the previously explained quotes from the Bodhicaryāvatāra and Ratnāvali.

Moreover, in this section the Commentary quotes a śūtra:

Oh Mañjuśrī, there can be no thought, cognition, or being conscious of what does not arise and does not cease; and that of which there is no thought, cognition, or being conscious there is no misconception (kun tu rtog pa), no misconception qua improper mentation. The practice of proper mentation does not elicit ignorance. Whatever does not elicit ignorance does not elicit the twelve links of existence.\textsuperscript{784}

It is stating that due to mistakes, namely, all of the proliferations of dualistic appearances of thought, cognition, and consciousness, [we apprehend] true arising, and that by means of proper mentation, namely, by means of the direct understanding that there is no true arising, we come to abandon the ignorance of apprehending true [existence], the misconceptualization that consists of improper mentation, and that by abandoning that we abandon the twelve links of existence. Therefore, there is not the slightest difference in the explanation that the innate apprehension of true [existence] is afflicted ignorance, and the glorious Candrā’s explanation that the counteractive force of the perfect wisdom of truthlessness is necessary to free ourselves from samsāra.

One should be aware of the fact that even though the Acārya Āryāśaṅga interprets the purport of the śūtras of the final wheel from a Vijnāpātmāra viewpoint in such works as the Bhūmis, the Saṃvaśya, and the Mahāyanasam-
graṇa, and so on, in this Commentary to the *Uttaratantra* he properly explains the philosophical viewpoint of the *Prāsaṅgikas*. Though there are a multitude of reasons [for saying this], as it would lengthen [our discussion] excessively, I will not write [further on this point] here.

Therefore, those who would maintain that in the *Maitreya-dharma* and in the system that follows them śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas [are not accepted] as understanding the selflessness of phenomena are like those who, bereft of the eyes of intelligence, follow and then commit themselves to the mere words of their ancestors. In other words, it is pointless!

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.4. An Extensive Explanation of Scripture and Logical Reasoning Proving That It Is Correct [to Claim That] Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Have an Understanding of the Selflessness of Phenomena

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.4.1. The Exposition of the Logical Reasoning

[Question:] Among the beliefs of the Mahayanists are two great traditions, one that believes that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas understand the selflessness of phenomena, and one that believes they do not. So which do you yourself follow and advocate?

[Reply:] I myself, under my own power, am not endowed with the ability to present arguments in regard to the tradition of any Mahayanist. Nonetheless, through the kindness of my holy guru, who is free from all error, I have come to an unmistakable understanding that the stainless radiance of the logic of the glorious Candra has made clear the correct path of the meaning of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna's] purport. Based on this I have generated a fearless self-confidence in argument and analysis after having seen that, outside of the tradition of the glorious Candra, all of the explanations of the purport of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] and the Conqueror [Sākyamuni], when examined in the light of the scriptural passages and logical reasoning that follow his methods, are like a pile of leaves exposed to a strong wind.

Some maintain that merely accustoming oneself to the direct insight (mgon sum du mchod pa) of the emptiness of a permanent, unitary, and independently existing person and to the sixteen [aspects] of the four truths, such as impermanence and so on, one can completely do away with the apprehension of the self of the person and the stains of the afflictions. To those who advocate this position, I pose the following questions:

1. Suppose one accustoms oneself, in accordance with the divisions of meditative practice, to the valid cognition that understands as impermanent all the entities that, from among phenomena and persons, you accept as being examples of phenomena. Will one or will one not then come to completely perfect clarity in regard to the object meditated on in such a way that those entities are directly perceived to be impermanent?

   If one does not, then, likewise, it would follow that even if one understands the sixteen aspects of the four truths, such as impermanence, and then accustoms oneself to them, that neither can one come [to perfect the clear appearance of these sixteen, as one was not able to perfect the clear appearance of even one]. What is more it contradicts what is claimed [in the following scriptural passage]:

   Thus, by exceedingly accustoming oneself
   To what is real, [that is, emptiness,] and what is not,
   [that is, conventional properties of objects like impermanence etc.]
   One perfects the meditation,
   Bringing as its fruits a mind clear and nonconceptual.

   If accustoming oneself in this way does lead to completely perfecting clarity, then it follows that that alone can rid one completely of the seeds of the reifying misconception which apprehends phenomena to be permanent, because merely accustoming oneself to the direct perception of the aspects of the four truths, such as impermanence and so on, can rid one, [completely and] without a trace, of the reifying misconception that apprehends the person to be permanent.

   If one accepts that, then it follows that by means of completely abandoning the reifying misconception which apprehends phenomena to be permanent one can completely rid oneself of the obscurations to omniscience, for by means of ridding oneself completely of the seeds of the reifying misconception that apprehends the person to be permanent one is able to rid oneself completely of the afflictions. If one accepts that, then it follows, absurdly, that it is not at all necessary to meditate on the selflessness of phenomena as an antidote to the obscurations to omniscience.

   (2) [Opponent:] The direct realization of the aspects of the truth of suffering, such as impermanence and so on, refers to the direct realization of the subtle impermanence (phra ba'i mi stong pa) of the five aggregates that are taken up (nyer len gyi phung po lnga), the actual exemplifications of the truth of suffering. By means of accustoming oneself to this, one rids oneself of the seeds of the reifying misconception that apprehends the five aggregates to be permanent. By means of that, one rids oneself of the seeds of the apprehension of the person, which is imputed on the basis of the five aggregates as something permanent, unitary, and independent. Then one completely rids oneself of the afflictions. This is what we maintain. We are not claiming that by means of accustoming oneself to directly seeing the impermanence of the person one gets rid of the seeds of the apprehension of the person as permanent, thereby completely ridding oneself of the afflictions. Hence, we are not at fault.
[Reply:] Well then, what are the five aggregates, phenomena or person? If they are phenomena, it contradicts the claim [made by some of you] that the exemplification of the person is the fivefold aggregates, [and by others that, from among the five, it is the aggregate of] consciousness.

If they are the person then, as you are claiming that strictly by means of accustoming oneself to seeing the person [the five aggregates] as impermanent one can rid oneself of the seeds of the apprehension of the person as permanent, and that then, by means of that, completely rid oneself of the affections, you have not been able to extricate yourself from falling into the same absurd conclusion I mentioned earlier.

(3) It follows [from your position] that by means of abandoning the seeds of the apprehension of a self in regard to such phenomena as the aggregates one necessarily abandons the seeds of the apprehension of a self in regard to the person, for by means of abandoning the seeds of the apprehension of the permanence of such phenomena as the aggregates one necessarily abandons the seeds of the apprehension of the permanence of the person. This reason is something that you yourself actually accept. If you accept [the predicate], then your tenets are undermined, for [in your own system] you accept that to abandon the seeds of the apprehension of the self of the person it is not necessary to realize the selflessness of phenomena. When I state this, what can you reply?

(4) It follows that you are unjustified in distinguishing between the realization of the impermanence and so on of the four noble truths as a path that can extirpate the seeds of the affections and the rough peace (chi rags) of worldly beings as a path that cannot extirpate the seeds of the affections, for there is no difference as to the way in which both of these paths apprehend their object; that is, neither of them comes to understand the ultimate reality of the object, the objects of both of these paths being conventional realities (kun rdzob kyi gnas tshul du grub pa). So what do you say to this?

[Opponent:] The scriptures explain that these two paths differ as to whether or not they can extirpate the seeds of the affections.

[Reply:] Who is claiming that the scriptures do not claim this? Just prove [to me] through reasoning that such an explanation is of a definitive meaning that is to be taken literally. We have already said that this was an exposition spoken for the benefit of those disciples who are not fortunate enough to directly realize the subtle selflessness of the person.

(5) If what is taught in the sûras of the first wheel, [that is, the first turning of the wheel of the doctrine.] such as the fact that the mere realization of the person's being devoid of a permanent, unitary, and independent self is the full-blown realization of the selflessness of the person, is of definitive meaning that is to be taken literally, then how do you avoid advocating that one also ascertains the selflessness of phenomena merely by negating that subject and object are different substances, as taught in the sûras of the final wheel.

If you claim that to define the selflessness of phenomena in merely that way, [that is, merely in terms of their nonduality.] is in logical contradiction to what is taught in the sûras of the middle wheel, that is, that the fact that all phenomena are empty of truly existing is the reality of phenomena, then in the same way you should also be claiming that to define the selflessness of the person in merely the way it is explained in the first wheel is in logical contradiction to what is taught in the sûras of the middle wheel, namely, that the person's being empty of inherently existing is the reality of the person. Both cases are completely similar.

(6) If something is the apprehension of true [existence] (bden 'dzin) in regard to a phenomenon x, does it follow that it is also the apprehension of self (bdag 'dzin) in regard to that phenomenon x, or does it not? If it does not, then it undermines [your position] that if something is the apprehension of true existence, then it follows that it is the apprehension of self. If it does, then it follows, absurdly, that the mind that apprehends the true [existence] of the person apprehends the self in regard to the person, for it is the apprehension of true existence in regard to the person. There is no response to the three cycles!

(7) By reason of [your accepting] that all apprehensions of true [existence] must be apprehensions of the self of phenomena, not only are you forced into accepting, but you in fact [willingly] accept, that the apprehension of true [existence] in regard to the basis, the person, is a form of apprehension of the self of phenomena. If that is so, then it follows, absurdly, that all of the thoughts which, referring to phenomena as the basis, apprehend them to be permanent, unitary, and independent, are forms of the apprehension of the self of the person, for all thoughts which, referring to the person alone as the basis, apprehend true [existence] are forms of the apprehension of the self of phenomena. If you accept that, it follows, absurdly, that the conceptual thought that apprehends sound to be permanent and the conceptual thought that apprehends the pradhāna of the Sāṃkhya and so on are also forms of the apprehension of the self of the person. This critique undermines the positions of all you "logicians" in one fell swoop.

(8) The Abhidharmasamuccaya states: "[The truth of] cessation is defined as [the state] in which, having perceived reality, defiled entities, [that is, the affections and so on], cease." In this way, [we see] that the truth of cessation is said to refer to a specific [aspect] of reality, for [it states that] based on the inherent purity (rang bzhin rnam dag) the various seeds of the adventitious (blu bur) defilements (dri ma) are abandoned by means of the antidote. Hence, there is no difference whatsoever between scholars of the Mādhyamika and Cittamātra [schools in this regard]. All accept that if something is a truth of cessation, then it must be [a form of] reality. Now it follows [from all this] that śrāvaka āryans directly understand reality because they directly understand the truth of cessation. You actually accept the reason and the opposite [of the
predicate] and, because you in principle accept the pervasion, [you are left carrying] a great burden of the most heavy internal contradiction.

(9) The Cittamārinins accept that (a) all dependent entities (gzhan dbang) and conventional truths are objects that, when perceived, increase the afflictions; and (b) the objects that, when perceived, purify the obscurations belong exclusively [to the category of] the real (yongs grub). Thus, for them to advocate that all the objects of the gnosis by means of which the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas completely get rid of the afflictions are dependent entities, and that they cannot perceive the real is a great internal contradiction in their tenets.790

(10) Based on the apprehension of the person as permanent, unitary, and independent there arises the mind that apprehends “mine” (dag gir ba ’dzin pa’i blo) and the afflictions such as the lust that desires what pleases it and that does not desire what brings suffering. Likewise, based on the apprehension of the person as truly [existent] there arises, completely analogously, all of the conceptions of “mine” as truly [existent] and so forth. Therefore, it is a grave mistake to make the distinction that the complete abandonment of the afflictions requires abandoning the apprehension of the person as permanent, unitary, and independent, but that it does not require abandoning the apprehension of the person as truly [existent].

(11) It would follow [from your position] that there would be no relationship between all of the many instances in the scriptures when it says that at the end of the Lord’s discourse on the fact that all phenomena are empty of true existence, when he had set forth that exposition of the doctrine, so many hundreds of thousands of living beings attained the fruit of stream enterer, so many attained the fruit of once returner, and so on. [There would be no relationship between the doctrine preached and the fruit attained] because it is not possible for śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas to understand the selflessness of phenomena.

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.4.2. Bringing Scriptural Exegesis to Bear [on the Problem]791

[This section will include discussion] not only of the previously quoted [citations] from the Avatārabhāṣya but also other [scriptural passages] such as the following one from the Śīrāḍhyāśayarivarīta Sūtra quoted in the Prasannapāda:

For example, a certain man who is present when a magician does a trick will, when he sees the woman conjured up by the magician, generate a mind of attachment. Coming under the influence of a mind of attachment, the audience becomes fearful and uneasy. Arising from his seat, the man leaves. He cultivates in his mind the fact that this woman is impure, impermanent, suffering, and void. He cultivates in his mind the fact that she is selfless.

Translation

What do you think, oh son of the family, at that time, has that man proceeded correctly or has he proceeded incorrectly?

Lord, the efforts of that man to cultivate in his mind the impurity of a woman who does not exist, to bear in his mind her impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness are incorrect.

The Lord spoke: Oh son of the family, in the same way should one consider whatever monk or nun, layman or laywoman who cultivates in his or her mind the impermanence of a phenomenon that was never born, never arose, who cultivates in his or her mind the impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness [of that phenomenon]. I do not say that those fools meditate on the path, for they are abiding in error.792

And also, the Dhūyatātanūṣū Sūtra says: “Mañjuśrī, because they do not see [263] the noble truths as they are, sentient beings, whose minds are deluded with the four mistaken attitudes, cannot go beyond this wretched samsāra.”793 In response: “Mañjuśrī said, ‘Lord, please teach us what it is that, when perceived, allows beings to go beyond samsāra.’” In response to this request [the Buddha said]:

When one meditates on impermanence and so on in such a way that one conceives of it as truly [existent], thinking, “I have gone beyond samsāra . . . I have obtained nirvāṇa,” thinking, “I have understood suffering; I have abandoned its cause; I have actualized cessation . . . I have meditated on the path,” there is said to arise the thought “I have become an arhat,” and there arises the thought “If I temporarily abandon the manifest afflictions, as they were explained previously, all of the defilements [must be] exhausted.” But it is said that when they see themselves about to take another birth at the time of death, they come to doubt the Buddha [and his teachings] and because of this fault they fall into the great hells. Now this is something that applies to some who abide in such a [wrong] path but not to all. Then Mañjuśrī says, “then how should the four noble truths be understood? When I asked previously about liberation from samsāra you said that it was necessary to see the four noble truths as they are, but what is the meaning of that?” In response to that [the Buddha said], “Mañjuśrī, whoever sees that all composite things are not born understands suffering. Whoever sees that all phenomena do not arise abandons the cause [of suffering]. Whoever sees that all phenomena are utterly nirvāṇa actualizes cessation. Whoever sees that all phenomena are totally unborn has meditated on the path.”794

Having said that, it goes on to clearly state that that path leads to nirvāṇa, the end of rebirth. It states that insight into the four truths as essenceless is what
liberates one from samsāra, and that a path which is still conjoined to the apprehension of true existence cannot liberate one from samsāra. The Vajra-
chedikā also says:

"Subhūti, what do you think, does he who is a stream enterer think to himself 'I have obtained the fruit of stream enterer'?" Subhūti spoke: "No Lord, he does not. And why is that? Lord, it is because he has entered nothing. It is because of that that he is called a stream enterer."\[^796\]

and also:

"Lord, suppose there is a stream enterer, and suppose he thinks to himself 'I have obtained the fruits of stream enterer,' he would be apprehending its self. He would be apprehending sentient beings, he would be apprehending a life force, he would be apprehending a personality."\[^797\]

The last three fruits [once-returner, nonreturner, and arhati] are treated in a similar way [in what follows of this passage]. To claim, however, that when the stream enterer thinks to himself "in a merely nominal way have I obtained the fruit of stream enterer" that that is the apprehension of the self is something both baseless and out of context. Hence, it is saying that he does not think to himself "I have obtained the fruit of stream enterer" in such a way that he conceives [of things] as truly [existent]. Therefore, it clearly teaches us that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas possess the wisdom that understands truthlessness.

Moreover, in [the section] on "the instruction on practice" (sgrub pa la gdoms pa), the Pañcavinśati says:

"If this world were filled with monks the likes of Śāriputra and Maudgalāyāna, like a swamp packed with reeds, their wisdom would not amount even to one one-hundredth of a bodhisattva's single day of meditation on the wisdom engaged in the mother, [that is, which mediates on the perfection of wisdom]." Having said that, the Venerable Śāriputra said this to the Lord: "Lord, the wisdom of a stream enterer, once returner, nonreturner and arhati, the wisdom of a pratyekabuddha, the wisdom of a bodhisattva, a great being, and the wisdom of the tathāgata, the arhati, the perfectly enlightened one, all of those wisdoms have no divisions; they are solitary, unborn, natureless, and empty. Lord, if what has no divisions is solitary, unborn, natureless, and empty, cannot be separated, cannot be perceived as different, then, Lord, how can the bodhisattva, the great being, when he meditates for a single day on the wisdom that is engaged in the perfection of wisdom be said to surpass the wisdom of all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas?"\[^798\]

The meaning of the question he is asking is this. One should not take it to mean that "it follows, absurdly, that it is not possible to distinguish such wisdoms because the wisdoms of all of the ārya persons of the three vehicles, being empty of truly existing, have no divisions." This is because, though they have no divisions ultimately, they can be divided conventionally. Hence, it is correct to give as an answer "there is no problem" [from the point of view explained earlier], whereas it would be unrelated, [that is, out of context,] to give the answer that "there is a great difference from the viewpoint of whether or not they possess all of the aspects of method and whether or not [their wisdom] is conjoined to [bodhi] cittaotpāda and compassion and so on. Therefore, the critique implicit in the question is that, "it follows, absurdly, that it is incorrect to distinguish the wisdom understanding reality into superior and inferior, depending upon which of the ārya persons of the three vehicles it belongs to, because, all being inherently solitary, inherently unborn, and empty, that is, lacking existence by virtue of own nature, like water in water, they cannot be divided into different varieties." Therefore, the reply that goes "even though there are no divisions as regards the aspects of such wisdoms, it is possible to distinguish them into superior and inferior from the point of view of whether or not the wisdom meditated on possesses the supreme of all forms of method and whether or not it is conjoined to cittaotpāda" is extensively taught in such passages as the following:

"Śāriputra, what do you think, does the wisdom of all of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas come close to the goal of the bodhisattvas, the great beings, who, when they meditate for a single day, engaged in the perfection of wisdom, are engaged in the knowledge of all aspects, which possesses the supreme of all aspects, and who think 'I will work for the benefit of all sentient beings; I will become perfectly enlightened in regard to all phenomena and all aspects; I will bring all sentient beings to nirvāṇa?'"\[^267\]

Śāriputra spoke: "It is not so, Lord!"

The Lord spoke: "What do you think, Śāriputra, no matter how large may be the totality of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, do any of them think to themselves 'I will become perfectly enlightened into a state of unsurpassed perfect enlightenment, and having done so, I will emancipate all sentient beings into a state of nirvāṇa without the remainder of the aggregates?'"\[^268\]

Śāriputra spoke: "It is not so, Lord!"

The Lord spoke: "Therefore, Śāriputra, you should understand this exposition. The wisdom of all of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas does not approach even the hundredth part of the bodhisattva's, the great being's, single day of meditation on wisdom."\[^799\]
Hence, it clearly explains that the inferiority of the understanding of the lesser vehicle and superiority of the greater is determined not by the fact that [the former] does not understand emptiness and that [the latter does], but by the fact that [the former's wisdom] is not conjoined to a special kind of method, whereas [the latter's] is. Although many instances could be cited in support of such a position from the Extensive and Condensed Mother [Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras] as well, fearing that it would make my work verbose, I will forego citing [them here].

What is more, in many of the sūtras of the great vehicle many great śrāvakas such as the Ārya Mahākāśyapa, Sāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, Ānanda, Anuruddha, Subhuti, Upāli, Mahānāma, Purna Maitrāyaniputra, Ājñātakaunḍinya, and Aśvajit engaged in question-answer sessions with the Lord, in question-answer sessions with the likes of Mahāsūtra, and in question-answer sessions among themselves; by means of this they set forth the essencelessness of all phenomena, they set forth the equality of existence (sādiddhi) and peace (sāddhi), and they did so in an extensive way. When this is the case, claiming that śrāvakas do not have the slightest understanding of the essencelessness of phenomena is equivalent to denying the experience [of the senses].

Opponent:] All of those are false śrāvakas and not real śrāvakas.

[Reply:] Then it follows, absurdly, that, as the Five Honorable Ones (Inga sde bstan po), [the first five disciples whom the Buddha taught,] are śrāvakas in their lineage, the sūtra of the first wheel that was taught to them as the chief disciples is not a sūtra of the Hinayāna pīṭaka [because they were not real Hinayāna śrāvakas]. Also, [because you claim that all the ones I mentioned were fake śrāvakas,] name one example of a real śrāvaka in the actual entourage of the Lord.

Moreover, the Ārya Ratnagunasaṃcaya says:

Do not rely on those who think they are
Tathāgatas or śrāvakas,
Who accept themselves to be pratyekabuddhas or to be the King of the Doctrine.
There is nothing to be obtained!800

Also: "Even those who desire to train in the bhāmi of the śrāvakas must train in the perfection of wisdom."801 Such passages also clearly demonstrate that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have the wisdom that understands truthlessness. That this is the intention of the Ācārya, the Ārya [Nāgarjuna], is also indisputable. Concurring with the previously cited passage from the Ratnāvali, the Dharmadhātustava also says:

Whoever does not understand it
Circles in the three existences (sādiddhi)
I pay homage to the dharmadhātu
Which abides in all sentient beings. 802

It is saying that without understanding the dharmadhātu there is no emancipation from the three existences. The Nirvikalpapustava also says:

The path to emancipation that was taught
By the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas,
And buddhas is the one reality.
Realize that there is no other.

The Bodhicittavivarana also says that if one does not understand emptiness, one will not attain emancipation.

One out-and-out liar has said that that explanation from the Bodhicittavivarana is saying that if one does not understand the mere emptiness of a self of the person, then emancipation is not possible, that is, that it is not referring to emptiness qua ultimate [reality].

[Reply:] The one who advocates such [a view] is advertising himself or herself as one who has never seen the scripture of the Bodhicittavivarana. This is because the Bodhicittavivarana itself says:

The pacified mind will not become deluded.
The lack of delusion is the understanding of reality.
And the understanding of reality brings the attainment of emancipation. "Reality" and the "perfect end;" "Signlessness" and the "ultimate;" And the supreme bodhicitta are reality. They are explained to be emptiness. Whoever does not understand emptiness Has no possibility of emancipation. Those deluded ones will circle Within the prison of existence, the six realms. 803

So without having seen what precedes that passage they quote the last verse alone by itself and explain the purport [of the entire passage] merely by inference.

[On the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna Understanding of Nirvāṇa]

Moreover, let me offer some small explanation of the following passage from the Ratnāvali:

The Mahāyāna teaches birthlessness;
The other [yāna], extinction qua emptiness.
As there is identity in the meaning
Of extinction and birthlessness, refrain [from degrading the Mahāyāna]. 804

As regards the view that both of these [extinction and emptiness] are synonyms (don gchig), one opponent says: if essences existed, because extinction
would not be possible, if one accepts that when the śrāvakas obtain nirvāṇa their composite [of the aggregates] is exhausted, it would be necessary to accept that the composite [of aggregates] was inherently empty from the very beginning. That is why the Hinayāna sūtras' statement that when nirvāṇa is [271] attained the composite is exhausted and the notion in the Mahāyāna sūtras that the composite is empty are of the same meaning (don gcig).  
[Reply:] This is utterly wrong! Were that so, there would be no way to counteract the following reductio argument: "It follows, absurdly, that entities (dgongs po) and emptiness are synonyms because if something inherently existed, it could not be an entity." Therefore, the [actual] meaning [of their being synonyms] is this. [Let us first consider] this passage from a Hinayāna sūtra:

The complete abandonment of this suffering, definitely abandoning it, is purification, is extinction, is separation from attachment, is cessation, is pacification, is ability; not being conjoined to any other suffering, its not arising, its not being born, is peace. That is excellence. It is like this. The definite abandonment of all of the aggregates is the extinction of existence, is the separation from attachment, is cessation, is nirvāṇa.805

Now let us comment on the meaning of this passage. Because it employs the demonstrative pronoun [this] when it says this suffering, the section that states the position] from the viewpoint of the suffering or aggregates contained within a [single] continuum in this way goes from "the complete abandonment" up to "ability." [The section] from the viewpoint of the suffering of a future birth goes from "not being conjoined to any other suffering" up to "nirvāṇa." According to the realists' interpretation of this [passage], when one realizes nirvāṇa without remainder to say that "the aggregates are completely extinguished" cannot be taken to mean that the aggregates have primordially extinguished all inherent [existence] because they accept that the aggregates inherently exist. Therefore, they must explain the passage, and do indeed themselves accept that by the power of the path's complete abandonment [of the obstructions] the aggregates become extinct. This being the case, it follows, absurdly, that in the system of the realists the person who actualizes nirvāṇa without remainder could not possibly exist because (1) when one actualizes nirvāṇa without remainder, the person who is actualizing it does not exist, and (2) as long as that person exists, the nirvāṇa is not being actualized. They [the realists] accept the reasons, for they accept that when it is being actualized all composite entities and the aggregates become extinct, whereas all persons must be composite phenomena; and also because all persons must necessarily have aggregates. Because of this we cannot explain the meaning of this passage as the realists do.

According to us, the object of the gnosis of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas that completely allows them to abandon the afflictions pacifies all of the proliferations of dualistic appearances. By means of this, they actualize cessation which is [the fact that] all composite things, including the aggregates, have primordially extinguished inherent [existence]. This is what it means to actualize nirvāṇa without remainder in the Hinayāna, and this is what the sūtra is teaching.

The Hinayāna sūtras teach that the cessation which is the end of this kind of suffering is nirvāṇa and the Mahāyāna sūtras speak of a cessation that is the nonexistence of inherently [existing] birth. To claim that these two teachings are both of the same meaning is the point being made by the Ratnāvali passage [cited earlier]. Therefore, it is indisputable that this is teaching us that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddha arhants directly realize the selflessness of phenomena.

In this way [we can see] that this system sets forth the standard for whether or not a nirvāṇa is with or without remainder based on whether the arhant has left behind the composite aspect of his body. It does not accept that whether or not it is without remainder is determined by whether or not the aggregates of suffering have been extinguished. Because the arhant, who has completely abandoned the afflictions, has no remainder of the appearance of true [existence] within the equipoise that actualizes cessation, the [fact that] the aggregates and so on have primordially exhausted inherent [existence], he is said to have obtained nirvāṇa without remainder. Because in the aftermath (rges thob), when one has arisen from that [equipoise], there is a remainder of the appearance of the true [existence] of the aggregates and so on, [that non-equipped] state is called nirvāṇa with remainder. Therefore, they also do not believe that there is a definite order such that one must always first actualize nirvāṇa with remainder and then actualize nirvāṇa without remainder, [as having "awakened" from nirvāṇa without remainder, the equipoise, it is possible to once again enter nirvāṇa with remainder, that is, an aftermath state]. In contradistinction to this, that is, were it as it is [advocated by] the other system, not until the arhant had left behind the composite aspect, his body, could he be said to actualize nirvāṇa because the previously cited Hinayāna sūtra states that when nirvāṇa is actualized, all the suffering of this life is completely abandoned and extinguished. The Yuktisāṣṭikā, in the process of refuting the other [system]'s definition of nirvāṇa, says:

If the aggregates do not cease,
Although the afflictions may be exhausted, one does not [obtain] nirvāṇa.806

In the commentary to this, having cited that very Hinayāna sūtra quoted earlier, [Candrakirti] says in a very extensive way:

Now in that sūtra, the words "this suffering" refer to the suffering of the present [life]. It explains [the process within the present life] from
The phenomenon perceived then
Is the actualization of nirvāṇa. 809

This [refers] to the arhants direct realization of the inherent birthlessness of suffering. This is also the meaning of the sūtra when it says: “Monks, the perceived phenomenon is nirvāṇa,” and also when it says: “My births are exhausted. I have relied on the brahmācārya (tsangs bar spyod pa). I have done what was to be done. I will know no other existence after this one.”

Moreover, the following passage from the Yuktisāṅkikā also explains this same point in a more extensive way:

The knowledge of existence
Is what is called nirvāṇa.
Just as things that arise and are then destroyed
Are labeled as having “ceased,”
Likewise the Holy Ones
Accept a cessation that is like a magical creation.
Because they have been destroyed, cessation has occurred
But if it does not [require] knowing the composite,
For whom can that become an experience
And how can it be called destruction? 810

Therefore, this system [of interpretation] is a special great tradition for defining nirvāṇa, a tenet not held in common with any other philosophical school. In the process of defining nirvāṇa in this way one can effortlessly determine for oneself that the fact that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena is the holy belief of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna]. It seems that in all earlier and later [schools] other [than our own] who boasted of being “Prāsaṅgika Māhyamikas” there did not even occur the slightest suspicion as to the fact that the Ārya Father [Nāgārjuna] and his son [Āryadeva’s] definition of nirvāṇa may be different, that is, uncommon to that of other philosophical schools. Hence, we [have taken this opportunity] to clearly explain exactly the beliefs of the omniscient Lord of Yogis, our holy and glorious spiritual master [Tsong kha pa] who is a direct follower of the Ārya Father and his son.

Even though we have in an extensive way proven, by means of many scriptural citations and logical reasons, that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena, the following question nonetheless may be asked.

[Opponent:] We must accept that the sixteen aspects, such as impermanence and so on, and the selflessness that is the refutation of a self-sufficient substantially existent person (gang zag rang rgya thub pa’i rdzas yod) are established by valid cognition. Therefore, it is also necessary to accept that the chief disciples for whom these [doctrines] were taught accustom themselves to these objects that are established by valid cognition in this way. At that time,
by virtue of accustoming themselves to those objects, it is possible that those objects, when meditated on, can be understood directly. This is proven by the reason that goes “because it is a quality of the special mental continuum that, by accustoming itself, the basis can be grasped by that which apprehends it without having to exert repeated efforts.” That being the case, because that gnosis which newly and directly sees those objects is the path of seeing, it has the ability to eliminate all of the afflicted obstructions gotten rid of [on the path of] seeing. If that is accepted, it follows, absurdly, that by accustoming oneself to those objects that are directly perceived the afflicted obstructions to be gotten rid of [during the path of] meditation can be completely eliminated; and if that is accepted, you have repudiated your claim that simply by accustoming oneself to the selflessness that is the refutation of a self-sufficient and substantially existent person and to the understanding of the sixteen aspects, such as impermanence and so on, one is not able to eliminate even the smallest seed of the afflictions.

[Reply:] Well then, the sūtras of the final wheel teach a selflessness of phenomena that is the repudiation of the fact that subject and object are not different substances. It is necessary to accept that the chief disciples for whom this was taught establish this with a valid cognition and then meditate on it, and that by means of this meditation they come to newly and directly see that object. It would follow, absurdly, that at that time [they were engaged] in the Mahāyāna path of seeing. If that is accepted, it follows, absurdly, that that [path] has the ability to completely eliminate the obstructions to omniscience which are to be gotten rid of [during the path of] seeing. If that is accepted, it follows, absurdly, that by means of meditating on newly and directly seeing that object, one can completely eliminate the obstructions to omniscience that are to be gotten rid of [during the path of] meditation. If you accept that, it follows, absurdly, that to become enlightened is not at all necessary to understand the Madhyamaka view. How would you reply to all of this, for the logic in both this [and your own argument] are completely analogous.

Therefore, granted that the reasoning which establishes [the existence of] yogic direct perception (rnal ’byor mgon sum) proves that it is possible for one to first establish, by means of a valid cognition, such a selflessness of phenomena and then, meditating on it, to come to see it newly and directly. Nonetheless, that is not the Mahāyāna path of seeing, and though one may accustom oneself to that, it is not the supramundane Mahāyāna path of meditation. The statements that by means of accustoming oneself to the direct perception of such a selflessness of phenomena one can completely eliminate the obstructions to omniscience and then become enlightened must all be taken as statements of provisional meaning. Likewise, we do not claim that, even though the sixteen aspects, such as impermanence and so on, are established by valid cognition and then meditated on, it is impossible to see them directly, [that is, it is possible to directly experience them]. All we are saying is that to see them newly and directly in that way is not the Hinayāna path of meditation and that, even though one may accustom oneself to that, it is not the supramundane path of meditation; and that statements to the opposite effect, namely, that by completely abandoning the afflictions through meditation on the direct perception of the sixteen aspects, such as impermanence and so on, arhatship is attained, are all statements of provisional meaning.

This completes the extensive explanation determining whether or not śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena.

4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3. The Exposition of the Two [Kinds of] Obscurations (sgrība pa) and the Paths on Which They Are Abandoned

The exposition of the two obstructions as accepted by this Ācārya, [that is, Candrakīrti,] is different from that of any other philosophical school from the Śvātantrikas on down. In the Śvātantrika system the apprehension of true [existence] is a nonafflicted [form of] ignorance (nyön mongs can ma yin pa'i ma rig pa), and all of the manifest (mgon gyur ba) apprehensions of true [existence] are manifest obstructions to omniscience (shes bya'i sgrība pa mgon gyur ba). Also, the seeds (sa bon) that give rise to the apprehension of true [existence] are the seeds of the obstructions to omniscience. The Mahāyāna path of seeing completely eliminates all of the philosophical (kun brtags) obstructions to omniscience together with their seeds. The innate (lhan skyes) ones are eliminated in stages within the nine bhāmis. The six manifest basic afflictions and the twenty manifest subsidiary ones, held in common with the Abhidharma system and others, together with their analogues (mshung ldan) are the manifest afflicted obstructions (nyön mongs pa'i sgrība pa mgon gyur) and the seeds that give rise to them are the seeds of the afflicted obstructions (nyön sgrība gyi sa bon). [This is what the Śvātantrikas] accept.

As regards “afflicted ignorance,” some Cittamātrins and Mādhavyamika Mahāyānists accept that [it refers to] the view in regard to the permissible [group of aggregates] that [they take to be] the apprehension of the person as a self-sufficient and substantially existent [entity]. Others believe [that it refers to] a mental factor (sems byung) which is unclear or deluded as to the [four noble] truths or karma and its results, and they accept that afflicted ignorance and the view in regard to the permissible are not synonymous.

In this system, that is, in that of the Prāsaṅgikas, afflicted ignorance refers to the opposite of gnosis, which is the wisdom that understands reality, that is, selflessness. This does not refer to the mere absence of that wisdom or to something that is merely different from it, however, but to the active oppo-
site ('gal bla mi mthun phyogs), namely, the apprehension of true [existence] that is the reification that the person and phenomena exist inherently. Therefore, [the Prāśāṅgikas] accept that even the apprehension of a self of phenomena is afflicted ignorance. The Āvatārabhāṣya says:

In this regard, because sentient beings are deluded in their perception of how it is that things exist, they are nescient (gti mug). Ignorance, which has as its nature the ability to obscure the perception of [a thing’s] essence, reifying entities that have no own-nature, is the conventional (kun rdzob). 

Also: “In this way, we set forth conventional truths based on the afflicted ignorance which is the temporary collection of the branches of existence.”

And also, the Catuḥśatakatikā says:

One comes to possess attachment toward entities under the influence of afflicted ignorance (nyom mongs pa can gyi mi shes pa), which is a consciousness that reifies things into something more [than they are]. We determine [a state] to be the cessation of samsāra based upon someone’s having completely eliminated the seeds that throw one into samsāra. It is because this has been taught that [the root text] says:

The seed of existence is consciousness.
Objects are its sphere of activity (spyod yul).
If one sees the selflessness within objects,
The root of existence will cease.

As this explains, insight into the essencelessness of the object completely overturns the seeds of existence, the cause of attachment. From this, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas and the bodhisattvas who have obtained forbearance in regard to the dharma of nonarising achieve the reversal of samsāra.

And also, the Catuḥśataka says:

Just as the body organ, [that is, the organ of touch, pervades] the body
Nescience abides everywhere.
Therefore by destroying nescience
All the afflictions will also be destroyed.

In the Tiṅka to that it says: “Because nescience is delusion [that arises] from conceiving of those [objects] as if they truly [existed], it is determined to be a reification of things into true self natures (bden pa'i rang gi ngo bo).”

Now [let us discuss] the reason why that apprehension of true [existence] is believed to be afflicted ignorance. Because it directly contradicts the way in which the wisdom that understands selflessness apprehends things, ignorance is the active opposite of gnosis, the cognition that is the understanding of reality. Without eliminating the apprehension of the aggregates as truly [existent things] one cannot eliminate the apprehension of the person as a truly [existent thing]. Without eliminating that, under the influence of the [apprehension of the person as truly existent], one accumulates karma. Because that implies, as proven by the previously explained reasoning, that samsāra cannot be overturned, ignorance is [considered] to be the root of samsāra. Therefore, because this is the ignorance that is the first link among the twelve links of dependent arising, this is what is accepted as afflicted ignorance. The great Acārya Buddhāpiṭaka himself accepts this. The [Commentary] Buddhāpiṭaka says:

Therefore, the naturelessness of things is reality. By merely seeing that, emancipation is obtained. The Acārya Āryadeva also says:

The seed of existence is consciousness.
Objects are its sphere of activity.
If one sees the selflessness within objects,
The seeds of existence will cease.

And also:

Therefore, karma and the afflictions arise from a cause, that being conceptualizing things in an incorrect way. Conceptualizing things in an incorrect way arises from mental proliferations (spros pa); it arises from worldly (jig rten pa'i) mental proliferations. Those who possess the thought that conceives of phenomena found in the world and those not found [there with thoughts like] “this is a true [thing],” conceive of things in this way or that, and that is why conceptualization [is said to] arise from mental proliferations. Mental proliferations cease due to emptiness. Worldly mental proliferations [of things], both those found [in the world] and those not found [there], cease due to emptiness. The nature of entities cease due to the understanding of emptiness. They cease after having understood emptiness. Therefore, emptiness is reality, and by means of meditating on emptiness, one will come to understand reality. The understanding of reality is what we call emancipation. Again, the Acārya Āryadeva says:

In brief, all of the teachings of the tathāgatas
Can be condensed into two:
That phenomena do not endure
And that nirvāna is emptiness.

That this same point is the belief of the Acārya, the Ārya [Nāgārjuna], is unquestionable. This is because the Prajñāmūla says:
Emancipation [arises] from the exhaustion of karma and the afflictions. Karma and the afflictions [arise] from misconceptualizations. They [in turn] arise from mental proliferation, and mental proliferation Ceases due to emptiness.\textsuperscript{820}

Having said that it goes on to say how that emptiness should be thought of:

One overtops that which is expressed (brjod par bya ba) By overturning the objects of the mind (sems kyi spyod yul). Reality is similar to nirvāṇa In being unborn and unceasing.\textsuperscript{821}

It is saying that mental proliferation, the apprehension of true [existence], is the root of karma and the afflictions and that the understanding of emptiness eliminates them, so that one, of necessity, attains emancipation. Emptiness is also explained [therein] as being the dharmadhātu that is the cessation of all mental proliferations. Likewise, the Yuktisāṣṭikā also says:

If one finds any position whatsoever One will be seized by the writhing snakes of the afflictions. Whoever has a mind with no abode Will not be seized in this way.\textsuperscript{822}

It is saying that if one finds within the mind any abode, that is, any object apprehended as being truly existent, one will definitely be seized by the snakes of the afflictions. Hence, there is no doubt that he believes that the apprehension of true [existence] is the ignorance that is the root of all of the afflictions. We therefore also have proven that it is the Acārya's belief that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas understand the selflessness of phenomena [because they have obtained emancipation, which has the former as a requisite].

Because there are opposing ways of defining afflicted ignorance, there also are tremendous differences in the ways that the other afflictions are set forth, as follows. The view in regard to the perishable qua apprehension of the person as a self-sufficient and substantially existent thing, and the six root afflictions and twenty subsidiary afflictions that arise due to it, afflictions explained in a variety [of ways] in the Abhidharma pītakas of both the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, even in this [system, that is, in the Prāsaṅgika school], are accepted as being real afflictions. Based on the innate apprehension of true [existence], which is not recognized as an affliction in any system from the Śvātāntrikas on down, there arises a thought that apprehends the object as existing in an inherently pleasant or unpleasant way. Based on that there arise, one at a time, attachment, anger, and aversion. From conceiving that the three, pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feelings, exist inherently there arises craving, [aversion] and so forth. Even the attachments that arise based on the apprehension of true [existence] without depending on apprehending the person to be a self-sufficient substantially existent [entity] are considered to be afflictions. Therefore every affliction, be it desire, anger, pride, craving, or what have you, has two ways in which it can arise: it can arise based on the apprehension of the person as a self-sufficient and substantially existent [entity] or it can arise due solely to the apprehension of true [existence] without depending on the [former]. Hence, be aware that there are two [ways of considering the afflictions]: one is the exposition of the afflictions as it is commonly regarded [among the lower schools], that is, as it occurs in the Abhidharma pītakas of the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna; and the other is the exclusive exposition of the afflictions as it is regarded within this [Prāsaṅgika] system alone.

These afflictions, both common and exclusive, as per [the preceding exposition], together with their analogous mental factors (mshungs ldan), are the manifest afflicted obscurations (nyon sgrib mgon gyur) and the seeds that give rise to them are called the subconscious afflicted obscurations (nyon sgrib bag la nyal) or the germinal aspect of the afflicted obscurations (nyon sgrib sa bon kyi cha).

[Question:] Well then, what do they accept to be obscurations to omniscience?

[Reply:] The Avaśāraḥāya says:

The latent potentialities of ignorance (ma rig pa'i bag chags) are what block one's cutting through to phenomena. The existence of the latent potentialities of the likes of attachment and so forth are also the cause of such things as engaging in [actions with] the body and speech. These latent potentialities of ignorance, of attachment and so on are also exclusively what prevent omniscience and buddhahood. There is nothing else [that does so].\textsuperscript{823}

Hence, the point is clearly taught. In this [citation], the latent potentialities of ignorance refer to the latent potentialities of the apprehension of true existence, and the words "block one's cutting through to phenomena" are teaching the definition of an obscuration to omniscience. The words "engaging in [actions with] the body and speech" refer to the negative reflex actions (gnas ngan len) of body and speech, like "hopping like a monkey" and calling someone a stupid woman.\textsuperscript{824} The word also expresses that not only are the latent potentialities of attachment and so on that which blocks cutting through to phenomena, they are also the cause of the negative reflex actions of body and speech. Hence, it is demonstrating that those latent potentialities are the obscurations to omniscience.

The negative reflex actions of the mind are the aspect of mental unclarity in regard to the situation of phenomena that are difficult to understand, like, for example, Maudgalāyāna's saying that he could not perceive the rebirth of his mother into the worldly realm called the hell of brilliance with his extra-
sensory powers no matter how long he looked. This is included among "those things which block cutting through to phenomena."

[Opponent:] Because those latent potentialities of the afflictions that are the causes giving rise to the negative reflex actions of body and speech in arhants are afflicted obscurations, śrāvakāra arhants have not completely abandoned the afflicted obscurations.

[Reply:] Well then it follows, absurdly, that even the latent potentialities that are the causes of the negative reflex actions of the mind are afflicted obscurations because the latent potentialities that give rise to the negative reflex actions of body and speech are afflicted obscurations. If you accept [the premise], then it follows, absurdly, that if something is an obscuration to omniscience then it must also be an afflicted obscuration, for both the aspects of mental unclarity in the elucidation of subtle phenomena and the latent potentialities that give rise to them are [according to you] afflicted obscurations.

Therefore, the negative reflex actions of the three doors [body, speech, and mind] that arhants possess are accepted to be obscurations to omniscience in every school of both the Madhyamaka and the Yogācāra. There is no one who holds the belief that they are afflicted obscurations.

Moreover, latent potentialities are depressed by the apprehension of true existence and by the afflictions, such as attachment, that arise due to that [apprehension of true existence], and these latent potentialities that are depressed within a mental continuum are of two kinds. One has the characteristic that it gives rise to a later equivalent of itself, that is, to the further apprehension of true [existence] or to another affliction. The other has the characteristic that it has the ability to elicit the mere appearance of true [existence] (bden snang), that is, an appearance in which the object appears to the six active consciousnesses (jug shes) [the six sense consciousnesses] as if it existed from its own side. The first kind are latent potentialities of the afflictions qua seeds of the afflictions. They are not obscurations to omniscience. The second kind are latent potentialities of the afflictions qua seeds of the obscurations to omniscience. They are not afflicted obscurations. Even though for something to be a seed of the afflictions it must be an afflicted obscuration, in order for something to be a latent potentiality of the afflictions it need not be an afflicted obscuration. The germinal aspect of such an obscuration to omniscience, described as "a latent potentiality that is in error as to the appearance of duality" (gnyis snang 'khruļ pa'i bag chags), and the aspect of the appearance of true [existence], that is, the appearance of an object to the six active consciousnesses as if it existed from its own side, which is based on those [previous] latent potentialities, is called a manifest obscuration to omniscience. Nonetheless, the six active consciousnesses [themselves] need not be obscurations to omniscience. It is similar to the Sautrāntika system where, in the case of the conceptual thought apprehending a pot, the aspect of the appearance, in which what appears appears as an external pot, is a universal and a reification, but where the consciousness to which it appears need be neither a universal nor a reification.

Without making these kinds of distinctions, to blankly accept that in the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamika system every consciousness is ignorance and every appearance is an obscuration to omniscience leaves one with no alternative but to conclude that [the Prāsaṅgikas] are the equals of the heterodox Mīmāṃsākās, who accept that being defiled is the nature of the mind itself, so that they end up accepting that when one has completely eliminated the obscurations to omniscience one does not understand phenomena in the least.

The afflicted obscurations are of two kinds: philosophical and innate. The innate apprehension of true existence and the attachment and so on that arise due to it, together with its analogues, are the manifest innate afflicted obscurations. The latent potentialities that give rise to later afflictions, whether they exist in the distant future or as an immediate effect, and which are deposited [within consciousness] by those [previous manifest thoughts], are the germinal aspects of the innate afflicted obscurations. The apprehension of true [existence] that is philosophically constructed, the afflictions such as the apprehension of an extreme (mthar 'dzin) and the apprehension of the superiority [of faulty disciplines] (mchog 'dzin) that arise due to that, the apprehension of the person as a self-sufficient and substantially existent person, and the afflictions that arise due to that, together with their analogues, are all philosophical manifest afflicted obscurations. The latent potentialities of the afflictions that give rise to these are the germinal aspects of the philosophical afflicted obscurations. Even though, for example, the mental consciousness (yid kyi nram par shes pa) that is the chief of the analogues of attachment is an afflicted obscuration and actually afflicted, it is not an actual affliction. Hence, other analogous phenomena should be understood to be diverse in this same way.

The obscurations to omniscience are not divided into the two [categories] of innate and philosophical. The reasons are as follows. Were that so, then [each of these two] would have to be divided into two [further categories], namely, the [obscurations] abandoned during [the path of] seeing and those abandoned during [the path of] meditation. If that were accepted, then it would be necessary to accept that the Mahāyāna path of meditation could eliminate the philosophical aspects of the latent potentialities [which cause] the error of dualistic appearance, and this cannot [be accepted]. Also, [the division into philosophical and innate obscurations to omniscience is not a tenable one] because it contradicts the [Prāsaṅgika's] belief that from the seventh bhāmi on down it is not possible to eliminate even the smallest of the seeds of the obscurations to omniscience.

[Question:] Why is it not possible to posit the minds that apprehend as correct and nonerroneous the appearance of objects to the sense conscious-
nness as existing by virtue of their own characteristic, together with their seeds, as the philosophical obstructions to omniscience?

[Reply:] The apprehension of the appearance of an object to the sense consciousness as truly [existent] is the apprehension of true [existence]. Hence, it is contradictory to accept that [on the one hand] those are philosophical obstructions to omniscience and [on the other] to accept that every apprehension of true [existence] is an affliction.

What is more, suppose one engages in an analysis of whether or not that aspect of the appearance in which the sense consciousness' own object appears to be truly [existent] is erroneous. Based on faulty reasoning, to apprehend that [the object] exists as it appears, [that is, that it does truly exist and that the appearance therefore is not faulty,] is an afflicted philosophical apprehension of true [existence]. Were this not so, then tell us what it is that you accept as being an afflicted philosophical apprehension of true [existence]. If there were such a thing as a mind that arises in and of itself and that, without engaging in analysis, apprehends that it is correct for [things] to exist as they appear to sense consciousness, that is, that they truly [exist], then that would be an innate apprehension of true [existence] and not a philosophical one.

Therefore, the definition of an obstruction to omniscience is "anything that is or counts as (rigs su gnas pa) an obstruction that acts principally to block the attainment of emancipation, which is the mere elimination of the suffering of samsāra, [as opposed to complete buddhahood]." The definition of an obstruction to omniscience is "anything that is or counts as an obstruction that acts principally to block a single mind's directly cutting through within one instant to [all] phenomena, that is, both truths." If one subdivides afflicted obstructions, they [are said to be] of two kinds: philosophical and innate. The definition of the first is "anything that is either an affliction, together with its analogues, which arises under the influence of a philosophical position or a seed that gives rise to that." The definition of the second is "anything that is either an affliction, together with its analogues, which arises independently of the influence of a philosophical position, [arising instead] from the mere seeds of that past continuum that has existed since beginningless time, or the seeds that give rise to that." If each of these two [sets of philosophical and innate afflicted obstructions] is further subdivided, each [can be said to have members that are] manifest and seeds. The definition of a manifest philosophical afflicted obscuration is "anything that is a philosophical afflicted obscuration and a mind that apprehends either an object (dmigs) or its aspect (rtan)." The definition of a seed of a philosophical afflicted obscuration is "anything that, though not apprehending either its own object or [that object's] aspect, nonetheless has the characteristic of having the ability to be the material cause (nyer len) that gives rise to a philosophical afflicted obscuration as its effect." The definitions of the two kinds of innate [afflicted obstructions] should be understood analogously.

The obscurations to omniscience, when divided, are of two kinds: manifest and seeds. The definition of the first is "anything that is or counts as both (1) an obscuration existing within the mental continuum of an āryan still in training who has completely eliminated the apprehension of true [existence] and (2) an aspect of the error of dualistic appearance, the appearance in which an object seems to exist by virtue of its own characteristic." The definition of the second is "anything that is or counts as both (1) something posited on one's mental continuum by an affliction, while being a latent potentiality that is the material cause [giving rise] to the error of dualistic appearance as its effect and (2) an obscuration existing within the mental continuum of an āryan still in training who has completely eliminated the afflictions."

Even though the errors of dualistic appearance, together with their seeds, within the mental continua of bodhisattvas on the seven impure bhāmis are not obstructions that are contained within the mental continua of āryans still in training who have completely abandoned the afflictions and the apprehension of true [existence], because they are of the same kind as the obstructions that are contained within their mental continua, they are said "to count as" those obstructions.

"Philosophical afflicted obstructions" and "afflicted obstructions abandoned [during the path of] seeing" are synonymous. "Innate afflicted obscuration" and "afflicted obscuration abandoned [during the path of] meditation" are synonymous. All obstructions to omniscience are abandoned [during the path of] meditation. There are none that are abandoned [during the path of] seeing. This concludes the exposition of the two [kinds of] obstructions.

[How the Obscurations Are Eliminated on the Various Paths]

Now I will treat the subject of how those two obstructions are eliminated on the various paths of the three vehicles. The Avadārabhāṣya says: "The śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas abandon afflicted ignorance." The bodhisattva spoken of is the same as the one mentioned in the previously cited passage from the Catūṣkata-jātikā, namely, it is "the bodhisattva who has obtained forbearance in regard to phenomena that are unborn." This refers to the bodhisattva who has obtained the eighth bhāmi. Hence, the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhants and the bodhisattvas who abide in the pure bhāmis have completely abandoned the afflictions. Even though both of those commentaries explain it in this way, because, as quoted earlier, this is [mentioned] within the context of explaining that the apprehension of true [existence] is afflicted ignorance, all of these three instances are referring to the [fact that] they have completely abandoned the apprehension of true existence together with its seeds.
Therefore, from the seventh bhūmi on down not even the smallest seeds of the obstructions to omniscience are eliminated, for (1) the seeds of the apprehension of true existence have not been completely eliminated, and (2) without completely eliminating those, it is not at all possible to eliminate the error of dualistic appearance. Therefore, one commences to eliminate the seeds of the obstructions to omniscience only from the eighth bhūmi. Hence, [the Prāsaṅgika belief] is not the same as the belief of the Śvātantrikas and Cittamātrins, who accept that one commences to eliminate the seeds of the obstructions to omniscience from the first bhūmi. Likewise, one should also be aware that all of the following teachings from the sūtras are expositions that are of provisional meaning, which were taught for those disciples who, for the time being, could not be taught the subtle selflessness of phenomena—to wit, the teachings that the misconceptualizations which are the apprehensions of true existence are obscuration to omniscience; that they are of two kinds, the ones abandoned [during the path of] seeing and the ones abandoned [during the path of] meditation, and that the ones abandoned [during the path of] seeing are eliminated first, whereas the ones abandoned [during the path of] meditation are divided into nine [categories] such as small, medium, and so forth and that these are abandoned with the nine stages of the path of meditation as their [respective] antidotes. [All of these are provisional teachings that cannot be taken literally].

[Question:] Well then, why is it that no matter how long śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhants accustom themselves to the direct perception of the selflessness of phenomena they cannot eliminate even the smallest of the obstructions to omniscience?

[Reply:] It is because the elimination of the obstructions to omniscience cannot be accomplished by wisdom alone. It requires that the wisdom that perfectly mediates on the selflessness of phenomena be conjoined in a complementary way to the inconceivable special features of method that belong to the Mahāyāna, and the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lack those aspects of method belonging to the Mahāyāna. They also do not eliminate even the smallest of the obstructions to omniscience because, as explained earlier, their meditation, even on the selflessness of phenomena, is very condensed, lacking the perfect meditation that takes place through an extensive analysis.

Now we turn to the way in which those objects to be abandoned are eliminated by their antidotes. Let us take the path of seeing as an example. The birth of the nonobstructed (bar chad med) path of the Mahāyāna path of seeing and the cessation of the afflications that are abandoned [during the path of] seeing commence simultaneously. The birth of the nonobstructed path of the path of seeing and the elimination of the affictions abandoned [during the path of] seeing in such a way that they cannot arise again in the mental continuum occur simultaneously. The gnosis that in the second instant of that [process] directly understands the special kind of cessation, which is that the pure essential reality (chos nyid rang bzhin rnam dag) of the mind is free from the stains of the adventitious [obstructions] that are abandoned [during the path of] seeing, is called the liberative path (rnam grol lam) of the path of seeing.

The elimination of the manifest objects to be abandoned in such a way [293] that they do not temporarily arise within the mental continuum does not require that a supramundane (jig rten las 'das pa'i) gnosis eliminate the seeds of those [obstructions]; but the elimination of these manifest [obstructions] in such a way that it is impossible for them to arise within the mental continuum ever again does require that the seeds of those [obstructions] be eliminated by a supramundane path ('das lam). This much is something on which all of the philosophical schools of both the Madhyamaka and Cittamātra agree.

According to those Cittamātrins who believe in a foundation consciousness, even though the mental consciousness in the continuum of someone who is equipoised within the path of seeing is of the nature of undefiled gnosis, it is not contradictory to maintain, as they do, that at that time contained within the foundation consciousness are the seeds of [obstructions] that are to be abandoned during the path of meditation. Hence, they accept that there exist the seeds of other things left to be abandoned within the continuum of someone still in training, even while they are equipoised in a supramundane path.

According to the Śvātantrika Madhyamikas who do not accept a foundation consciousness, at that time there is no foundation consciousness, nor do they accept an exemplification of the person, [that is, something that can be pointed to as being the person,] that is not consciousness. [They believe that] if within the mental consciousness that is the direct understanding of reality there exist the seeds of the remaining [obstructions] that are to be abandoned, then that mental consciousness would be defiled, which would contradict its being undefiled gnosis. If [on the other hand] there existed at that time another mental consciousness within [that person’s] mental continuum that contained the latent potentialities of [the obstructions] that are to be abandoned, then it would follow, absurdly, that the person had two mental continua. Hence, [they conclude] that within the mental continuum of someone equipoised within the path of seeing there cannot exist the seeds of any [obstructions] to be abandoned. Nonetheless, [they say] that even though those [obstructions] to be abandoned, for the time being, do not arise because the causes and conditions [for their occurring] are incomplete, it is not the case that they have been prohibited from arising again due to an antidote. Even though those [obstructions] that are to be abandoned are not present within the mental continuum at that time, [they maintain that] they have not been eliminated, [so that they can arise again when the meditator emerges from such an equipoise].

In the Prāsaṅgika system, even though there is no foundation consciousness, as will be explained later, [it is the belief that] it is possible for the mere 'I' that is labeled in dependence on the aggregates to act as the basis into which the latent potentialities of the afflicted phenomena are deposited.
Hence, [in this latter system] it is not contradictory for there to exist the seeds [of the obscurations] to be gotten rid of [during the path of] meditation within the continuum of someone equipoised within the path of seeing.

The gnosis of the “End of the Stream,” the tenth bhūmi, is the nonobstructed path that eliminates the most subtle of the remaining obscurations to omniscience, and [the state of] omniscience is the liberative path that depends on the first instant of that [nonobstructed path]. The detailed arguments (mtha’ dpyad pa) as to how those antidotes eliminate [those obscurations] that constitute “what is to be abandoned” should be known from other more extensive explanations.

[THE STATUS OF INFERENCE IN THE MADHYAMAKA]

4.2.3.2. As Regards the Refutation of That [Object of Refutation], the Explanation of the Differences between the Prāsaṅgikas and the Svātantrikas

4.2.3.2.1. Refuting What Others Believe. [Do Mādhyamikas Have Philosophical Positions?] [834]

Many later scholars who think themselves to be Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas make the following claim.

[Opponent:] The Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas have no system of their own, no belief, and nothing at all that they accept. Were they to have such beliefs, then they would also have to accept such things as the syllogisms (gan tshigs) that prove the beliefs of their own system, logical examples, and so forth. Were that so, they would essentially become Svātantrikas. It is for this reason that the Vigrahaavārthani says:

(1) Had I any beliefs
Then I would suffer from that fault,
But since I have no belief
I alone am faultless.

Were I to perceive anything
As the objects of direct perceptions and so on
Then that would have to be either proven or disproven,
But since I do not you cannot accuse me. [836]

And again, the Yuktīsāṣṭikā says:

(2) Great beings take no sides;
They have no arguments.
How can they who take no sides themselves
Accept the positions of others? [837]

The Catuḥśataka says:

[295]
(3) Whoever takes no sides
Such as "is," "is not," and "is-is not"
Cannot be accused
No matter how long one tries. 838

The Prasannapadā states: (4) "If one is a Mādhyamika, it is not right to use the svatantra form of reason, 839 for they [the Mādhyamikas] do not accept the alternative position." 840 And also: (5) "The point which is refuted in a reductio argument is something related to the opponent, not to us, for we have no beliefs." 841 The Madhyamakāvatāra says:

(6) Does the annihilator come into contact with what is annihilated or not?
If so, then the faults which already have been mentioned
Will definitely be incurred by those who hold to this [view];
But since I do not have a position, this reductio does not apply to me. 842

Hence, whatever expositions, whether of the conventional or of the ultimate, a Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika may set forth, are carried out merely for confronting others, but not because it represents [the Prāsaṅgika's] own system. The Madhyamakāvatāra says:

(7) I do not accept, even conventionally.
A real (dngos) dependent entity (gzhon dbang) as you yourself do.
Since they are effects, though they do not exist, I say that they exist
In light of worldly convention. 843

The Vigrahavyāvartani says: (8) "Since there is nothing to be refuted, I refute nothing." Hence, there is even no such thing as the refutation of another's position." 844 This is what the opponent claims. 845

[Reply:] Those who make such claims have, as I have said earlier, misrepresented the extent of what is to be refuted. Hence, they think that the reasoning of the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas is refuting all phenomena. Then, once refuted, seeing that all those forms of reasoning can be used to refute what they themselves accept, they refute that all those absurdities urged on others are applicable to themselves. Should such absurdities be urged, being totally unaware of how to avert such arguments [when turned against them], their one last hope is to say, "we accept nothing."

This is what should be said to them. It follows, absurdly, that Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas are not advocates of philosophical tenets (grub mtha' smer ba), for they accept no philosophical positions (grub mtha'). If this is acceptable to you, then [the view that] they are the supreme among all advocates of philosophical tenets has been lost.

You, the person who advocates such [a position], have beliefs because you are a true believer in the position "I accept nothing."

[Opponent:] To say that "accepting nothing" is accepting something is similar to saying "give me some money," and when answered "I have no money at all," to then reply "give me some of that money you call 'no [money] at all'." 846

[Reply:] It is a great mistake to say this, for we are [not engaged in mere word games and are instead] claiming that the heartfelt (the bas) claim to accepting nothing is an acceptance [of something]. We are not advocating that accepting nothing is accepting something. For example, although the permanent sense of sound is not a tenet, the heartfelt claim that sound is impermanent is a belief.

It is also not right [for you] to make the distinction that the reductio [form of argument] is not to be refuted but that the svatantra is. Why? Because in your own system, just as you cannot accept the svatantra, you also cannot accept the reductio, and [just as you accept that the reductio is posited as a valid mode of reasoning merely for the sake of some disciples and not because it actually is valid reasoning,] there is no contradiction in maintaining that according to the Prāsaṅgika system the svatantra is acceptable [as a valid form of reasoning] merely for the sake of some disciples, [hence reducing both the svatantra and the reductio to the same fate]. If you accept [the premise], then it contradicts your making such a distinction.

In your own system it follows, absurdly, that even though the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas do not accept philosophical tenets, one can still consider them to be Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas because they accept them when confronting others. 847 This is because Candrabhūtī's acceptance of "Prāsaṅgika tenets" merely when confronting others, though he does not accept them in his own system, is enough to make him a Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika. The reason is something you yourself accept. If you accept the premise, then it follows, absurdly, that the Conqueror Śākyamuni is a Cittamārīn because, though he does not accept the tenets of the Cittamārīn himself, when he taught the Sandhinirmocana Sūtra he accepted them merely for the sake of other disciples.

It follows, absurdly, that even when merely confronting others, it is not correct to accept the tenets of the Prāsaṅgikas because the person in whose presence one accepts [these tenets], one who accepts [the tenets] when confronting that other person, and the tenets themselves, all of them, are nonexistent [according to you]. If you do not accept [this latter] reason, then you have transgressed [your own view] that it is incorrect to say that any phenomenon exists.

It follows, absurdly, that by advocating from the heart that all words are false one is advocating from the heart that those very words are true in their meaning. This is because the heartfelt claim that "we accept nothing at all" does not imply [according to you] that one is a believer in accepting nothing.
Hence, these two expressions are self-contradictory, resembling each other in every way.\textsuperscript{848}

It follows, absurdly, that such scriptural citations as ‘‘had I any beliefs’’ are scriptures belonging to no advocate of philosophical tenets, for they are not the scriptures of any one [school] from the Śvātāntrikas on down and [according to you] they are also not the scriptures of the Prāśāṅgikas. If you accept the premise, it follows, absurdly, that they are not Buddhists scriptures.\textsuperscript{849}

It follows, absurdly, that the distinction between scriptures of definitive and provisional meaning is an incorrect one because the Buddha has [according to you] no system of his own. If you deny [this latter] reason, then you have transgressed [your own claim] that the person who perceives the ultimate Madhyamaka view can have no system of his or her own.

It follows, absurdly, that one cannot declare the śrāvaka Vātsiputriyas to be at all at fault after they examine whether or not the person and the aggregates are of the same or of a different substance [from the aggregates] because they advocate that whether the person and the aggregates are one substance or different substances is ineffable (brjod du med pa). If you claim that [the premise] does not follow [from the reason], then you must also give up the claim that the fact that the Prāśāṅgikas do not accept in their own system any such thing as annihilator and annihilated implications that no fault can be declared of the Mādhyamika Prāśāṅgikas when they examine whether the annihilator comes into contact with the annihilated.\textsuperscript{850}

Again, the Ārya Nāgārjuna and the glorious Candrakīrti and so forth repeatedly made one-pointed statements like ‘‘this is so,’’ ‘‘this is not so,’’ ‘‘this is correct,’’ and ‘‘this is not correct’’ in the treatises they themselves have composed. Now if these statements do not represent the views of the authors who compose these [works], then tell me, whose views do they represent?

Not only that . . . there are many instances in those treatises when [the authors] actually use expressions like ‘‘I believe such and such’’ or ‘‘I accept such and such.’’ In the Vigrāhavāyikāntani, for example, it says: ‘‘If we did not accept convention, however, we could explain nothing.’’\textsuperscript{851} The Yuktisāstikā says:

\begin{quote}
Those who believe that dependent things
Are neither true nor false
Like the reflection of the moon in water
Cannot be deposed by [wrong] views.\textsuperscript{852}
\end{quote}

Also, the Lokāntastava says:

\begin{quote}
Clearly, whatever arises from causes
Must be accepted
As being similar to a reflection
For they are neither nonexistent nor existent.\textsuperscript{853}
\end{quote}

The Prajñāmāla says:

\begin{quote}
Whatever arises interdependently
Is accepted as being empty.\textsuperscript{854}
\end{quote}

The Prasannapadā says:

\begin{quote}
It is due to the mere fact of its conditionality that [a thing] is accepted as existing conventionally, but not on account of accepting the four [extreme] positions (phyogs bshi), for [otherwise] it would follow, absurdly, that we would be advocating things to have an essence, and this, again, is not correct. When we accept the mere fact of its conditionality, as [this implies] the mutual dependence of cause and effect, [it implies that the thing] does not exist by virtue of its own nature, and hence that we are not advocating things to have an essence.\textsuperscript{855}
\end{quote}

This is clearly making the case that in our own system we accept the conventional fact of mere conditionality, but do not accept an entity that inherently exists. Again, the Prasannapadā says: ‘‘In this way too does this exist conventionally. Hence, the Acāryas have expounded the fact that [things] exist by existing merely in mutual interdependence. This should be accepted in just this way, without a doubt.’’\textsuperscript{856} This is saying that without a doubt we should accept conventional entities that exist one in dependence on the other. The Avatārabhāṣya also says: ‘‘The sages believe that this position is free from fault and full of benefit. We should accept it without a doubt.’’\textsuperscript{857} And also:

Hence, just as we accept the mere fact of the conditionality of that which is interdependent, as we also accept that [things are] labeled in dependence on [other things] (brtan nas brags pa), in our system we do not suffer from annihilating anything that nominally exists (tha snyad). This is not something that should be accepted [of us] even by our opponents.\textsuperscript{858}

Again, the Avatārabhāṣya makes many statements like the following:

\begin{quote}
[Question:] Does the Acārya at all accept such a special kind of essence, [referring here to emptiness]?
[Reply:] It is when confronted with such [a question] that the Lord [Buddha] taught in a very extensive way that whether or not the Tathāgata arises, the reality of phenomena will nonetheless abide. ‘‘Reality’’ exists.\textsuperscript{859}
\end{quote}

The Prasannapadā, commenting on the [Prajñāmāla] verse ‘‘not from itself, not from another,’’ says: ‘‘Hence, one should apply [the adjectives no. never, and in no way] as follows. ‘No thing is in any way ever born from itself.’ Likewise, [the adjectives] should be applied to the other three beliefs [born from other, both, and neither] in the same way.’’\textsuperscript{860} Again, the [Avatāra]bhāṣya says,
A Dose of Emptiness

[commenting on the verse,] "When it does not arise from itself how can one claim that it does not arise from other things."

"Having elucidated the four beliefs, he explains them by proving them with reasoning."

This clearly shows that the four beliefs, the fact that things are not born from themselves and so on, are the beliefs of the [Prasangika]’s own system. Hence, the **Avatapta** says:

> Just as there is no Dharma
> Apart from this one,
> Likewise should the wise understand
> That what exists in these [treatises] exists in no others.

And in the **Bhāṣya** it says:

> Just as there are no other treatises apart from the Mādhyamika treatises that elucidate without error the Dharma called *emptiness*, likewise the wise should understand that the Dharma of emptiness that comes about from this system of explanations, encompassing our own views together with the arguments, exists in no other treatises.

This is insistently stating that this method of setting forth emptiness, as it is explained by Candrakirti, is a special and uncommon system different not only from that of the realists, but also from that of the Mādhyamikas who follow the **Ārya Samdhisthānottaracāra**. He adds that this is something the wise should by all means understand. Those who are poor in intellect and fortune may not be able to understand such a special system following the path of reasoning, but at least they should not slander it by saying “there is no such system”! To say “we do not accept any system, whether Prasangika or Sva-tantra Mādhyamika” clearly identifies one as not being a Mādhyamika. So do not take up such a contradictory system that prides itself on being the best among philosophical schools.

How do we then explain the meaning of the scriptural passages cited above?

1. The verse from the **Vighrahavāyavartāni** that goes “I had any beliefs” is the answer to an objection that goes as follows:

   If the essence of all things
   Did not exist in them all,
   Your own words too would be essenceless
   So that they could not repudiate essences.

2. The meaning of this scriptural passage, which presents the [opponent’s] argument, is as follows: if nothing had an essence, then the words of the Mādhyamika’s belief, “nothing has an essence,” would also lack an essence. If *that* were so, then that belief would not have the ability to repudiate the existence of an essence, nor could it bring about an understanding of essencelessness.

The meaning [of the verse that is] a response to this is as follows: were I to accept that everything is essenceless and then accept that the few words of the belief, “everything is essenceless,” exist by virtue of an essence, then I would suffer from this fault [which you bring up]. In my system, however, the words of such a belief do not exist by virtue of any essence. Hence, I alone am without the fault you describe, namely, that of being self-contradictory. This is what is meant. [The passage] is not teaching that in general there are no beliefs.

As has been explained previously, the verse, “were I to perceive anything” is teaching that a valid cognition and the phenomenon that it perceives are not inherently subject and object. It is not teaching that phenomena and the valid cognitions on which they depend are nonexistent. This is the very point expressed in the Tīkā on the **Catuḥśataka** line that goes: “Existence, nonexistence, both existence and nonexistence...” when it says:

> It is impossible ever to refute someone who is an advocate of emptiness. Since you do not even believe in emptiness, how is the realm of nothingness possible? Therefore, since there is nothing to the extremist positions that accept existence, nonexistence and so forth as inherently existent things, it is impossible to ever offer a rebuttal of someone who advocates emptiness.

2. The meaning of the passage, “great beings take no sides,” is as follows. The **Yuktisasikākāvṛtti** passage that precedes this verse states:

Those who have not fathomed this reality, which is interdependence, apprehend the self-characteristic of entities. Without a doubt:

> In those who believe in entities
> There arises attachment and anger.
> Their views are inexhaustible, they hold on to what is inappropriate
> And it is from this that disputation comes about.

As this says, for those who do not adhere to the position that entities exist by virtue of their own characteristic there is no disputation that involves upholding one’s own position and the refutation of other’s position, where these positions are refuted into real entities. It is not teaching that we have no system of our own.

4. The passage from the **Prasannapadā** that says that “we do not accept the alternative position,” should be interpreted in the context of the passages from the **Vighrahavyāvartāni** and the **Catuḥśataka** and understood in a similar way.

5. If one interprets the passage that states, “Because there is nothing to be refuted, I refute nothing,” to mean that “inherent existence is not refuted because there is no inherent existence,” this becomes an instance of a contra-
dictory pervasion. Hence, the meaning is this. The refuting agent does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic because there is not the slightest bit of inherent existence in what is to be refuted, the refuted entity. In our own system we do believe that both what is to be refuted and what does the refuting are false and illusory things, for the Vigrahavyavartani states:

Just as one magically created thing can obstruct another
And one illusory man can obstruct another,
Just as an illusion blocks another illusion,
This refutation works in just this way.869

(5) The Prasannapada passage that goes, "for we have no beliefs," means that we have no svatantra beliefs. It does not mean that we have no system of our own. This is how it is to be explained.

(6) When the Avatara states that it has no position it is saying that the faults that arise for the realists when they analyze causality in terms of the contact or lack of contact of cause and effect do not similarly apply to ourselves under analysis of whether what is annihilated comes into contact with what annihilates. Realists believe that causality exists inherently and that it is necessary to establish [its existence] by means of reasoning that exists inherently; that is, that it must be established as something that can be analyzed. We, on the other hand, have no inherently existent position involving things that are annihilated or things that annihilate. For us, it is not proper to claim that an inherently nonexistent and false thing can be thought of in any terms when it is analyzed through reasoning. This is the meaning.

In the Bhasya, it states:

We do not fall into a similar absurdity in our own system, for, from our perspective, even if the annihilator comes into contact with what annihilates, there is no annihilation; and even if the annihilator does not come into contact with what is annihilated, there is no annihilation, for neither the annihilator nor what is annihilated inherently exist. Therefore, we do not think in terms of contact or noncontact.870

The phrase, "for neither the annihilator nor what is annihilated inherently exist," is the commentary on the lines [of the root text] that go "I do not have a position."

What is more, in the commentary to those lines it is stating that it is impossible for there to be a form of annihilation that, when analyzed with reasoning in terms of the two possibilities, is determined either to have or to lack contact. A form of annihilation that, when unexamined and unanalyzed, exists only nominally, however, is possible. The sutra passage that involves a question and answer session between the two great sravakas,871 which is cited as a proof text for this point, very clearly states that if one analyzes things by examining them with reasoning into two possibilities, neither attainments nor realizations exist, but that attainments and realizations do exist in terms of mere worldly conventions when left unanalyzed and unexamined.

Both the root text and the commentary of [MA] teach that the annihilation of what is annihilated by the annihilator is possible and that it is necessary to accept the existence of attainments and realizations. It does not teach that we have no beliefs.

Moreover, those who believe that causality exists inherently can be refuted by examining whether a cause does or does not come into contact with its effect when it gives rise to it. As a rebuttal of the possibility that we also suffer from such a fault, the response is made from the viewpoint that we accept essencelessness, not through advocating that we have no system of our own. The Avatārabhāṣya states:

How so in your case?

Because both [cause and effect] are like an illusion
Therefore, I do not suffer from the fault and worldly entities still exist.

For you who analyzes own characteristic in terms of what is produced and what produces it, this is what happens. Our system, however, maintains that because entities are mistaken reifications they arise, but are unarisen and illusory by nature. It maintains that, though essenceless, they become the object of misconception, like the false hair that is perceived by one whose eyes are diseased. It is this system that is the inconceivable one. Therefore, the fallacy, as you have explained it, does not apply to us, and as the entities of the world are still established without examination, everything exists.872

What is more, if there are no beliefs or philosophical positions in our system, then how could the Conqueror Maitreya have said: "This [system] accepts this to be real and that belief depends on compassion"? The belief that the three jewels that can arise within one’s own continuum in the future are something to be attained, the belief that the teacher is the Buddha, who has already in the past attained this in his own continuum, the that Dharma is the path, and that the Spiritual Community are those who help one on the path—all such beliefs, being part of the common and uncommon practice of refuge, would not be possible. Nor would it be possible to engage in the practice of the superior thought (thuk bsam) that accepts the task of dispelling the suffering of all sentient beings, or of the aspirational [altruistic] mind (smon sens), that pledges to attain enlightenment for the sake of others, or of the active [altruistic] mind (jug sen), that accepts the task of training in the practices of the bodhisattva, or of the disciplined mind (spong sens) that pledges to abandon every action that is not in accord with the training of the monk. This,
of course, implies the complete destruction of the sprout that brings about the great medicinal tree that is the Tathāgata, the one that heals all beings.

[Opponent:] Although we do not accept these things in our own system, we do accept them when confronting others. Hence, there is no fault.

[Reply:] That being the case, your moral discipline, the generation of your [altruistic] mind (sams bskyed), your going for refuge, and so forth become for you mere words and are not from the heart. All these points have been very clearly set forth [just as Maitreya does in the preceding passage]. To state that all of the fallacies we set forth apply equally to you, and to accept this without reservation, is truly amazing.

According to the tales told by most of the meditators of this Land of Snows, to have the "view" (lit pa) is to be devoid of beliefs. "Meditation" is being devoid of all thought, being devoid of all action, both positive and negative. The "fruit" is to be devoid of all hope. This is what they advertise. However, all of this reduces to nothing more than the view that maintains that the mind should be blanked out, that nothing should be apprehended. Thinking that nothing is so or not so, they pride themselves on having generated understanding in their minds. Those who maintain this great nihilism, that in our own system we have no beliefs, are singing the same tune as those who maintain the view of Hva Shang, that the mind should be blanked out.

This has been an extensive refutation of the view that in the Prāsaṅgikas' own system nothing is to be accepted. This also serves as a proper refutation of the fact that the difference between the Svātantrikas and the Prāsaṅgikas consists of the fact that the Svātantrikas are the Mādhyamikas who believe in valid syllogistic reasoning to establish the beliefs of their own system, whereas the Prāsaṅgikas only go about refuting the beliefs of the realists by means of reductio arguments, not accepting valid syllogistic reasoning themselves. This is because if they accept nothing in their own system, all of the previously stated faults will arise; and because if they do accept something, then they have transgressed their view that it is possible to believe in things without establishing them through valid knowledge. If one were to accept that whatever one believes must be established by means of the valid cognition of direct perception, then it would follow, absurdly, that all phenomena should be evident to one [because they would be ascertained through the direct perception of the senses], and there would be no difference between one's own system and that of the Čārvākās who maintain that the only valid cognition is direct perception. If one accepts that understanding through inference is possible, one has strayed from one's original assertion that [Prāsaṅgikas] do not accept valid syllogistic reasoning.

[The previously mentioned distinction between Svātantrikas and Prāsaṅgikas is also to be refuted] because, as explained earlier, it has been stated that there exist four positions: that things do not arise from themselves, and so forth. Those positions cannot be established simply by direct perception without depending on syllogistic reasoning.

[It is also to be refuted] because many passages, like those that follow, teach a logical reason (gtan tshig) to prove the beliefs of our own system. The Avatāra states:

Because things arise interdependently,
Concepts cannot be analyzed.
And so, by the logical reason of dependent arising
The infinite net of wrong views is cut.\textsuperscript{873}

And also:

Because there is no such thing as arising from self, from another
From both, or causelessly, everything is essenceless.\textsuperscript{874}

And also:

Because there can be no action without an agent,
There can be no "mine" without the self.\textsuperscript{875}

Also, in the Bhāṣya on the lines:

Just as one [can see the negative consequences such as eclipses and so on even in the reflection]
Of the variations that exist within the orb of the sun [when it reflects in water, for example.]
[So that this occurs in a merely dependent and nominal way
Without first having to determine the correctness of whether or not the sun and the reflection meet or do not meet]\textsuperscript{876}

it says:

Because what we call a reflection does not exist in the least, it is in no way possible to entertain thoughts like "[the sun's reflection] arises when it comes into contact or when it lacks contact with the orb of the sun." Nonetheless, when the reflection is perceived due to its nearness to the condition, the form [of the reflected object, here the sun,] it permits one to ascertain the point that one desires to understand. Likewise, one should be aware that it is an annihilating entity, empty of inherent existence, that annihilates the entity to be annihilated and that it is a syllogistic reason that is devoid of adequate reality (thad pa dang bral ba), that is, that is empty of inherent existence, that proves a premise; and as there is no need to split them up into two [possibilities, for example, contacting or not contacting,] a similar reductio cannot be urged upon our own words.\textsuperscript{877}
This is making the case that it is our own position [to accept that] it is a
syllastic reason devoid of the possibility of inherent existence that proves
a premise.
[Another Opponent:] A Svātantrika is one who on examining reality, ac-
cepting such a thing as a proof of essencelessness has the belief in essence-
lessness within his or her own system, whereas a Prāśāntika is one who,
though nominally accepting a position of his or her own on the occasion of
examining reality, does not in his or her own system accept even the sylla-
stic reason that proves essencelessness, but who instead refutes the beliefs of
others who accept the existence of an essence by means of a reductio argument.
[Reply:] This too is not correct, for by refuting the existence of an essence
one is affirming the nonexistence of an essence, as these two are in direct
contradiction to one another, being mutually incompatible. Were this not so,
just ask yourself how you would answer someone who says “we affirm es-
senselessness, but we do not refute the existence of an essence.”
Now what reason is there for not accepting a belief on the occasion when
one analyzes reality?
[Opponent:] It is because if something exists when one is analyzing real-
ity, it must ultimately exist.
[Reply:] Well then, take the analysis of reality [itself]. It follows, absurdly,
that it does not exist when one is analyzing reality because were it to exist at
that time, it would have to ultimately exist. If you accept [the premise], then it
follows, absurdly, that it is impossible to analyze reality by means of Madhy-
ayakaka reasoning; this is because it does not exist when reality is being analyzed.
One should realize that this same methodology can be applied to the reasoning
that analyzes reality, to the proponent (phag rgyal) who is analyzing it, to the
opponent (phyir rgyal) for whom the analysis is being done, and so forth.
It follows, absurdly, that the refutation of others’ beliefs simply by reductio
arguments does not take place upon the analysis of reality because it does
not ultimately exist. You have accepted the three cycles.
The following are contradictory beliefs: (1) to advocate on the one hand that
on analyzing reality there are no beliefs and (2) to accept that in one’s own
system all phenomena are accepted as existing nominally; this is because the
occasion on which one analyzes reality is itself a mere nominal entity.
You are also very mistaken if you think that not having any beliefs ul-
timately means not having any beliefs on analyzing reality, for not even
Svātantrikas accept having beliefs ultimately, and hence this cannot be a dis-
tinguishing feature of the Prāśāntikas.
Although there appear to be many different variants on this view on the
part of previous [scholars], such as the belief of the Pandit Jayānanda and so
on, 878 I will not go into them here because (1) were I to mention them one by
one it would make this work voluminous, and because (2) it is very easy to
refute these other positions simply by following what I have already explained.

[Another Opponent:] The Prāśāntika is one who carries out the refutation of
the logical object of refutation (rtags kyi dgag bya), such as arising, cessa-
tion and so forth, without affixing the qualifier ultimately, whereas the
Svātantrika is one who carries out the refutation after having affixed the qual-
ifier ultimately.
[Reply:] This too is not correct. Take, for instance, the citation of the
Extensive Mother Sūtra in the Avatārābhāṣya.
Nominally there is attainment and realization
But ultimately there is no attainment or realization. 879
So it does actually affix the qualifier ultimately, and so one can see that there
are many sūtras of definitive meaning which do affix the qualifier ultimately to
the logical object of refutation. The Raināvalī says:
“I” and “mine” do exist
But not in an ultimate sense. 880
And also:
How could the arising of a [sprout]
Whose seed is false be true [or ultimate]? 881
And also:
Likewise, though cause and effect
Appear in the world to be born and destroyed,
In reality arising
And also cessation do not exist. 882
Because these sources affix the predicates ultimately and in reality to the logi-
cal object of refutation, it would follow, absurdly, that all of these sūtras and
śāstras according to you are Svātantrika scriptures.
[Opponent:] Well then, how do you interpret the Prasannapadā refutation of [312]
[there being a need] to qualify the object to be refuted with the word ultimately?
[Reply:] The meaning of this is explained in the Avatārābhāṣya where he
says that the Acārya Nāgārjuna refuted arising in general by saying “there
is no arising from self” without making any qualifications. So one should
realize that in the syllogism, “no entity is ultimately born from itself because
it exists, like sentient beings, for example,” the word ultimately acting as a
qualifier is superfluous.
This is refuting that the qualifier ultimately should be added in the refu-
tation of arising from self. It is not refuting the fact that there may be a need
to qualify other objects of refutation with ultimately. That is why the Prasan-
napadā makes such statements as: “It is by reason of the fact that things do
not arise from themselves even conventionally that it is not appropriate to
qualify [its refutation with the word] ultimately.” 883
Therefore, one cannot totally refute phenomena that nominally are established, [that is, proved to exist,] by means of valid cognitions without first qualifying the refutation with such expressions as *ultimately* or *inherently*, whereas things that do not exist even nominally can be refuted without any qualification. Nonetheless, though the Prāsaṅgikas and Svaśāntrikas do not differ in their belief that such things as the eye [consciousness] etc. must be refuted only after qualifying them with the word *ultimately*, according to the Prāsaṅgikas there is no difference between "not existing inherently" and "not existing ultimately," whereas according to the Svaśāntrikas things do inherently arise nominally. Hence, they believe that it is necessary to qualify [the refutation] by saying that things do not inherently arise *ultimately*. This is because there is a great difference in subtext [between the Svaśāntrikas' and Prāsaṅgikas'] logical object of refutation. Hence, those many instances in the [315] *sūtras* and *sāstras* of definitive meaning in which qualifiers such as *ultimately* and *inherently* are actually affixed to the logical object of the refutation one should understand to also apply to those few instances in which [the qualifiers] are not actually affixed, being intended as [so qualified] by the context.

The *Heart Sūtra* of the Perfection of Wisdom [for example] says "form does not exist, sound does not exist," and so forth, but the affixing of a qualifier during the synoptic preambule [mdor bstan] [of that work], "those aggregates should also be seen as being inherently empty" is an "initial clarification" (thog ma'i gzsal byed), so that by applying it to all [other cases], one should say that "form does not inherently exist" and so forth [for sound and so on].

In this way [we see that] many *sūtras* of definitive meaning must be explained through the application of a clarification. Otherwise, the belief that in the Prāsaṅgikas' system it is not necessary to apply the qualifier *ultimately* to the logical object of refutation is once again a case of the emergence of this evil system that believes that even nominally no phenomena exist. Hence, [this belief] must be refuted by means of all the reasons that I have outlined.

Another ignorant opponent says this.

[Opponent:] Even Prāsaṅgikas accept svaśāntra syllogistic reasoning (rang rgyud kyi rtags) because they accept a trimodal syllogistic reasoning (shul gsum pa'i rtags) that proves a specific quality (kyhad par kyi chos) based on a subject (chos can) that is established by the valid cognitions of both the proponent [of the syllogism] and the opponent [to whom it is proposed]. Should you not accept that this alone is what makes something a svaśāntra syllogistic reason then, just as [the Prāsaṅgikas would not be accepting svaśāntras simply by accepting the trimodal criterion for a syllogism], even the realist logicians could not be said to accept a svaśāntra form of syllogistic reason, [which of course they do]. Likewise, because the position that is [314] born from a desire to infer a certain particular quality of a subject that is accepted as established by valid cognition is a svaśāntra position, even Prāsaṅgikas have svaśāntra positions. However, in the Prāsaṅgika system svaśāntra syllogistic reasons and positions are accepted when contemplating the nominal, whereas they are not accepted when analyzing the ultimate and when contemplating reality. Why is that? It is because when analyzing the ultimate, within the purview (rigs ngor) of this understanding that analyzes the ultimate, the subject disappears (snang ba ldog). Hence, we accept that for a Prāsaṅgika the subject is not established by a valid cognition, [and where there is no subject there can be no syllogism].

In the system of the Svaśāntikas, that is, for Bhāvaviveka and so on, there is no disappearance of the subject within the purview of the understanding that analyzes the ultimate. That is why in their system they accept svaśāntra syllogistic reasoning even during the analysis of the ultimate. Also, in explaining the meaning of the scriptural passages of the *Prajñāpāramitā* Buddhaśālā and Candra use for the most part reductio arguments, whereas Bhavya uses for the most part svaśāntra syllogistic reasoning. These are the differences between Prāsaṅgikas and Svaśāntikas. Apart from these there are no differences.

This is the position advocated [by this opponent].

[Reply:] We find [in the Indian texts] that the syllogistic reasonings of the Prāsaṅgikas are repeatedly called "inference based on what is renowned to [or accepted by] others" [i.e. gzhan la grags kyi rjes dpag]. Now if all trimodal logical reasons whose subjects are established by the valid cognitions of both proponent and opponent are iro's then tell me how you would go about refuting the position that all syllogistic reasoning used by the realist logicians are iro's?

It follows, absurdly, that even when they are analyzing the ultimate, the Prāsaṅgikas accept a svaśāntra logical reason because when a Prāsaṅgika proves to a realist that the sprout is truthless, for example, the subject, that is, the sprout, is established by the valid cognition of both the proponent and the opponent and it is based upon this subject [the sprout] that the Prāsaṅgika sets forth the trimodal logical reason for the purpose of proving the particular quality, namely, truthlessness.

[Opponent:] At that time the subject is not established by means of a valid cognition in the proponent's, [that is, in the Prāsaṅgika's,] system because he accepts that within the purview of the understanding based on that logical reason the subject disappears.

[Reply:] Then it follows, absurdly, that every valid cognition that perceives the subject of that logical reason must be an inferential understanding based on that logical reason. This is because, when the subject disappears within the purview of the understanding based on that logical reason, at that time the subject cannot be established by a valid cognition. If you accept the premise, then it follows, absurdly, that when a Buddhist cites "being a product" (byas pa) as a logical reason to prove to the Sāṅkhya that sound is impermanent, any valid cognition that perceives the subject [sound] must be the inferential valid cognition that understands that sound is impermanent.
Were this so, one would be forced to accept that the subject of that logical reasoning could not be established by a valid cognition before the inference based on that reasoning arose. [Hence, yours] is but the blithering of someone who has never studied logical methodology.

What is more, when you accept that the subject does not disappear within the purview of a Śvātantrika, you are in clear contradiction to the claim that the Śvātantrikas do not in any way accept phenomena that can withstand logical examination. So show me where there is to be found a Mādhyamika who accepts that conventional phenomena exist within the purview of an ultimate analysis. Not only does this hermeneutic force one to accept that there are no differences between Prāsaṅgikas and Śvātantrikas in terms of which of the two schools is best, but in fact it [implicitly] condemns the Śvātantrikas to a position that is inferior even to that of some realists, for not even the Cittamātrins accept that the dependent (gzhan dbang) exists within the purview of the understanding that realizes the ultimate truth.

Again, such a hermeneutic is a repudiation of direct experience, implying [as it does] that the person who claims that it is not correct for a Mādhyamika to accept svatantras, [Candrakīrti, for example] himself accepts svatantras. The Prasannapada states: "It is not right for a Mādhyamika to employ svatantric inference." And also: "It is my understanding that he who advocates, on the one hand, that he accepts the Mādhyamika viewpoint and, on the other, uses svatantric syllogistic reasoning suffers from a variety of very serious errors."

[Opponent:] These [passages] imply that it is not correct to use the svatantra when analyzing the ultimate.

[Reply:] To claim this is to reveal oneself as the hopeless idiot one actually is. This is because the Prasannapada extensively explains the reasons for why the use of the svatantra is incorrect within the context of refuting arising from self. Also, the logical reasoning that proves the nonexistence of arising from self is not reasoning that analyzes the ultimate, and the valid cognition that ascertains the nonexistence of arising from self based upon that logical reasoning is only a valid cognition that analyzes the nominal and is not an understanding that analyzes the ultimate. Were this not so, then all forms of logical reasoning would end up being reasoning that analyzes the ultimate.

4.2.3.2.2. Setting Forth Our Own Position

4.2.3.2.2.1. The Explanation of the Meaning of Svatantra and Prasaṅga

As it has been said: "Proof is something that exists for both parties" and also:

The enunciation [of a reason possessing] the trimodal [criteria] and the nonestablishment [of the predicate in the eyes of the opponent] ascertained by both parties constitutes "a proof" or "a refutation," whereas if such an enunciation already has been established, or if it is doubted by either one, it is not. This is because it would require proving it again.

As this says, when positing a svatantra position or logical reason, it is not enough that both the proponent and the opponent establish by means of valid cognition the subject of the inquiry (shes 'dod chos can), which is the basis on which a predicate is posited. Instead it is absolutely necessary that [the subject] be established compatibly (mthun snang du) in both the system of the proponent and opponent. Also, the trimodal criterion of the logical reason that proves the position [in question] must also be established by a valid cognition in such a way that it be established compatibly in the system of both proponent and opponent.

For the subject to be established compatibly in the system of proponent and opponent, the way in which valid cognitions establish their subjects must exist compatibly in both their systems. In the system of the realists, evident subjects such as form and so on must be established by the valid cognitions of direct perception (mngon sum) and they accept that any direct perceptual valid cognition is a valid cognition that perceives a svalaksana (rang mthsan) as the object it witnesses (rang gi zhal bya). Even when apprehending a concealed entity (rkyab), such as the eye organ and so forth, as the subject, though the valid cognition that actually perceives that subject is inferential in nature, it must reach back to a direct perception via a string [of thoughts which extend back to it]. So it does not matter whether or not one actually calls that perceived object in regard to which that inference is a valid cognition a svalaksana [because, due to the fact that it must extend back to a direct perception, it has its roots in the perception of a svalaksana]. All realists without exception accept that the perceived object is not something posited just nominally (ming tsam kyi), but that it exists from the object's own side (yul kyi sdom lugs su grub pa). That is why in the system of the realists all valid cognitions that perceive their subject are believed to be valid cognitions in regard to subjects that exist by virtue of their own characteristic. Also, in the system of the realists, as all valid cognitions are consciousnesses that are nonerroneous in regard to the objects of which they are valid cognitions, it is believed that if the subject of a logical reason is established by a valid cognition, that very subject must be an object found (rgnyed don) by the valid cognition that is nonerroneous with respect to it. Hence, as existence by virtue of something's own characteristic is even nominally impossible according to the Prasaṅgika system, even nominally there is no such thing as a valid cognition that perceives an object that exists by virtue of its own characteristic. Therefore, the way in which the subject is established by a valid cognition in the two systems, the realists' [and Prasaṅgikas'], cannot be compatible. Because
of this, [the Prāsaṅgikas] generate in the minds of their opponents an ascertaining consciousness that understands truthlessness simply by means of iro’s and reductio arguments.

If this were to be enunciated in a brief and easily understandable way, one would say this: a svatantra logical reason is what is posited as a syllogistic reason for proving that predicate which the proponent wishes inferred in regard to a subject that is compatibly established in the system of both proponent and opponent, [a subject that is] the object found by a valid cognition that is nonerroneous in regard to a perceived object that exists by virtue of its own characteristic. An iro, on the other hand, is a syllogistic reason in which the subject, though not established by a valid cognition in a way that is compatible to both the proponent and opponent, is nonetheless a subject established by a valid cognition in the system of the proponent and by a valid cognition in the system of the opponent and that is posited while embracing (khris nas) what the opponent’s system believes as regards the establishment by a valid cognition of the subject, of the relation between the subject and reason (phyogs chos), and so forth.

The realist opponents do not refute that the eye consciousness is a valid cognition in regard to form and so on, and neither do [the realists explicitly] admit it to be a valid cognition in regard to form that exists by virtue of its own characteristic. Nonetheless, the realists implicitly presuppose and accept in their hearts, [even if they do not admit it,] that the eye consciousness is a valid cognition in regard to form that is established by virtue of its own characteristic. Hence, until the time one abandons the philosophical tenets of the realists and understands those of the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas, nothing can be found that can be shown to be compatible between the realists and the Prāsaṅgikas, for whom [the eye consciousness] is not a valid cognition in regard to form that is established by virtue of its own characteristic, but is a valid cognition in regard merely to form [alone and unqualified]. One should therefore realize that in the realists’ system there is no such thing as a valid cognition that fails to be valid in regard to form that is established by virtue of its own characteristic, nor is there such a thing as a valid cognition with regard to mere form. What is more, this does not contradict the fact that [whether or not they accept it] there exist valid cognitions in the conviction of a realist that are not valid cognitions in regard to form that exists by virtue of its own characteristic, but that are valid cognitions in regard to mere form.

To accept that an iro refers to [a logical syllogism] in which the subject and trimodal [criteria] and so on are not accepted by the proponent, but either are or ultimately will be accepted by the opponent, once again is the emergence of this tenet which accepts that the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika accepts nothing whatsoever in its own system. Hence, it is pointless [to even consider it].

[Opponent:] Well then, show us an example of an iro syllogism, how its trimodal [criteria] are established, and how, in dependence on that, an understanding of the predicate is born.

[Reply:] In this regard, in the third chapter of the Prajñāmāla it says:

Were sight to see its own nature
That would not be sight.
And how can whatever does not see itself
Ever possibly see others?\textsuperscript{309}

Therefore, positing as a logical reason that it does not see itself, it proves that the eye cannot see other things, like the [color] blue, by virtue of its own nature. It is true that in the Prāsaṅgika’s own system all three things—the subject of that syllogism, the reason, and the predicate—are established by a valid cognition, but still there is nothing that can be shown to be compatible about the way the realist opponent and [the Prāsaṅgika] establish these by a valid cognition in their respective systems. So embracing the beliefs that are accepted by the opponent as regards the establishment of the subject and reason by a valid cognition, it is because [this logical reason] is posited for the purpose of refuting another’s belief in “sight that [exists] by virtue of its own nature” that it is called “an inference based on what is renowned to others” [iro]. It is in this vein that the Prasannapadā explains:

We do not use svatantra inferences, for inferences must have as a result the refutation of another’s belief. In this way, the understanding that “another is not seen” is an outcome of the eye’s not seeing its own nature. Also, they accept that seeing other things is concomitant (med na mi ’byung ba) [with seeing itself]. Therefore, when there is no such thing as seeing a thing’s own nature, there can be no such thing as seeing another, as in [seeing] a pot, for example. The eye does not see its own nature, hence it does not see another. Therefore, not seeing its own nature and seeing another, such as [the color] blue and so on, are contradictory. It is contradictory to inference [based on] what is renowned in one’s own system (rang la grags pa’i rjes dpag). This is what is elucidated by the inference which proves that [point].\textsuperscript{302}

The logical reason, namely that the subject, the eye, does not perceive itself, is established by a valid cognition; and because seeing another [entity], such as form, where the seeing is established by virtue of its own nature, is impossible even nominally, therefore, that reason can refute the object of the refutation. How could that logical reason refute the object of the refutation, however, if whenever the logical reason existed in the subject, so did the object of the refutation, and whenever one did not exist in the subject, neither did the other? Hence, even in our own system we must be able to make the
distinction that the subject of a syllogism based on what is renowned to others and the reason both exist, whereas the object of the refutation does not exist. It is not sufficient that the reason and subject and so forth be accepted merely by the opponent. That which is called "inference based on what is renowned to the opponent" is synonymous to "inference based on what is renowned to others," given that the proponent is a Mādhyamika.

Now let us turn to how the logical reason is proven. It is not necessary to prove [or establish] the existence of the subject, reason, and example to the opponent because he or she already accepts them. The concomitant relation (khyab 'brel) [between the reason and predicate] is as follows. For example, because we see water to be wet it is also possible to see earth that has [water] to also be wet. Were water not wet, then it would be impossible to perceive earth that had it to be wet. Likewise, if an entity had any essence that existed by virtue of its own nature, having perceived that essence in [the thing] itself, one would also have to perceive it in others that possessed it. In this way the opponent comes to understand the general concomitance by means of being shown an example which is renowned to him or her.

Now let us put this within the present context. If the eye could see inherently, first of all sight of itself would be perceived, and then sight of form and so on, and of the form within the composite whole in any object, would be perceived. Buddhāpalīta's commentary on the line: "Were sight to see its own nature" explains:

If the nature of phenomena were such that their own nature were seen, as other things would also possess it, other nature would also be perceived. For example, when water is seen to be wet, because it possesses it, even earth is perceived [to be wet]. When fire is seen to be hot, because it possesses it, even water is perceived [to be hot]. When the sweet fragrance of a jasmine blossom is experienced, the cloth that possesses it should also be perceived [to smell sweetly]. When an entity does not appear in terms of own nature, how could it be perceived in terms of other nature? Just as a jasmine blossom is not experienced to have a foul smell, neither will [that foul smell] be perceived within the cloth. Therefore, if sight sees its own nature then it would be possible to say "it is sight because it sees form and so on." But in fact sight does not see its own nature, and how can what does not see its own nature see other things? Therefore, it is not possible to say "it is sight because it sees form." The Acārya Āryadeva also says:

Were it the case that the essence of all phenomena
Must first appear in things themselves,
Then why wouldn't it also be
That the eye apprehends the eye itself?\(^{893}\)

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Even though the eye's not seeing itself even nominally does not imply that it does not see form and so on, were the sight of form to exist by virtue of its own nature, that sight would effectively become the essence of the eye, and then it would be necessary to see [things] independently of any causal conditions. In this way, we see that because the distinction between not seeing itself and seeing form is impossible [when sight exists inherently], it would have to see both itself and another [entity such as form].

[Opponent:] Just as fire does not burn itself but can burn another, likewise, though the eye does not see itself this does not vitiate against it seeing form.

[Reply:] It is not the eye's seeing form that vitiates against fire's merely burning kindling. Instead, the former must be compared to the burning of kindling by fire [in such a way that this process] exists by virtue of its own nature. It is in this way that your example would resemble the predicate. If it did exist in this way, then are fire and kindling a unity that exists by virtue of its own nature or different [by virtue of their own nature]? If they are one, it would follow, absurdly, that just as fire burns the kindling, it would also burn itself. In the second case, [that is, if they were inherently different,] it would follow, absurdly, that fire could arise independently of the kindling because they would be unrelated and different things, like a horse and a cow. If you repudiate this, then you have undermined [your own view] that they are a kind of "different" that exists by virtue of its own nature. It is with the idea of expressing this same point that the Prajñāpāramitā says:

It is because sight is established
That it cannot [be compared] with the case of fire [you bring up].\(^{894}\)

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4.2.3.2.2. The Explanation of the Reasons Why the Svaśtantra Is Not Accepted\(^{895}\)

One should be able to understand the point [being made in this section] from what has already been explained earlier, but for those of inferior intellect I once again will mention it in a condensed and easily understandable way.

It is incorrect for a Mādhyamika to posit a svaśtantra logical reason to a realist. This is because it is impossible for the subject, reason, and example to be established by any kind of valid cognition in a compatible way within the systems of the opponent and proponent, no matter what logical reasoning the Mādhyamika is positing to a realist.

[Opponent:] The Buddhist posits to the Vaiśeṣika the following [syllogism]:

Subject: sound
Predicate: is impermanent
Reason: because it is produced
Example: like a vase.
A Dose of Emptiness

In so doing [the subject] is not qualified as "[sound] that arises by the transformation of the elements," which is the Buddhist’s special belief [regarding the nature of sound], nor is it qualified as "[sound] that is of the quality of space," the Vaiśeṣika’s special belief. Instead, merely sound itself is the subject established compatibly by the two [parties].

Likewise, when the Prāsaṅgika posits for the realist the syllogism:

Subject: form
Predicate: does not inherently arise
Reason: because it arises interdependently.

[the subject, form,] is not qualified as "existing by virtue of its own characteristic," the special belief of the realist, nor is it qualified as "[form] that is empty of existing by virtue of its own characteristic," the special belief of the Prāsaṅgika. Instead, form alone is taken as the subject. So why should we not accept it to be something that is compatibly established by both the proponent and opponent?

Reply: The subjects of those two syllogisms do not resemble each other as regards their being compatibly established by both proponent and opponent. Why? Granted that [the valid cognition which establishes the subject] is not actually a valid cognition in regard to the properties of sound’s being a quality of space. Still, [the valid cognition] does establish compatibly in both the Buddhist realist and Vaiśeṣika systems simply a sound that is the object found by an auditory cognition considered to be a valid cognition that is nonerroneous in regard to sound that is established by virtue of its own characteristic.

Form is, in the system of the realists, the object found by a valid cognition that is nonerroneous in regard to form’s being established by virtue of its own characteristic. In the Prāsaṅgika system, although form is not established by virtue of its own characteristic, it is an object found by an erroneous valid cognition to which [the form] appears as if it existed [by virtue of its own characteristic]. Just as all phenomena are divisible into two categories, those that are objects found by erroneous valid cognitions and those found by nonerroneous valid cognitions, likewise, valid cognitions themselves are also divisible into two categories, those that are erroneous in so far as objects appear to them to exist by virtue of their own characteristic, and those that are nonerroneous in so far as [objects] do not appear in this way. The mere fact that an object is the object found by an erroneous valid cognition does not contradict the fact that there does exist a nonerroneous valid cognition which perceives it. Hence, just because it is an object found by an erroneous valid cognition does not contradict its being an object perceived by the Buddha’s gnosis, which understands things as they seem to be (ji snyed pa). For example, it is true that the appearance of falling hair (skra shad’ dzag pa) to the visual consciousness whose organ has been affected by eye disease is merely an erroneous appearance, yet this does not contradict the fact that it also appears to the nonerroneous gnosis of a Buddha. Likewise, granted that the truthlessness of a sprout is the object found by the inferential valid cognition that perceives the truthlessness of the sprout, and granted also that all inferential valid cognitions are erroneous cognitions, this does not imply however that the truthlessness of the sprout is merely an object found by an erroneous valid cognition, for otherwise it would follow, absurdly, that because sound is found by the auditory consciousness and because sound is like an illusion, the auditory consciousness finds sound to be like an illusion.

4.2.3.2.2.3. Bringing the Prasannapādā to Bear on This [Question] and Explaining [Its Meaning]

Having accepted the teaching that a Mādhyamika who accepts a svatantra logical reason suffers from the fault of having the basis [of the syllogism] not being established, that is, of having no subject, then, in stating the position of the opponent, the Prasannapādā says:

[Opponent:] In saying "sound is impermanent," the predicate and subject are taken as generalities and not as particularities. Were their specific peculiarities to be apprehended, then it would be impossible to call one what is inferred and the other that of which it is inferred. If, for example, "sound qua transformation of the four great elements" were to be apprehended, it would not be established for the opponent. On the other hand, if one were to apprehend [as the subject, "sound qua quality of space," it would not be established for the Buddhist. Likewise, even if one Vaiśeṣika accepts that sound is impermanent, were sound qua product (byas pa) to be apprehended [as the subject], it would not be established for others. On the other hand, the Manifestationist (mNgon par gsal bar bya ba) position would not be established for [the Vaiśeṣika]. Likewise, if what is variously destroyed requires a cause, that would be unacceptable to the Buddhist, whereas if [destruction] were causeless, that would not be established for the opponent. Hence, just as in these [cases] the predicate and the subject qua mere generalities are apprehended, in the present case [within the discussion of the Mādhyamika’s use of svatantra reasoning] it is a mere subject that is apprehended, apart from any specific peculiarities.

The Buddhist proves to the Vaiśeṣika that sound is impermanent. The Vaiśeṣika also proves to the Manifestationist that sound is impermanent. At both those times it is a merely general kind of sound that is apprehended as the subject, without its being distinguished by the specific beliefs of either propo-
nent or opponent. Likewise, [continues the Svātantrika,] the Mādhyamika proves to the realist that the eye, form, and so forth do not truly arise, and to the Sāṁkhya that they do not arise from themselves. At such times, it is merely a general kind of eye that is apprehended as the subject, without specifying it as either true or false according to the specific beliefs of either opponent or proponent. Therefore, as the subject is comparatively established, there is no fault [with our position]. This is a statement of Bhāvaviveka’s beliefs.

Wishing to set forth the refutation of that [position], the Prasannapadā first teaches that that point is incorrect:

That is not so! When one accepts, as in this case, the refutation of arising as the predicate which is to be proven, then it vitiated against the claim that in reality the basis of that argument, that is, the subject, is found to be a self-existing entity by a mistaken (phyn ci log) cognition. That is your own belief [as a Mādhyamika]. The mistaken and unmistakable are two distinct [categories]. Therefore, when a mistaken [cognition], such as that of someone with eye disease perceiving falling hair, apprehends what in fact does not exist [the hair] to exist, then how could he or she be said to be perceiving any existing object? When someone without eye disease does not incorrectly impute [the existence of a nonexistent object] such as falling hair by means of his or her incorrect [cognition], then at that time how could the person be said to perceive any object that does not exist conventionally? That is why the Acārya has himself spoken these words:

Were direct perception and so forth
To perceive any object whatsoever
Then there would be something to be proven or disproven;
But as there is no such thing, there is no accusing me.

Because the incorrect and correct [forms of cognition] are distinct [categories], therefore, while [a cognition] is correct it cannot be incorrect. How could the eye that is taken as the subject [of your svatantra syllogism] exist conventionally? Hence, you have not disproven the faults [we have accused you of, namely,] that your subject (phyogs) is not established and that your logical reason is not established. What you have offered is no answer at all.\textsuperscript{[327]}

Now to explain the meaning of this [passage]. The part from “That is not so!” up to “the mistaken and unmistakable are two distinct [categories]” is the explanation in brief. From “therefore” to the end of the verse it is the explanation of the line “the mistaken and unmistakable are two distinct [categories].” Everything below “because” is the condensed meaning. So first of all let us explain the meaning of the words of the explanation in brief.

\textsuperscript{[329]}

It is the correctness of the belief that when Mādhyamikas prove to a realist [328] that the eye and so on have no true arising they take a merely general “eye” as their subject without qualifying it either by [the word] true or false [that is repudiated with the words] “That is not so!” It is taking the eye as the subject, as the basis [of the predicate that] in reality there is no true arising, that is, is refuted, and the fact that it does not exist in reality is something that Bhāvaviveka himself accepts. Why is that? It is because this is a case during which “the eye and so forth” is taken as the subject, and “the repudiation of true arising” is taken as the predicate to be proven. In this way we see that a Mādhyamika must accept that the eye is found to be a self-existing entity only by a mistaken consciousness that has been affected by ignorance as to reality. The realists, on the other hand, accept that the eye and so forth are objects found by an unmistakable consciousness unaffected by the causes of error. Hence, the subject, the eye and so forth, will not be established compatibly. The object found by a mistaken consciousness and the object found by an unmistakable consciousness are distinct [categories]; that is, they are mutually exclusive.

Now the extensive explanation: because they are distinct [categories] just as a person with an eye disease [apprehends] hair that is not there, a mistaken [consciousness] that has been affected by ignorance apprehends form and so on, which do not exist by virtue of their own characteristic, as if they existed by virtue of their own characteristic, that is, [form] appears [to such a mistaken consciousness] and a valid cognition finds the form and so on to exist. At such a time, however, how could a perception of any object, such as form, actually exist by virtue of its own characteristic? That valid cognition does not find form and so on to exist by virtue of its own characteristic!\textsuperscript{[329]}

Just as a person who does not have eye disease [does not perceive] imaginary hair, the unmistakable gnosia of the āryan, which is unaffected by the cause of error, ignorance, and which does not impute the form and so on to be something it is not, does not find [true form]. At that time also the valid cognition that finds the form to exist is an erroneous consciousness. Why does a nonerroneous valid cognition not find form and so on to exist? It is because when the unmistakable āryan gnosia arises, there can be no perception of any kind of form whatsoever within the purview of that [gnosia]; that is, there can be no object that is conventional and no object that exists by virtue of its own characteristic. Because there is no valid cognition that perceives an object that exists by virtue of its own characteristic the Acārya [Nāgārjuna] has stated [the verse quoted in the Prasannapadā passage] and that goes “Were direct perception and so forth.”

Now the condensed meaning is this. Because the object found by a mistaken [consciousness] and the object found by an unmistakable [consciousness] are mutually exclusive, as we have seen, at the time it is not mistaken, that is, within the purview of a nonerroneous valid cognition that understands reality,
no object can be found by a mistaken valid cognition. Therefore, how could the conventional entity, the eye, be the subject established compatibly for the two sides?

Hence, you have not been able to overturn the faults [I have pointed out], namely, the fault of the subject (PHYOGS KYI SKYON), that the basis, the subject, does not exist, and the fault of the logical reason (STAN TSHEGS KYI SKYON) which ensues from the basis, the subject, not being established. So it says, "this is no answer at all." This is the meaning [of the passage].

The SVAṬANTHIKA MĀDHYAMIKAS believe that form does not truly exist even nominally, but they also accept that the eye consciousness of an ordinary limited being (TSHUR MHTHONG) is a nonerroneous valid cognition in regard to form's own-characteristic [existence]. Still, [according to us] if form and so on do not truly exist even nominally, they cannot exist even nominally by virtue of their own characteristic, and so it becomes necessary to accept that the consciousness to which [form] appears as existing by virtue of its own characteristic is erroneous. Hence, it is necessary to accept that form and so on are the objects found by an erroneous valid cognition, and because in the realists' system all form and so on are objects found by valid cognitions that are nonerroneous in their perception of [the fact that these objects] exist by virtue of their own characteristic, it is impossible for the objects to be established compatibly. It becomes incorrect, therefore, to posit SVATANTRA logical reasoning. This is the way [the Prāsaṅgikas] logically force [the Svaṭantikas into giving up this form of reasoning]. It shows the contradiction in accepting that all phenomena are truthless and accepting the svatantra. This very fact is the reason why it is incorrect for a Mādhyaṃkika to accept the svatantra.

Following that, the PRASANNAPĀDA, wishing to demonstrate that the stated example [of the syllogism proving sound to be impermanent] does not resemble the actual case [of the syllogism proving form or the eye to be truthless], says:

Even the example does not work. Both parties are alike in that neither accept [a syllogism] in which the specific properties of the general entity "sound" and the general entity "impermanence" are expressed [but take as the subject and reason only the unqualified general entities themselves]. Likewise, the general entity "the eye" is something not accepted even conventionally either by the advocates of emptiness or by the advocates of nonemptiness, and because it is also something [that is not accepted] ultimately, it has no resemblance to the example.\(^{901}\)

One person interprets this as follows.

[Opponent:] The meaning is this. Even though there does exist in the systems of both parties a sound that is neither the transformation of the elements nor a quality of space, no form that is neither true nor false is established compatibly in the system of both the realists and the Mādhyaṃkikas.

[Reply:] The one who claims this is no better than an amateur philosopher. Instead, I interpret it as follows. When a Buddhist proves the impermanence of sound to a Vaiśeṣika, though neither of the two sides have [valid cognitions establishing the subject] that verify either that sound is the transformation of the elements or a quality of space, both parties do have valid cognitions that [they think] establish a mere sound that exists by virtue of its own characteristic. Hence, it is the heartfelt belief of both parties that the mere sound that is the object found by such a valid cognition is to be taken as the subject. It is impossible for there to be in the system of both Mādhyaṃkikas and realists a valid cognition in regard to the eye alone, a valid cognition that is neither nonerroneous in regard to the eye nor erroneous. Therefore, a general entity, "the eye" that is neither the object found by an unmistakable valid cognition nor the object found by a mistaken valid cognition, is not accepted, either conventionally or ultimately, by those who advocate emptiness and [by those who advocate] nonemptiness. This is why it has no resemblance to the example, and this is what [this latter passage] means.

This same procedure demonstrates that the logical syllogistic reasoning also is not compatibly established for the realist and the Mādhyaṃkika. The PRASANNAPĀDA says: "This same method that is used to express the fault of having a basis, [that is, a subject,] that is not established should be applied to express the same fault of not being established in regard to the logical reason 'because it exists.'\(^{102}\) It is very easy to understand, applying these arguments, why the reason is not established by a valid cognition in a compatible way.

Immediately after this [passage] the PRASANNAPĀDA states:

What is more, the logician [Bhāvya] himself accepts the outcome of the aforementioned argument. How so? An opponent posits the following counterargument [to him]: "The causes and so forth that bring about the internalatyana in fact do exist because the Tathāgata has said so, and what the Tathāgata says goes! For example, didn't he say that nirvāṇa is peace?" In response to this [he asks]: "What is the object you accept as the logical reason, is it that the Tathāgata said this conventionally or that he said it ultimately? If conventionally, the object of the logical reason would not be accepted by yourself; if ultimately, then when the existence or both existence and nonexistence of the predicate (chos) is not established it eliminates the possibility of a causal condition, [that is, a logical reason,] whose nature is to have an existent result, nonexistent [result], or both existent and nonexistent result. Hence:

How can you call it a reason that proves [the predicate]?
Wore that so it would be incorrect.
The meaning of these words is that this is simply not a reason that proves [the predicate]. Therefore, as ultimately there is nothing to be proven nor a proof, the point is that your logical reason is not established and is contradictory." This is how [Bhavya] enunciates the faults [of his opponent], and it is because he accepts this very method himself as proving that this logical form of reasoning is not established, that in all cases of inferences in which one posits a real phenomenon (dngos po'i chos) as a logical reason the logical reason and so on will not be established for himself, thereby destroying all notion of proof. [903]

One Tibetan who believes himself to be a follower of Candrakīrti interprets the meaning of this passage as follows.

[Opponent:] When Bhāvaviveka posits the syllogism:

- **Subject:** earth
- **Predicate:** is not ultimately solid in nature
- **Reason:** because it is an element
- **Example:** like wind.

[Candrakīrti analyzes this syllogism of his as follows.] If you [Bhavya] are positing [the reason] "because it is an element" ultimately, then it is not established for yourself, and if you are positing [the reason] "because it is an element" conventionally, then it is not established for the realist opponent, so that you suffer from the fault of having a logical reason that is not established. Were this methodology not to suffer from the fault of having the logical reason not established, then you, Bhāvaviveka, are contradicting your own statement that the logical reason posited by another, "because the Tathāgata has said so," suffers from the fault of being a logical reason that is not established by your analyzing it as you do, that is, by arguing.] If you are saying "because the Tathāgata said so" ultimately, it is not established for the Mādhyamika and if you are saying "because the Tathāgata said so" conventionally, then it is not established for yourself.

[Reply:] This system of interpreting [this passage makes it seem as though it is] merely a case of the fault falling on [Bhavya] himself, as if he had no familiarity with the science of reasoning, so it definitely does not represent Bhavya’s intention. Therefore, the refutation of such a method [of interpretation] that so underestimates [Bhavya] cannot be the intention of this passage from the Prasaṅgapiṭa.

Hence, I explain the meaning of this scriptural passage as follows. When Bhāvaviveka refutes the opposition he asks them which of the two positions they accept, either that the object posited as the reason "because the Tathāgata said so" exists ultimately or only conventionally, because a third alternative apart from these is impossible. If it exists ultimately, it is not established for the Mādhyamika, and if merely conventionally, it is not established for the opponent. Hence, he states that the logical reason suffers from the fault of not being established for either party. Then the glorious Candrā says, "Well then. When we analyze the reason that Bhāvaviveka himself uses to prove to the realist the nonexistence of true causality, we see that both the subject and the reason must be either objects found by an erroneous valid cognition or else objects found by a nonerroneous valid cognition, apart from which there is no third alternative. If it is the object found by a nonerroneous valid cognition, then it would not be established for a Mādhyamika, and if it is the object found by an erroneous valid cognition then it would not be established for the realist, so that it becomes necessary to accept that the subject and logical reason suffer from the fault of not being established because it is analogous to the reasoning by which you, Bhāvaviveka, have demonstrated, through your analysis of your opponent, that they suffer from the fault of having a logical reason that is not established. This is the meaning.

In this regard [let me say that] according to Bhāvaviveka, because the subject and the reason, merely nominally speaking, are objects found by nonerroneous valid cognitions even in the Mādhyamika system, the fault of their not being compatibly established in the system of both parties does not occur. Though he would explain it in this way, however, the glorious Candrā refutes him by demonstrating the contradiction between [claiming] on the one hand that form and so on are empty of truly existing and on the other that the eye consciousness and so on are valid cognitions that are nonerroneous in regard to form and so forth. Hence, in the Prajñāpradīpa we find the expression independent (rang dbang) in such passages as "spoken from an independent or negativist (sun 'byin pa) perspective" to be synonymous with svaṇṭra. From [such contexts we know] a svaṇṭra logical reason to refer to [a reason that] generates an inference which understands the proposition (bsgrub bya) after the opponent has ascertained the subject, reason, example, and so on and the trimodal conditions in such a way that they are established compatibly by both parties, where the valid cognition establishes the object from its own side, perceiving it to be independent—[all this] without [the proponent merely] accommodating to the beliefs of the opponent [but actually accepting this faulty method of establishing the subject and so on]. Therefore, in a logical reason that is mutually posited among two parties both of which have correctly understood the Prāsaṅgika viewpoint, for the purpose of setting forth some kind of nominal fact, the subject and trimodal criteria are established compatibly within the system of both parties. However, [even in such a case where the reasoning is between two Prāsaṅgikas, the reason] is not a svaṇṭra logical reason.
4.2.3.3. The Explanation of the Reasoning That Refutes the Object of the Refutation

4.2.3.3.1. The Actual Explanation of the Reasoning That Refutes the Object of the Refutation

4.2.3.3.1.1. The Reasoning That Refutes the Self of the Person

The *Avatāra* says:

The chariot is (1) not accepted as being different from its own parts, (2) it is not nondifferent, (3) nor is it that which possesses them, (4) it is not in the parts, (5) nor are the parts in it, (6) it is not their mere aggregation, (7) nor their shape, and in the same way...

If one searches for the chariot by means of the sevenfold analysis (*dpyad pa rnam pa bdun*), though no essence is found within the chariot, as long as one does not analyze it, it is possible to unerringly posit all the functions of a chariot, which is merely labeled as such in dependence on the chariot's parts. Taking this as an example, the same methodology is also applied to the person, and among all of the forms of reasoning that set forth the selflessness of the person, this one is praised as supreme.

First of all, let me briefly state the method by which the chariot itself is searched for by means of the sevenfold analysis, and thus established as essenceless. If the chariot exists inherently, then is it inherently one with or inherently different from its parts? If the former is true, then, just as the parts are many, so would the chariot become many. If it were inherently different [from its parts], it would be of a different nature (*ngo bo tha dad*) [from them], and whatever are of different natures and yet cotemporal must be unrelated different objects, and hence, like a horse and a cow, the chariot would have to be perceived separately from its parts. Therefore, neither of the two possibilities, being the same or being different [from its parts], is possible.
The two possibilities, of the parts inherently depending on the chariot and of the chariot inherently depending on its parts, also do not work. This is because in either case [the chariot and its parts] would have to be inherently different things and I have just finished explaining why this would not work.

Neither will it work to say that the chariot inherently exists in such a way that it possesses its parts, as, for example, Devadatta might possess a cow or as Devadatta possesses his nose. In the former case of possession, [the two entities] are of different natures, whereas in the latter case of possession they would have to be inherently of the same nature, and both of these [possibilities] already have been refuted.

It also does not work to say that the mere assembly (tshogs tsam) of the chariot's parts is the chariot, for were that so, it would follow, absurdly, that the mere assembly of the complete [set of parts] set down in a certain place, wheels, nails, axle, all taken apart and deposited loosely, would be the chariot.

It is also not correct to posit the special shape of the parts of the chariot to be the chariot, for were that so, is it the shape of the individual parts that is the chariot or is it the shape of the assembly of parts that is the chariot? In the former case, is the shape identical to the shape when it has yet to be put together [that is the chariot] or is it another shape, different from the former? In the first case there would be no difference between the shape of the wheels and so forth at an earlier time, when it was yet to be put together, and at a later time, when it already had been put together. Hence, just as there is no chariot at the earlier time, when it has yet to be put together, likewise later, when it has already been put together, there would also have to be no chariot.

The second case, [its being another shape,] also does not work, for were there to be any other special features in the shape of the wheels and so forth when, at a later time, it already has been put together, features that do not exist in the wheels and axle and so on when, at an earlier time, it has yet to be put together, they would have to be perceived, and they are not.

It also does not work to posit the shape of the assembly of parts to be the chariot, for in our own system the assembly of the parts is the basis of labeling the chariot, nor does it work in the realist system, for they claim that the shape of the assembly [of parts] cannot exist as a substance, as the assembly itself does not exist as a substance, while accepting that the chariot must exist as a substance.

In this way, if searched for in these seven ways, no chariot is found; but if it is not analyzed, it is labeled as a chariot in dependence on its parts. In this same fashion one should realize that this [applies] in a similar way to all phenomena, such as pots and so on, for [it can be applied] analogously in accordance with all of the previous explanations of the reasoning that refutes the inherent existence of the subject by analyzing it in terms of whether or not it is inherently one or different from its parts. Hence, the Avatāra says:

It is not correct to say that the mind [which apprehends] a pot [arises] in regard to a pot which exists in terms of matter and so on, [that is, as the accumulation of atoms].

Because it does not exist, neither can its matter exist.

Therefore, [the pot] cannot be the shape of the [matter].

Let us now explain this by applying the methodology used in the case of the chariot to the person. We must first ask ourselves whether that "I" or that "person" which is the basis that we conceptualize when we think "I" is the same as or different from the aggregates. If it is the same, then just as the aggregates are many, so would the self be many, even at one instant of time.

That is not all, for the Prajñāmāla says:

If the aggregates are the self
It would arise and be destroyed.

Upon the destruction of the human aggregates during a previous birth a new set of god aggregates may arise that are of the same continuity, [that is, belonging to the individual who was previously the man]. When this occurs, it would follow that just as the aggregates of the man and the god are different, so too would their selves. Were that so, it would not be possible to remember [former] births. The karma already created would be wasted and we would encounter karma that we had not created. All of these three faults would ensue. What is more, if the selves within past and future lives were different by virtue of their own characteristic, they would be distinct unrelated objects, and because of this those three faults would ensue. Although it is not contradictory to say that the self and the aggregates are merely different nominally, to say that they are inherently different would make them unrelated distinct objects, which follows from the previously explained reasoning. Were that so, we would have to perceive the self apart from the aggregates, whereas this in fact is not perceived. As the Prajñāmāla says:

Were the self different from the aggregates
[The self] would not have the characteristics of the aggregates.

The self would not possess the characteristics of the aggregates such as arising, destruction, and abiding, for it would be an object distinct from, and unrelated to, the aggregates, just as, for example, a horse does not possess the characteristics of a cow. Now if this is accepted, [that is, that the self does not arise and so forth,] then the self would be a noncomposite phenomenon and it could not be the one who accumulates karma or experiences its ripening, being a permanent unchanging thing. This very same reasoning refutes the inherent existence of the dependence of the self and the aggregates, as well as the possession [of one by the other], for these three positions [identity, depen-
dence, and possession] have as a definite prerequisite that [the self and the aggregates] be different.

If the mere assembly of the aggregates is the self there would then ensue the fault of the object of the action and the doer of the action being identical, for just as the aggregates are those taken up by the self [at birth], so too is the assembly of the aggregates taken up by the self, [whereas the assembly itself being the self, by hypothesis, it becomes both what is taken up and what takes up, thereby annihilating the distinction between action, object, and doer]; and because the continuity of the aggregates is also accepted as being that taken up by the self, this same reasoning refutes the possibility that the continuity of the aggregates is the self.

It is also not possible for the shape of the aggregates to be the self because, were that so, it would follow, absurdly, that the self was material and it would also follow, absurdly, that when one is born into the formless realm the self would cease to exist.

The fact that if it is searched for in these seven ways no self at all is to be found is what it means for the self to be essenceless. This, however, does not repudiate the fact that, if it is not analyzed, the notion of person is a functional one. It being established by a nominal valid cognition, the person does nominally exist. What is more, when the mind that thinks "I" arises, it does so in dependence on, that is, using as a basis, the five aggregates within one's own continuum [if one is in the form realm or below], and the four, [excluding the form aggregate, if one is a formless being]. Without using [such a basis it would not arise] and that is why it [is said] to be merely labeled in dependence on the aggregates.

When one repudiates the self through reasoning one also establishes the essencelessness of mineness because mineness is something that must be established in dependence on the self. That is why the Prajñāmāla says:

If the self does not exist
How could "mine" exist?

4.2.3.3.1.2. The Explanation of the Refutation of the Self of Phenomena

4.2.3.3.1.2.1. The Actual Explanation of the Reasoning That Refutes the Self of Phenomena

Although many forms of reasoning setting forth the selflessness of phenomena are taught, the Prasannapāda states that if one negates that arising exists inherently, the refutation of all other objects of refutation, such as inherent existence and so on, becomes very simple. What is more, the Avatāra states that to refute true arising the most powerful form of reasoning is the one that refutes arising via the four possibilities (mu bzhi skye 'gog). Therefore, let me very briefly mention this method here.

The Sāṃkyas think that if things do not exist at the time of their causes, then they could not arise. Hence, they claim that [a thing] exists in an unmanifest way within the nature of its cause, that the manifestation of that [preexisting effect within the cause] is what we call causality, and that what has already become manifest need not arise again.

The Vaiśeṣikas, all of the realists of our own system, and the Śvātantrikas all accept that things, by virtue of their own characteristic, are different from their causes, thereby exclusively believing in "arising from another."

The Nigranthas [Jains] claim that everything arises both from itself and from another in the following way. They say that a porcelain pot having the nature of clay arises based on the clay, thereby arising from itself; and being dependent on the potter and wheel and so on, it arises from other [things]. Humans, being strictly of the nature of the vitality (srog) of their previous births, arise based on vitality, thereby arising from themselves; and being dependent on parents and previous karmas, they arise from others.

From among the twenty-five different philosophical schools that derive from the Sāṃkyas, the ascetic Lokakṣaṇaḥ (Jig rten mig) composed the Hundred Thousand Scriptures of the Čārvakas. He and all his followers accept that things arise causelessly.

None of these four ways of arising are apprehended by modes of innate misapprehension of true [existence]. Nonetheless, if things existed the way they are apprehended by the innate apprehension of true [existence], they would definitely have to exist in one of these four ways. The reasons for this I have already explained.

First of all let me briefly mention something of the reasoning that refutes arising from self. The exposition of the Avatāra, namely its pointing out such absurdities as the seed and sprout having to have the same color and shape and so on, are easy to understand. The Prasannapāda presents how it is that Buddhāpālita explains this point as follows:

The Acārya Buddhāpālita himself states that things do not arise from themselves because that would make their arising purposeless and because utter absurdities would follow. It is unnecessary for things that exist in and of themselves (bdag gi bdag nyid yod) to arise again, for if things arose even though they already existed, they could never stop arising.

Then, to state the way in which Bhāvaviveka attempts to counteract this [342] position, the Prasannapāda says:
In response to this, one opponent [Bhavya] says, "this is not correct because [Buddhapālita] states neither logical reason (gan tshigs) nor example (dpe) and because he does not eliminate the fault advocated by the others. Because these are words of a reductio argument, we must take the opposite object [in order to determine the opponent's true belief] and because it is evident that the proposition (bsgrub bya) and its predicate (chos) must be reversed, [it follows] that things would be born from others, that causality is efficacious ('bras bu dang bcas pa) and that it is finite (skye ba thug pa yod pa).

But these positions are contrary to our own tenets." This is the fault of which he accuses [Buddhapālita].

Because this argument and the response to it are extremely difficult to understand I will explain them. Let me, however, first [give the faulty interpretation of] one person.

[Opponent:] The meaning of the section that goes "we must take the opposite of the present context" is as follows. All valid reductio arguments must imply ('phen) a positive proof (sgrub byed). Hence, so too must the reductio put forth by Buddhapālita imply a positive proof. We know that we arrive at the predicate [of such a positive proof] by taking the opposite of the reason of the reductio and that the logical reason [of such a proof] is the opposite of the predicate of the reductio. Hence, (the positive proof) that must be accepted as valid logical reasoning is:

Subject: all things
Predicate: have purposeful and finite arising
Reason: because they arise from others.

But to do so is to contradict our own tenets. This is [Bhavya's refutation of Buddhapālita].

The way the glorious Candra refutes that such a fault exists is as follows. Because it is not correct for a Mādhyaṃkika to accept svatantras, they also do not accept a positive proof qua implication of a reductio. Merely positing a reductio does not imply a positive proof because the speaker does not speak with the desire to imply a positive proof and because words show only the meanings that their speakers desire them to express, not expressing anything independent from the speaker. Therefore, since Buddhapālita's reductio is only one that demonstrates the internal contradiction in what the opponent accepts, there is no fault. This is [Candrakīrti's] response.

[Reply:] This interpretation is utterly misguided, for, as I have already explained at great length, there is no contradiction in rejecting the svatantra and accepting valid forms of logical [sylllogistic] reasoning, not to speak of the fact that it is quite incorrect to consider the Prāśāntika a system that advocates that reductio arguments cannot imply positive proofs. The Avatārabhāṣya says:

If what is dependent on others arises strictly from another, then from a flame heavy darkness could arise because of its otherness; but this is neither evident nor reasonable. Therefore, it cannot be, and therefore the otherness of cause and effect is untenable.

Also, in the Bhāṣya to the verse that goes "everything would arise from everything else because," it says: "If, as you say, the rice sprout arises from a rice seed which is different from it, then so too would a pot, cloth, and so forth, and that is not seen to be the case. Therefore, it cannot be." So we see that the commentary clearly explains the positive proofs implied by those two reductio that the root text explicitly teaches. Although there are many such [examples of reductio implying positive proofs in Prāśāntika treatises], as it would lengthen [the work excessively], I will not cite them.

The Prasannapadā explains the meaning of Buddhapālita's reductio arguments. The line "things that exist in and of themselves" is the extensive explanation of the word their; then it posits that as the reason. The line "it is necessary for them... to arise again" is the extensive explanation of the line "that would make their arising purposeless," and "if things arose even though they already existed, they could never stop arising" is the extensive explanation of "utter absurdities would follow." These latter two are explained to be the predicates of the reductio. Because "the purposelessness of its arising" and "the neverendingness of its arising" are not explained to be the reasons [of the reductio in the Prasannapadā], anyone who accepts that in our own system these are accepted as the reasons [can be considered only] to be poorly versed [in this literature]. There is also no way that anyone who is half acquainted with logical reasoning would ever maintain that all valid reductio arguments must imply a positive proof. So how could it be possible for someone like Bhāvaviveka, a completely perfected mahāpandita, to accept such a thing?

Therefore, the opponent's position is to be interpreted as follows. Buddhapālita's stated syllogism expresses no example or reason to prove that there is no arising from self, and hence it is nothing but a mere belief. Also, it does not eliminate the fault expressed by the Sāmkhya when he analyzes the belief as follows: "If by the words nonarising from self you mean [nonarising] from a result whose nature has become manifest, you have proven something already established for us. If [you mean nonarising] from a cause whose nature is that it has unmanifested potential [to produce the effect within it], then, as everything that arises can arise only from such [causes], your comonsequence is reversed."

The words translated [into Tibetan] in the Prasannapadā as "because these are words of a reductio argument" are translated in the Prajañapradipa [of Bhāvaviveka where they first occur] as "because these are words which offer an opportunity [for the opponent to accuse us]." This means that, as these are words that offer the other party an opportunity to accuse us [of a fault], they are not correct. How does this opportunity arise? It arises because
it is necessary to take the opposite of the words as they are literally arranged within the present context. If, as per the literal interpretation, the proposition to be proven were “things do not arise from themselves,” and the logical reason “[because] arising is purposeless and endless,” then the relationship between reason and subject (phyeogs chos) is not established [because the arising of things is not purposeless and endless]. If the logical reason is that “[things] arose from themselves, [arising] would be purposeless and endless,” then for the relationship between subject and reason to be established the proposition to be proven would also have to be established, [making the syllogism useless]. So it is not possible to take [Buddhapālita’s reductio] as it literally stands. Therefore, it becomes evident that here Buddhapaśita himself believes the two opposites [of the literal] meaning to be the reason. This is how Bhavya interprets the beliefs of Buddhapālita.

How does it become evident that it is the opposite [of the literal] meaning that he believes to be the reason? It is evidenced by the former and latter uses of the words because it would, which are words that imply the opposite. How is this evidenced? In this way. From the fact that “their arising would be purposeless” [we understand that he believes it to be actually] finite. This is how it is done. Hence, Buddhapaśita, as proof for the previously stated belief, namely “that [things] do not arise from themselves,” does not posit the actual literally stated “arising would be purposeless and endless” as his reason. Although he does not actually state it literally, the word would has the ability to indirectly imply that it is the opposite [of the literal] meaning, that arising is purposeful and finite, that is to be posited as the reason. It is clear that this is Buddhapaśita’s belief. This is the meaning of Candrakirti’s interpretation of Bhavya’s interpretation of Buddhapaśita’s reductio.

In this regard, when [Tsong kha pa’s] Great Exposition [of the Prajñāpāramitā, called] An Ocean of Reasoning, says: “If it is necessary to take the opposite of the literal reason, one must also take the opposite of the literal predicate (dam bca’) because they are similar.” It is not teaching that the reasons for both [the reversal of the logical reason and predicate] are similar, for there is no question at all that the faults arising from taking “the purposelessness and endlessness of arising” as the reason are similar to the faults arising from taking “no self-arising” as the predicate. Nor is it simply insisting that the predicate must be the opposite of the literal predicate because the reason is the opposite of the literal reason. Well then, what is the meaning of this passage? This is not [a general principle that is] being claimed of everything that is a reductio or a logical reason. Here [Tsong kha pa is saying] that they are similar in that, when Buddhapālita cites as the reason that proves no self-arising the purposefulness and finiteness of arising, it becomes necessary to accept as the predicate an opposite entity, that is, the opposite of the non-affirming negation (med dgag), which is the mere repudiation of self-arising.

How they are similar as regards the need to accept that is as follows. It does not mean that they are similar in that [the predicate must be reversed] by citing “it arises from another” [as the new predicate]. The meaning instead is this. The object that is the reversal of the given predicate, that is, the nonaffirming negation that is the mere repudiation of self-arising, is a predicate that is an affirming negation (ma yin dgag). If the purposefulness and finiteness of arising is posited as the reason, then the words of the proposition, that is, that “things do not arise from themselves,” indirectly suggest (shugs la phren) that the quality being proven is that things arise from others. The reason is as follows. By directly expressing that things arise in a purposeful and finite way, it is expressing that things arise; and by the words “they do not arise from themselves,” it repudiates arising from self. Given that they arise, there are no two choices but that they arise either from themselves or from another. Hence, by claiming on the one hand that things arise, and on the other that they do not arise from themselves, it is suggesting that they arise from another. It is just like the case of claiming that fat Devadatta does not eat during the day. This indirectly suggests that he eats at night. Because Bhāvaviveka himself accepts arising from another nominally, he advocates that [all arising] is included within these two [possibilities]. The meaning of the following two passages from the Great Exposition should be understood in this same way. “In this regard, it is not that just as the reason is reversed, so too must the predicate [be reversed]. Therefore, the reversed object is the nonrepudiation of self-arising.” And also: “When it says: ‘because arising is purposeful and finite, if the self-arising of things were not repudiated . . . ’ they would arise from others.” The Exposition also says: “The [suggestion of the arising from another] does not [occur by] reversing the reason of the reductio because it is explained to occur by reversing the proposition, and because no self-arising is never claimed to be the reason.” This passage demonstrates the beliefs of one individual who has never subtly analyzed such an issue and holds to the conception that Bhāvaviveka’s statement to the effect that “by the reversal of no self-arising, arising from another [is suggested]” is a statement [meaning] that Buddhapālita posits as the reason of his reductio argument “no arising from self” and that because it is necessary to take the opposite of this reason to be the predicate [of the positive syllogism implied by the reductio], arising from another becomes this predicate, [thereby being suggested or implied by the reductio]. Because this individual has this doubt, for the purpose of dispelling it [the Exposition] teaches this not to be the case.

Bhāvaviveka does not think that the reversal, [that is, the opposite,] of the mere repudiation of self-arising is the reversal of the reason of the reductio that Buddhapālita urges on the Śāṅkhyas, for Bhāvaviveka himself says that “because it becomes manifest that the predicate is an object to be reversed, things would arise from others.” He is not saying that by reversing the reason
their arising from others [is suggested], and also because Buddhapālita does not claim, nor does he posit, ‘‘no self-arising’’ as the reason of his reductio. This is what [Tsong kha pa] intends to say [in the Exposition passage].

So what does Bhāvaviveka think he is proving by showing the fault of having to take the reversed entities as the reason and predicate? He states, ‘‘there arises the fault of contradicting our own tenets.’’ There arises the fault of contradicting which of our own tenets? Now this definitely is not claiming that because [Buddhapālita] is accepting that arising is purposeful and finite, he is contradicting the tenet which advocates that it is purposeless and endless, and that because he is accepting arising from another, he is contradicting the tenet that there is no arising from another, for neither the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] nor Buddhapālita accept arising that is purposeless and endless. Well then, how does it [contradict our own tenets]? In the same way as it was just explained. Advocating, on the one hand, that things arise purposefully and, on the other, that they do not arise from themselves indirectly implies [according to Bhavaya] that they arise from another. If this is so, then as it is not the nonaffirming negation, that is, the mere repudiation of the self-arising of things, that acts as the proposition (bsgrub byar ma song), but the affirming negation indirectly implied by the predicate [of the reductio] that acts as the proposition, then it contradicts our own tenet that the proposition must be a nonaffirming negation. This is Bhavaya’s intention.

That a nonaffirming negation is the proposition is a tenet not only of Buddhapālita, but a fundamental tenet of all Mahayanists who comment on the purport of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna], whether Prāsaṅgika or Svātantrika. That is why the Exposition says: ‘‘in this way it contradicts our own tenet that the words not from self are referring to the mere repudiation of self-arising.’’931

It is an indication of extreme dillletantism on one’s part to interpret this mean, as does the Explanatory Commentary to the Prajñāpāramitā.932 That is in contradiction to the tenet that one should not accept arising from another and purposeful and finite arising, for it seems [that if one interprets Bhavaya in this way], one has not understood even the mere fact that Bhāvaviveka himself believes that the arising of things from others is the purport of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna].

[Opponent:] [The Explanatory Commentary] is claiming that it is in contradiction to the tenet that one should not accept the arising from others ultimately.

[Reply:] But then it would be necessary to say that it is from the reversal of ‘‘no arising from self’’ that ‘‘ultimately arising from another’’ becomes the predicate, reducing one to advocating nonsense. So here it is not this that is being advocated, but instead that the reversal of no self-arising comes to establish arising from another. So to say that [Bhavaya means that] it is in contradiction to the tenet that one should not accept arising from another ultimately is [actually] refuting Bhāvaviveka because he accepts that there is arising from another but no arising from another ultimately. In this same way it is easy to understand that it is not correct to reject purposeful arising and to analyze it by [determining] whether he is not accepting purposeful arising altogether or whether he is not accepting purposeful arising ultimately.

[Opponent:] Bhāvaviveka accepts that, even though purposeless and endless arising are posited as the reasons literally, it is the two reversed objects that, according to the intended meaning, become evident as the posited reasons. If that is so, then why does he teach that there is a fault of not expressing a reason?

[Reply:] There is no problem here, for he believes that this [reductio] does not express a svatantra reason that can prove no self-arising. In this regard the glorious Candra answers this by putting the meaning of the Prasannapadā in an easily understandable way.

The svatantra reason that proves no self-arising does not suffer from the fault of not eliminating the objections advocated by others because in general Mādhyamikas should not accept svatantra reasoning, and in this [particular] case no svatantra reason is posited to prove no self-arising anyway. We have already explained the reasons why the svatantra should not be accepted.

[Opponent:] Be that as it may, it is still necessary to state a faultless syllogistic reason [based on what is] renowned to others with an example and so on, and this is not stated, so the previously mentioned fault still ensues.

[Reply:] Even though an inferential [argument] is not stated, simply by means of a reductio [argument] that states the contradictions, an opponent can come to see the problems, that is, the internal contradictions, within his or her own position, thereby [eventually] abandoning that position. If they see such [faults] and yet do not abandon [their position], then it would do no good to expound an inferential argument. Do not argue with the insane!

Therefore, it does not follow that inference [based on what is] renowned to others must definitely be stated to all opponents. When it is necessary to state [this form of argument] to someone, it is stated. Buddhapālita’s statement, [351] ‘‘there is no need for what exists in itself to arise again,’’ are the words extending the passage, ‘‘that would make their.’’ Hence, exists is the reason and the arising again of things is purposeless is the proposition. In this way we see that the explanation that extricates the power of the great meaning of these words of Buddhapālita is as follows:

Subject: the clay pot that is an entity accepted as existing in an unmanifest state at the time of its cause
Predicate: does not arise from itself
Reason: because it exists, having already been established in its own nature
Example: as in the case of the pot that is accepted as being manifest.

This is the explanation of the way of positing the inference [based on what is] renowned to others as it is taught [by Buddhapālita]. Therefore, he does not
suffer from the fault of not having stated a concordant example that possesses both [the qualities of] the reason and predicate [of a syllogism based on] the renown of others, for the Sāṃkhya themselves have already established that the pot which is already manifest need not arise again. That very [syllogism] proves to the Sāṃkhya, who accept that the thing which they believe to be in an unmanifest state must arise again, that it does not arise again. So he does not suffer from the fault of proving what already has been established. Hence, we are free of the fault as stated [by Bhavya].

How we are free of the fault that “since it is necessary to accept something that is the opposite of the reductio, we are contradicting our own tenets” is a point taught in the Prasannapada and extremely difficult to understand. For this reason those who are devoid of the seeing guide of intelligence, in the midst of their darkness, spew forth the continuous and inexhaustible clamor in which they clearly announce their own concocted stances.

Now this point that Bhāvaviveka variously analyzes and in regard to which he faults Buddhapaśita on this one occasion is that having to do with the four lines [of Prajñāmūla (1, 1)] that go “not from self, not from another.” In his explanation, Buddhapaśita sets forth the four positions of our own system, namely, that things do not arise from themselves and so forth. Then, to prove these four positions of our own system, he does not actually posit a trimodal syllogistic form of proof, but instead literally states only a mere reductio argument that demonstrates the problems involved in accepting the opposite of these, our own, positions.

This is the point on which Bhavya faults him. That is why our own Lord [Tsong kha pa] in his Great Exposition of Insight says:

“No thing, either inner or outer, can ever or in any way arise from itself” and likewise should [all of the adjectives and adverbs like ever and in any way, and so on] be applied to each of the other three positions and not be isolated as predicates of a syllogism. Arising from self is refuted by a reductio, and these positions, without being statements of example-reason that prove these [points], nonetheless teach the problems of the opposites of these positions.

So must it be understood.

Bhāvaviveka states our own position to be that “things do not arise from themselves” and then posits as proof of this, [that is, as the reasons,] “because their arising would be purposeless” and “because their arising would be endless,” and this [he says] is not correct. That purposelessness and endlessness should not be posited as the reasons has been previously explained. Also, [he says that] establishing our own position and the arising of certainty in regard to it cannot be accomplished merely by means of a reductio that exposes the faults of the other’s [position], hence requiring that a trimodal logical reason be stated as proof of that position. What is more, the words “their

arising would be purposeless” in actuality implies the absurdity of purposeless arising and “would be endless” implies the absurdity of endlessness. A mere reductio argument argued against another, however, cannot prove our own position, that is, that things do not arise from themselves, which is why it is necessary to take the object that is the opposite of the absurdity, that is, of purposelessness, namely, that there does exist purposeful arising [as the reason], and because of this he thinks that there arises the fault of contradicting our own tenets. This is then, as it was explained earlier, how [Bhavya] disputes [Buddhapaśita’s interpretation of Prajñāmūla (1, 1)]. How could anyone then claim that his argument is a case of his thinking that all valid reductio arguments imply a positive proof?

Therefore, when Bhāvaviveka interprets the belief of Buddhapaśita, he takes the two reductios:

| Subject: things                      | Predicate: absurdly, arise purposelessly |
| Reason: because they arise from themselves. |

and

| Subject: [same]                      | Predicate: absurdly, arise endlessly     |
| Reason: because they arise from themselves. |

to be the actual exposition (dngos bstan) of the passages “their arising would be purposeless” and “utter absurdities would follow,” and then he thinks that the two objects that are the opposite of the absurdities are evidently being believed to be the positive proofs, [that is, the reasons,] of [the proposition] “things do not arise from themselves.” In this way [we see that] Bhāvaviveka, in explaining the meaning of Buddhapaśita’s commentary, sets up the force of the former and latter sets of arguments in such a way that the passage, “it is necessary for things that arise in and of themselves to arise again,” becomes the extensive explanation of the passage, “because that would make their arising purposeless.” Then he disputes [the validity of Buddhapaśita’s claims] in this way, when [in actuality what he is refuting] is a mode of urging the reductio that, according to Candrakīrti’s interpretation, was never intended. Candra himself takes the former passages as the brief expositions and the latter ones as the extensive expositions.

Now, for the meaning of his [interpretation]: [according to him] the first reductio is:

| Subject: things that are accepted as existing in an unmanifest way at the time of their cause |
| Predicate: absurdly, arise again, purposelessly |
| Reason: because, their own nature being already established, they already exist. |
Whereas if it is necessary to arise again even though they already exist, their own nature being already established, then the second reductio is [posited]:

Subject: the mere arising of a seed
Predicate: occurs in a continuous fashion without any end or finality
Reason: because, even though it already has been established in its own nature, it must once again be planted and grow.

He [Candra] comments that these two reductios are the ones urged [by Buddhāpālīta]. He does not posit as the reasons that prove the nonexistence of self-arising "purposeful arising," the opposite of the absurdity "their arising would be purposeless," and "finiteness," the opposite of the absurdity of endlessness. When he posits a syllogistic reason [based on] the renown of others in proving that things do not arise from themselves, he posits [as the reason] that "their own nature, being already established, they already exist," and so there does not arise the fault of his having to accept that "purposeful arising" and so on are posited as the reason. Also, these two reductios, which have just been explained, are not urged [on the opponent] to prove the opposite of the absurdities, having posited the opposite of the absurd fact (thalchos) as a reason proving that things do not arise from themselves. Instead, these are mere reductios urging absurdities, that is, facts not accepted [even by the opponents], to show an internal contradiction in the Sāṃkhya position that accepts both (1) that things, having already been established at the time of their cause, already exist; and (2) that once again they must arise from their own nature. Hence, the opposites of the absurdities—"arising again that is purposeful!" and "the mere arising of a seed not occurring in a continuous fashion without any end or finality"—are related to the beliefs of the opponents, the Sāṃkhya. In the position of us, the Buddhists, there is no acceptance of a belief in these two opposites. Hence, we do not incur the fault of contradicting our own tenets via the acceptance of the opposites of the absurdities. This being the meaning of the Prasannapāda when it says, "the fact that is the opposite of the absurdity is something related to the opponent and not our own [position], for we have no beliefs," there is no fault.

Therefore, Bhāvaviveka, not realizing that the former and latter words of Buddhāpālīta's commentarial [passage] are to be taken as the brief exposition and extensive explanation [of the same point and not as expounding different points] and that he urges in this way the unacceptable absurdity that it is purposeless for things to arise again, [Bhavya] says that [Buddhāpālīta] should posit a positive proof of our own position, but that he has not actually done so.

Hence, [Bhavya] claims that by the statements, "because that would make their arising purposeless" and "because utter absurdities would follow," [Buddhāpālīta] is taking as the reason he posits the opposite of the absurdities he actually urges, namely, [the opposite of] the absurdity that the arising of things is purposeless and the [opposite of the] absurdity that it is endless.

When [Bhavya] states this fault [in Buddhāpālīta's system], Candra answers him in the way that we have just explained. For this reason the Great Exposition says:

He [Candra] teaches that Bhāvaviveka, not understanding that the absurdity being urged is the purposelessness of having to arise again and the absurdity of endlessness, takes as the urged absurdities the purposelessness and endlessness of arising in general, and in this way claims that their opposite must be accepted.\[357\]

Hence, not exactly understanding the word again, he faults Buddhāpālīta from an honest mistake; he does not in any way state a fault that consists entirely of wishful thinking.

[Opponent:] This is not so. When Bhāvaviveka exposes the fault [in Buddhāpālīta's system], he is stating that [arising from self] cannot be refuted simply by means of a reductio ad absurdam [argument] that does not imply a positive proof, hence requiring that the reductio imply a positive proof. The reductio being:

Subject: the sprout
Predicate: absurdly, does not once again arise in a purposeful and finite way
Reason: because it arises from itself.

The opposite of that [reductio], that is, the positive proof implied by it, is:

Subject: the sprout
Predicate: does not arise from itself
Reason: because its arising again is purposeful and finite.

Hence, [Bhavya] claims that Buddhāpālīta is contradicting the Acārya [Nāgārjuna's] belief that arising again is not purposeful or finite.

[Reply:] Because the pervasion (kyab pa) of your proposed reductio has no efficacy against the beliefs of the Sāṃkhya, [that is, it is not accepted by them] it is reduced to being a proof based on what the one who is urging the reductio has [only] himself or herself determined to be the case (tshad grub). But even this can not be, as for us it is a completely improper reductio whose pervasion is the opposite of what it should be. What is more, the reason of the implied positive proof, the opposite of that [reductio], is a nonestablished syllogistic reason, [that is, it is nonexistent]. The relation between subject and reason (phyogs chos) is contradicted by valid cognition, and the pervasion is actually the opposite of what it should be. This is what you have as your reason! How could the faults of a reductio or a syllogism be any greater than these? What is even more surprising, however, is that you should claim that a great pandit the likes of Bhāvaviveka, without actually finding even a single one of those stated faults, should have nonetheless gone ahead and claimed...
that [Buddhapālita] was contradicting the Acārya’s tenet that one should not accept arising again to be purposeful and finite.

[Opponent:] When the absurdity not accepted by the other party is urged, the one urging it must definitely accept the opposite of the absurd fact. Therefore, it is not correct for Candrakīrti to not accept the opposite of the absurd fact of those two reductios he claims to be the meaning of Buddha-pālita’s commentary.

[Reply:] The Prasannapada says: “How could the absurdity occur that, when the advocate of essencelessness proves an absurdity to an advocate of essences, he or she comes to possess the opposite of that absurdity?” This does not refer to absurdities in general, but to the two absurdities which refute arising from self. When undesired facts are urged by means of those two [reductios], it is not necessary for the one who urges them to necessarily accept the opposite fact. This is because when a word demonstrates a meaning, it does so only following the speaker’s intention to express it (brjod ‘dod) and not independent of the speaker.939 and [in this case], the one who is urging [the absurdity] urges it with the intention merely of refuting that arising again is purposeful, [without implying anything else].

[Opponent:] Well then, the Sāṃkhya’s believe and teach that it is merely the awakening of what already exists by means of conditions that is the meaning of arising. Because they say “the sprout arises,” it would follow that [such an expression] would mean “the sprout that they advocate arises.”

[Reply:] There is no problem, for [when the texts] say “if it has the ability,” they mean that both the ability of a word to teach a certain meaning, and [the speaker’s] desire to enunciate [that meaning] are necessary [for the word to have that meaning]. In this section I have already explained the meaning of the Prasannapada’s refutation of the avatāra. As the remainder is slightly easier to understand, I do not explain it here.

4.2.3.1.2.1(B) The Refutation of Arising from Another 940

Those who accept arising from another believe that effects are inherently different from their own individual causes, and [they are refuted as follows]:

Subject: smoke
Predicate: absurdly, is independently different from fire, and vice versa
Reason: because it is inherently different.

The pervasion holds because if something is a created thing941 that depends on another it contradicts its being an essence. If [the proposition] is accepted, then it follows, absurdly, that [smoke] is a different object unrelated to fire. If that is accepted, then it follows, absurdly, that just as smoke arises from fire [without being at all related to it], so too could darkness arise from a flame, as, in so far as they are different unrelated objects, they have a similar relationship [to the relationship between fire and smoke]. Likewise, it would follow that from causes and noncauses alike both effects and noneffects would arise.

[Opponent:] Even though they are similar in being different, a barley seed and a barley sprout belong to one continuity and are of a common family and so forth. The barley seed and the rice sprout, however, do not [belong to this same continuity], so the fault, the absurdity of everything arising from everything else, does not arise.

[Reply:] If [two things] are inherently different, a distinction of the kind [you are making] is not possible. This is because if [two things] are different in such a way that they are mutually independent [of each other], and yet still belong to the same continuity, then everything would belong to the same continuity as everything else. This very point is expressed in the twenty-first chapter of the Prajñāpāramitā:

If cause and effect are different
Causes would resemble noncauses.942

The Avatāra also says:

If a thing arises in dependence upon something different from it,
Then thick darkness could arise even from a flame,
And everything would give rise to everything else
Because of the similarity of the difference even with everything that is not a cause.943

Such are the forms of reasoning expounded [by Nāgārjuna].

As regards the reasoning that leads to the faults of the extreme absurdities [implicit in the position of] those who accept arising from another, one Tibetan says that it is because cause and effect must be asynchronous, [the former occurring first and the latter later], whereas if they were different, they would have to be coterminous. But this is not correct, for were one to take such a stance, all of the faults [pointed out by one in] the refutation would similarly and in just the same way apply to oneself.944

Another Tibetan Opponent: According to the logical (rtog ge) treatises, when one understands the pervasions, “wherever there is special smoke, there is fire” and “if something is produced, it must necessarily be impermanent,” they are understood unerring in regard to all places and times. At the time of understanding them, having understood them in regard to a single isolated case, such as [fire and smoke] in the kitchen and [the production and impermanence] of the pot, then by reason of the similarity between these [two specific pervasions] and the two pervasions in regard to other objects, one comes to correctly understand the two pervasions in regard to all objects and times. In the same way, [Candrakīrti] urges these extreme absurdities [like darkness arising from flame] by means of the reason of the similarity of [the}
two things] being merely different. This kind of reasoning is called induction (\textit{ldog pa\'i\'i dphun phul ba}).

[Reply:] This method of interpretation is consistent with the logical exposition of either the higher nor the lower philosophical schools [for the following reasons]. The logicians do not claim that when causal or essential reasons (\textit{bras rang gi rtags})\textsuperscript{446} are posited, having [first] understood the perversions, “if there is smoke in the kitchen, then there must be fire in the kitchen” and “if the pot is produced, then the pot must be impermanent,” one then goes on to understand [the more general] pervasion in regard to other objects and times by analogy. Instead, it is based on the examples of the kitchen and the pot that the [general] perversions, “where there is smoke there is fire” and “if something is produced, then it must be impermanent,” are understood. When such perversions are ascertained by a valid cognition, it cuts through the doubt that it is possible to negate fire and yet not negate smoke; that it is possible to negate impermanence and yet not negate being a product. But here, even though [the understanding of this pervasion] manages to refute that cause and effect are different, it does not undo the doubt that the multitude of noncausally related things are different.\textsuperscript{446}

Again, another opponent says this: the Prāṣāṅgikas accept in their own system that nominally there is arising from another, for, merely nominally, cause and effect are different objects.

[Reply:] This is quite incorrect, for, as it says in a previously quoted passage from the Prasannapadā:

\begin{quote}
It is due to the mere fact of its conditionality that [a thing] is accepted as existing conventionally, but not on account of accepting the four [extreme] positions, for otherwise it would follow that we were advocating things to have essences; and this again is not correct.\textsuperscript{447}
\end{quote}

This is making the general distinction that the four [positions], arising from self and so on, are not accepted conventionally, and that it is an interdependent arising that is accepted conventionally. It is stating that no matter which of these four one accepts, one must accept that things exist inherently. The \textit{Avatāra} also says that arising which is [any of] the four extremes cannot be considered to be either of the two truths when it says: “On that occasion, no matter what reasoning [one uses], [arising from self or other cannot be considered to be correct either from ultimate or from conventional viewpoints].”\textsuperscript{448} Also, when it says “arising from another does not exist even from a worldly [point of view],” it is explicitly stating that arising from another is not possible even nominally. Hence, you [the opponent] are flying in the face of all of these scriptural passages [by advocating that the Prāṣāṅgikas accept arising from another conventionally, that is, nominally].

Therefore, the arising of results from a cause \textit{that is an inherently existing different object} is what is meant by “arising from another.” This is very clearly the purport of those scriptures. All those who accept arising from another, from the Śvātantrika Mādhyamikas on down, accept that cause and effect are different substances. There is no one, however, who accepts that there is arising from another simply by virtue of the fact that cause and effect are different objects with different names.\textsuperscript{449} Were that not so, that is, if in the Prāṣāṅgika system a cause’s merely being a different object from its effect entailed arising from another, it would follow that in the Prāṣāṅgika system there would also be auto-cognition (\textit{rang rig})\textsuperscript{450} because there exists a consciousness that cognizes an object that is of its own nature.\textsuperscript{451} Therefore, those who accept this, confusing the apparent etymology for the actual meaning, think that all of the etymologies of words imply their [meaning], which is [362] absolutely absurd.

\section*{4.2.3.3.1.2.1.(C) [The Refutation of the Arising from Both Self and Other]}

The position that accepts the arising from both suffers from the faults stated of both arising from self and arising from another.

\section*{4.2.3.3.1.2.1.(D) [The Refutation of Arising Causelessly and Conclusion]}

As regards the position that accepts [arising] to be causeless, the \textit{Avatāra} says:

\begin{quote}
If their view becomes one in which arising is simply acausal, Then everything would always be arising from everything else, And for the purpose of growing rice, the world would not amass The hundreds of [required conditions], such as [planting] the seed and so on.\textsuperscript{452}
\end{quote}

The \textit{Catuḥṣataka} also says:

\begin{quote}
There would be no point to erecting pillars For the sake of building the house.\textsuperscript{453}
\end{quote}

It is easy to understand that the faults that these passages imply [arise from accepting this fourth alternative].

All of the multitude of reasoning taught to refute arising via the four extremes ultimately depend on the syllogistic reasoning of dependent arising (\textit{ri\'en \'brel kyi\'i gyan tshigs}), which is the refutation of the fact that things exist by virtue of
their own characteristic by means of the reason that everything, whether external or internal, arises in dependence on its own causes and conditions. As the Avatāra says:

Because things arise interdependently,
Concepts cannot be analyzed.
And so, by the logical reason of dependent arising,
The infinite net of wrong views is cut.954

Therefore the reasoning of dependent arising is the chief of all reasoning. Now the [relation between] the subject and the reason955 within the syllogistic reasoning of dependent arising already has been proven for all the other [opponents] except those who accept that things arise causelessly, and so there is no need to prove it. The pervasion956 is proven by means of demonstrating that arising in dependence [on causes and conditions] is contradictory to inherently existing. This is because if something is interdependent, then it must rely [on other things] (los bcas), and if it exists inherently, then it cannot rely on another entity.

[OTHER UNIQUE TENETS OF THE PRĀSAŃGĪKA SCHOOL]957

4.2.3.3.1.2.2. Explaining Other Facets [of the Prāsaṅgika Tenets] That Are Not in Common with the Cittamātrins and Others

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.1. The Explanation of the Uncommon Exposition of the Three Times

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.1.1. The General Explanation of the Three Times958

The Vaibhāṣikas959 posit the sprout as existing within each of the three times. Hence, they believe that the sprout exists both at the time of the future sprout and at the time of the past sprout, and they believe that the same is true of all entities.

(1) In addition, the Venerable Dharmatréa [Chos skyob] says that when the sprout proceeds from the future to the present, and from the present to the past, the future and present entities are abandoned, but the substances within future and present time are not abandoned. For example, when a gold container is destroyed to make ornaments, it loses its shape; and when milk becomes curd, it becomes another flavor— but [in either case] they do not lose their color.

(2) The Venerable Ghosaka [dByangs sgros]960 says that even though each time possesses the characteristic of all three times, whether something is the "past," for example, is determined by whether it [the past] is predominant. For example, when a man has the greatest attachment for one woman, it does not mean that he lacks attachment for other women.

(3) The Venerable Vasumitra961 says that when a specific period, like the future, even of a single entity like a sprout, has passed, it nonetheless exists in the future. For example, when a single playing piece (ri lug) is placed in stages in the first, hundredth, and thousandth position, it is called one, hundred, and thousand, respectively, though it is still the same piece.

(4) The Venerable Buddhadeva962 says that just as one woman can be a mother or a daughter depending on whom [the relationship] is based, likewise,
A single entity is future in regard to a previous [moment], and past with respect to a later one.\footnote{963}

The first viewpoint, because it advocates change [of a substance from a nonmanifest to a manifest status and then back again], is similar to the Vaiśeṣika system. The second system makes topsy-turvy the characteristics of the three times. In the third case, if an action that is of a different nature from the phenomenon, such as the sprout, were being accepted, then the sprout and so on, would become a noncomposite entity, [that is, permanent]. If [the action] were of the same nature [as the sprout], then the occasions on which the action occurred and did not occur would not be different. In the fourth case, because it is necessary for the advocate of such a position to maintain that at every moment, previous, final, and intermediate, all three times must exist, at each of the three times all of the three times would exist in their entirety. Again, if the sprout and so on existed in its own nature at past and future moments, what would be the point of saying that the sprout and so on has "passed away" or "has not yet arisen"?

This is the way that the Abhidharmaśāstra and its Bhāṣya refute [these different views]. It then explains its own position, [that of the Sautrāntikas,] to be that, even though the cause of an entity exists in general, the nonarisen [aspect] of a present entity is the future. The passing away once again of an entity that already has arisen from its cause is the past; whereas what has arisen and not yet ceased is the present.\footnote{964}

There is no difference among the three schools, the Sautrāntikas, Cittamātrins, and Śvātantrika Mādhayamikas, as regards accepting the characteristic definitions of the three times in this way and believing that neither past nor future exist as entities. Moreover, they think that when an entity such as a sprout passes away, all of the entities that are the parts (cha shas) of the sprout cease. Due to that cessation, it does not become any other entity such as a pot. Neither past nor future have even the slightest nature of their own apart from the mere negation of the ceasing object. Hence, they think that no past or future thing can be an entity, [that is, can truly exist] (dngos po ma grub pa).

Although the Prāsaṅgikā Mādhayamikas accept that the three times are entities (dngos po), they do not accept that the sprout exists at the times of the future sprout and past sprout. Hence, they do not resemble the Vaibhāṣikās. As regards the exposition of the three times in this system, [that is, in the Prāsaṅgikas',] the Catuḥsātakaśākāśa says:

In this regard, the future is the not passing into the present. The past is the going beyond it. For something to come about in the present means for it to arise and not cease. Because the arising of something in the present is referenced to the present, it is primary. Because they are yet-to-come and over, [respectively,] the exposition of these two times, future and past, are not primary.\footnote{965}

So, for example, let us take a sprout. The passing away in its own second moment of a sprout that already has arisen from causes and conditions is the past time of the sprout. Even though the sprout in general does have causes that give rise to it, the temporary nonarising of the sprout within the context of a certain time and place due to the fact that its causes and conditions have not completely come together in such a setting, that is, in the eastern direction during wintertime, for example, is the future time of the sprout. A sprout that has arisen and not yet ceased is the present time of the sprout.

The Abhidharmopakāśa mentions nonexistent things, such as the horns of a rabbit, and nonentities (dngos por med pa), such as space. Although these do not arise, [the former because it does not exist, the latter because it is permanent,] this aspect of their nonarising is not considered to be their future. It is to exclude this that the text says, "even though they have causes, their nonarising . . ." Therefore, even though in general there exist the causes to give rise to a phenomenon, the aspect of its nonarising due to the incompleteness of some causes that give rise to it at a specific time and place is posited as the future. The aspect of the nonarising of a phenomenon whose causes are impossible, [phenomena whose causes] cannot come about under any circumstances, is not posited as the future. This is what is meant.

Hence, when an opponent claims that "mere nonarising or nonarrival" is posited as the defining characteristic of the future, [it is an indication] that he or she has not understood the exclusion [implied by] the passage, "even though it has causes." The opponent also is contradicting the passages frequently taught in the scriptures of the Mahāyānists that say that the two times, the past and future of a phenomenon, are posited based on its present time. This is because the opponent is contradicting the fact that the future time of nonexistent space depends on its present time; and this because the opponent advocates that if something is present it must necessarily be an entity [and space is not].\footnote{966}

This much is something held in common by everyone from the Sautrāntikas to the Prāsaṅgikas. Nonetheless, whether or not the past and future are entities is not agreed on. The Prāsaṅgikas believe that just as the previous moments of the sprout give rise to the later moments, so the previous moments of the passing away of the sprout give rise to the later moments of its passing away.\footnote{967}

[Opponent:] Well then, the moments of the passing away of the sprout that have arisen and not yet ceased would be present and, were that so, then the past and the present would not be mutually exclusive things.

[Reply:] There is no problem here. The first moment of the passing away of the sprout is the passing away of the sprout. The subsequent later moments of the passing away are the passings away of their own previous passings away. The passing away of the sprout is not the passing away of the simultaneous passing away of the sprout, [that is, it is not its own passing away,] but
still it is the passing away of the sprout. Therefore, it is in general a passing away, and so it is only the past and not the future.

In this same way, no matter what subsequent moment of the past there may be, its own nature must be posited via the passing away of some other entity. Likewise, no matter what subsequent moment of the future there may be, its own nature must be posited via the nonarising of some other entity. The present need not be posited with regard to either the passing away of another entity or its nonarising. Its own nature is that which has arisen and not yet ceased, like a sprout. Hence, the three times are mutually exclusive. Therefore, an exemplification of the past, for example, is that aspect of the passing away of the sprout in its second moment. An exemplification of the future, for example, is that aspect of the nonarising of the sprout due to the incompleteness of the causes and conditions in the eastern fields during winter-time. An exemplification of the present is, for example, a sprout. As for the characteristic definition of the past in the Prāsaṅgika system, it is as follows. Whenever it is posited it must be posited in dependence on the entity’s own time, and it is the completed passing beyond of an entity from its own time, where the entity is the basis of such a dependence. Whenever it is posited it must be posited in dependence upon the entity’s own time, and it is the phenomenon of the nonarrival at the entity’s own time, where the entity is the basis of such a dependence, that is the characteristic definition of the future. That it has arisen and not yet ceased and that the appearance of its image [to the mind] does not depend on the appearance of the image of another phenomenon that already has completed going beyond its own time or not yet arrived at it is the characteristic definition of the present.

[Opponent:] If something is the passing away of the passing away of the pot, then it follows that it is the nonpassing away of the pot because it is the passing away of the passing away of the pot. If you say that the premise does not follow from the reason, then you have not understood the nature of double negation.

[Reply:] This is nonsense! [Now I ask you:] does the nonarising of the wintertime sprout that lacks water, manure, and so forth arise or does it not? If it does, you must repudiate your advocacy of the fact that the future is not an entity, [that is, a causal thing]. If it does not arise, it follows, absurdly, that such a sprout arises because the nonarising of such a sprout does not arise. When it is put this way, you cannot answer the three cycles (khor gsam la lan med). Were you to say that the predicate does not follow from the reason, then we would reply that “you have not understood the nature of double negation.” When it is put in this way, again you have no reply to the three cycles. What is more, it is clear that the advocate of such a position does not at all understand the meaning of “not understanding the nature of double negation.” It is quite possible for [someone who advocates] that “the passing away of the passing away of the pot need not be the nonpassing away of the pot” to understand the nature of double negation. This is because the passing away of the pot is not mutually exclusive with either the pot or the nonpassing away of the pot, as there exists a multitude of things in a third category that is neither of the two. Therefore, “understanding the nature of double negation” has meaning only in the context of exclusion of things the negation of one of which affirms the other (nam bcad yongs gcod).

Again, it is a joke to claim that in the system of the glorious Candra the present is defined as “what has arisen and not yet ceased,” [omitting the second portion of the definition that we posited earlier] and that the future has as one portion of its definition “what is about to arise.” Think about the kind of answer you would give to the three cycles [when the following argument is made]. It follows that the nonarising of the sprout is produced, as it is an entity. You accept the reason. If you accept the premise, then it follows that it arises because it is produced. If you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that it is present because it has arisen and not yet ceased [because this is what you posit as the definition of the present]. If the nonarising of the sprout has not already arisen from its own cause, one loses the fact of its being an entity, and if it has, it contradicts its being about to be born. Therefore, all you have done is failed to distinguish between the nonarising of the sprout about to arise and the sprout’s being about to arise.

Every system from the Sautrāntika up to the Prāsaṅgika accepts that the passing away of the sprout is the past time of the sprout, that the nonarising of the sprout is the future time of the sprout, and that the time when it has arisen and not yet ceased is the present time of the sprout. They do not differ in this regard. Therefore, whether or not something is the present time of the sprout must be determined based on the sprout’s own time. It is not the case that the sprout is not [temporally] present simply because it does not exist at the time when it is being spoken of by the persons who are engaged in a disputation over it, for its nonexistence at the time of those persons does not imply its nonexistence during its own time.

[Opponent:] If something is past, then it must be a passing away and if it is future, then it must be a nonarising. Causes exist previous to their effects, which exist later. Yet, former moments are past and later ones are future.

[Reply:] Anyone who claims this has just failed to recognize that his or her own words are contradictory.

4.2.3.1.2.2.1.2. The Explanation of the Proof of Why the Past and Future Are Entities

This point is explained in the Prasannapada in two ways, according to scripture and to reasoning. First the scripture: the Dasabhāmiṃka Sūtra says: “Old age and death occur due to the condition of birth.” Hence, it is say-
ing that death is the passing away of the sentient being who dies, and that that [passing away] arises due to the condition of birth. Again, that very same sūtra says: "Death functions in two ways: it acts to destroy the compounded, and it brings forth ignorance, the cause of not being able to cut through the continuity [of the defiled aggregates]." It is saying that death performs two functions: passing away occurs due to its cause, and the passing away itself creates ignorance. This implies that passing away has a cause which brings it about, and that the passing away itself has the ability to create an effect. It is with this same intention that the Prajñāpāramitā says: "Entities and nonentities are produced." It is saying that both the entity, which is the pot, and its nonexistence after it has passed away are produced. The Yuktisāṣṭikā [of Nagārjuna] also says:

The peace that results from the exhaustion of a cause
Is what is perceived as 'exhaustion.'

Hence, the exhaustion of a cause such as oil causes the exhaustion of an effect such as the [flame of the lamp]. Because [the Yuktisāṣṭikā] says this, there is no doubt that this is the intention of the Acārya Nagārjuna himself.

As for the [arguments from] reasoning, the Prasannapadā says:

Some accept destruction ('jig pa) to be causeless and then advocate that momentariness (skad cig ma) [belongs only to the compounded ('du byas). They say "because of its being causeless, like a sky flower, it does not exist." But then how could the momentariness of things be possible? How could there be composition in what is devoid of destruction? Therefore, this entire [position] should be understood to be incorrect.

The Buddhist systems that accept that "passing away" and "destruction" are different things believe that as soon as entities exist, they are destroyed, no longer abiding in the second moment. They also believe that, as this destruction arises from each entity's own cause, it does not depend on some later cause that is different from [the entity's] own cause. Yet they believe that the passing away in the second moment is a nonentity (dngos med) and hence completely acausal, [that is, permanent].

These [claims] are taught in the [Prasannapadā] to be a fault ridden by pointing out that both passing away and not passing away must either similarly arise from causes or both must not arise from causes, [but that the latter being causal and the former not is not acceptable]. This is done as follows. If its not having abided at the second moment is causeless, then its nonabiding within the second moment would also have to be causeless; and so it could not be momentary. If that were so, then it could not be compounded; and it would not be right for them to advocate that compounded things are momentary. This is the meaning [of the preceding passage]. In short, [we must ask] whether the passing away that is causally independent exists or does not exist. If it exists, then it contradicts the fact that the destruction of the sprout is causally dependent. If it does not exist, then it contradicts that the passing away of the sprout is causally independent. Because destruction refers to what is about to pass away, [to claim that] what is about to pass away depends on a cause, and yet that the passing away does not depend on a cause, is utterly contradictory. Otherwise, similarly and absurdly, it would follow that even though what is about to arise is causally created, arising is not causally created. Therefore, it is an extremely easy task to prove by means of the reasoning that says "old age and death occur due to the condition of birth" that in this, [our own] system, the passing away in the second moment depends only on the arising within the first moment and on nothing else, and therefore entities are momentary things that do not abide in their second moment.

[Opponent:] Even though it is not necessary for something to be causally created after it already exists, its existence nonetheless must be causally created. Hence, there is no fault.

[Reply:] Well then, to say that "even though it is not necessary for something to be causally created after it has passed away, the passing away itself is causally created" is an analogous claim [which is anathema to you].

Also, previously, at the time of the seed, the sprout's own nature does not exist. Later it does, and hence the arising of the sprout is accepted as having a cause. Likewise, the passing away of the sprout also does not exist previously at the time of the sprout. Later it comes to exist newly, and hence, as its nature is periodic (res 'ga ba), it exists in dependence on causes. Also, as the Yuktisāṣṭikāvṛtti says: "the exhaustion of the butter and its nature is the cause of the passing away of the lamp." Thus, it is correct to accept that the past has causes and effects.

[Opponent:] The exhaustion of the butter and the wick is not the cause of the passing away of the lamp. The exhaustion of the butter and the wick is the noncompletion of the conditions for the final moment of the lamp to give rise to a subsequent future. It is because the conditions for a subsequent future are not complete that it does not arise, [and not that its passing away has something as its cause].

[Reply:] If that were so, when the conditions for that subsequent future are complete, it will definitely arise, and hence you have ended up accepting that the noncompleteness of the causes is the cause of the nonarising of the future effect; and you have ended up accepting that the exhaustion of the causes of the abiding [of the sprout] brings about the exhaustion of its abiding, [thereby accepting that both future and past are causal entities]. This is how the Yuktisāṣṭikāvṛtti explains [the reply].

Likewise, the cause of the future, that is, of the temporary nonarising of the sprout in a field during wintertime, is accepted as being the noncompleteness of causes and conditions; that is, the exhaustion of previous causes and
the nonarising of later ones. Therefore, it is necessary to set forth the causality of seeds and sprouts and so on as they are witnessed by the world. In the world, people say: “because there was no water, my rice went bad,” and “for want of food my son died.” Such expressions, to the effect that for lack of a previous thing a later thing came to be lost, are common. Just as it is necessary to accept that the nonexhaustion of food and water are the causes for the life of the boy and good rice, [respectively,] so too must their exhaustion be accepted as the cause for the exhaustion [of the life of the boy and the good crop of rice]. There is no difference.

This way of positing the past and the future is not correct for those who accept that entities exist by virtue of their own characteristic, that is, that the method of a cause’s giving rise to an effect must be posited in such a way that it is found by logical reasoning, but it is correct for those who posit all entities, cause and effect, action and actor, and so forth, merely nominally (ming tsam), without analyzing or examining them. This is because darkness arising from the passing away of a lamp and a sprout’s arising from a seed are in every way identical as regards the status of their being posited merely nominally, [which they both are].

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2. The Explanations of [Two Other Factors] Differentiating [the Prāśāntikas from Other Schools], Namely, the Rejection of the Foundation Consciousness (kun gzhi) and the Acceptance of External Objects (phyi don)

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.1. The Explanation of How, Even Though We Do Not Accept the Foundation Consciousness, the Relationship between Karma and Effects Is Still Possible

Although the position of those who believe that entities do not exist inherently, [that is, of the Madhyamikas,] is that they do not accept the foundation consciousness and so forth, they nonetheless preserve in a perfectly pure way the relationship between karma and its effects. This is as follows. Even though karma and its result may be interrupted by a period of many lives or eons, that virtuous and nonvirtuous karma give rise to happiness and suffering, [respectively,] is something that all Buddhist [schools], both upper and lower, accept.

[Opponent:] In this regard, if the karma remains until it gives rise to its effect, then it would be permanent, and as what is permanent cannot possibly be efficacious (don byed pa), no relationship between cause and effect would be possible. If, on the other hand, that karma passes away in the second moment of its activity, then there would exist no previously existing karma to give rise to an effect. What is more, as the passing away of the karma is a nonentity, how could the result arise from the karma?

It is in response to such an argument that [different schools posit different entities to act as intermediaries between karmic cause and effect]. To explain how, when karma is about to cease, that is, before the second moment of its activity in which it already has ceased, karma has the potential to bring forth an effect in the future, as the basis onto which those potentials are deposited, the Cittamātrins conceive of a foundation consciousness (kun gzhi rnam par shes pa). Some Vaibhāṣikas, the ones who are different from the Kāśmīra Vaibhāṣikas, believe in a substance (rda nas grub) which is a product that is neither [mind nor matter] (ldan min ’du byed), which they call the inexhaustible (chad mi za). This entity is an object different from karma and like a contractual agreement for a loan (ba lon gya dpang rgya). Then, among the Vaibhāṣikas themselves some believe in the so-called attainment (thob pa) of both virtuous and nonvirtuous karma, again a substance which is a product that is neither [mind nor matter] and which is an object different from both karmas. Others, such as the Sautrāntikas and the Kāśmīra Vaibhāṣikas, conceive of a continuity of consciousness (rnam shes kyi rgyun) that is contaminated with latent karmic potentialities (las kyi bag chags). Therefore, they believe that even though the karma ceases, there is no contradiction in its bringing forth an effect even after a long time.

[According to the Yogācāras] karma deposits latent potentialities onto the foundation consciousness, and those latent potentialities are the results of the karma. The evolutionary continuity of those [latent potentialities] brings forth the effect, and so there is no contradiction in a previous karma’s giving rise to a future effect. According to the Prāśāntikas, after a karma has ceased, there is no contradiction in the cessation of the karma bringing forth an effect even after a long time because the cessation of the karma is an entity [having causal properties], for how it is that the past and the future are [causal] entities is something we have already mentioned in great detail.

[Opponent:] To have a ripening, [that is, an effect,] arise from the essenceless cessation of karma would entail the absurdity of unending ripening and the absurdity of nonsensically bringing forth the ripening [effect].

[Reply:] There is no problem here. For example, the aspect of illusory hair, and not the horn of a rabbit, appears to the eye consciousness affected by eye disease, though both [the illusory hair and the horn of the rabbit] are similar in being nonexistent. Likewise, one should understand that even though [two] karmas are similar in that they do not inherently exist, an effect is born from the passing away of the karma that has not yet given rise to its ripening [effect] and not from the one that already has given rise to the ripening [effect], virtuous and nonvirtuous karma giving rise to happiness and suffering, [respectively,] without there being a mixing up of the individual [elements].
[Opponent:] Now we must analyze [the situation] as follows. Is the self at the time of the accumulation of the karma the self at the time of experiencing the ripening [result] or is it not? If it is, the one who accumulated the karma would be permanent. If it is not, the creator of the karma does not experience the ripening [result], and the one who experiences the ripening [result] is not the one who created the karma, thereby entailing that karma already created can be wasted and that the one not created can be encountered.

[Reply:] There is no problem here. The self at the time of accumulating the karma does not experience the ripening. Still, the self at the time of accumulating the karma and the self at the time of experiencing the ripening are ""selfs"" that are part of the "mere general self" (phyon nga 'tsam), [that is, the self unqualified by any temporal prescriptions]. Hence, it becomes possible to say that the self creates karma and that the self experiences the ripening [result], and therefore one does not encounter karma that has not been produced, nor does one waste the one that has been produced. One should understand this method [of interpreting karma and its results to be analogous] to all of the instances in which one is first a layman and later a monk [when, though it is not the monk who did a certain thing, he nonetheless says, "I did such and such as a child"]. It is the same as all of the cases in which the Buddha, quite rightfully, engaged in linguistic expressions such as: "At that time, at that epoch, I was the king of beasts, called 'Superior Limbs,' " [describing his exploits in a past life].

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.2. Refuting the Fact that the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] and so on Accept [the Foundation Consciousness]

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.2.1. The Reason Why They Do Not Accept [the Foundation Consciousness]

The glorious Candra does not accept a foundation consciousness that is of a different nature from the mental consciousness. He says in the Avaśābhāṣya:

Therefore, as neither [ultimate nor conventional] truth has any essence, not only does this exile into far reaches the views of eternalism and nihilism, but in fact it assures that, no matter how much time passes after the karmas have ceased, they are still related to their effects, without the need to conceive of the foundation consciousness, the continuity of consciousness, the "inexhaustible," "attainment," and so forth. How so?

Because it does not inherently cease, therefore, though there is no foundation consciousness, it is still possible.

Translation

One should know that no matter how much time passes
After the cessation of the karma, the effect still arises.987

[Opponent:] This teaches that the foundation consciousness does not exist ultimately. It does not teach that it is nominally nonexistent.

[Reply:] This would imply that [Candrakīrti was saying] that even though the foundation consciousness does not ultimately exist, karma and its effects are still possible, hence implying that Candrakīrti accepts that karma and its effects are ultimately possible [which of course he does not].988

Again, it is explained [by Candrakīrti] that accepting the foundation consciousness is like believing in God (dbang phyug) as the creator of beings. Therefore, no intelligent person would dispute that the root text of the Avatāra and its Bhāṣya do extensively refute, through both scripture and through reasoning, [the existence of the foundation consciousness]. Nonetheless, one should not content oneself with knowing the mere fact that "even though we do not accept the foundation consciousness, it is still possible to posit karma and its effects." We must be able to state [reasons why, that is,] "if it is [378] accepted, such and such a fault will ensue." What are these faults? Those who accept a foundation consciousness that is of a different nature from the mental consciousness (yid shes) when consciousness (rnam shes) is divided into eight groups, must accept the way its perceived object (dmigs pa), its aspect (rnam pa), its nature (ngo bo), and its analogues (phrul pha'ig) are posited in such works as the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, the Mahāyānasamgraha, the Nirṇaya- samgrahāni, the root text of the Madhyayāvibhāgata and its Commentary, and the root text of the Trisūlikā and its Commentary. Because no other text whatsoever explains the nature, referent, aspect, and analogues [of the foundation consciousness] in a way that disagrees with the expositions set forth in those [works], such exegesis as are in disagreement with those [works] cannot but be considered mere self-fabrications, and something that exists in this way, [that is, in contradiction to the way it is presented in these works], cannot be proven either by means of scriptures of provisional or definitive meaning or by reasoning.

[Opponent:] Even though [the Madhyamikas] do not accept [the foundation consciousness] ultimately, they concur with those [Cittamātra texts] in accepting it nominally.

[Reply:] If this were so, then as the Trisūlikā says:

The vijñapti that is the appearance
Of the taking [of rebirth] and abiding [in the world]
Is born . . .989

And as the Mahāyānasamgraha and the Nirṇaya- samgrahāni, concurring with this, explain in great detail, it would be necessary to accept that everything that appears, both in the external world and internally within the bodies of sentient beings, is the mere appearance of the evolution (yongs su 'gyur ba'i
snang ba tsam) of the latent potentialities of the foundation consciousness. They also say that “therefore the referents within the foundation consciousness are indistinguishable (ma chad pa).” If one accepts this, there is no possible way to accept external objects even nominally.900 Because it is a logically well-founded tenet of this system [the Prāṣāṅgika] to accept the existence of external objects, their repudiation of the foundation consciousness is equally well founded. Therefore, it is proven that neither the Acārya [Candrakīrti] nor the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] accept it. This is because the Bodhicittavivarana (Byang chub sems 'grel)903 explains this just as per the reasoning of “the ontological equivalency of object and consciousness” (don shes yod med nyinglas pa'i rigs pa), which is taught in the Avatāra to refute the nonexistence of external objects. This will be explained later.

What is more, if one accepts the foundation consciousness as it is explained in those texts, because it cannot [in the Cittamārin system which accepts that consciousness ultimately exists] be established by a nominal nonfaulty consciousness that exists [only when] it is not being analyzed and examined, when one searches for how the object labeled by the name foundation consciousness exists, it must be found by reasoning; and this forces one into accepting an inherently existing object even though one may not wish to do so. Therefore, the acceptance within the glorious Candrakīrti’s system of (1) the existence of external objects, (2) the lack of inherent existence, and (3) the existence of the foundation consciousness is nothing but a continuous rosyary of mutual contradiction; hence, we discard the latter.

If one accepts the foundation consciousness, it would be necessary to accept that it is the perceived object of the afflicted consciousness (nyon yid), of the misperception of the perishable (jig lta), and of the innate misapprehension of the “I” (ngar 'dzin rphan skye), which would make pointless the Avatāra’s extensive refutation of the position that consciousness is the referent [object] of the misperception of the self (bdag lta), for then it itself would be accepting that position. Therefore, that the foundation consciousness is not to be accepted is proven to be the purport of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna], because, as has already been proven, the Ārya accepts the way of positing the referent object of the misperception of the self as it is explained by Candrā.

4.2.3.1.2.2.2.2.2. The Refutation of the Belief That the Prāṣāṅgika Mādhyamikas Accept It

[Opponent:] Even the Acārya Candrā accepts the foundation consciousness to be of provisional meaning. He does not advocate it to be nonexistent, like the horns of the rabbit. In the Avatāra he says:

The existence of the foundation consciousness, the existence of the personality,

Translation

And the existence of the aggregates alone . . .
These teachings were given to those who could not understand
The extremely profound meaning [of reality].992

If his stating them to be of provisional meaning implies that he does not accept them, then it would be necessary for him also to not accept the personality and the aggregates themselves because he treats them similarly. Then why is it, [you may ask,] that in the Avatārabhāṣya he says: “The claim that God is the creator of all and the claim that the foundation consciousness is the creator of all are, except for the fact that the former is accepted as being permanent and the latter impermanent, identical.”993 This is showing merely the similarity of the belief that they are the creator of all; it is not showing that there is no difference as regards their ontological status. Were this not so, it would be necessary to refute the meaning of the sūtras. The Ghanavyāha says:

Just as the moon abides
Together with the stars in space,
Likewise does the foundation consciousness
Abide together with the seven consciousnesses.994

It would be necessary to refute the meaning of this citation [if the existence of the foundation consciousness were denied]. Would you not also be refuting the meaning of the Suvarṇaprabhāsottama, which states the functions (gnas gyur) of the eightfold group of consciousnesses separately.

[Reply:] Such claims are pointless blithering, for it is a case of the mind being possessed by the demon of jealousy that, oneself not being trained even in the terminology of different systems, makes one biased in favor of even the slightest claim that opposes the system of others, hence being speech that throws all caution to the wind.

What do you mean when you say that “the teaching that the foundation consciousness exists is provisional”? Do you mean that it cannot be accepted literally or do you mean that, even though it can be accepted literally, simply because the foundation consciousness is a conventional entity, it is provisional from this point of view? Under the present circumstances there are no other methods [for distinguishing] definitive from provisional apart from these.

In the first case, [if the teaching of the existence of the foundation consciousness cannot be accepted literally,] then it follows that the existence of the foundation consciousness cannot be taken literally because the teaching of the existence of the foundation consciousness cannot be taken literally. If you accept [the premise], then it flies in the face of what you claim. In the second case, [where the teaching of the foundation consciousness is called provisional simply because it is conventional,] then it is necessary to identify within the system of the glorious Candrā the basis of intention, which is that basis intended, [the entity the Buddha] had in mind, when he taught that the founda-
tion consciousness exists. Having searched for such a basis of intention, even though it will not be the foundation consciousness that is one among the eightfold group of consciousnesses, there must still be some object that is the basis of intention, onto which, for some reason, the term foundation consciousness is labeled and taught. This, however, is not the case [for you]; the object designated by the term foundation consciousness you accept as being the foundation consciousness that is one among the eightfold group of consciousnesses. This is because you accept the teaching that such a foundation consciousness exists literally, that is, as a statement of the existence of a foundation consciousness that is one among the eightfold group of consciousnesses. If you accept [the original premise that the basis of intention is the foundation consciousness itself and not some other phenomenon], then what of the scriptural passages in which [the Buddha] guides beings attached to heterodox views, who would be fearful if taught the profound doctrine of emptiness directly, as well as the statement in the Avatārabhāṣya which says that it is intending [to refer to] the object emptiness that the words foundation consciousness are taught as a term: "It should be realized that, for the purpose of demonstrating (tjes su thugs pa) that it is the nature of all entities, it is emptiness alone that is identified by the words foundation consciousness." So it is saying that, intending emptiness as the meaning, the term foundation consciousness is taught verbally. Would you erase these [statements] by an action of your hand? Either that, or else why not go ahead and unabashedly claim [the absurdity] [382] that Candrakīrti accepts that emptiness is consciousness!

[Opponent:] Candrakīrti accepts that such a foundation consciousness exists merely nominally, but that it does not exist ultimately, and he accepts that it is that portion of the sūtras' teaching of a foundation consciousness that truly exists that is of provisional meaning [and not the entire teaching of the foundation consciousness itself that is provisional].

[Reply:] Well then, it would be also necessary to claim that the passage that says "the existence of the personality and the existence of the aggregates alone" is teaching that statements as to the inherent existence of the personality and the aggregates are of provisional meaning [and not mere statements about the personality and aggregates themselves]. This is because you advocate a similar way of interpreting the provisional meaning of the foundation consciousness. If you accept such a thing, that reductio you previously urged on us would be utterly meaningless, for you should be advocating "it follows, absurdly, that the personality and the aggregates are not accepted as truly existing, because such a teaching, [that is, in the MA,] accepts them as being of provisional meaning." whereas you advocate instead "it follows, absurdly, that the personality and the aggregates would not be accepted." Should you claim such a thing, [that is, that the aggregates are not accepted as truly existing,] then we would answer "a thousand times yes!" However, this would be in direct contradiction to your own claim that Candrakīrti does not accept true existence even nominally.

[Candrakīrti's] very statement regarding the similarity of (1) advocating God to be the creator of the world and (2) the Cittamātra claim that the foundation consciousness is the creator of the world proves that he does not accept the foundation consciousness, for we have already proven that [those who accept the foundation consciousness accept it to be the creator of all]; that is, that in the texts, according to such explanations as that of the Mahāyānasamgraha, it is accepted as the totality of the seeds of all afflicted phenomena (kun nas nyon mong kyi chos kyi sa don thams cad pa). Otherwise, it means that one is positing something not explained by any sūtras or commentaries and accepted only by oneself. One would be accepting the nature, causal characteristics, and so on of a foundation consciousness that is not in accordance with any exposition such as that of the Mahāyānasamgraha and the Mahāyānasamgraha and advocating that to be the foundation consciousness that is of a different nature from the mental consciousness. If [that is your claim], then think deeply about the kind of refutation you would wage against us should we accept that there are 108 different types of consciousnesses.

To say that "you are repudiating the meaning of the sūtras [by refusing to accept the foundation consciousness]" is merely a fault that boomerangs upon yourself. What response would you have to the three cycles should we state the following argument: "it follows, absurdly, that both the Prāsaṅgika and Svātantrika Mādhyamikas repudiate the meaning of the sūtras, for [some] sūtras and their commentaries state that dependent entities (gzhon dbang) truly exist, whereas both the Prāsaṅgikas and the Svātantrikas refute true existence even nominally." It would also follow, absurdly, that you yourself should repudiate the meaning of the following passage:

There is no essence, there is no viññāṇī.
There is no foundation consciousness, there are no entities.
But the infantile logicians
Impute these things, themselves no better than corpses.

for you accept the foundation consciousness. Nor does this exhaust all of the possible absurdities [that could be urged against you].

Therefore, we are not advocating that no sūtras teach that the foundation consciousness exists. We simply claim that those sūtras have an ulterior purport (dngogs pa can) and are not to be taken literally. According to you, however, if something is the word [of the Buddha] (bka'), then it must be taken literally, for if one repudiates the literal meaning of one sūtra, there would ensue [according to you] the great fault of repudiating the meaning of that sūtra (in its entirety). Although there is a great deal to be said [in this regard], as it would lengthen [this work] excessively and be of little purpose, I will not
expand on this any further. Therefore, the claim that even the glorious Candra accepts the foundation consciousness is to completely misconceive something [to be the case] that is not the case. Hence, I say:

The puerile who think of themselves as sages Are the most childish ones. If such be the likes of sages Then what must fools be like?

[Opponent:] The Árya Nágáruṇa accepts a foundation consciousness that is of a different nature from the mental consciousness, for he says:

The closer it gets to a magnet The quicker will a compass spin And even though it has no mind It seems as though it possesses a mind. Likewise the foundation consciousness, Though untrue, [appears] as if it were true. When there is fluctuation and movement Then it takes up an existence (srid pa).

Just like the ocean and wood, They are tossed about [by the wind]. In the same way the foundation consciousness Wavers based on the body.\textsuperscript{1000}

[Reply:] This is not as [you would have it]. This scriptural passage is itself a portion of the refutation of the Cittamātra position. Cittamātra ["mind only"] refers to [the tenets that] repudiate external things that are different objects from the mind, without repudiating the inherent existence of the mind alone. Such a teaching is [propounded] for the purpose of eliminating the fear that the childish have toward the teaching that all phenomena are essenceless. It is not a definitive reality. [Nágáruṇa] refutes the fact that the inherently existing purity of an eternal mind (gnyis grub pa), as accepted by the Yogācāras, is the direct object of an individual aut cog nitive gnos is (so rang gi rig pa ye shes kyi sphyod yul). When he does so, he first sets up the hypothetical rebuttal [of a Yogācāra]: "if the mind does not substantially exist, it would be impossible for the action of a movement to occur; that is, impossible for [the mind] to come here from a previous [state of existence] or to go from this one to the next." As a response to this, he states that, even though the compass and the driftwood have no minds, they move as if they did. Likewise, even though the foundation consciousness does not truly exist, it appears as if it did, possessing the movement of going and coming. Therefore, he does not accept a foundation conscious -

ness that exists by virtue of its own characteristic, as propounded in such works as the Mahāyānasamgraha.

[Opponent:] Nonetheless, might he not accept [the foundation consciousness to be] an illusorylike totality of the seeds of all utterly purified phenomena (snyan ma la bu kun byang gi chos thams cad kyi sa bon thams cad pa) that is of a different nature from the six groups of consciousness?

[Reply:] If he did accept that, he would have to accept that external objects did not exist, and that form, sound, and so forth appeared due merely to the ripening of the latent potentialities within the foundation consciousness, whereas in that same work [cited earlier] he states:

Phenomena are understood by consciousness.
Were phenomena to be nonexistent, so too would consciousness.
How is it that you reject
The known but not the knower?\textsuperscript{1001}

So in such passages [Nágáruṇa] states that the object and consciousness must either both exist or both not exist together, that they cannot have a different [ontological status]. Hence, that consciousness exists but that external objects do not is most certainly not the belief of the Árya [Nágáruṇa]. Therefore, when a "foundation consciousness" is mentioned in those scriptures, it is the mental consciousness being labeled by the term foundation consciousness, for, as a response to the objection to the refutation of the inherent existence of the mind in general, [by calling the mental consciousness foundation consciousness] it is demonstrating how a mind that lacks true existence nonetheless can function (bya byed rung ba). [We also know that it is the mental consciousness being called foundation consciousness by Nágáruṇa] because in that work the mind designated by the term foundation consciousness is taught to be the mind that, at the point of transferring to another existence, takes up that existence.\textsuperscript{1002} In another set of the scriptures of the Árya [Nágáruṇa], the father, and his son, Candrakirti, in the context of the Guhyasamāja practice, it is stated over and over again that the death mind and the birth mind are both the mental consciousness. What is more, as regards this [latter scripture], in the second chapter of the Root Tantra of Guhyasamāja, the tathāgata recite the verses of bodhicitta. From among those, some are the verses of bodhicitta spoken by Vairocana. Because it comments on the meaning of these [verses, the work of Nágáruṇa paraphrased earlier] is called the Bodhicittatvavāraṇa, [The Commentary on Bodhicitta] (Byang chub sems grel). Hence, this work is one that is a part of the Guhyasamāja [literature].

[Opponent:] Having given thought to the several instances of terms like foundation consciousness and afflicted consciousness (yon yid) occurring in the Guhyasamāja cycle, the Árya father and his son have come to accept within the Guhyasamāja a foundation consciousness that is of a different nature from the six groups.
[Reply:] This stance is the blithering of fools who have not come to understand even the basic terminology of either the great scriptural exegesis that teaches about the foundation consciousness or of the Guhyasamāja cycle. As this is not a subject over which experts dispute, and as this is also not the proper place for such a discussion, I will not set forth an answer to their arguments here.

Therefore, in many sūtras, such as the Extensive, Intermediate, and Condensed Mother [Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras], when the number of consciousnesses is taught, only six groupings of consciousness are explained. No more than that are explained. The Saṃdhinirmocana and so on explain that [in addition to those six there exist] a foundation consciousness and an afflicted consciousness that are of different natures from the six groupings. Hence, the sūtras expound two methods: one that posits a foundation consciousness, and one that does not.

In accordance with this, the Lord Maitreyanātha, when he comments on the meaning of those sūtras, also [does so in two different ways]. In the Madhyānāsāntavihāra, he says in the foundation consciousness and puts forth the position that there are no external objects. In the Abhidharma, and in the Dharmaśāstra, he does not posit a foundation consciousness and sets forth the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamika system that does not repudiate external [objects]. The Acārya Asanga also does not explain the intention of the Uttarāsanā in accordance with the Vijñānavāda, [that is, Cittamātra,] or Sāvāntvāntrya; he explains it in accordance with the Prāsaṅgika system. In the Mahāvīraśāstra he cites, as proof for the [existence of] the foundation consciousness, the following passage from the Abhidharma:

This very passage, however, he cites in the Commentary to the Uttarāsanā as proof that all sentient beings have a tathāgatagarbha, the inherent purity of the mind. Hence, accepting the teaching of the foundation consciousness as being of provisional meaning, of having been spoken with a basis of intention, emptiness, in mind, he is in no way different from the glorious Candra.

4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.3. The Explanation of How External Objects Are Posited Nominally

The Madhyamakāvatāra sets forth in an extensive way the beliefs of the Cittamātrins as the position of an opponent [to be refuted]. In so doing, the Cittamātrins [are portrayed] as accepting that external objects such as form and so forth do not exist and that consciousness truly exists; they [are not portrayed] as accepting that consciousness truly exists and that form does not exist [at all]. Were the Cittamātrins to accept that [there is no such thing as form], then they could not accept any term like form, aggregate, [the list] form, sound, . . . , the three worlds (kham gsum), the environment, and so on. In India there were not even any heretics, let alone Buddhists, who, while realizing that they must be flying in the face of everything directly seen [by the world], nonetheless claimed their position to be supreme. Even the Cārvākās are nihilistic only in regard to those things that are not witnessed. They do not claim that what is directly seen, [for example, an object such as form,] does not exist. It seems, however, that in Tibet there are many who take those tenets that fly in the face [of experience] to be supreme.

[Opponent:] Then how do you interpret the fine in the Madhyamakāvatāra that goes, “If form does not exist, then do not grasp the mind as existing,” [as this seems to indicate that the Cittamātra position being refuted accepts that form does not exist altogether, and not just that form qua external object does not exist]?

[Reply:] It means that “form qua external object does not exist” and not that form is altogether nonexistent. Were that not so, that is, if you accept such a thing, [namely, that the Cittamātrins repudiate form altogether] on the basis of those words alone, then the Cittamātrins would also have to accept that phenomenon (shes bya) do not exist because [the Madhyamakāvatāra] also says: “If the mind were to exist while phenomena do not.”

Hence, in the Bhāṣya, in the section [commenting] on the verse that goes, “the viññāṇa arising from the sense organ,” it says: “Hence, having shown in this way that there is no eye organ different from consciousness, so as to teach that even form exists in a way that is not separated from consciousness, we say . . . .” In the commentarial passage after [the verse] it says: “Although external objects such as blue and so on do not exist, the appearance of blue and so on does occur within consciousness.” [The position of the Cittamātrins] should be understood just as it is stated here.

For those idiots who would claim that the Cittamātrins accept external objects nominally, all of these arguments and rebuttals in the Avatāra and its Bhāṣya become unintelligible, for both Candrakīrti and the Cittamātrins would be holding similar views, that is, that nominally external objects exist but that ultimately they do not.

[Opponent:] Well then, what is the reason by virtue of which external objects are accepted in the Prāsaṅgika system, and how do they explain the purport of those sūtras that teach that there are no external objects?

[Reply:] The ultimate reason is this. Form and so forth appear to sense consciousness as if they were external objects, distant [from consciousness] as it were. If they did not exist in this way of appearing even nominally, then the refutation [of its existing in this way] could not be carried out by a valid
cognition that analyzes the nominal independently of a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate. This is because it is impossible for a valid cognition that analyzes the nominal to refute external objects, and when it is analyzed by a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate, even consciousness does not exist. Not even the Cittamātrins themselves would advocate that [external objects] could be repudiated by a valid cognition that analyzes the nominal, for in the Cittamātrins’ own system the refutation of external objects must depend upon valid cognitions that analyze the ultimate, such as [the valid cognition born from an understanding of the] syllogistic reason of the simultaneity of the object and perception (han cig dmigs nges); they believe that the refutation of external objects can be performed only in dependence on a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate also] because the emptiness of things existing as they appear qua external objects is the ultimate truth or reality according to the Cittamātrins’ own system.

What more, if there were no external objects nominally, it would be necessary to accept that form was of the nature of consciousness. If that were so, there could be no way in which it could be established by an ordinary nominal consciousness that understands its object without analyzing or examining it logically. Hence, when form is analyzed logically, that is, analyzed as to whether it is of the nature of matter or of consciousness, it would have to be found to be of the nature of consciousness. If that were so, form would have to exist by virtue of its own characteristic, we consider it far more pleasing to accept that form is an external object nominally.

For these very same reasons we do not accept the foundation consciousness. This is because it is impossible for an ordinary nominal valid cognition to establish the existence of the foundation consciousness independently from a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate, and when it is analyzed by a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate, it does not exist. Even though the Cittamātrins do not accept that all valid cognitions that establish the existence of the foundation consciousness are valid cognitions that analyze the ultimate, they do accept that they must depend on valid cognitions that analyze the ultimate because they accept that [the establishment of the existence of the foundation consciousness] depends upon the reasoning that refutes external objects.

As regards the reasoning which the Cittamātrins use to systematically refute [external objects], from spatially partless atoms on up, it goes:

If you put six [of these atoms] around the one [in each of the four directions, top and bottom],

The subtle atom [in the middle] would have six parts [the parts facing each of the atoms placed around it];

But if these six parts were the same,

Then even the composite [of the seven] would become one atom.

But such an argument does not vitiate against the Prāsaṅgika’s acceptance of external objects, for the Prāsaṅgikas do not accept external objects as things that are found when searched for logically. They only accept them when [they are left] unanalyzed, unexamined. [It also does not refute the Prāsaṅgika position] because, though they accept external objects, they do not accept spatially partless atoms even nominally. That if one accepts a partless entity one must accept true existence is something on which all Maññhamikas, both Prāsaṅgikas and Svātantrikas, agree.

[Opponent:] It is not right for Prāsaṅgikas to accept external objects, otherwise it would follow, absurdly, that the Cittamātrins would be inferior to the Sautrāntikas, as, on the one hand, both [Cittamātrins and Sautrāntikas] accept that consciousness is truly existent and, on the other, those who advocate that external objects exist, [as do Sautrāntikas,] are better off than those who do not, [the Cittamātrins].

[Reply:] Whoever holds this misconception is making it clear that he or she understands nothing of the higher or lower philosophical schools. [There is this relative superiority of Cittamātra over Sautrāntika and of Prāsaṅgika over Cittamātra] because the Sautrāntikas accept that partless atoms and the kind of reasoning to which [such beliefs] give rise [are things that can be established] when examined logically, whereas the Cittamātrins, justifiably, repudiate such external objects by means of the reasoning that refutes such external objects [that are independent and composed of partless atoms]; the Cittamātrins [on the other hand fail in that] they do not accept an external object that exists just nominally while it is not being logically analyzed or examined, [and so] the Prāsaṅgikas refute that [position] by means of the reasoning that [points out] the ontological similarity of object and subject, [that is, that one cannot be any more real than the other]. Therefore, though the Sautrāntikas and Prāsaṅgikas resemble each other in the mere fact of their both accepting external objects, the way in which each accepts them is utterly different.

[The Prāsaṅgika Interpretation of the Cittamātra Sūtras]

Now we should mention the way in which the meaning of those sūtras that teach the Cittamātra are to be interpreted. The Cittamātrins, in the Mahāyānasangraha, [for example], cite as proof [of their doctrine] the following sūtra passage from the Daśabhūmika Sūtra: “These three realms are mind only (sems tsam).” However, both Bhāvaviveka and the glorious Candra [state] that the word only in that sūtra does not eliminate [the possibility of] external objects. Just as the passage that states that even the three realms in their entirety “are borne from the karma of various worldly beings,” [the former passage is claiming that the three realms] are created by karma. Karma is of two kinds: mental (sems pa) and mentated (bsam pa). Therefore, the
three realms are created by the mind, and hence the word only is stated [by the Buddha] to refute a creator other than the mind, such as God. This is how [Bhavya and Candra] answer [the Cittamātrins’ interpretation]. That [such passages as the one in the Dasiabhumika] are refuting creators other [than the mind] is something that the Lankāvatāra also teaches:

I have explained as being mind only
The continuity of the personality, the aggregates,
And also causality and atoms,
And creators, such as pradhāna and God.

Because the three realms are a creation [of karma], mind is said to be more basic than matter, as is shown, once again, by the following sūtra passage:

Under the influence of karma
Sentient beings are born into times of darkness.
Mind is like color and a precious crystal
In the worlds of hell and heaven.

Again, the Lankāvatāra Sūtra says:

It is not external objects that appear.
It is because the mind, appearing as the variety [of things],
Resembles the body, its possessions, and the abode,
That I have explained them all to be mind only.

Here is how Bhāvaviveka replies to the Cittamātrins’ interpretation of this passage. This sūtra is not refuting external objects, thereby teaching the mind-only [doctrine]. It is refuting that consciousness apprehends [its object] without the aspects (rtam du dzin). There is no appearance without aspects. The mind is born in a likeness to, for example, the body sense organ and the form that is experienced, via the multifarious appearances of the aspects. There is no seeing without aspects. The glorious Candra, on the other hand, does not repudiate the fact that this sūtra is teaching the Mind Only [Cittamātra]; instead, he interprets the teaching of mind only to be of provisional meaning.

Now there are two kinds of proof for the fact that this sūtra is not to be taken literally: scriptural and logical. The logical one is the very same reasoning that establishes the ontological similarity of [external] objects and consciousness which was explained earlier. As for the scriptural [proof], the Avatāra says: “This was taught by the teacher to be of provisional meaning.”

And in the Bhāṣya to this [verse], the following passage from the Lankāvatāra is quoted:

Just as a physician gives
Different medicines to different patients,

In the same way has the Buddha also taught
The mind-only [doctrine] to sentient beings.

The words this scriptural passage [in the lines from MA] that go:

Other sūtras of this same type
Are elucidated by this scriptural passage as being of provisional meaning.

do not refer to the just cited passage [from the Lankāvatāra], but to three groups of scriptural passages quoted in the Bhāṣya. In general, at this place in the text, the root text of the Avatāra and its Bhāṣya [explain that] there are five things, which must be proven to be of provisional meaning, and four scriptural passages that prove them [to be so]. The five things that must be proven to be of provisional meaning are

1. The Lankāvatāra’s teaching that there are no external objects, and that [everything] is mind only.
2. The teachings of other sūtras that there exists a permanent, stable, and truly existent tathāgatagarbha (rtag rten bden grub kyi bde shes snying po) that is the totality of the Buddha’s qualities and that has existed inherently in the mental continuum of every being since beginningless time.
3. The Samdhinirmocana’s teaching that there is a foundation consciousness that is of a different nature from the mental consciousness.
4. Again, the Samdhinirmocana’s teaching that the dependent (gzhon dbyang) and the real (yongs grub) exist by virtue of their own characteristic.
5. And also, the teaching from that [same sūtra] that there are three final vehicles.

(1) The scriptural passage which proves that the first one is of provisional meaning has been previously cited, [that is, it is the Lankāvatāra passage].

The necessity (dgos pa) for teaching that there are no external phenomena is to revert excessive attachment that arises with reference to external form and so on; and [even though the teaching that there are no external objects is of a provisional character], based on the ascertainment that external objects are essenceless, [Cittamātrins] will [eventually] come to ascertain that consciousness [too] is essenceless.

(2) The scriptural passage which proves that the second [doctrine] is of provisional meaning is in the Lankāvatāra:

“Likewise, the doctrine of a tathāgatagarbha has been taught within the sūtras spoken by the Lord; and this the Lord has said to be inherently pure clear light, and hence primordial purity itself, possessing the thirty-two exemplary marks and existing within the body of every
sentient being. The Lord said that, like a jewel of great worth wrapped within a dirty cloth, it is enwrapped by the cloth of the aggregates, dhātus and avatāras, that it is suppressed by attachment, anger, and obscuration, that it has become stained by the stain of conceptualization (yongs su rtog pa), and that it is permanent, stable, and enduring (rtog pa rtan po ther gzung). How is this thāhāgatagarbha advocated by the Lord any different from the self advocated by the heterodox? Lord, the heterodox also teach the advocacy of a self that is permanent, creator, without qualities, pervasive, and indestructible."

The Lord spoke, "Mahāmati, my teaching of the thāhāgatagarbha does not resemble the self advocated by the heterodox. Mahāmati, the thāhāgatas, the arhants, the utterly perfected buddhas teach by the word thāhāgatagarbha notions such as emptiness, the perfect end, nirvāṇa, nonarising, marklessness, and wishlessness. To eliminate the abode of the fear that the childish have in selflessness, we have taught, via the teachings on the thāhāgatagarbha, the state of nonconceptualization (nram par mi rtog pa'i gnas), the experiential object of no appearance (snang ba med pa'i spyod yul). Mahāmati, future and present bodhisattvas, great beings, should not be fixated upon the self. For example, Mahāmati, a potter will make a variety of different vessels out of a single pile of clay particles with his hands, his skill, instruments, water, string, and effort. Likewise, Mahāmati, the thāhāgatas, in a variety of ways, possessing skill in means, and wisdom of the reality that is the reversion of all misconceived characteristics, that is, of the fact that phenomena lack a self, just like a potter, teach [but a single ultimate doctrine], using a variety of words and letters, whether you call it teaching thāhāgatagarbha or teaching selflessness. Therefore, Mahāmati, the teaching of the thāhāgatagarbha does not resemble the claims of the heterodox regarding the self. In this way, Mahāmati, the thāhāgatas teach the thāhāgatagarbha by means of the thāhāgatagarbha teachings so as to lead those who are fixated on the claims of the heterodox regarding the self. How can those who possess an attitude that has fallen into the view that conceptualizes a real self come to possess an attitude that abides in the experiential object of the three emancipations (nram 'par thar pa gsum); how can they quickly become perfectly awakened within the supreme and utterly perfect enlightenment?"

This is cited in the Bhāṣya [to MA]. The fact that if such a thāhāgatagarbha existed, it would resemble the self of the heteretics [indicates that such teachings] are not to be taken literally. The intended basis (dgos gshi) [of the teaching of the buddha essence, that is, what the Buddha was actually referring to,] is the essential purity, the reality of the mind. The purpose (dgos pa) is to eliminate the fear of emptiness in those who have extremely solid latent potentialities that are fixated upon the self of the heterodox, and who, if taught emptiness directly, would be frightened. Because the sūtra teaches [things] in this way, one should know that those individuals who nowadays advocate that the teachings of such a thāhāgatagarbha are of a literal and definitive meaning are themselves attached to the self of the heretics.

The teachings of such a thāhāgatagarbha, which are stated in the Lankāvatāra and in the Bhāṣya to be of provisional meaning, are not [the teachings found in the work] whose meaning is extensively set forth in the Mahāyānottaratantra, that is, the Thāhāgatagarbha Sūtra, one of the “ten garbha sūtras" renowned nowadays among latter-day Tibetans. This is because this [latter] sūtra is one that merely teases that the thāhāgatagarbha, the reality of the mind (sams kyi cho nyid), though temporarily stained, is essentially pure. Still, to the extent that it possesses adventitious defilements it cannot actualize the qualities of a Buddha; but when the adventitious stains are cleared away, then all of the qualities of a Buddha, such as the [ten] powers and so on, are actualized. This doctrine is taught in terms of nine examples and nine [exemplified] meanings, and the Uputtanatana also comments on this in this way. Hence, it is because this sūtra does not at all explicitly teach that the thāhāgatagarbha truly exists; that even when it possesses adventitious defilements it inherently possesses all of the qualities of the Buddha, such as the powers, and because it has no meaning that must be interpreted in an ulterior way, as it literally teaches that because the reality of the mind is uncompounded, it is permanent, stable, and enduring, and that when it becomes free of adventitious defilement, the qualities of the Buddha such as the powers are actualized; [it is for all of these reasons that the Thāhāgatagarbha sūtra is not the sūtra being claimed to be of provisional meaning by the Prasangikas]. Anyone who claims; "as becoming free of the adventitious defilements brings about the actualization of all of the qualities of a Buddha, even at the time of possessing defilements, the powers and so on are inherently present" is making himself known to be a real fool.

(3) The Bhāṣya states that this very same sūtra proves that the teachings on “the existence of a foundation consciousness of a different nature from the mental consciousness" are of provisional meaning. How is it that the provisional status of the existence of such a thāhāgatagarbha proves that the foundation consciousness is also of provisional meaning? The Ghanavyāha teaches, for example:

The various bhūmis are the foundation consciousness
And the thāhāgatagarbha are the virtuous ones.
The thāhāgatas teach this garbha
By means of the words foundation consciousness.
Even though the *garbha* is known as the foundation consciousness, those whose minds are weak (*blo zhen rnam*) do not realize it.\(^{1033}\)

The *Lankāvatāra* also states repeatedly that these two are synonyms; that is, that the *tathāgatagarbha* is known as the foundation consciousness and that it comes together with seven [other] consciousnesses. This does not mean, however, that the foundation consciousness and the *tathāgatagarbha* are mutually encompassing categories, so that if something is one it must also be the other. Instead, it means that the object that [the Buddha] had in mind when he used the words *foundation consciousness* and the object he had in mind when he used the word *tathāgatagarbha* are the same, for he used both of these words to refer strictly to emptiness, the reality of the mind. That is why the *Bhāṣya* says: "It is because it is the essence of all things that one should know that emptiness alone is designated by the words *foundation consciousness*.\(^ {398}\)

Hence, because (1) the teachings of the foundation consciousness and such a *garbha* both have the same basis of intention, that is, that [the Buddha] had the same thing in mind [when he taught both of them]; (2) the purpose of both [is also the same], namely, the elimination of fear in those who are attached to heterodox views; and (3) were they to exist as literally [taught], then both of them would likewise suffer from the absurdity of being in no way different from the self of the heretics,\(^ {1035}\) the scriptural passage that teaches the *tathāgatagarbha* to be of provisional meaning also proves that statements [concerning] a foundation consciousness are also of provisional meaning.

The statements that the *tathāgatagarbha* truly exists; that it is a permanent, stable, and primordial entity that is positive and independent; and that it inherently contains the qualities of the Buddha such as the powers and so forth cannot be taken literally. Still, the basis of intention of those statements, that is, what was [actually] intended [when the statements were spoken], the reality of the mind covered with stains (*sems kyi rang bzhi dri bcas*), is the actual *tathāgatagarbha*. Because this too is the object that is the basis of intention of the statements concerning the foundation consciousness, the [sūtra] passage quoted in the *Mahāyānaṃsāṃgīrāha* as proof of the existence of the foundation consciousness,\(^ {399}\)

The element (*khaṃs*) from time beginningless;
It is the abode of all phenomena.
It is because it exists
That all beings can attain nirvāṇa.\(^ {1036}\)

is quoted in the commentary to the *Uttaratantra* as proof of the existence of the *tathāgatagarbha*. Although a great deal is to be said as regards these [points], as the size of the document would become too large, I will write no further on it here.

(4) Again the *Lankāvatāra* says: "Mahāmati, the characteristics of emptiness, nonarising, nonduality, and essencelessness are to be found within the sūtras of all the buddhas."\(^ {1037}\) This is quoted in the *Bhāṣya*,\(^ {1038}\) and immediately after that the *sūtra* says: "No matter what sūtra it may be, they should all be understood to contain that very meaning, [that is, emptiness].\(^ {1039}\)

These are the scriptural passages that prove the provisional status of the *Samdhinirmochana*’s statements that the dependent exists by virtue of its own characteristic. The reasoning that proves that those passages are of provisional meaning is as taught extensively in the *Avatāra*.

(5) As for the scriptural passage that proves the *Samdhinirmochana*’s expanation of three final vehicles to be of provisional meaning, realizing that it already had been quoted [by Nāgārjuna] in the *Sūtrasamuccaya*, it is not quoted [by Candrakīrti] in the *Avatārabhāṣya*,\(^ {1040}\) As for the reasoning [used to disprove the doctrine that there are three final vehicles], the purpose of teaching three vehicles, even though there do not exist three final vehicles, is taught in such passages as: "Because, when its reality is understood, all definitions are eliminated."\(^ {1041}\)

In this way [we see] that both our accepting external objects and our not accepting the foundation consciousness stems from our not accepting inherent existence even nominally.

In the *Madhyamakāvatāra* it says that the Cittamātrins cite such things as the consciousness in dreams, the sense consciousness to which imaginary hair appears, and so forth as examples that, even though external objects do not exist, the subject, that is, the consciousness, to which they appear as if they were external, exists inherently. At such times, even though there are no external elephants or imaginary hair, because it appears as if there were, the objects are considered to be false (*rde sn pa*). [Though the Cittamātrins claim that only the external object and not the consciousness is false, however, the Madhyamikas] answer that such examples are not appropriate, for just as the object is false, so too should the subject, the consciousness, be a false thing that does not exist by virtue of its own characteristic, so that there is no difference between whether or not object and consciousness exist inherently. This is an extremely powerful argument for refuting [the position] that there is no external [world] but that consciousness exists, for by this method [of argumentation], the actual example [offered by the Cittamātrins] is repudiated, and an example that is proved by means of other reasoning, as is the case in the proof of the existence of past and future lives, is not found, so that a valid syllogistic reason to prove [the idealist] position becomes impossible.\(^ {1042}\)

In our own system we do not accept that sense consciousness exists within a dream. Hence, because the appearance of a herd of elephants within the dream consciousness is an appearance only within the mental consciousness, it is not a form element (*gsags kyi skyes mched*). Though nothing external can be said to be the form of an elephant at that time, the appearance that appears as the form of an elephant is form that is external. It is form that is a dharma element (*chos kyi skyes mched*) which is the object of the mental consciousness.
alone (yid shes kho na'i yul du gyur); and from among this [latter category], it is a form which is imaginary (kun brags pa'i gzugs), like the appearance of the world filled with bones within the mind that has meditated upon the unpleasantness [of cyclic existence]. The appearance that appears as imaginary hair to the sense consciousness [affected by cataracts], the appearance in which a mirage appears as water, and the appearance in which the reflection appears as one’s face [within a mirror], are form elements because they are [40] forms that are the appearing objects (snang yul) of sense consciousness. Now we must examine the following question.

[Sense Perception Across World Spheres: The Case of Water]

[Opponent:] If there are external objects and the world is not of the nature of mind, how should [one consider], then, a river of water that appears to a preta as pus and blood? Is it the pus and blood that it appears to be or not? Also, is [the pus and blood] to be accepted as an external object or is it not?

[Reply:] In this regard, the Mahāyānasamgraha says:

Because a single thing is different for different minds, depending upon what family [of beings] they belong to, whether preta, animal, human, or god, we accept the object to be nonexistent.

In the explanation (bshad sbyar) of that [work] by the venerable spiritual friend Nīlsvabhāva it says:

By virtue of the ripening of his or her own karma, a preta sees deposits of water such as rivers to be filled with pus and so forth. An animal, for example, a fish, conceives of it as its own abode. Humans conceive of it as sweet, pure, fresh water and think “I will wash in it,” “I will drink it,” “I will enter it.” The gods who are equipoised in the element of infinite space see it as space, for they have no recognition of form.

[Opponent 1:] It is for this reason that all phenomena are whatever one’s own mind makes them out to be. It is impossible to say in a definitive way “it is this” or “it is not this.”

[Opponent 2:] Because it is true for a being as it appears within the purview of that being’s own mind, a single entity that [has the properties] of wetness and fluidity is true pus within a preta’s purview, and true water for a human.

[Reply:] Those who advocate these positions are making themselves [41] known to be utter fools, to be the likes of the Nirgranthas. The entity that possesses the characteristics of wetness and fluidity appears to be pus and blood to the eye consciousness of a preta. It appears to be water to the eye consciousness of a human, and nectar to the eye consciousness of a god. At that time do you accept those eye consciousnesses to be valid cognitions or do you accept that some [among the three] are valid cognitions, whereas others are not? In the first case, it would follow that there was something that was pus and blood, clear water, and nectar [all at the same time], whereas there exists a valid cognition that is unmistakable [these three] being mutually exclusive. Because that single entity would be established as being pus and blood by a valid cognition and not being pus and blood by a valid cognition, valid cognitions could no longer serve the slightest function as agents of verification. To accept this, and to claim that only that which appears to one’s own mind, and that it is not therefore possible to decisively posit something to be x or not x, reduces one to being unable to decisively distinguish between the correct philosophical position of the Buddhists and the incorrect position of the heterodox. Therefore, because the teachers of the heterodox and our own teacher, the perfect Buddha, would not be distinguished in goodness, what worse karma is there than this, the slandering (skur ba bdebs pa) of the three jewels?

[Opponent:] Some of these eye consciousnesses are valid cognitions, but some are not.

[Reply:] Then which are not valid cognitions?

[Opponent:] Some gods seeing nectar and the pretas seeing pus and blood are mistaken appearances that have been affected by [these beings’] own particular karma, that is, those eye consciousnesses are not valid cognitions, whereas humans seeing [it as water] is a valid cognition.

[Reply:] Then tell us why humans seeing it as cool, clean water is not the result of their karma as well. Therefore, [the humans’ perception] is in every way analogous. It too could not be a valid cognition. If only the eye consciousness of a human could be a valid cognition and if the eye consciousnesses of other sentient beings could not be valid cognitions, then the same would be true for the ear consciousness. Because [this would mean] that there could then be no valid cognitions in the continua of any nonhuman beings, it would be impossible for there to arise ascertainings consciousnesses (nuges shes), and for there to occur the elimination of reification (sgro’ dogs chod pa) in regard to any object within the continua of any nonhuman beings. Because that would imply that these other beings could not even recognize each other, those who advocate such a thing are more stupid than even animals.

Now if you are wondering what we ourselves accept; it is this. We believe that the eye consciousnesses of all three [beings], god, human, and preta, are valid cognitions. Nonetheless, we do not believe that the vessel filled with the wet and fluid [substance] is the common basis of all three [substances]: clean and cool water, pus and blood, and nectar. [That is, the liquid is not all three substances.] Instead, we believe that one part is pus and blood; that one part...
is clean, cool water; and that one part arises as nectar. It is not the case, however, that as soon as that vessel filled with the wet and fluid [substance] comes into existence, these three parts also come into existence; it is not that for as long as the continuity of the vessel filled with the wet and fluid [substance] exists, so long does it engage in possessing the continuity of the three parts. Instead, it is when the preta comes close to it that the previous moment of the wet and fluid [substance], acting as a material cause (nyer len), and the preta’s own karma, acting as the dominant cause (bdag rkyen), make one part of that vessel filled with wet and fluid [substance] arise as pus and blood. Likewise, when a god approaches it, the previous [moment of the] wet and fluid [substance], acting as the material cause, together with the god’s own karma, which acts as the dominant cause, cause one portion to arise as nectar. When the god and preta leave it, however, because the karmic dominant cause is not complete, the later continuities of pus and blood and nectar do not arise. It is by virtue of the preta’s evil karma that he sees the pus and blood part, and it is because he has not accumulated good karma that he does not see the nectar part. By virtue of his good karma, the god sees the part of the nectar and does not see the part of the pus and blood. Therefore, when the preta takes that vessel in his hand and begins to drink from it, all of the parts become exclusively pus and blood as soon as it reaches the preta’s mouth. This is because it has become an object used exclusively by a preta. The other two cases should be understood in the same way, by analogy.

[Opponent:] What was this vessel filled with the wet and fluid [substance] before the three beings, god, human, and preta, had arrived at that place? Was it water, or pus and blood, or nectar?

[Reply:] If it were a river, a spring, or a well that came from the earth, or were it taken from [any one] of those, then it would be originally ordinary water, as it originally arose from a karmic domain in which humans are dominant. The pools of nectar that exist in some special god realms are originally nectar, as they proceed from the dominant cause of the karma for enjoying such things as pools of nectar, [that is], the karma that gods possess. In short, whether it is water or nectar before the preta and so on depends on the environment from which that wet and fluid [substance] came; that is, whether the environment came into existence due to the dominant cause of humans’ karma, or from the dominant cause of gods’ karma, and so forth.

This same method of explanation can also be applied to the following example. When the hand that has been blessed by certain special mantras touches a red-hot piece of iron, it does not feel hot, but if the hand of another man were to touch it, it would be hot and it would burn. This piece of iron has two tactile parts: one that is hot and one that is not. The hand that has been enchanted by spells experiences a tactile sensation that is not hot and does not experience the heat. When the hand of another man touches it, however, it experiences the tactile sensation of heat and does not experience the tactile sensation of no heat. Likewise should one understand that the division into parts and whole applies to such scriptural passages as:

Pretas in the springtime are burnt even by the moon,
And in the winter, even the sun makes them cold.

So, when the rays of the moon and the karma of a preta come together in the springtime, the one part of the moon’s rays that has become the object of the bodily sensations of the preta causes a feeling of heat at that time. When the rays of the sun in wintertime and the karma of a preta come together, the one part of the sun’s rays that has become the object of the bodily sensations of the preta causes a feeling of coolness. Whenever it has not come together with the karma of a preta, the rays of the moon are not accepted as having these two different feelings, that is, the hot feeling is not accepted; also, there is no one who accepts that the sun possesses the substance of darkness.

Hence, without having understood the meaning of the texts, do not create suffering for yourself by laboriously refuting these [points that no one accepts]. Even though a single entity will arise as clear water, pus and blood, and nectar, depending on the karma of individual beings, we believe that the karma of each will not [permit them] to see the other parts, that they only see that part which is the fruit of their own karma.

[Opponent:] A non-Buddhist] claims that when a single being is seen by a friend and a foe he is [seen] to be pleasant and unpleasant [respectively], but is not seen to be both [pleasant and unpleasant] by each, for these [two qualities] are mutually obscured by active form (las gzaugs). This, however, has been refuted by the reasoning of Dharmakirti. [Likewise is your position that a single entity cannot be seen in two ways, but that only different parts are seen in different ways, also refuted by Dharmakirti.]

[Reply:] You are only making it clear to all that you are completely unfamiliar with both the scriptural exegesis of Dharmakirti and with the beliefs of those whom you are trying to refute. The lines:

If, in dependence upon sight of that,
Another form were to arise ...

[are to be interpreted as follows. [A heterodox school believes that,] when viewed up close, there arises a transparent active form between the organ and the object; and that, when viewed from afar, there arises a nontransparent active form between the organ and the object. Hence, [they believe] that there is a difference in the clarity or lack of clarity in the sense consciousness of the object blue and so on when close or far, but they do not attribute this to the appearance (rnam pa shar ba) of the object to the consciousness [but instead to the presence of this intervening active form]. Having expressed what this
When viewed from up close, if the active form that arises between the eye consciousness that apprehends blue and the blue [itself] obscures the blue, then it follows, absurdly, that the eye consciousness apprehending blue does not see the blue. If it does not obscure it, then again it follows, absurdly, that the eye consciousness that perceives it from up close individually sees both the clear active form and the blue simultaneously, and that the eye consciousness seeing it from afar individually sees both the nontransparent active form and the blue simultaneously. These are the reductios urged [on those who accept “active form”]. No one is accepting anything about the form [or body] of one man being both pleasant and unpleasant. There is nothing more amazing than the meaningless explanation that tries to fit these scriptural texts to conform to such a refutation, [as you attempt to do].

Here we are not accepting that between the eye consciousness of a preta and clean water there arises an active form of pus, through which [filter] the clean water is seen by the eye consciousness; and if you try and urge upon us the absurdity that the eye consciousness of the preta does not see that part [of the liquid] that is clean, cool water, we would heartily agree! Because you yourself share this same belief, that it is not seen by that [being], is this not a reductio of one who is still affected by sleep? Get your act together! Therefore, it is not in regard to such a belief that the reasoning of Dharmakirti is directed.

The glorious Dharmakirti extensively refutes the belief that the five diseases, such as wind, bile, phlegm, and so on; the five elements—earth, air, fire, water, and space; the five spirits (gdon lnga), and so forth are all the direct effects of the five poisons, the afflictions. [He refutes the fact] that attachment and phlegm, anger, and bile, and so on have an invariable relationship in which the latter proceed from the former, in the lines: “Because they are not invariable, wind and so on are not their qualities.” By changing the words of this reasoning that refutes the heterodox one should know that the resulting argument perfectly refutes the preceding opponent’s view. The view that noncompounded space is a direct result of jealousy is the deceiving thought of a bunch of utter fools. Hence, do not become partisan to these babblings, which are much worse even than what the heterodox accept.

[Opponent:] By claiming that there are six objects seen in six different ways you are also contradicting the explanation that a single object is seen in six different ways, as expressed in the line “because a single thing is different for different minds.”

[Reply:] This is extremely unrefined talk. How would you respond, for example, to the claim that when the five limbs of a single man, his head, and so on, perform five distinct kinds of action, it becomes five actors doing five actions and not a single man doing the five actions?

[Opponent:] Because these five limbs are limbs that are parts of a single man, when they perform five different actions, we say that that one man is performing five different actions. There is no contradiction.

[Reply:] [Well, in exactly the same way], because the single entity that has the characteristics of wetness and fluidity is a whole that has six different parts that are seen in six different ways, how is [this view of ours] in contradiction to the line “because a single thing is different for different minds”? [Have we not given a rationale, via this example, for calling six different ways of perceiving the parts of the object “ways of perceiving the single object,” just as the five different actions of the five limbs are called “actions of the man”—each of the former being in the relationship of part and whole to the latter?]

[Opponent:] Let the object that occupies the place of the single entity that possesses the characteristics of wetness and fluidity, that is, the whole, be perceived by those who possess the condition, that is, the karma, of a god, a man, and a preta. You believe that occasionally, when [such beings] come together, the parts of that whole, the pus and blood, the nectar, and the cool, clean water, are actually present. If that is so, then it would be necessary that in the place occupied by the one river there exist those various substances. Hence, one material thing would not displace another, as is commonly accepted by all.

[Reply:] The one who advocates this has not yet come to understand the nature of reasoning: before the dawning of an opponent, the sun of his refutation has already risen. It follows [according to him] that it is impossible for many different entities, the parts, to exist in the place occupied by a single whole, for were it possible there would arise the absurdity that other material things would not be blocked from arising in the place occupied by one material thing. If you accept the [original premise, that the parts cannot exist where the whole does,] then it follows, absurdly, that in the place occupied by a ceremonial pot there do not exist the many [parts] such as the spout, the base, the hollow cavity, and so forth. What is more, when a bowl is filled with a mixture of clean, cool water, milk, beer, and blood, it follows, absurdly, that other material things are not blocked from arising in the place occupied by one material thing because four different things, clean, cool water, milk, blood, and beer, exist simultaneously in the place occupied by that bowl full of liquid. Our omniscient Lord Tsong kha pa believes that at that special time [when all three beings simultaneously witness the bowl of liquid we call water] there exist at one time many parts, which arise as pus, nectar, and so forth, in the bowl full of liquid. He does not at all accept that in the place occupied by the bowl full of [substance possessing the characteristics] of wetness and fluidity there exists a bowl full of pus, a bowl full of nectar, and a bowl full of clean, clear water; nor does he at all accept that at the place occupied by one molecule of water there exist simultaneously a molecule of nectar and a molecule of pus. As he in fact claims no such thing, when you demonstrate any fault [in his position], thinking that he does teach this, then you are only showing [what kind of person] you yourself are [and not what the Lord Tsong kha pa is like].
as you explained it earlier, [that is, literally,] then has fear besieged you [into the present action] or is it just a cover-up?

[Opponent:] If the eye consciousness of some pretas to which a river filled with pus appears is really a valid cognition in regard to real pus, then consider [412] this passage from the Suhrllekha:

Trees become fruitless for them

And their mere glance makes a river dry.1060

It would then be correct [for you] to also accept that the eye consciousness of a preta to which things appear in that way is a valid cognition in regard to the drying up and nonexistence of rivers such as the Ganges, and that it is a valid cognition in regard to the sudden disappearance of the fruits of trees very heavily laden with fruit. This would therefore imply that it was correct to accept that at that time the River Ganges actually was dry, and so forth.

[Reply:] There is no problem. Such a preta first sees that river from far away. If he did not, he would not go to it with the thought that desires to drink [from it]. Thus, desiring to drink, he approaches; but obstructed by his karma, his eye consciousness does not see the river. When he does not see it, he sees instead the bottom, a river bed filled with dirt, rubble, and so forth. If it were not obscured by the river, men too would see that. In this way, they directly see the dirt on the bottom of the river. Due to their not seeing the river, which would act as an obstruction, they see the bed at the bottom of the river, and doing so they conceptually think ‘the river is dry.’ Such a conceptual thought (trog pa) is a mistaken consciousness (log shes) in error with regard to its conceived object (chen yul). It is not a valid cognition in regard to its conceived object. That eye consciousness is a valid cognition in regard to the rubble and pebbles of the river’s bottom. These do actually exist. It is the case that their eye consciousness does not see the river and not that the river appears to be nonexistent.1061 Likewise, it is the case that karma obstructs their seeing the fruit so that they do not see it, and see only the branches of the tree. Hence, [that eye consciousness] is a valid cognition in regard to the branches of the tree, but it does not perceive the fruit to be nonexistent. The conceptual thought that apprehends the fruit to be nonexistent is a mistaken consciousness that is in error as regards its conceived object. That is why we do not accept it to be a valid cognition in regard to the conceived object.

Therefore, when we consider the river and the dirt at its bottom, the eye consciousness of man is a valid cognition in regard to the [river] water and is not a valid cognition in regard to the dirt at the bottom; whereas the eye consciousness of a preta is a valid cognition in regard to the dirt at the bottom, but is not a valid cognition in regard to the [ontological status of the] river. Likewise, before some kinds of food reach the mouth of some pretas, they are ordinary food, but when they reach their mouths, the further succession [of

[Opponent:] Well then, how do you interpret Vinitadeva’s explanation [of this point], “When there is not even the slightest drop of pus, how could there be a river full of it? It is due to the ripening of their karma that they see it [to be pus],” in his Vimsatikavasvuttikā?1057 All these arguments and analyses carried out in great detail in the Vimsatikā, in the Svavrtti, and in the Svavrttiikā are performed strictly to refute external objects. If the appearance of the aspect of blue within the eye consciousness is an aspect bestowed (gtaud) [on consciousness] by an external object, then a human’s perception of an entity, a single river, as clean, cool water, and a preta’s perception of it as pus, blood, and feces would become appearances that arise due to the external object. Hence, the arising of those appearances would have to be appearances that do not at all depend upon the awakening of karmic latent potentialities. It appears only to pretas and so forth whose latent potentialities have awakened accordingly and not to others. In general, they appear in this or that way due to karma that is of the nature of consciousness. Thus, [the passage] is saying that when there is no single drop of pus that is an external object, that is, that exists as it appears [to that being], how could there exist a river filled with external pus; nonetheless, [it does not deny that] these [beings] see it [as pus and so on] due to the ripening of karma. Were it not so, [that is, were this] passage not teaching principally the nonexistence of pus and so on qua external objects, but the nonexistence of pus altogether[,] then [why] immediately after this [passage], in rebuttal to an [opponent’s] argument, does there ensue the absurdity that the pus and blood appearing as pus and blood to the preta cannot possibly act as food and drink, does he answer that even though it is of the nature of consciousness alone and empty of being an external object, this does not contradict the fact that it can act in a manner that is either beneficial or destructive. This is explained extensively via many examples in the root text and commentary in such lines as: “they function, just as a dream can be destructive.”1058 So, were it not [as we have explained], it would contradict all of these [passages]. This is because in the Vimsatikā’s own system it is believed that when it appears in this way to a preta there is in reality no pus that can act as food and drink apart from the mere appearance of pus.

Now you, who take refuge in believing the mere literal interpretation of the words without at all analyzing the layout of the meaning, consider what it says in the Vimsatikāśavṛtta: “Likewise, although the Lord has said that the elements such as form and so forth exist, this teaching is for the purpose of the disciple’s spiritual growth (’dul ba’i skye ’ba’i ched du). Those words have an ulterior purpose.”1059 Because it says this [and because you insist on taking everything in the scriptures literally], then go right ahead and accept the absurdity that there is no form except for the mere appearance of form to the eye consciousness. This makes you more nihilistic than even the Čārvākas. If you accept that this [one passage] teaches that there is no external form and so on, [hence not taking it literally,] and yet accept the previous [Vimsatikā passage]
moments] of the food actually becomes fire, by virtue of the pretas’s karma. Were this not so, that is, were the fire that is the basis of that appearance not real but only a mere appearance of fire to the mind, it would follow that it could not scorch their mouths and burn their throats and stomachs, which would be a form of skepticism in regard to karma and its result. If the mere appearance that appears to the mind in this way could burn and so on, then the mere appearance that appears as hair [to the one suffering from cataracts] could act as hair, that is, it could be braided and so forth; and the mere appearance that appears as a bee to the one suffering from eye disease could act as a bee, stinging one’s body. Hence, all of the distinctions between whether the basis appearing to any consciousness actually exists or not would become utterly without purpose, and it would follow, absurdly, that even the appearance of a mirage as water could act as water.

Therefore, a river appears as pus and blood to some pretas, as nectar to the gods, as a home to some creatures, and so forth; and these eye consciousnesses as well as the way in which [their objects] appear are valid cognitions. If the entities that are the basis of the appearance, [that is, the pus, nectar, and so on,] did not exist, then the entities that are the basis for what appears to a hell being, that is, fire, weapons, and so forth, would not at all exist or above the mere appearance of fire, molten iron, the forest of razor leaves, and the weapons and so on that appear to the eye consciousness of a hell being. This is because the reasoning in both cases, [that is, in the case of pretas seeing pus and hell beings seeing weapons and so on,] is analogous. If you accept that, [that is, that what hell beings witness being done to them is mere appearance,] then there would follow the absurdity that there is no possibility for the real burning of the body or the cutting of the limbs over and above the mere arising of such appearances to the mind. Thus, it would follow that hell beings and pretas and so on would have no feelings of bodily suffering whatsoever, over and above mere mistaken mental appearances. What greater skepticism can there be in regard to karma and its effects than the likes of this? How would you refute someone who advocated that the appearance of fire and water and so forth to the eye consciousness of a man was a valid cognition in regard to the mere appearance but that there was not the slightest entity such as fire or water that was the basis of the appearance, [that is, you would end up refuting such a person just as we are refuting you].

[Opponent:] Because it is established by the experience of men themselves that [fire and water] have the ability to perform functions such as burning and cooking, and [acting as sources for] washing and drinking, fire and water do actually exist.

[Reply:] Well then, why do you deny the actual existence of pus and blood and so on, for it is established by the experience of pretas that pus and blood, and the fire that has fallen into their mouths and so on, can act as food and drink, can burn their throats and so forth?

[Opponent:] That is mere fancy (rloms pa tsam) due to an error in so far as it is established by the experience of those pretas.

[Reply:] Then even with men it would be mere fancy established by experience under the influence of error.

[Opponent:] Well then, they would not really perform the functions of cooking and washing.

[Reply:] To say “well then, they would not really burn the throats of those pretas” would be completely analogous. Hence, you are either accepting that there is no phenomenon whatsoever that can really perform a function or else you are accepting that the entities that are the bases of whatever appears to beings in the lower realms and gods, due to their individual karma, do not have the slightest ability to perform the functions of creating happiness or suffering. Because [in either case] this would mean that [these entities] would be in no way different from the fictitious hair that appears to one who suffers from eye disease, you are confusing a view of skepticism in regard to karma and its effects for an exposition that has been set forth via valid reasoning. Don’t go showing off!

The Avatāra says:

Similar to the sense organ of one who suffers from eye disease
Is the preta’s perception of pus in a river of flowing water.

Both the root text and the commentary explain that both the eye consciousness of pretas who see pus and blood in the river, that is, the consciousness that possesses the object, and the object itself, equally lack any inherent existence; and that, just as there exists a consciousness, a possessor of objects, in a merely nominal way, as long as it is not being examined or analyzed, there also exist external objects. [The MA] is showing that this situation is similar to one previously explained, that is, that the eye consciousness of the patient with eye disease and its external object both lack inherent existence, but that from a strictly nominal [viewpoint] the eye consciousness to which the falling hair appears and its external object both exist. How could it possibly be showing [instead] a similarity between the fact that the hair that is the basis of the appearance can perform no function over and above its merely appearing as hair to the consciousness to which the hair appears and there being in reality no pus and blood that is the basis of the appearance over and above their appearing to the eye consciousness of pretas to which they appear? [Were that so,] it would mean that the argument between the Madhyamikas and Cittamātrins was not over whether or not object and consciousness had the same ontological status, but over whether or not the basis of appearance of the appearances of erroneous consciousnesses exist; and it would be clear that you have not even seen the section of the Bhāṣya [to MA] that deals with the verse that goes, “Due to the power of the eye disease, the hair that is seen,” in which the opponent’s position is set forth. It makes it clear that you are just
another one of those who are for the most part false teachers in the midst of retinues satisfied with the mere sound of the words of the lecturer, [as opposed to requiring that the meaning make sense].

[Opponent:] The Bodhicaryāvatāra says:

Who purposely creates the weapons
[Used to torment] the beings of hell?
Who creates the ground of burning iron?
Who creates those multitudes of fire?

All such things have been said by the conqueror
To arise from sinful minds.1065

This is indicating that the weapons of hell and the ground of burning iron and so forth do not really exist. If they did, then who created them? These are all the mere mistaken appearances of the mind. Hence, it is analogous to the mind of the preta [who sees] pus in the river of flowing water.

[Reply:] To claim this is to claim that the fact that a holy being who has correctly trained himself or herself in the path of the ten virtuous actions and is born as a god and the fact that a sinful being who has committed the five heinous sins and is born into hell are both mistaken appearances of the mind with no difference in desirability; that is, that there is not the slightest difference as regards the pleasure or suffering that is actually experienced by the body [in these two states]. Hence, there would be no difference between dharma and nondharma, and it would be fitting for all great beings to make only that kind of mental prayer to exert themselves in the practice that takes demerit as its object.

[Opponent:] Well then, what is the meaning of that scripture, [that is, the Bodhicaryāvatāra citation]?

[Reply:] The words who purposely creates and who creates are indicating that there is no other being, no one at all, not even God, who creates the weapons and burning iron of the hells in a premeditated way.

[Opponent:] Then who or what is the creator of them?

[Reply:] The creator is the sinful mind of those beings who have accumulated that karma in their own previous lives and who then experience the ripening of it [in hell]. It is indicating that, as this is the source, the mind itself is the chief creator of happiness and suffering. Do not claim that because it arises from the mind which is the cause of this [suffering or happiness], it therefore does not exist!

[Opponent:] Well then, do you accept that when a god, man, and preta, possessing the proper karma, assemble, there appears in the place occupied by a bowl full of [liquid possessing the characteristics] of wetness and fluidity a [whole] bowl full of nectar to a god, a [whole] bowl full of pus to a preta, and so forth?

[Reply:] At that place, pus does appear to the preta, and the basis of that appearance does actually have the ability to act as pus. Nectar does appear to the god in that place, and the basis of that appearance does actually have the ability to act as nectar. We believe this. It is not necessary, however, that there appear with absolute precision the same amounts; that is, a [completely] full bowl of nectar or a [completely] full bowl of pus. Were it necessary, then it would also be necessary that the amount of a bowl full of liquid appear even to a microbe the likes of which cannot be seen by the ordinary eye, and that lives in the bowl full of liquid [possessing the characteristics of] wetness and fluidity with the thought of its being a home. Were that so, then the depth, width, and breadth of the ocean would have to appear exactly as it is to the tiny fish who lives in the ocean. It would also be necessary for it to appear as a bowl full of weapons when it appears as weapons to some demigods (tha ma yin) [which it of course does not]. Even if it were necessary that at that time there appear exactly similar proportions, that is, a [complete] bowl full of pus, a [complete] bowl full of nectar, and so forth, this still presents no problem for us. This is because no one could refute the assertion that, though those eye consciousnesses are valid cognitions merely in regard to pus that has the ability to act as such and in regard to nectar that has the ability to perform the function of the basis of appearance, they are not valid cognitions in regard to the aspect of the proportion; that is, of just how much it is that appears. In these various ways, this point has been misapprehended by those of small intellect using [as their source] the mere words of those who cannot analyze it, so that they do not realize the eloquence of the holy to be eloquence. Seeing their incertitude in regard to karma and its effects, I have explained it in a slightly more elaborate way.

4.2.3.1.2.2.3. The Explanation of Why We Do Not Accept Autocognition (rang rig)1065

4.2.3.1.2.2.3.1. The Explanation of How We Refute the Position That Does Accept It

4.2.3.1.2.2.3.1.1. The Explanation of the Opponent's Position

The autocognition accepted by the Śautrāntikas and the Cittamātrins is as follows. The Tarkajñālā clearly indicates this by setting forth the opponents' position:

The Cittamātrins claim that consciousness appears in two ways: self-reflectively (rang snang ba) and reflecting the object (yul snang ba).
The consciousness that reflects the object takes on the aspect of the external object. This [latter consciousness] then becomes the object of a self-reflective consciousness.\textsuperscript{1067}

Self-reflective refers to the subjective aspect (dzin rnam), and reflecting the object refers to the objective aspect (gzung rnam). The objective aspect, which \textsuperscript{419} takes on the aspect of the object, is explained to be the object of the subjective aspect. Hence, the experience of the objective aspect by the subjective aspect is the meaning of autocognition. Therefore, in the Sautrantika and the Cittamatra systems both, every consciousness has a subjective aspect which is of [that consciousness] own nature. This [subjective aspect] is directed strictly internally, and it is devoid of all dualistic appearances.\textsuperscript{1066} It cognizes itself. It is a subjective aspect that is independent (yan gar ba) and that cognizes both itself and the objective aspect without at all depending on the appearance of any object whatsoever. These same points are clearly expressed by many scriptures such as the Pramana-vartika in such lines as ‘‘Permanently it faces within, toward itself’’\textsuperscript{1066} and ‘‘Both the cognized and cognizer have no aspect.’’\textsuperscript{1070} Moreover, in the Satyadvayavrtti it says:

When refuting autocognition . . . that consciousness, [that is, autocognition,] should be understood to be the cognition of the nature [of something] nondualistically and [it should be understood] to be nonexistent. If that were not so, it would not be correct.\textsuperscript{1071}

which means that because there is no such thing as autocognition devoid of all dualistic appearances, there is no such thing (gzhan dbang) as the lack of subject-object duality.

The chief form of reasoning that the realists claim proves the existence of such an autocognition is this. If they were to posit a [standard syllogism of the form]:

[Subject:] the autocognition that autoexperiences the eye consciousness that apprehends blue
[Predicate:] exists . . .

there could be found no example possessing [the characteristics of] both the reason and predicate that could be posited, [that is, accepted by,] the opponent [to whom the syllogism is being posited]. So they do not go about proving it in this way, and instead do so as follows.

After the eye consciousness has seen blue, there arise consciousnesses that remember the object and that think, ‘‘I have seen blue.’’ They remember the possessor of the object, [that is, the eye consciousness itself,] and think, ‘‘I have seen.’’ Just as it is impossible for there to arise a consciousness that remembers the blue unless it was preceded by an experience of the object blue, likewise it would be incorrect for there to arise a memory of the eye con-

sciousness apprehending blue unless it was preceded by an experience of the possessor of the object, the eye consciousness apprehending blue. Therefore, [they claim that] there does exist the experience of the eye consciousness apprehending blue. This can only be of two types: either it is a reflexive experience (rang myong), or an experience of something other (gzhan myong). Were it experienced by a consciousness that is something different from [the eye consciousness] itself, whether concomitant with it or occurring after it, it would be necessary to accept yet another entity that experienced [that one experience], and so on ad infinitum. If the latter moment of the eye consciousness apprehending the blue experiences the former, there would follow the absurdity that the latter moment could not transfer its attention [lit. the action of apprehension] to the blue [as it would be preoccupied with apprehending the eye consciousness, hence implying that we see everything for only one moment]. This disproves its being an experience of something other. Therefore, it is established as being a reflexive experience. Because it is impossible for it to appear distant to itself, we have established the existence of autocognition devoid of all dualistic appearances. This is what they say.

4.2.3.3.1.2.3.1.2. The Explanation of How to Refute It

4.2.3.3.1.2.3.1.2.1. The Refutation of the [Logical] Proof

Do you infer [the existence of] this experience using as your reason the fact of memory qua inherently existent thing, or do you posit as your reason mere memory [unqualified by whether or not it inherently exists]? In the first case, because for a Pra sanika there is no difference between [inherently existing memory] and autocognition, both being nonexistent, [positing the reason of inherently existing memory] as proof of autocognition is improper. In the second case, positting mere memory, the result [of the reflexive experience of autocognition], as the reason proving the existence of a preceding special cause, namely, the reflexive experience [of autocognition], involves an erroneous pervasion (khyab pa ’khrul ba).\textsuperscript{1072} It is just like inferring the [existence] of fire glass from the mere [presence of] fire and the [existence] of water glass from the mere [presence of] water.\textsuperscript{1073} Even though it is possible to establish that a mere experience preceded it by reason of having a memory, that experience cannot be fit into a pattern of ‘‘reflexive experience,’’ and ‘‘experience of another’’ as accepted by both Sautrantikas and Cittamatrins. It is just like [421] the fact that one cannot repudiate that a butter lamp is of a radiant nature (gsal ba’i rang bzhin) even though one can repudiate that the lamp radiates itself and that it is radiated by an object different from itself.

[Opponent:] But a butter lamp is radiated by itself.
[Reply:] Then it follows, absurdly, that darkness is obscured by itself. If you accept that, then it follows, absurdly, that there should be no obstacle to
clearly seeing the form of a pot within pitch black darkness, for at that time, 
the darkness, being obscured by obscuration, [that is, by itself], would not be 
seen, [thereby leaving the seeing of the pot unhindered]. As the Prajinamala says:

If the self-, or other-, nature of a lamp
Is what makes it appear [luminous],
Then there is no doubt that the self-, or other-, nature of darkness
Is what obscures it.  

Because, according to you, the earlier experience and the later memory
are inherently different things, they become different in such a way that they
are mutually independent of each other. If that is so, they would have to be
unrelated different things, and it would therefore be incorrect for the later
memory to remember the earlier experience. Otherwise, [if a consciousness
unrelated to another one could remember it,] then the memory consciousness
within Devadatta's continuum could, absurdly, remember an experience in the
continuity of Yagja.

4.2.3.1.2.2.3.1.2. The Refutation of the Belief

By repudiating the [Yogacara's] proof for the existence of autocognition as
explained, we also repudiate the existence of autocognition itself.

If that subjective aspect, to which there appear no objects of a different
nature from [the mind] itself, apprehends that very subjective aspect, then
the existence of valid cognitions would not depend on the perceived [objects]
(gzhal bya), and neither would the existence of perceived [objects] depend on
valid cognitions.

No matter how much thought one gives to the independent subjective as-
pect that is directed internally, [that is, to autocognition,] it is impossible
to get an image of any difference between the cognized [object] (rig bya) and
cognizing [subject] (rig byed).  Were that so, [that is, were it impossible to
gain a conceptual mental picture of the relationship between subject and object
within autocognition,] and despite that were one to still maintain that there can
be posited a cognized [object] and a cognizing [subject], then it would be just
as correct to maintain that within a single sprout there exists its own arising
agent, [that is, its own cause,] (skyed byed) and its own arisen [effect] (bskyed
bya). If [that were so, then] there would ensue the absurd fault that all actions
and their doers (bya byed) would become identical, which is why [the
Madhyamakavatara] says:

When the actor, the action, and the process are not one,
Then it is not reasonable for something to experience itself.

4.2.3.1.2.2.3.2. The Explanation of How We Posit Our Own
System, Which Does Not Accept [Autocognition]

[Opponent:] Even the Acarya Candrakirti accepts that from a merely nominal
point of view there is such a thing as autocognition, the subjective aspect
experiencing itself.

[Reply:] This claim flies directly in the face of instances in the Madhyama-
makavataraabhaya in which [Candrakirti] says that, though autocognition does
not exist even nominally, memory can still arise.  For example, after refut-
ing the existence of any form of autocognition and memory that exist by virtue
of their own characteristic, he says:

[Opponent:] But from the point of view of worldly parlance ('jig
rten gyi tha snyad) . . .

[Reply:] Even according to that, it is impossible for memory to
possess autocognition as its cause.

and also: "I will show in this way how memory arises without auto-
cognition."

Well, how does memory arise in our own system if there is no autocog-
nition even nominally? Let me take the meaning of what is extensively taught
in the Madhyamakavatara root text and its Bhaya and put it in a somewhat
more easily understandable form.

Subject: indefinite
Predicate: even though the subjective appearance that is internally di-
rected and devoid of dualistic appearances does not experience itself,
there is nonetheless a reason for why a memory arises that thinks "I
have previously seen this blue lotus".

Reason: because (1) the eye consciousness that previously perceived
the blue lotus and the later memory of it are not inherently different;
(2) one can, by seeing one's own eye consciousness, say "I see"; and
(3) due to the fact that both the object seen by the previous eye con-
ssciousness and the object remembered by the memory are the same
object, such a memory arises.

This perfectly establishes it.

The glorious Santideva explains it in a like manner. In the Bodhicar-
yavatara he says, first citing the opponent's position:

If autocognition did not exist,
How could consciousness remember?

He gives the answer that the pervasion is uncertain, [that is, that just because
there is memory does not imply that there must be autocognition,] as follows.
Because the determination of the number of valid cognitions depends on the perceived [objects that those valid cognitions apprehend], and because the nature of the two valid cognitions is posited in such a way that it corresponds to the nature of the kinds of perceived [objects].

As it says, the number of valid cognitions is determined by the number of perceived [objects] (phgal byas). Only by virtue of the arising within valid cognitions of the aspects of the perceived [objects] is the nature of the perceiving valid cognitions posited. These words refute that, apart from this method of establishing such valid cognitions, there is any separate method, such as their being established by autocognition.

[Opponent:] Then what does it mean to say that valid cognitions are established as existing merely by the fact that the valid cognitions establish the perceived [object]?

[Reply:] In this regard, let me first analyze a source of doubt that could occur to another. The meaning of such an explanation is that the eye consciousness that apprehends blue is established as existing by the perception of blue on the part of eye consciousness that apprehends blue. Therefore, it is necessary to accept that the eye consciousness that apprehends blue establishes the existence of the eye consciousness that apprehends blue. If this is so, then it is necessary to accept that the eye consciousness that apprehends blue establishes the eye consciousness that apprehends blue. Do not think, however, that because this is so, it is necessary to accept that it cognizes (rig) it or that it understands (rgs) it. Were that the case, then it would be necessary to accept [425] that the eye consciousness is both what cognizes and what is cognized by the eye consciousness. If this were so, all of the problems demonstrated during our refutation of the realists' belief in autocognition likewise would apply as well to us, [statements like]: "it is not correct for the subjective aspect that is devoid of all dualistic appearances and is of the same nature as the consciousness [it perceives] to itself experience itself because, no matter how much thought one gives it, the image of the cognized [object] and cognizing [subject] never appear differently, so that all actions and their doers would become identical." [1068]

If that [eye consciousness] understood itself, then it would be necessary to accept it as either a direct understanding (rgnos sogs) or an indirect understanding (shugs sogs), and we cannot accept it as either. You may be wondering what fault there is in accepting the proposition that "in the process of (shugs kyis) the aspect of the object appearing to that consciousness, that consciousness is itself established." Well, [if that were so, that is, if a consciousness understood itself indirectly in the process of directly understanding its object] then it would follow, absurdly, that the equating gnosia of the Mahāyāna path of seeing that realizes reality understands itself, the gnosia,
possessor of the object, in the process of directly understanding reality. Why are we urged not to accept that? [If we do,] it would follow, absurdly, that the reality, the perceived [object], in regard to which that gnosis is considered a cognitive valid cognition (rig shes tshad ma), would not be a strict non-affirming negation (med dgag), the mere negation of true existence, being instead an affirming negation (ma yin dgag). This is because in the process of making the mere negation of true existence its direct object, it affirms a positive object, the gnosis, as a mental object. It would also follow, absurdly, that the word truthlessness indirectly affirms as its expressed [meaning] (briyod byar) the mind that understands truthlessness. That is why [Tsong kha pa’s] Great Exposition of the Prajñāpāramitā says:

[Hypothesis:] Then even the existence of essenceslessness must be understood indirectly, hence being established by a cognitive act (rig shes).

[Reply:] Were that so, then the words the sprout is essenceless would have to indirectly teach the existence of essenceslessness, for the mind that follows [the hearing of] those words indirectly understands its existence. Therefore, it would be an affirming negation that indirectly affirms another phenomenon apart from the mere negation of the object to be refuted, thereby prohibiting its being a non-affirming negation.

Try to interpret that passage [and still maintain that the understanding of emptiness indirectly understands anything like the mind that is cognizing it or even the existence of the emptiness itself]. If the cognitive act that understands essenceslessness were to establish the existence of the subject, [that is, of the cognition itself,] indirectly in the process of directly understanding the essenceslessness, then what need is there to say that it would also indirectly understand the existence of the essenceslessness [and hence, as Tsong kha pa has clearly stated that the latter does not take place, how could the former]. If the direct understanding of an object indirectly establishes the existence of the object possessor, then it would be contradictory to claim that it did not indirectly establish the existence of the object itself. If you accept that, then, as it is necessary to definitely accept, as the Lord himself has repeatedly said, that the existence of essenceslessness is established by a nominal valid cognition and not by a cognitive act, [and as your position violates this, your attempt at] setting forth the Madhyamakā’s own system collapses once again.

To accept that a consciousness x directly understands itself is to misconceive the position of this system because it would follow, absurdly, that every cognitive valid cognition would be both a valid cognition that analyzes the cognitive valid cognition and a valid cognition that analyzes the nominal. If, by the power of ultimate and a valid cognition that analyzes the nominal. If, by the power of taking as its direct object the negation of true existence, the existence of the consciousness itself is directly understood, then, by the power of taking the negation of true existence as a mental object, a positive phenomenon, [the existence of the consciousness,] would be affirmed, hence degenerating the status of emptiness, reality,] as a non-affirming negation. To sometimes accept that all direct understandings must have [their objects] appear to them (nam par shar bas khyab pa), and on other occasions to accept that every consciousness is directly understood by autocognition is to have a major problem with one’s memory. As the Great Exposition of the Avatāra [of Tsong kha pa] says:

Were it as others believe, that is, that a valid cognition is established by a valid cognition, without allowing that a valid cognition be established simply by the establishment of its perceived [object], then a valid cognition could be established independently of the perceived [object].

So, to claim that the author of the Great Exposition accepts that a valid cognition is established by itself, by a valid cognition, either directly or indirectly, is to completely misinterpret [his intention].

What we advocate is as follows. The eye consciousness apprehending blue establishes the existence of the eye consciousness apprehending blue. How does it establish it? We do not claim that it establishes it by virtue of its perceiving the blue. The eye consciousness apprehending blue, by virtue of its perceiving blue, leads directly to a consciousness that remembers the apprehension of the blue by the eye consciousness apprehending blue. It is that very consciousness which remembers the apprehension of blue by the eye consciousness apprehending the blue that eliminates both the refutation that “blue does not exist” and that “the eye consciousness apprehending blue does not exist,” so that it is a valid cognition which can lead to the ascertainment that these do exist simply by one’s turning one’s mind to the matter (blo kha phyogs pa tsam). Hence, the memory consciousness itself is a valid cognition in regard to the existence of the eye consciousness. When this later memory consciousness remembers the blue, it does not do so at the expense of making the apprehension of the blue its object. It is a memory that, thinking “I have seen blue,” picks out the apprehension of the blue. Hence, it is a memory of both the blue and the apprehension of the blue. Therefore, even though the eye consciousness apprehending blue establishes the eye consciousness apprehending blue in dependence on the perception of the blue, it is not established by the eye consciousness apprehending blue [directly, in an autocognitive way]. Likewise, even though the eye consciousness apprehending blue perceives the blue, the eye consciousness apprehending blue is not a valid cognition in regard to the apprehension of blue by the eye consciousness apprehending blue. Instead, it is the consciousness that remembers the apprehension of blue by the eye consciousness apprehending blue that is a valid cognition in regard to this [apprehension].
The nonaffirming negation that is the mere negation of true existence is perceived by the ārya trainees' equiposed gnosīs understanding reality in a way that resembles water mixed with water, [the object, emptiness, and the gnosīs appearing to be inseparable]. It does not at all perceive either the existence of the truthlessness nor the existence of the gnosīs itself. Nonetheless, the later memory consciousness that remembers the understanding of reality on the part of that gnosīs establishes the perception of reality by that gnosīs, and hence it also establishes the gnosīs. Therefore, in dependence on the cognitive act, both the existence of the cognitive act and the existence of reality are established, but the cognitive act itself does not establish the existence of the cognitive act and the existence of reality. That is why the Great Exposition of the Prajñāpāramitā says:

Without depending upon any other intervening valid cognitions, based on the power of the cognitive act, there can arise a mind that is in direct opposition to the misapprehending mode of the reification that misapprehends essencelessness to be nonexistent. Because that very [mind] eliminates that reification, [we say that] based on the cognitive act the reification is eliminated. It is not that the cognitive act [itself] cuts through the reification, however.

From such citations, together with their examples [in the Great Exposition of the Prajñāpāramitā,] the way of positing the later memory consciousness as a valid cognition is extensively explained. Then, in the Great Exposition of the Avatāra, the way of establishing a valid cognition by means of establishing the perception of the perceived [object] by a valid cognition is explained. One ought to know how to explain [these points] by fitting together these two explanations.

In the Exposition of the Avatāra it says:

The apprehension of blue is established by the very establishment of blue. For example, it is similar to the fact that the subject, [that is, the consciousnesses that apprehends the object,] is remembered by that very memory of the object; and that memory does not arise due to the subject experiencing itself, as others accept.

And also: "In this way [we see that] the apprehension of blue is not established by autocognition as others accept, but is instead taught as being established by the valid cognition of direct sense perception."

Even though [Tsong kha pa says this], he is not claiming that the apprehension of blue perceives itself, and that the direct perception that apprehends blue is a valid cognition in regard to the existence of the apprehension of blue. [The meaning of the previous [citation] we have already explained. The latter one means that "the existence of the apprehension of blue is taught as being established in dependence on the direct perception which apprehends blue.

Likewise, nonconceptual mistaken consciousnesses such as the sense consciousness to which two moons appear or to which imaginary hair appears, as well as the conceptual mistaken consciousnesses such as the apprehension of sound as permanent and the apprehension of a self, are all valid cognitions in regard to the portion of their appearance; that is, in regard to the appearance of the two moons and the appearance of sound as permanent. Hence, these consciousnesses' perception of such appearances establish the existence of these consciousnesses in a way similar to the preceding [case of nonmistaken valid cognitions]. However, in the case of those still on the path of training, though reality directly appears to their equiposed wisdom that directly understands reality, the portion of the appearance, that is, the direct appearance of reality to those gnoses, is not the object of those gnoses. This is because, if the portion of the appearance were their indirect object, it would contradict that reality appears directly, and if it were the direct object, there would have to exist the appearance of duality within that [gnosis], because that [appearance] is a conventional object different from that gnosis. If that were so, [that is, if a dualistic appearance existed therein,] then it would contradict that [the gnosis is equiposed on reality] the way water mixes into water, for, except for the mind of a perfect Buddha, it is impossible for a single mind to be the common locus of those two, [that is, it is impossible for a single mind to directly cognize both the ultimate truth and the conventional truth]. Nonetheless, the memory of reality directly appearing to that gnosis establishes: (1) the existence of the gnosis, (2) the existence of reality, and (3) the portion of the appearance that is the appearance of reality. This concludes the exposition of how we reject autocognition.
[THE TWO TRUTHS AND THEIR COGNITION]

4.2.3.3.2. The Explanation of the Two Truths, Which Is the Basis Set Forth by Reasoning

4.2.3.3.2.1. The Basis for the Division [into Two Truths]

[The set of all] phenomena themselves is taken as the basis for the division. As the Pitāputrasamāgama Sūtra says:

In this way, the Tathāgata has an understanding of both the conventional (kun rdzob) and the ultimate (don dam pa). Phenomena themselves become used up [when fit] into this [framework] of conventional and ultimate truths. Because the Lord has seen emptiness, has understood it, has perfectly actualized it, because of this, he is said to be omniscient.

The Great Translator ṅNgog and others explain that it is the intention of the Bodhicaryāvatāra that the ultimate truth is not something known, a phenomenon (shes bya), but this is a mistaken position, for it contradicts Śāntideva's explanation in the Śikṣāsāṃuccaya, where he quotes that very sūtra [just cited] and says that the known, that is, phenomena, are the basis for the division into two truths. [It is also mistaken] because it would follow, absurdly, that the Buddha taught the ultimate truth without understanding it, [as, according to you, it cannot be understood]; and also because it would follow, absurdly, that the very way in which pillars and pots and so on appear is their reality because phenomena could have no thusness (de bzhin nyid) qua reality. [Finally, it is mistaken] because it would follow, absurdly, that there would not be the slightest difference between the way things appear to the minds of ordinary beings and to that of āryans.

[Opponent:] Well then, how do you interpret this passage from the Bodhicaryāvatāra:

The conventional and the ultimate
Are what are accepted as the two truths.
The ultimate is not an object of the mind;
The mind is accepted as being conventional.
[Reply:] It is an extremely erroneous pervasion to claim, as some do, that the mind's being a conventional [entity] is proof that the ultimate is not an object of the mind. This instead should be explained as follows. The first two lines teach the division into the two truths. Then, for the purpose of clarifying the nature of each of these categories, [it explains in the next two lines] that the nature of the ultimate truth is as follows. It says that the object that is reality and not an object of a mind deluded by dualistic appearances is the ultimate. The nature of the conventional is as follows. The mental object of a nominal mind is accepted as being conventional. This is how it must be explained, for the meaning of the following passage from the Pitāputrasamāgama Sūtra quoted in the Śikṣāsamuccaya applies to the Bodhicaryāvatāra as well:

That the conventional is the usage (spyod pa) of the world is seen by the Tathāgata. That which is the ultimate is inexpressible (brjod du med pa), unknowable (shes par bya ba ma yin pa), utterly unknowable (rnam par shes par bya ba ma yin pa), completely unknowable (yongs su shes par bya ba ma yin pa), not demonstrable (ma bstan pa). [104]

The division of phenomena into two truths is a [bipartisan] enumeration meant to exclude any third alternatives. This is because when one affirms somethings as being a false, deceptive object, one must be negating its being the object reality, which is not deceptive; and also because the deceptive and the nondeceptive are mutually exclusive, contradictory things (phan tshun spangs pa'i dangs 'gal). Along these lines the Madhyamakāloka says: "Two phenomena that possess the characteristic of being mutually exclusive must be related in such a way that the negation of one affirms the other, and hence it is not correct to conceive of something that is neither." [105]

[Question:] Then how are the four truths collected into the two truths?

[Reply:] The truth of cessation is an ultimate truth, whereas the other three truths are conventional truths. This is because the Avasārabhāṣya says: "Then how could there be four noble truths that are different from the two truths?" [106] Having asked this question, it says, by way of an answer: "The truths of suffering, cause, and path are included within the conventional truth. The truth of cessation is of the nature of the ultimate truth." [107] What is more, Candrakīrti's Vākīsāsātikāvīrti also explains it in this way.

[Opponent:] The truth of cessation is not reality (chos nyid) because the refuted objects negated to posit the truth of cessation are the adventitious stains that are a refuted object that in general can exist, whereas that which is negated to posit reality, true existence, is a refuted object that cannot possibly exist.

[Reply:] This is an extremely erroneous pervasion, for it would follow, absurdly, that a nonpot could not be a non-"rabbit's horn" because the refuted object that is to be negated in positing nonpot, that is, the pot, is a refuted object that in general exists, whereas the refuted object that is to be negated in positing non-"rabbit's horn," that is, the rabbit's horn, is a refuted object that cannot exist.

The belief that the truth of cessation is an ultimate truth is something characteristic not only of Pāṇḍarīkas; it is held in common by both the Pāṇḍarīka and Svaṭantrika systems. [108] Were that not so, then let us consider the liberative path (rnam grol lam), one of the two parts of the equipoised gnosia of the path of seeing that directly understands reality, [the two being] the unobstructed path (bar chad med lam) and the liberative path. [109] If the Svaṭantrikas did not accept that cessation was an ultimate truth, then it would contradict the fact that in their system this liberative path is accepted as actualizing (mgon par byas pa) a cessation that is the abandonment of the seeds of the obstacles [removed during the path of] seeing (mthong spang sa bon). [They must accept cessation to be an ultimate truth, for otherwise] it would be in utter contradiction to the following position. They accept that the nature body (ngo bo nyid sku) and the final truth of cessation of a perfect Buddha are synonyms. Accepting this, they claim that the reality possessing the two purities is the nature body. [110] [They must also accept this, for otherwise] it would follow that this system should not accept a position which advocates that the nature body is an ultimate body and that composite bodies ('du byed kyi sku) are conventional bodies. [Finally, they must accept this, for otherwise] it would follow that the Abhisamāyālamkāra commentaries of Ārya [Vimuktasena] and Haribhadra become meaningless when they divide the aspects of the truth of cessation into the sixteen emptinesses. [111]

Therefore, for the great translator Ngag, the father, and his son, to believe as they do is to advocate that the ultimate truth is not a [knowable] phenomenon and to hold in their hearts what they cannot [out of shame] advocate [openly], namely, that the truth of cessation is not an object of the
mind. When the Lord [Tsong kha pa] himself states in the *Exposition of the Avatāra, “Whether the truth of cessation is advocated as being a conventional truth is undecided,”* he is not referring to the Mahāyāna Svātantrikas of India nor to the belief that arose in Tibet that in the Prāsaṅgikas the truth of cessation is a conventional truth. He is referring to those scholars, which we have just mentioned, who advocate what they do when they explain the scriptures of the Svātantrikas. What is more, take the syllogism, “the truth of cessation is not reality because the refuted object negated is positing reality is a nonexistent refuted object whereas the refuted object negated in positing the truth of cessation, the stains, is a refuted object that exists.” According to this system, the difference between the Prāsaṅgikas and Svātantrikas is that according to the Prāsaṅgikas [the syllogism] lacks a pervasion, [that is, the predicate does not follow from the reason,] whereas according to the Svātantrikas, it has a pervasion. Apart from this they have no reason whatsoever for claiming that in the Svātantrika system the truth of cessation is a conventional truth.

4.2.3.3.2.2. The Meaning of the Words [Ultimate and Conventional]

The meaning of *ultimate truth* [lit. highest object truth, (don dam bden pa) is as follows]. Most Svātantrika Mādhyamikas explain that the word *highest* refers to the undefiled equipoised gnosis that understands reality, and that the word *object* refers to its object. Nonetheless, as regards [the etymology] in this system, that is, in our own, the Prāsaṅgika[,] the *Prasannapadā* states: “Because the object is that, and as it is also the highest, it is the highest object; and because it is the truth, it is the highest object truth, [that is, the ultimate truth].” Therefore, because that very object itself is the highest or correct (yong dag pa) reality, it is the highest object. In the world something is considered to be deceptive if in reality it is one way while appearing another. The opposite of that is said to be nondeceptive. Because it is this, [the highest object] is said to be the truth.

Therefore, the *true* in the expression *empty of true existence even nominally and the truth in the expression ultimate truth are completely different [in what they refer to]. That is why, when the *Yuktiśaṅkikā* says “nirvāṇa is the sole truth,” the *Vṛtti* says:

How so? Because the compounded appears mistakenly, it deceives the childish, but nirvāṇa is not like that, for it always abides in a nature, an essence, which is acausal. It never appears to the childish to be causal in nature as the compounded does. Therefore, it is because nirvāṇa always abides in nirvāṇaness that in strictly worldly terms it is called a *highest truth*.

Even though nirvāṇa is an object found by the gnosis of an āryan, and even though the ultimate truth is an object found by the gnosis of an āryan, this does not vitiate against the fact that [the proposition] “nirvāṇa is an ultimate truth” must be established by a nominal, worldly valid cognition. For example, sound is an object found by the ear consciousness, and impermanence is an object found by direct perception, nonetheless, [the proposition] “sound is impermanent” must be set forth by inferential means.

[Opponent:] We accept that there is a single common locus that is three things—an object (don), highest (dam pa), and the truth (bden pa)—and that the word *truth* has two connotations. Sometimes what is nondeceptive is called the *truth*, and sometimes what really exists (gan tshul la grub pa) is called the *truth*. Emptiness is called the *truth* in the first [sense of the word *truth*] and not in the second, which is a reference] to the object to be refuted. Both emptiness and the ultimate truth are false things (rdzun pa).

[Reply:] This is just one giant menacing mass of direct contradiction. Because a false thing refers to something that is deceiving, the two [concepts] of truth and falsity, in this sense, mutually exclude each other in a direct way. As the *Prajñāmūla* says:

The Lord has said that any phenomenon That is deceiving is false. All composite things are deceiving phenomena, Hence they are false.

And in the commentary to that, the *Prasannapadā* says: “All compounded things are false and have the quality of being deceptive, hence they are like a mirage. Whatever is true does not have the quality of being deceptive, like, for example, nirvāṇa.”

Let us now turn to the meaning of the words *conventional truth* (kun rdzob bden pa). The basis of the etymology of the word *conventional* is the innate misapprehension of truth that grasps an object as existing by virtue of its own nature. It is because it is true within the purview of that [innate ignorance] that it is called conventional truth. The reason for that etymology (sgra bshad) [that is, the reason why ignorance is given the name conventional—lit. “concealing,”] is because it obscures our seeing the nature of things as they are. If the etymological criteria of a word x are fulfilled, it follows that that [entity which fulfills them] is an etymological basis (sgra bshad gshi) of that word; but just because something is the etymological basis of a word x does not imply that it is the referent (sgra 'jug gshi) of the word x. For example, a turtle born from a lake fulfills the etymological criterion of being lake born, so it is an etymological basis of the words lake born. However, anything that is the referent of the words [lake born] must be a flower.

Therefore, although the likes of the gnosis that directly understands reality is a referent for the word *conventional truth*, it is not an etymological basis for
it; and even though reality is a truth within the purview of the innate apprehension of true [existence], it need not be a "conventional truth," for [simply fulfilling the criteria for being an] etymological basis does not imply [that it is the true referent of the term], as is the case, for example, with "the limbed one."\textsuperscript{1122} This method of explaining the etymology of the words conventional truth is spoken of in the context of both the root text and commentary of the Avatāra [dealing with the verse that goes]: "Because delusion obscures its nature, it is a conventional truth."\textsuperscript{1123} The Bhāṣya on this passage states: "In this way, conventional truths are posited under the power of the afflicted ignorance that has been accumulated by the different parts of existence."\textsuperscript{1124} The meaning has already been explained. Again the Bhāṣya says:

Moreover, the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have abandoned ignorance see composite entities to be like the nature of reflections. For them they are of the nature of feigned things (bcos ma) and not true, for they do not conceive of things as truly [existent]. The childish, however, become confused (bṣlu bar byed pa), but for those different from them, [that is, from the childish,] by [their perceiving them to] arise interdependently, like illusions and so forth, those [composite things] become for them mere conventionalities.\textsuperscript{438}

Now as regards the meaning of this [passage, one opponent has this to say].

[Opponent:] This is demonstrating that form and so forth are for ordinary beings conventional truths, but for the āryans who have abandoned afflicted ignorance they are not a conventional truth, for they do not conceive of them as truly [existent].

[Reply:] Any such teaching is just blithering, for (1) to cite that something is not apprehended as truly [existent] by a certain mind as proof of the fact that for that mind it is not a conventionality is a contradictory pervasion ('gal khyab); (2) to cite that for the conventional mind of ordinary beings [things] appear to truly [exist] as proof of the fact that it is lacking within the [minds] of āryans is a completely unrelated pervasion (khyab 'brel gang yang med); and (3) also because it follows that if a conventional truth does not exist within the purview of a buddha's [mind, as you are suggesting, because he has abandoned apprehending things as truly existent,] then it must, absurdly, be nonexistent.

Therefore, the meaning of the commentary is this. Whatever mind within the continuum of an āryan has the truth [present within it] is not a conventional mind that posits [things] as being conventional truths. This is because, as they have abandoned the apprehension of true existence completely, they see form and so forth as mere conventionalities, never seeing them as truly [existent]. That is what it means.

Even though that mind does not perceive [things] as truly existent, it need not be the case that within its purview another mind does not see [things] as truly [existent]. Pots, pillars, and so forth are conventional truths. Even though pots and pillars and so forth are established by the valid cognitions of ordinary beings who have not found [certainty] in regard to the Madhyamaka view, they cannot be determined to be conventional truths by the valid cognitions of ordinary beings who have not found the Madhyamaka view. This is because, if a valid cognition determines [something] to be a conventional truth as it is accepted by a Madhyamaka, it is necessary that the valid cognition determine it to be conventional. If it determines that, it must determine it to be a false [thing], and if it determines that, it must repudiate that it is a truly existent [thing, thereby having to have cognized emptiness, which an ordinary being who is not a Madhyamika has, by definition, not done].

The conventional in the expression conventional truth and the conventional in existing conventionally do not mean the same thing. This is because we call something a conventional truth on account of it being true within the purview of the innate apprehension of true existence of a conventional mind, whereas something is considered to exist conventionally because a valid cognition that examines the conventional finds that it exists. Therefore, the first conventional should be understood to refer to the innate apprehension of true existence and the second to the valid cognition that analyzes the conventional. With this we complete the explanation of the etymology of the two truths.

\textbf{4.2.3.2.3. Considering Whether They Are the Same or Different}

As both the root text of the Avatāra and its commentary say in the context of the verse that goes, "Both of the natures of things that are found are apprehended,"\textsuperscript{1126} all conventional and ultimate phenomena have natures, and if their natures exist they must be either the same or different because whatever [two things] exist must be either one or different. Therefore, those multitudes of former [scholars] who claimed that the two truths were of neither the same nor different natures are just advocating that the two truths do not exist.

In this way [we can see] that the two truths are either of the same or of different natures. If they are of different natures they must be distinct unrelated \textsuperscript{440} things because things that are of different natures cannot have a single-nature relationship (bdag gcig 'brel) and also because, as reality is a noncomposite phenomenon, it cannot be related to anything else causally (de byung du 'brel ba).\textsuperscript{1127} If they are unrelated things, then it follows, absurdly, that reality is not the essence of the conventional because it is a thing that is distinct and unrelated to the conventional. If [one claims] that [the predicate] does not follow [from the reason], then there would be no way to avoid the absurdity that everything is the essence of everything else. If this is accepted, then it follows, absurdly, that the stains of the mind could never be eliminated be-
cause the reality that is the inherent purity [of the mind] (rang bzhin gyis rnam par dag pa'i chos nyid) is not the essence of the mind.

Therefore, the two truths are of the same nature but have different opposites\(^\text{128}\) (ngo bo gcig la idog pa tha dad), having a single-nature relationship such that if one did not exist neither could the other (med na mi ‘byung ba’i bdag gcig ’brel) just like production and impermanence. Just as it says in the Bodhicittvavivarana, reality is not perceived as being different from the conventional:

The conventional is explained to be emptiness.
Emptiness alone is the conventional.
In the sense that if one does not exist neither will the other,
They are like production and impermanence.\(^\text{129}\)

[Opponent:] The expression “of the same nature but having different opposites” occurs within the context of logic (rgog ge) but not within this [system of] scriptural exegesis. Nor is it correct for them to be of the same nature because (1) when the conventional arises or ceases so too would the ultimate have to arise or cease, and also because (2) neither of them has a nature. If both of them had natures their natures would be dual. My own system is [to accept] that the two truths are [the brand of] “different” that repudiates identity (gcig pa bdag pa’i tha dad).\(^\text{130}\)

[Reply:] How would you answer if I were to tell you that [your own] expression, “[a brand of] ‘different’ that repudiates identity,” is “a logical term and not one that occurs in the scriptural exegesis of this [Madhyamaka system]?”

[Opponent:] Even though the term does not actually exist [there], the meaning does.

[Reply:] Then what applies for the one case, [that is, your use of the term] applies in general, [so that my use of the technical term is also justified].

As for your claim that what is of the same nature must arise and cease in unison, it comes about based on a faulty understanding of the meaning of following passage from the Praśnān草avārtikām: “If they are not different they would have to arise and be destroyed in unison.”\(^\text{1131}\) Based on the [misinterpretation of that passage], you mistakenly think that [two things] that are of the same nature must be the same. How would you answer if we [present you with the following argument] Is a pot and [the category of] knowable phenomena (shes bya)\(^\text{132}\) of the same or of different natures? If they are of different [natures], it would follow, absurdly, that the pot would not be a knowable phenomenon. If they are of the same nature, then [following your line of reasoning] when the pot arises or is destroyed, so too must [the category] of knowable phenomena arise and be destroyed.

Those who, on the one hand, claim that the two truths have no nature and yet advocate that the real essence [of things] is emptiness are scoffing at their own words. How would you answer if I present you with this argument: it follows, absurdly, that the two truths have no essence because they have no nature, for if they had essences, it would follow, absurdly, that reality would be dual.

[Opponent:] Just because something is an essence does not mean that it must be an essence qua logical object of the refutation.

[Reply:] Then likewise, just because something is the nature [of something else] does not mean that it need be the nature qua logical object of the refutation.

4.2.3.3.2.4. The Nature of Each [of the Two Truths] Individually

4.2.3.3.2.4.1. The Definitions

The definition of an ultimate truth is “that [phenomenon] which, when found by a certain valid cognition, [characterizes that valid cognition] as one that is engaged in an ultimate analysis.” The definition of a conventional truth is “that [phenomenon] which, when found by a certain valid cognition, [characterizes that valid cognition] as one that is engaged in a nominal analysis.”\(^\text{[442]}\) These are definitions that can be considered faultless, both in the system of the Prāśāntikas and that of the Svātantrikas.

4.2.3.3.2.4.2. The Divisions

4.2.3.3.2.4.2.1. The Divisions of the Ultimate Truth

If it is divided in an extensive way, [the ultimate truth can be said to have] sixteen emptinesses;\(^\text{1133}\) if in an intermediate way, (1) the emptiness of entities, (2) the emptiness of nonentities, (3) the emptiness of own nature, and (4) the emptiness of other nature; if [divided in] a brief way, there is the selflessness of the person and of phenomena. This is explained in the Avatāra.

Now this is how it occurs in the scriptures of the Svātantrikas, the Satya-dvaya says:

Because the refutations of arising and so forth
Are concordant with reality (yang dag pa),
We accept them to be ultimate.\(^\text{1134}\)

And the Madhyamakāloka says: “Because even the nonexistence of arising is concordant with the ultimate in this way, it is called ultimate but is not actually so, for in reality the ultimate is beyond all mental proliferation (spros pa).”\(^\text{1135}\) So they claim that there are two kinds of ultimates: real ones (don dam dngos) and concordant ultimates (mthun pa’i don dam). Real ultimates
are the nonconceptual cognitions that directly understand reality via the complete reversal of the proliferations of the dual appearance of its object. Although the conceptual ones, like the inferential cognition that understands reality, within their own purview, can overcome the proliferations of the apprehension of true [existence], because they cannot overcome the proliferations of dual appearance, they are ultimates that are concordant to those former [real ultimates]. Here the cognition (rig she) is considered ultimate and then divided into real and concordant ultimates.

Even though the truthlessness of the sprout is a real ultimate, it is also said not to be a real ultimate that eliminates the two kinds of proliferations within the purview of the inferential cognition [of emptiness] when compared to the way in which things appear to the direct understanding of reality in which both the proliferations of true [existence] and dual appearances have been eliminated. A nonaffirming negation, such as truthlessness, is a real ultimate, and such affirming negations as the composite (tshogs pa) of truthlessness and sprout are considered to be concordant ultimates. Hence, one must understand the way in which [ultimates] are divided into objects and subjects.

4.2.3.3.2.4.2.2. The Divisions of the Conventional\[1136\]

Within the Śvātāntrika system, we find that the Sarvādhyeya says:

Even though they are similar in that they appear,
We divide the conventional
Into "correct" (yang dag) and "incorrect" (yang dag ma yin)
Because some are efficacious (don byed nus) and some are not.\[1137\]

So as it says, they accept these two [kinds of conventional entities], real conventional entities and unreal conventional entities. Because in their system all consciousnesses exist by virtue of their own characteristic, it is impossible to have an unreal conventional entity that is a consciousness. Hence, subjects are not divided into real and unreal, only objects are divided into real and unreal.

As for the Prāśāntīka position, as the Avalāndra says:

Whatever is apprehended by the six healthy organs
Is understood by the world.
Some are true from [the viewpoint] of the world itself;
The remaining are considered false even from [the viewpoint] of the world.\[1138\]

One can divide things into real and unreal based on worldly consciousness, but we do not do so in our own system,\[1139\] so that even though, within the purview of worldly consciousness, things can be divided into correct and incorrect, this division that exists within the purview of worldly consciousness is not accepted in the Prāśāntīka's own system. This is the meaning. It is definitely not to be explained to mean that, because the division into correct and incorrect is based on worldly consciousness, the Prāśāntīkas do not accept it in their own system. Were that so, then it would follow, absurdly, that they could not in their own system set forth the exposition of the conventional truth [with all of its valid divisions] because to do so one must depend on worldly consciousness.

Therefore, when we say that the division into correct and incorrect exists within the purview of worldly consciousness, we mean that the division into correct and incorrect [conventional entities] is made by an ordinary innate worldly mind ('jig rten pa'i blo bhan skyes rang dga' ba), and not at all that the division into correct and incorrect [conventional entities] is made by a worldly nominal valid cognition ('jig rten pa'i tha snyad pa'i tshad ma). This is because to say that one is accepting [the correct] as an object established by a valid cognition and yet to not accept it in one's own system is an indication that one has transgressed the methodology of those who advocate logical reasoning; and also because that worldly mind in the purview of which form is apprehended to be correct is an apprehension of true [existence], and hence cannot be a valid cognition.

Let me put this in a more easily understandable way. Both the eye consciousness to which the reflection of a face in the mirror appears as if it were a reflection and the reflection of the face itself are understood to not exist as they appear, even by ordinary worldly beings.\[1140\] Ordinary worldly beings can in no way understand that the actual face does not exist as it appears, hence there is a difference between these two [the actual face and the reflection] in that, within the purview of the consciousness of an ordinary worldly being, [the former] exists as it appears whereas the latter does not.

In the Prāśāntīka's own system there is no difference between the face and the reflection as regards whether they exist as they appear, for both are similar in being empty of existing as they appear. Likewise, within the purview of worldly consciousness, both the sensory perception to which two moons appear and the appearance of one moon as two are both mistaken (log pa). This is because both, completely independently of a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate, can be understood independently not to exist as they appear by an ordinary worldly mind that has not been affected by the cause of the illusion. Pots, pillars, and so forth, and the eye consciousnesses to which they appear are correct within the purview of worldly consciousness. This is because, within the purview of ordinary worldly minds that have not been affected by the cause of adventitious illusion, both exist the way they appear; and also because understanding them to be empty of existing as they appear definitely depends on a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate.

Therefore, the glorious Candra has said that there is a division into correct and incorrect within the purview of worldly consciousness. He has never said
that there is a division into correct conventionalities and incorrect conventionalities within the purview of worldly consciousness. My own spiritual master also does not accept this. In fact, it is utterly inappropriate to accept it because, within the purview of ordinary worldly minds, pillars, pots, and so forth are not conventionalities, and also because it is utterly absurd to posit something as false based on a mind in the purview of which things are posited as truly existing, which is exactly what a mind that apprehends something as correct is doing.

[Question:] What is the reason why, in the Prasangika's own system, they do not accept that the conventional can be divided into correct and incorrect [conventional entities]?

[Reply:] I will tell you. It is not appropriate to divide the conventional into correct and incorrect because it is not possible to divide the conventional into things that exist as they appear and those that do not; and that is so because, even merely nominally, all conventional entities exist in one way while appearing in another, so that none of them can exist as they appear. This is so because all conventional entities, even from a merely nominal [viewpoint], are erroneous subjects (bslu ba’i chos can); and that is so because all conventional entities, even from a merely nominal [viewpoint], are false things.

[Opponent:] That [last reason] is not established, [that is, they are not false].

[Reply:] Then it follows, absurdly, that nominally they truly exist. This follows because truths and falsities are mutually exclusive directly contradicting [concepts] (phan tshun spangs pa’i dngos’gal).

Moreover, it would follow, absurdly, that [if there were such a division of conventional entities into correct and incorrect], then nominally the objects that appear (snang yul) to the consciousnesses of ordinary beings could be divided into erroneous ones and nonerroneous ones, for nominally there exists this division of conventional entities into correct and incorrect ones. If you accept [the premise that the objects appearing to ordinary beings are divisible in this way], then it follows, absurdly, that nominally there is such a thing as an inherently existing entity because (1) the appearance of form to the eye consciousness of an ordinary being is an appearance of form as if it existed from its own side (rang ngsos nas) and under its own power (tshugs thub tu), and (2) the eye consciousness [by the premise you accept] is not erroneous in regard to the objects that appear to it. To deny (1) is to contradict direct experience, and to deny (2) means that you must give up your acceptance of the former absurd hypothesis.

If, from among the two divisions of the conventional into correct and incorrect, something were to be correct, then it would have to be unmistakable (phyin ci ma log pa). Hence, if there existed an ordinary being’s consciousness that, from among the two divisions of the conventional into correct and incorrect, was correct then without a doubt it would be necessary to accept that there existed an ordinary being’s consciousness to which things appeared in an unmistakable way. If that were accepted, though anathema to one, one would have to accept that nominally things did inherently exist. Yet [as Prasangikas] we have the belief that even nominally inherent existence is impossible. Therefore, to accept that in our own system it is possible to divide [the conventional] into correct and incorrect [entities] is an incorrect and obscured view that is compatible with none of our philosophical tenets.

Therefore, the difference between the Prasangikas and Svatantrikas as regards whether ordinary beings can have a nonerroneous consciousness, [the former accepting that they cannot and the latter that they can] stems from the fact that they differ as to whether in their own system they accept a division of things that are conventional entities into correct and incorrect ones; and that in turn stems from whether they believe that nominally things exist by virtue of their own characteristic. This being the case, the Svatantrika’s method of dividing the conventional into correct and incorrect is improper, whether they claim that it is so only within the purview of the world or they claim it to be so according to the Madhyamika’s own viewpoint. Whether or not someone believes in substantial existence (rdozas grub) is based on whether that person believes in existence by virtue of [a thing’s] own characteristic and whether he or she divides things into correct and incorrect. Whoever would claim that in the Prasangika system there is a belief in substantial existence in a merely nominal way has no intuition as to how in this system all phenomena are considered to be merely labeled existent things even nominally. The Avatthabhāṣya says, after an extensive citation of the Daśabhāṣya Śātra:  

Therefore, anyone with intelligence [will realize] after seeing the citation from this [source] that the conceptualization that consciousness exists substantially, that this utter conceptualization, is an involvement with views.

And also:

We understand that because those with no intelligence become attracted, in whatever small measure, to the [idea of] substance, then, like pouring water into the dependent phenomenon of a pot before it has been fired, their intelligence becomes polluted, and hence all the worldly terminology established from strictly worldly [usage], like sit! go! do! cook! and so forth, as well as form, feeling, and so forth, are all destroyed. Because of that, the mind [involved] in these [ideas will remain] strictly in existence and not attain higher states. This is stating that if one accepts dependent entities to exist substantially, none of the terminology of the world becomes possible. Also, in the commentary to the line that goes, “In this context whatever reasoning...”, it explicitly says that substantial arising is impossible even nominally. And both the root text and the commentary on the line, “Because it is engaged in substantialism it...
would not be incorrect,"  

are explaining that if the object substantially existed, the mind qua subject must be unmistakable. The Catuññākājīka also explicitly explains that true existence, substantial existence, and inherent existence are synonyms. Without realizing that you are contradicting all of these texts, you boastfully claim that the Madhyamikas accept substantial existence nominally.

[Opponent:] Well then, how do you interpret the Bhāṣya when it says:

For example, suppose someone says, "[someone] has stolen my possession [lit. substance]," and someone else argues and examines [what the first person said asking], "[what possession has been stolen]" and [the first person replies], "it is a pot," to which [the second person replies], "the pot is not a substance because it is a knowable phenomenon, just like the pot in a dream." Such a refutation of the one by the other, in that it is the repudiation of worldly meaning by worldly usage, is contradicted by the world.

[Reply:] The claim is being made with the presupposition that in the world wealth is called stuff and it is teaching that it is not correct to logically analyze [this and by such means] to refute such worldly usage of terminology. If, by the mere fact that we employ the terminology (thyang byed pa) of a certain amount of possessions [lit. substance] to refer to a certain amount of wealth, one must accept substantial existence nominally (thyang du), then it follows, absolutely, that this system, that is, the Prāṣāṅgika, must accept autocognition nominally, in the world there exist such expressions as "I see myself." It would follow, absolutely, that nominally there must exist such things as a permanent entity (rtags dangs) and true existence because in the world we employ expressions like "water always (rtag tu) falls" and also because there exist expressions like "only this one is true, the other is false." Having given an explanation of the exposition of the two truths, I will now turn to some topics that are ancillary to this.

[The Prāṣāṅgika Interpretation of the Three Nature Theory of the YOGACĀRAS]

If the exposition of the two truths in the Prāṣāṅgika's own system is as I have explained [earlier], then what is the Prāṣāṅgika's own exposition of the three natures (mgo bo nyid gsum) like? The Avataññābhāṣya says:

For example, as regards the dependently arisen phenomenon of a rope that is imagined to be a snake, it is an imaginary [entity], for it does not exist in that way. As regards the real snake, it is real, for it is not imagined. Likewise, an essence is also imagined within dependent phenomena that are produced (byas pa can); but as it has been said that:

Essences are not created. They do not depend on other [things].

the nature of things is not produced. The analysis in which previously apprehended dependently arisen produced entities are determined to be similar to reflections is the true one among the Buddha's mental objects (spyod yul), for it is not imagined. This is because it is due to the fact that they have realized reality by actualizing the sole essence [of things], without contacting (ma reg par) produced entities, that they are called buddhas. Therefore, one should explain the intended meaning of the stūra after having understood, in this very way, the exposition of the three natures called imaginary, dependent, and real.

Let me condense the meaning of this and put it in an easily understandable way. An essence qua fundamental reality is imagined within things that dependently arise; that is, within phenomena that are dependent. The object in regard to which the Buddha's gnosis perceiving reality is a gnosis understanding reality is the real. By saying this it is teaching us that the conventional, that is, the objects as they appear, are the dependent. That part which is the refutation of those [objects] into reality, or into the fundamental nature of things, is the imaginary, and their being empty of inherent existence is the real. "Without contacting produced entities" means that within the purview of a cognition that is a gnosis understanding reality there can be no objects at all that are causally created entities; and not only are [causal] entities [excluded], no conventional phenomenon whatsoever can be its object.

4.2.3.3. The Explanation of the Valid Cognition That Ascertains the Two Truths, [That Is, All Phenomena]

4.2.3.3.1. The Definition

The definition [of a valid cognition in general] is "the consciousness that is not deceived in regard to the phenomenon that is its own apprehended object (dzin stangs gyi yul)."

[Opponent:] Well then, if the valid cognition cognizing a conventional object does so in a nondeceived way, how can you avoid contradicting your claim that all conventional [phenomena] are deceptive objects [and hence objects that deceive]?

[Reply:] There is no problem, for it is not contradictory that, on the one hand, it be an object that deceives in so far as, within the consciousness that takes it as its object, [the way in which it appears] does not accord with the way it exists, and that, on the other hand, this [valid cognition] is nondeceived in regard to the phenomenon in so far as it establishes that phenomenon as it is in a positive way (jiitar yongs su bcad pa ltur grub pa).
In every system, from the Svātantrikas on down, all valid cognitions are nonerroneous (ma 'khrul pa) in regard to the phenomenon with respect to which it is a valid cognition. Here [in the Prāsaṅgikas system], however, both the valid cognition within the continuum of an ordinary being and the valid cognition that analyzes the nominal within the continuum of an āryan who is affected with the latent potentialities of the error of dualistic appearance are erroneous consciousnesses with regard to the phenomenon with respect to which they are valid cognitions. Form appears as form to the eye consciousness, and it also appears to exist by virtue of its own characteristic. Still, [the eye consciousness] cognizes (gzhai) form to be form, but it does not cognize form to exist by virtue of its own characteristic. Even though [the eye consciousness] is a valid cognition in regard to (1) form, (2) the appearance of form, and (3) the appearance of form that exists by virtue of its own characteristic, it need not be a valid cognition in regard to form’s existing by virtue of its own characteristic.

4.2.3.3.2. The Divisions

As regards the divisions, the Prasannapada’s explanation that is fourfold—
(1) direct [perception] (mgon), (2) inference (rijes), (3) scriptural (lung) valid cognition, and (4) valid cognition by analogy (nyer ‘jal)—is based on comments in the Vigrahavyāvartani root text and commentary. Scriptural valid cognition is inductive inference (yid ches rjes dpag) that cognizes extremely obsolete states (shin tu ikog gyur). Analogy is a valid cognition that infers obsolete states (ikog gyur) in dependence on an example. Hence, [both scripture and analogy] are contained within [the category of] inference. Therefore, he is not denying [the usual] categorization of valid cognitions into [just the two subdivisions] of direct perception and inference.

As regards the valid cognition of direct perception, we have already refuted autocognitive direct perception (rang rig mgon sum). [The Prāsaṅgikas] also repudiate [the notion of] mental direct perception (yid kyi mgon sum) as it is explained in the Pramāṇaviniścaya. This is because the Catuṣṭhaṭatākiṭa says:

These two [types of] consciousness do not cognize the same object. One cognizes the aspect of the object in a direct and positive way. It arises first. The second is not a consciousness that acts directly. Under the influence of the sense consciousnesses it conceives [of the object] and is born. Hence, [due to this connection to sense perception] it is said to “cognize its object” [and not because it is actually a form of direct cognition].

Sense consciousness clearly cognizes objects such as form and so forth. The mental consciousness cognizes them under the influence of the sense consciousnesses. It does not directly and clearly cognize them as do the sense consciousnesses. This is what it is saying. The mental consciousnesses that cognize their objects under the influence of the sense consciousnesses are memories (dren pa).

It is not, however, that they do not accept [some notion of] mental direct perception, for the Catuṣṭhaṭatākiṭa says: “Nor is it something which is an experience, like feeling and so on. It does not engage objects like form and sound and so on via the sense organs.” It is saying that kinds of experience like pleasant and painful feelings (shor ba) that are in the entourage (‘khor) of the mental consciousnesses are valid cognitions that perceive their own evident (mgon gyur) phenomena.

Feeling, the mental event (sems ‘byung) that is within the entourage of the mental consciousness, is a valid cognition; and the three [types of] feeling, pleasant, painful, and neutral, are cognized phenomena (gzhai bya). The sūtras give the definition of feeling to be “a special experience.” They say that whatever is experienced is experienced as either pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. Even in worldly parlance we say, “I am experiencing pleasure,” or “I am experiencing pain.” This indicates that what is experienced (myong bya) and that which experiences it (myong byed) appear as different [things] to the mind; and because this [difference between experienced and experiencer] is also proved both by scripture and reasoning, there is no similarity between [the present case] and the refutation of an independent (yan gar ba) subjective aspect that, when it faces inward, has the capacity of [giving rise to] the appearance of cognized entity (rig bya) and cognizing entity (rig byed) as different. Hence, we do not suffer from the absurd fault of having to accept autocognition.

Because in our own system it is impossible for a Buddhist not to accept yogic direct perception (rnal ’byor mgon sum), here [in the Prāsaṅgika system] direct perception is said to be of three kinds.

The Prasannapada says:

If in the world there existed anything like a characterized object (mthun gzhis), a specific characteristic (rang gi mthun nyid), or a generic characteristic (spyi’i mthun nyid), everything would be an object perceived within direct perception. Hence, they would [all] be nonobtuse (ikog tu ma gyur). Therefore, together with the consciousness that possesses an object there would have to occur a direct perception.

Within the context of this passage Candrakīrti is merely identifying a direct perceptual valid cognition from among the two divisions of direct perception and inference. He is not teaching that if something exists, then it must appear directly to the omniscient gnosis [of a Buddha]; nor is he teaching that whether something is a specific (rang) or a generic (spyi) [characteristic], it must be evident (mgon gyur), for in the section following that scriptural passage the
Prasannapadā says: "The consciousness that possesses as its object something obscure and that arises from nonerror in regard to the proposition to be proven through reasoning is inference." Therefore, the meaning of the previous Prasannapadā passage is this. No matter what phenomenon the realists accept as either a specific or generic [object], any consciousness possessing dualistic appearance that takes that phenomenon as its direct object (dngos yul) must have the appearance of that object within it; and the object of any consciousness in which the appearance of the object arises in the consciousness is directly perceptible (mngon sum pa). At that time it is teaching that there is an explicit use of the word direct perception when applied to objects, and an allegorical sense of the word direct perception when applied to subjects, [that is, to the consciousnesses cognizing the objects]. Therefore, [Candrakīrti] accepts that if an object is "directly perceptible" (mngon sum pa), it must be evident (mngon gyur), and that what it means for something to be a direct perceptual valid cognition is that it is a consciousness not deceived in regard to its own evident object. Consciousnesses that possess dualistic appearances must be undeceived in regard to the appearance of the objects that appear to them. Therefore, it is necessary to accept that all consciousnesses are direct perceptual valid cognitions in regard to the appearance of the objects that appear to them. Thus, even though the two kinds of apprehension of self and the sense consciousness to which two moons appear and so forth are mistaken consciousnesses, they are nonetheless direct perceptual valid cognitions in regard to the appearance of the two selves and in regard to the appearance of two moons, [respectively]. This is because they are consciousnesses that are undeceived in regard to their own directly perceptible objects that are based on those [appearances].

The sense consciousness to which two moons appear is a consciousness that is undeceived in regard to the two moons that appear to it, for, because it takes such an appearance as its direct object, the ascertaining consciousness (nges shes) that ascertains that appearance can be elicited ('dren) independently, without reliance on another valid cognition. Even though the sense consciousnesses to which the two selves appear and to which two moons appear are valid cognitions in regard to the appearances of the objects that appear to them, they need not be valid cognitions in general. This is because they are minds that are not valid cognitions in regard to their individual apprehended objects ('dzin stangs kyi yul la tshad min). Therefore, simply because something is a valid cognition in regard to the appearance of an object that appears to it is not enough to make it a valid cognition in general.

Whether something is a valid cognition in general is determined by whether it is a valid cognition in regard to its apprehended object. For example, the Saṅgrāntikas believe that the fact that something is simply a mistaken consciousness in regard to its own appearing object (snang yul) is not enough to make it a mistaken consciousness. Instead, whether something is a mistaken consciousness is determined by whether it is a mistaken consciousness in regard to its apprehended object. Therefore, we do not suffer from the fault of not being able to distinguish between [minds] that are valid cognitions and those that are not.

Now from this method of interpretation one might entertain [the following idea], namely, that given that all consciousnesses are valid cognitions in regard to their own individual appearances why, if something is a valid cognition in regard to its own appearances, need it not be a valid cognition [in general]? In examining this, one might conclude this. "Mistaken nonconceptual consciousnesses, like the sense consciousness to which imaginary hair (skra shad 'dasg pa) appears, are valid cognitions; and this is because they are valid cognitions in regard to what appears to them. This is because the chief object of nonconceptual consciousnesses is the appearing object. In the case of the conceptual apprehension of sound as permanent, however, even though it is a valid cognition in regard to what appears to it, it need not be a valid cognition. This is because it is not a valid cognition in regard to its conceived object (zhen yul), and the chief object of conceptual consciousnesses is the conceived object." However, one should not entertain this idea, for following that line of reasoning, nonconceptual mistaken consciousnesses could not be valid cognitions, as follows. Despite the fact that the chief object of nonconceptual consciousnesses are their appearing objects, the mere appearance (snang ba tsam) is not the chief appearing object. The appearing object qua appearing basis (snang gshi) of that appearance is the chief appearing object. For example, the mere appearance of blue is not the chief appearing object of the eye consciousness that apprehends blue. Instead, it is the blue qua basis of the appearance of that consciousness that is the chief appearing object of that consciousness. Therefore, even though [a mind] is a valid cognition in regard to an appearance, if it is not a valid cognition in regard to any object that is the basis of what appears to that consciousness, it is not a valid cognition, for its chief appearing object in regard to which it is a valid cognition would be nonexistent. Thus, whether something is a mistaken consciousness depends on the chief appearing object that is the basis of appearance. Hence, there is a way to distinguish between the fact that the eye consciousness apprehending blue is not a mistaken consciousness and the fact that the sense consciousness to which falling hair appears is a mistaken consciousness. Were it not so, then all nonconceptual consciousnesses would either have to be mistaken or else there could be no nonconceptual mistaken consciousnesses.

This being the case, some have thought that if it is necessary to accept that whether or not something is a mistaken consciousness depends on the chief appearing object, then it must also be necessary to accept that whether or not a nonconceptual consciousness is a valid cognition depends on the chief appearing object. This, however, is but a lack of subtlety in one’s analysis; it is a conclusion born from incorrect examination. Be aware that nowhere in the
valid cognition’s positive \textit{(yongs su gcod pa)} mode of apprehension of its own perceived object. To accept, on the one hand, that attitudes to be abandoned, like the apprehension of the self, and its antidote, the wisdom that understands selflessness, are contradictory modes of apprehending the single object \textit{(dmigs pa)} they are focused on and, on the other, to accept that direct perceptual valid cognitions have no mode of apprehension is a great internal contradiction.

Now let us discuss the meaning of real \textit{(dngos)} direct percept \textit{(mgon sum)} and that which is just labeled \textit{(baugs)} \textit{(direct perception without actually being so). In general, we do not accept that if something is a direct perceptual valid cognition, then it contradicts its being a direct percept. It depends on the individual object, as follows. Blue is a real full-blown direct percept \textit{(459)} of the eye consciousness that apprehends blue. The eye consciousness apprehending blue \textit{(on the other hand)} is labeled a direct percept based on the blue \textit{(without actually being a direct percept). At the same time, it is a real full-blown direct perceptual valid cognition; but the eye consciousness apprehending the blue is the actual full-blown direct percept of, for example, the extrasensory perception that knows the mind of someone else; that is, it is directly seeing the eye consciousness \textit{(of someone else)} as it apprehends blue. That extrasensory perception is labeled a \textit{direct percept} based on such an eye consciousness, and \textit{(at the same time} it is an actual full-blown direct perceptual valid cognition. This is how one should understand the meaning \textit{(of these terms).}"

Therefore, in this \textit{Prāsaṅgika} system, the consciousness that remembers blue, that is elicited by the eye consciousness apprehending blue, in so far as it is an experience of the evident phenomenon blue that it takes as its apprehended object, as witnessed by experience, is an undescribed consciousness. Hence, it is accepted as being a direct perceptual valid cognition. Thus, being a subsequent consciousness \textit{(bcad shes)} and being a valid cognition are not mutually exclusive; it is also not contradictory for something to be both a direct perceptual valid cognition and a conceptual thought that perceives the meaning of a word. In this vein, the \textit{Prasannapadā} states:

\begin{quote}
Moreover, since words qua direct percepts are what express nonobtuse meanings, meanings associated with the senses are direct percepts. In this regard, as they are associated with the senses, nonobtuse entities, like the pot and blue, are direct percepts. Because the consciousnesses that understand them, like clay and the fire that bakes it, are the result of direct percepts, \textit{(those consciousnesses too should be called direct percepts).} \footnote{\textit{(460)}}
\end{quote}

Even though both the \textit{Prasannapadā} and \textit{Catuḥśākaṭakāja} extensively teach a refutation of the claim that being nonconceptual \textit{(rtog bral)} is part of the definition of a direct percept, as it would lengthen this exposition excessively, I will not go into it here.
According to this method of interpretation, then, valid cognitions are of two types: direct perceptual valid cognitions and inferential valid cognitions. The definition of the first is "a consciousness that, without depending on a logical reason, is undeceived as to the directly perceptible phenomenon that it takes as its apprehended object." The definition of the second is "a consciousness that, depending on a logical reason, is undeceived in regard to the obtuse phenomenon that it takes as its apprehended object." Just because something is a valid cognition that understands a directly perceptible object does not mean that it is a valid cognition that understands that object directly, as is the case, for example, with the consciousness that remembers blue. Therefore, something's being a direct perceptual valid cognition does not imply that it directly understands its object. For were that not so, [that is, were it to necessarily understand its object directly], then it would follow, absurdly, that there would be no difference between the way the object is perceived by the eye consciousness apprehending blue, and the way it is perceived by the consciousness that, arising after that [eye consciousness], remembers blue; and also because if that were accepted, it would follow, absurdly, that even blind people could see form directly.

The first, [that is, direct perceptual valid cognitions,] have three divisions.

1. *Sensory* direct perceptual valid cognition is defined as "a consciousness that, directly arising from a physical organ as its dominant condition (bdag rkyen), is undeceived as regards the directly perceptible phenomenon that it takes as its apprehended object." An example is the eye consciousness.

2. *Mental* direct perceptual valid cognition is defined as "a consciousness that directly arises from the mental organ (yid dbang) as its own special dominant condition and that, without depending on samâdhî, is undeceived in regard to the directly perceptible phenomenon that it takes as its apprehended object." An example is the consciousness that remembers blue and that arises after the eye consciousness apprehending blue.

3. *Yogic* direct perception is defined as "a nonconceptual consciousness that directly arises from the samâdhî which is the union of mental quiescence (shi gnas) and insight (thag mthong) as its own special dominant condition, and that is undeceived in that it directly perceives as its apprehended object either the aspects of the [four noble] truths or the subtle or gross forms of selflessness." In the system of the Svâtantrikas, Cittamâtrins, and Sautrânâtikas, if something is a consciousness that directly understands the sixteen aspects of the [four noble] truths, such as impermanence and so on, then [that consciousness] must be an âryan gnosis.\(^{106}\) [For them,] the consciousness to which the world appears as bones, that arises from the samâdhî meditating on ugliness, is not a valid cognition. They also believe that the gnosis to which the generic image (don spyi) of reality appears, within the path of preparation (shyur lam), is not a direct perceptual valid cognition because it is a conceptual thought that apprehends the meaning of words. Hence, they accept that there can be no yogic direct perception within the mental continua of sentient beings.

In this [Prâşângika system], as we have explained, even before coming to a logical understanding of the ultimate subtle forms of the two forms of selflessness, there is such a thing as understanding, through reasoning and meditating on the sixteen aspects of the four truths such as impermanence and so on, the selflessness of the person qua mere repudiation of the person as an independent substantially existent thing, and emptiness qua the mere repudiation of subject and object as different entities. If one practices, fully taking into account all of the aspects of the practice that involve becoming accustomed to those [objects], one will come to a clear and direct perception of those objects. Gnosos of this sort are not âryan gnosos, but are nonetheless yogic direct perceptual valid cognitions. Hence, we believe that yogic direct perceptual valid cognitions do exist within the mental continua of sentient beings. This concludes the explanation of the exposition of valid cognitions.
4.2.3.4. Having Set Forth Emptiness, How to Meditate on It\textsuperscript{1165}

The fortunate should understand this in dependence on the extensive exposition found in the Stages of the Path of our glorious holy spiritual master \textsuperscript{[Tsong kha pa].}\textsuperscript{1166} It seems as though there are many individuals who, without the slightest expertise in the correct and incorrect methods of practicing mental quiescence and insight as they are taught in the scriptures and commentaries and in previous spiritual masters' own treatises, and without having accustomed themselves in the least to the points of the essential instructions \textit{(man ngag)} for deepening their experience into the bliss of the \textit{samādhi} that turns \textit{[the mind] inwardly, have had their words, under the false name of “essential instructions into mental quiescence and insight,” extensively compiled into expository treatises. Nonetheless, because those who have not studied even the mere terminology of the essential instructions for practice are not to be taken either as the objects of refutation or support by scholarly persons who are well-versed in the methods of accomplishing ordinary and special \textit{samādhis}, I will not engage in an exposition \textit{[of their views].}\textsuperscript{1167}  

4.2.3.5. The Exposition of the Result That Is the Culmination of Meditation\textsuperscript{1168}

Having, in an extensive way and by means of correct reasoning, understood, through the method explained earlier, the most subtle form of selflessness, without separating oneself from the portions of the practice that allow one to accustom oneself to the very view that has been understood, by practicing to perfect the Mahāyāna path, one comes to travel in stages the paths of faithful activity \textit{(mos pa spyod pa’i lam)}, \textit{[that is, the non-āryan paths of accumulation and preparation.]} and the ten \textit{bhūmis} of the āryan, the Diamondlike Samādhi, the gnosis of the tenth \textit{bhūmi}, the “Limit of the Stream” \textit{(rgyu mth’as)}, which eliminates without a trace being left the latent potentialities of the error of dualistic appearances. In the second moment after \textit{[that]} one actualizes the \textit{dharmakāya (chos skar)}, which is a state of “equal taste” \textit{(ro mnyam du gyur po)}, in that the reality of the \textit{mind} possessing the two purities becomes irre-
versibly [intermixed] with reality (de bzhin nyid), like water when mixed with water. At that same time, the body of the being of the tenth bhāmi, called “Limit of the Stream,” which is of the nature of mind, comes to be adorned with the marks and signs (mishan dpe). In the second moment after that it becomes the sāṃbhogakāya (longs spyod rdzogs pa’i sku), its continuity not interrupted for even a single instant until the end of the universe, inseparable in nature from the gnosis of the dharmakāya. That is why it is said that: “By the cessation of the mind, the bodies are actualized.”

According to the Mahāyāna of the pāramitās, one achieves enlightenment for the first time only in Akaniṣṭha, (tshul ston pa) becoming enlightened, at a later date, is the desire realm (d’od khangs). Though there is much to analyze in regard to such topics as the identification of Akaniṣṭha and the refutation of the form body’s being material and so on, wishing to discuss it elsewhere, I will not write about it here. Instead, let me here give a brief exposition of the way the Buddha’s gnosis understands objects.

[Opponent:] Within the Buddha’s own appearances (rang snang la) no phenomenon whatsoever is seen; therefore, there is no gnosis that is contained within the Buddha’s own continuum. It is only for the purpose of others, his disciples, that he puts forth a notion of “gnosis.” That is why the Avasāraḥbhāṣya says: “I have explained the workings of the minds and mental events within the state of Buddhahood to be mistaken.”

[Reply:] This is a giant slander against the sources of refuge, for it would be necessary to accept that he would not know who is to be protected, by what means he should protect, and so forth. What is more, because it would follow that the ten powers (chos bcu), the eighteen unshared attributes (ma’i dgres pa’i bco brgyad), and so forth are not qualities within the mental continua of buddhas, then tell me exactly whose mental continuum they are qualities of? The Avasāraḥbhāṣya also says: “Since he has actualized the sole essence, he has understood reality. That is why he is called the Buddha.” And also: “You of wholesome knowledge understand all phenomena in a single instant.” You are in direct contradiction to many such passages.

If there is no result, no omniscient gnosis, then all of the efforts made on the path for a period of three countless eons would be purposeless, and in the end it would be necessary to accept that there were no phenomena at all.

It seems to be an instance of this system that is based on a misunderstanding of the meaning of the scriptures that explain that one should avoid understanding the ultimate truth from the viewpoint of dualistic appearances and that one should avoid perceiving any of the proliferations of dualistic appearances, and that [based on this misinterpretation] claims that the ultimate truth is not a phenomenon. I have already refuted this method [of interpreting scripture] above. As for the meaning of “reversing the mind and mental events,” the Prasannapadā says: “The Sūtra says, ‘What is the ultimate truth? If there is no movement of the mind in regard to anything, what need to mention words.’ It is inconceivable (nyan par rgya pa med pa) in such terms.” As it is stating that the lack of movement of the mind refers to nonconceptualization, it is meaningless to [cite this] as proof of there being no gnosis.

[Opponent:] Well then, in your own system what is this gnosis’ method of understanding phenomena?

[Reply:] On the stages of the path, while one is still in training, the stains of the latent potentialities of the error of dualistic appearance that apprehends the two truths to be different things have not been eliminated. Hence, it is impossible for the ultimate and conventional truths to simultaneously appear to a single mind in a direct way (mngon sum du). Therefore, equipoise and aftermath states (snyan rjes) occur sequentially, [as opposed to simultaneously]; and the equipoise and aftermath states are of different natures.

At the level of buddhahood every latent potentiality of the error of dualistic appearance has been eliminated. Hence, a single gnosis can directly understand all the phenomena included within the two truths simultaneously. The two gnoses, that which cognizes [things] as they are and that which cognizes things as they seem to be, are of the same nature, as are the two gnoses, that during equipoise and that during the aftermath period.

When, in this way, the Buddha’s gnosis enters into emptiness, like water mixing with water, that gnosis directly and simultaneously understands conventional phenomena in such a way that they appear as dual, that is, as distant from the [consciousness] itself. Even though this dualistic appearance exists, however, it need not involve the error of dualistic appearance. Therefore, even though gnosis is both a gnosis that understands [things] as they are and one that understands [things] as they seem to be, the gnosis understands reality as it is and does not understand it as it appears to be. It understands the conventional as it seems to be and does not understand it as it is.

That portion of it which is the understanding of reality as it is via the waning of dualistic appearances is equipoise and that portion of it which understands conventional phenomena as they appear to be via dualistic appearances is the aftermath state. The commentary to the Uttaratantra verse that goes:

Because wisdom, gnosis, and liberation, As regards their clarity, radiance, and purity
And also as regards the fact that they are not different, Are like light, rays, and the sphere of the sun.

Therefore, the nonconceptual supramundane wisdom that the Buddha possesses clears away the obscurations [that block] the reality of phenomena. Hence, it is similar to clear light. The gnosis of all phenomena, the aftermath state, becomes engaged in all aspects of every entity qua phenomenon. Hence, it is similar to a radiating net of lights.
[The aftermath state spoken of] is not an aftermath state that arises after an equipoise, as happens during the paths of training. Instead, it is called an aftermath state because it is a state obtained due to the power of that equipoise. Also, as it has been stated:

The gnosis of omniscience
Is accepted as possessing the characteristic of being a direct perception.
We do not accept that others are direct perception, even partially.

and also, in the Satyadrayavyrtti, “One instant of his knowledge pervades the entire sphere of phenomena.” Thus, [the Buddha’s gnosis] understands every phenomenon of the three times directly and simultaneously. When he directly perceives today’s sprout, the gnosis that perceives today’s sprout also directly perceives last year’s sprout and next year’s sprout. Nonetheless, it does not perceive the sprout of those two years qualified as being today’s. If the gnosis is today’s gnosis, the entity perceived by that [gnosis] need not exist today, just as is the case with the extrasensory perception that perceives past lives.

[Opponent:] If the Buddha’s gnosis does not understand the Buddha’s gnosis it contradicts the claim that he understands all phenomena. If it understands it indirectly (shugs lo), it undermines the claim that the Buddha’s wisdom, [being a form of direct perception,] does not have an indirect understanding [of anything]. [If it is not indirectly understood, but instead] directly appears (dngos su snang), then does he understand things [in this way] via dualistic appearance or in such a way that dualistic appearance has waned? In the first case, as it would itself appear to be different from itself, while in fact not being so, it would follow, absurdly, that it was an erroneous consciousness. In the second case, as it would be a direct understanding of itself by itself in such a way that dualistic appearances had waned, you would have to accept that it was an autocognitive direct perception, [which you as Prasangikas reject].

[Reply:] It is not correct for the Buddha’s gnosis to understand the Buddha’s gnosis indirectly. What reason can you give for it being the case that even though the Buddha’s gnosis is the object of the Buddha’s gnosis, it is not appropriate for it to appear directly?

[Opponent:] If it appeared directly, then the Buddha’s gnosis would become both cognizer and cognized; and if that were so, then the acting subject and the object acted upon would be identical.

[Reply:] The same would be true in every way of [the alternative you propose, namely,] indirect cognition, for otherwise it would follow, absurdly, that indirect cognition would not count as cognition.

[Opponent:] If something directly cognizes itself, then it must appear to itself, and there occurs the absurd fault of something being like itself.

[Reply:] So show us what problem there is with advocating the opposite view, as we do, namely that if something directly cognizes itself, then it must cognize itself without appearing to itself.

[Opponent:] If one object is directly cognized without its aspect [appearing] (rnam med du), then all objects would have to be directly cognized without their aspects [appearing].

[Reply:] Then how would you reply if I said that it follows, absurdly, that if one object is directly understood in such a way that dualistic appearances had waned, then all objects must be directly understood in such a way that dualistic appearances have waned?

[Opponent:] If one object is ultimate, then all objects are ultimate.

[Reply:] Then how would you reply if I were to say that it follows, absurdly, that if one object is not different from itself, then all objects cannot be different from themselves?

Now, does the Buddha’s gnosis understand the Buddha’s gnosis via dualistic appearances or in such a way that dualistic appearances have waned? In the first case, it follows, absurdly, that the Buddha’s gnosis is different from the Buddha’s gnosis because it appears to the Buddha’s gnosis as dual, [that is, as different,] from the Buddha’s wisdom, and that is a consciousness that is non-erroneous with respect to its appearing object. In the second case, it follows, absurdly, that the [gnosis] is an ultimate truth because it is directly understood by the Buddha’s gnosis in such a way that dualistic appearances have waned. When analyzed in this way, we [respond that] we do not accept the first [alternative], and to the pervasion of the second one, [that what is understood by the Buddha’s gnosis in that way must be an ultimate truth,] one should give the following response. Simply because [Buddha’s gnosis] is directly understood by the Buddha’s gnosis in such a way that dualistic appearances have waned does not imply that it must be an ultimate truth, for if something is directly understood by the Buddha’s gnosis in such a way that dualistic appearances have waned, because it would have to be identical to the Buddha’s gnosis, the Buddha’s wisdom would have to have its dualistic appearances wane with respect to it, and if something is identical to the Buddha’s gnosis, it must be conventional.

Do not entertain the doubt that if one accepts that all of the phenomena that are positively indivisible but different only in a negative [or verbal] way (ldog pa tha dad pa’i grub bde dbyer med kyi chos) from the Buddha’s gnosis directly appear to the Buddha’s gnosis, then one must also accept that the Buddha’s gnosis directly cognizes itself. [If that were so, then] the Buddha’s gnosis that perceives things as they seem to be, absurdly, must directly understand even the Buddha’s gnosis because the Buddha’s gnosis is a phenomenon different in a negative [or verbal] way from the Buddha’s wisdom understanding things as they seem to be, while positively indivisible from the Buddha’s wisdom understanding things as they seem to be. You accept the pervasion. If
there is no pervasion that if something is a phenomenon that is different from
the Buddha’s gnosis understanding things as they seem to be while positively
indivisible from the gnosis understanding things as they seem to be, then it
must be something that directly appears to and is understood by the Buddha’s
gnosis understanding things as they seem to be, then give up [your acceptance
of] the pervasion that if something is a phenomenon that is different from
the Buddha’s gnosis while positively identical to the Buddha’s wisdom, then it
must directly appear to and be understood by the Buddha’s gnosis. If you ac-
cept [the original premise, that the Buddha’s gnosis understanding things as
they seem to be directly understands the Buddha’s gnosis], then [I ask this]: if
something is directly understood by the Buddha’s gnosis understanding things as
they seem to be, then it must be directly understood by the Buddha’s gnosis
or need it not be so understood? If it need not, then for something to be an
[object] directly found by the Buddha’s gnosis understanding things as they
seem to be it need not be something directly found by the Buddha’s gnosis, so
that it would be impossible to refute someone who accepts that the conven-
tional is what is directly found by the Buddha’s gnosis. If it must [be directly
understood by the Buddha’s gnosis], then it follows, absurdly, that the Bud-
ha’s gnosis directly appears to and is understood by the Buddha’s gnosis under-
standing things as they seem to be because it is a phenomenon different
from the Buddha’s gnosis perceiving things as they seem to be while being
positively indivisible from it. The pervasion is a true one. If you accept [the
premise], then it follows, absurdly, that the Buddha’s gnosis is directly under-
stood by the Buddha’s gnosis because it directly appears to and is understood
[471] by the Buddha’s wisdom that understands things as they seem to be. You have
accepted the three cycles!

Although there is more to be said, I will leave it at that.
This concludes the explanation of the exposition [of what occurs] at the
time of the result, [buddhahood].

[Concluding Verses]

The supreme leader, the masterful incarnation of logical reasoning,
The merciful father has established for me
The wealth of the hood of the Lord of Nāgas, the eloquence
of Nāgārjuna,
Which acts to grant one all requisites and desires.

The bright rays of the logical methods of the glorious Candras,
Freeing one from the hundredfold clouds of mental proliferations
With the water that opens the Kumuda [flower], my own mind,
Are the sources of hope for the fortunate ones of today.

Translation

The correct view [of emptiness] is the ultimate jewel,
But expertise in this incomparable analysis,
Untainted by the polluting stain of misconceptions,
Is to be purchased by method and in no other way.

When one tastes the eloquent sayings of the spiritual master
That come from churning the ocean of scripture,
Seeing the pond of the poisoned waters of scholarly pride and
false exegesis
As stealing away a life of happiness, one banishes them to far
off places.

Seeing the tremendous spread of the mistaken scriptural exegesis
Of scholars who plant the impure seeds of evil views,
What scholar could not generate pity
On those beings who, though aspiring to the dharma, walk so far from it?

Because this system is apprehended only by those
Who are renowned in the highest [forms of] reasoning,
It is different from all others and extremely subtle.

Hence this system, like the Conqueror’s own scriptures, is extremely
subtle.

Though I do not know how to arrange words in a literary fashion
And am devoid of the ability to prove things logically,
Alas! I have engaged in the composition of these words
As if a king had imposed on me some penance as punishment.

Just as the majority of the doctrines advocated
By the Tibetan (Ghan stong) followers indicate their stupidity,
In the opposite way the majority of what the Mādhyamika method-
ology advocates
Is witness to the unerring path of logic [which they take].

This elucidation which clears away the darkness of the three worlds
That comes from the [sun] orb of the analysis of my own mind
Opens up the lotus of the correct view [of emptiness].
So rejoice, ye hosts of clear minded ones!

By this virtue may I, in all my lives,
Never abandon service to my spiritual master;
And by apprehending all of the doctrinal methods of the Conqueror,
May I come to resemble Ajita [Maitreyar] and Mañjuśrī.

The good system of Nāgārjuna is held within the womb
Of this noble woman of wealth [Tibet],
Girdled with the four winding rivers.
May her activity make the world a more beautiful place.
A Dose of Empinness

[Colophon]

This Treatise That Perfectly Elucidates Reality, The Profound Doctrine of Empinness, Called "Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate" was composed by the learned Venerable [mKhas grub] dGe legs dpal bzang who, with the cupped hands of faith, took up the holy stainless nectar of the eloquent words from the lips of the one whose nature is the knowledge and compassion of all the buddhas of the three times rolled into one, the crown jewel of the [sages of all the] 500 [year periods in the history of Buddhism], the dust of whose feet serves as the crown on the heads of all the lords of sages, the omniscient one, whose virtuous enlightened activity pervades every spot of this ocean clothed [earth], making him incomparable at the task of raising the banner of the Tathāgata's teachings all the way up to the peak of existence, the chief son of the Lord Mañjuśrī, the king of the doctrine, the great Tsong kha pa bLo bzang grags pa. [He took it up with these cupped hands of faith] and tasting it with the tongue of analysis, he came to possess, in regard to the logical analysis of the stainless intent of all of the Tathāgata's scriptures, the self-confidence of the intelligence that cannot be overcome by opponents. Seeing that the scriptures composed by the Lord Master [Tsong kha pa] were very extensive and extremely subtle, making it difficult for those of inferior intellect to understand, and impossible for them to condense into a single line [of reasoning], with the thought of being of benefit to them and without in the least contradicting the intended meaning of the Lord Master, he condensed them into a single line of reasoning that was easy to comprehend.

This was written down by bLo gros chos skyong, a scholar well versed in all of the tripiṭaka and the tantras and who, being a one seater, abides by the stainless discipline of the Conqueror. It took place in the Southeast Nyang section of gTsang [province], a place that is a source of knowledge, in the great temple of the great college called dPal 'khor bde chen, a veritable park for expounding eloquent expressions.

May this [scribal work] as well cause the precious teachings to spread and expand in all directions and abide forever.

Appendix 1

The Verses to Rong ston

The following is a translation of the polemical verses that mKhas grub rje wrote to Rong ston pa on the occasion of their cancelled debate at dPal 'khor chos sde in 1428. They are to be found in KYP, folios 6a–7a. See the "Biography" for an account of the events leading up to the composition of these verses.

The superior power of the lineage of the supreme vehicle arises from the precious element of the dual accumulations.¹
There is no obstacle to the space of phenomena when one is led there by the swift magical stallion of analysis.
This vast ocean-clothed earth of the scriptures is illuminated by the rays of the sun of reasoning.
How can a firefly travel next to the sun, this jewel of the sky, the likes of which has never before been seen?

Nonetheless, this "Śākya" born in Rong Was of a mind to attack the teachings, Having taken up the banner of the scriptures of gShen rab And like a child boasting of being a scholar, He calls us to debate with him From quite a distance away, Repeatedly shouting out the insults Of an erratic ascetic.
But whenever I approached you, You became discouraged, were filled with fear, Embarrassment, and sadness, and seeing yourself abandoned, You went looking for a refuge.
Face to face I say to you, filled as you are with the darkness, Which is the desire to find fault In the pure white brilliance of the glorious Candra, That you shall be destroyed by the thunderbolt of my reasoning. The rays of the maker of the day, the sun of my master's proper explanations, Have been blocked by the growth of the tree of your jealousy,
For yours is a dense forest of evil explanations.
First he tells me to debate him
But then, seized with fear,
He blithers something like,
"I didn’t stop them!"²²
Over and again you take refuge in a vessel of lies
And lacking the clothing of shame or guilt,
Wearing the belt of your monastic discipline loosely,
You hide behind the blind
Of the evil words of your disciples, a pack of fools.
Finding a refuge in the words of your beneficiary
Who has said that in this district
Conferences of scholars are not allowed,
You tell him what a great kindness he has done you.
Though many hooded nāgas, the scholars,
Have come together in this place as judges,
From their respective oceans, the great seats of learning,
Which possess the play of a string of the waves of scripture and reasoning,
The word has come from him who is your protector
That, having returned to their respective abodes,
The oceans, which are the treasuries of water,
The mandala of disputation will not take place.
Now remember your threats as [I have explained them here],
Threats that in reality have proven to be powerless,
And in the future do not spread in secrecy
Evil rumors about the proper explanations of sages.
Having advised and refuted you,
Realize that your efforts at speaking untruths
And your resultant blathering, the consequence of shame,
Proclaim to scholars that you are like a sheep or ass.

I live in the gorge of a snow mountain, the Tathāgata’s teachings.
My mane heavy with the weight of a thousand scriptural traditions,
Possessing the power of the inexhaustible claws and fangs of reasoning,
I alone am the supreme sage, the lion, king of beasts.³³

Appendix 2
The Eighteen Great Contradictions

From sGrwa pa Shes rab rin chen pa’i rtson las lung rigs seng ge’i nga ro, in Miscellaneous Works of the First Panchen Lama (from the rDzogs la mkhar Ms. Collection) (Gemur, H. P.; Topden Tsering, 1979), pp. 373–462.

1. "yul kun brdzun dang yul can bslu med ‘gal’" (p. 407): To claim that all objects are false things contradicts the fact that there is such a thing as right knowledge of those objects.
2. "yul der ‘khrul dang de la ı̊shad ma ‘gal’" (p. 409): To claim that [a cognition] is erroneous in regard to its object contradicts its being a valid cognition (pramāṇa).
3. "rı̊ges dpag yod dang bsgrub ngag med pa ‘gal’" (p. 412): To claim that there is such a thing as inference contradicts the claim that syllogisms do not exist.
4. "mthun snang med dang chos can ı̊shad grub ‘gal’" (p. 414): To claim that [the subject of a syllogism] does not appear in a common way [to the proponent and opponent] contradicts the claim that the subject is established by a valid cognition.
5. "phyi don ı̊shad grub rdal phran cha bcas ‘gal’" (p. 417): That external objects are established by valid cognition contradicts the claim that elementary particles have parts.
6. "rı̊gs drug ı̊shad ma rdos bcas tshad grub ‘gal’" (p. 421): That each of the six classes of beings has [its own] valid cognition contradicts the fact that the gross [aggregates] are established by a valid cognition.
7. "skra shad med dang klung rnag yod pa ‘gal’" (p. 422): The claim that illusory hair does not exist contradicts the claim that rivers of pus exist.
8. "rı̊dzas grub med dang dngos po yod pa ‘gal’" (p. 424): The claim that there is no substantial existence contradicts the claim that things exist.
9. "gzhan skye med dang sa myug rı̊dzas gzhan ‘gal’" (p. 424): The claim that there is no arising from another contradicts the claim that the seed and the sprout are different substances.
10. "bden brdzun yod dang / yyang log med pa ‘gal’" (p. 425): To claim that there are such things as truth and falsity contradicts claiming that there is no such thing as the correct and incorrect [conventionals].
11. “yan lag la dp Yad bum pa mi nray dang skad cig la dp Yad zhig pa rnyed pa’i gal’” (p. 427): It is contradictory not to find a pot when its parts are analyzed, but to find destruction when a moment is analyzed.

12. “rang rgyud smra bsrang bzhi shnas pa dang / rang bzhi med blo de der grub pa’i gal’” (p. 430): It is contradictory to claim that those who advocate svatantras are essentialists while the mind that [recognizes] essencelessness exists in that way.

13. “’nyon mongs can min ma rig yod pa dang i shes par ‘gyur pa’i shes sgrub med pa’i gal’” (p. 432): Your claim that there is such a thing as nonafflicted ignorance contradicts the claim that no knowledge obscurations are forms of consciousness.

14. “’gzhung gzhis nas bshad kun bshis rang rig sogs i’ gog na de dag rang lugs mi’i dod dang / sde bdun nas gsungs tshad ma mi’i dod kyang / rang lugs tshad ma’i rnam gzhag shes pa’i gal’” (p. 432): The fact that the foundation consciousness, autecognition, and so forth as explained in other [non-Madhyamaka] texts are repudiated and not accepted in your own system contradicts the fact that your own system sets forth a general exposition of valid cognitions, albeit not the valid cognitions as taught in the seven treatises [of the Pramånakas].

15. “’mi rig sogs rtags rnal’ byor mgon sum dang / de’i sbyor lam rtags par mi sles’i gal’” (p. 439): The fact that of that there exists the understanding of nonconceptual states and yogic direct perception [in non-Madhyamaka systems] contradicts the fact that [those who practice these states] cannot reach the point of attaining their own path of preparation.

16. “’gzhis sems shes pa yid mgon yin pa dang / bden bshis shes pa rnal’ byor mgon sum’i gal’” (p. 439): The claim that the cognition of others’ minds is a form of mental direct perception contradicts the claim that the cognition of the four [noble] truths is a form of yogic direct perception.

17. “’kan mkhyen ye shes chos kun’ jal pa dang / shes bya phyes la tshad ma min pa’i gal’” (p. 440): The claim that the gnosia of omniscience perceives all phenomena contradicts the claim that it is not a valid cognition in regard to one-half of phenomena.

18. “’rda’bas yod dbag smra’i gnas ma bur rges dang / rnam shes dbag smra’i dba sems yod pa’i gal’” (pp. 440–441): To claim that to advocate a self that substantially exists is something that the Vaisipitryas do contradicts claiming that [some] Madhyamikas and the Cittamåtrins believe that consciousness is the self.

Notes

Introduction

The Introduction has benefited from the comments of D. Seyfort Ruegg.


3. The verse continues:

Still, in this country of snow mountains
Most of those who seek water go after mirages instead.
Even though the source of happiness has been expounded in the scriptures
Of my supreme and incomparable master, those of little fortune
Fail to find this curative, which is the correct view.
Witnessing that the multitudes are following evil and mistaken paths,
That they are becoming confused when forced to distinguish the true path from the false,
My mind fills with pity for them.

Collected Works, vol. 1a, folios 171a–b. All references to the Collected Works of Tsong kha pa and his two disciples are to the Lhasa Zhol edition, unless otherwise specified.

4. This is not to say that this insight was unique to the Buddha, being already a well-established principle of the religious movements at that time. For a discussion of some of the philosophical issues surrounding this question see K. Potter, Presuppositions of India’s Philosophies (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1963), pp. 1–25; see also A. L. Basham, The Origins and Development of Classical Hinduism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), Chapter 4, “Mystical and Ascetic Traditions.”

5. I have discussed the theory of antidotes (skt. pratipaka; tib. gney po) in “Women and Illusion: Towards an Aesthetics in Buddhism,” a paper delivered at the American Academy of Religion (1987), unpublished; see also Abhidharmakosa (AK) I, 26), (V, 61), and (VII, 8); and Abhidharmasamuccaya (AS), W. Rahula trans. in Le Compendium de la super-doctrine (Paris: École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1980), p. 14; “De plus, la fonction des choses favorables (kuśala dharma) consiste à éliminer ce qui leur est hostile (vipakṣa) et la fonction des souillures majeures et mineures (kleśopa-
kleśa) consist to faire obstruction à leurs opposés (pratīpaśka).” On pratīpaśkatthāvanā see p. 116 of that work; also S. Anacker, “The Meditational Therapy of the Mahāyānavibhāga-bhāṣya,” in M. Kiyota and E. W. Jones, eds., Mahāyāna Buddhist Meditation: Theory and Practice (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1978), pp. 101–107. This is not to say that Buddhists everywhere and at all times have advocated an agnostic theory of mind (thoughts fighting other thoughts) implied by the antidote model for purification. There have been movements throughout Buddhist history that have stressed the innate purity of the mind, advocating, instead of the poison-antidote model, one in which this innate purity is tapped or made manifest in what we might call the ionic, as opposed to the agnostic, model of purification.


8. Title of one of the first scholarly texts in English on the doctrine of emptiness, the work of T. R. V. Murti, The Central Philosophy of Buddhism (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974).


10. See the TTC’s second stanza of the “Concluding Verses.” “Candra” refers of course to Candarkriti, the author of the Prasannapada, though perhaps not the first, certainly the most famous of the Indian “Prasangikas,” a name that seems to have been applied to Candarkriti’s school only in Tibet.


12. This is not to say that such a synthesis was not attempted prior to Tsong kha pa. This seems, for example, to have been the very tack taken by rNgo’og lo tsas ba; see L. W. J. van der Kuijip, Contributions to the Development of Tibetan Buddhist Epistemology (CTBE) (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1983) Alt und Neu Indische Studien (no. 26), pp. 36–38. It was Tsong kha pa’s particular synthesis, emphasizing as strongly as it did the fact that the ultimate could be approached conceptually, however, that drew particular attention and criticism. See also L. W. J. van der Kuijip, “Studies in the Life and Thought of mKhas grub rje I: mKhas grub rje’s Epistemological Oeuvre and his Philosophical Remarks on Dignaga’s Pramāṇasaruccaya I,” (SKI) Berliner Indologische Studien (BIS) (1985) 75–105; see also P. Williams, “A Note on Some Aspects of Mi bskyod rdo rje’s Critique of dGe lugs pa Madhyamaka,” JIP 11 (1983): 125–145; and his “rMā bya pa’i bya chung brtson ‘grus on Madhyamaka Method,” JIP 13 (1985): 205–225; as well as my “The Prāsaṅgikas’ Views on Logic: Tibetan dGe lugs pa Exegesis Concerning the Question of Sāvatantras,” JIP 13 (1985): 55–62.

13. On “sectarian” developments in Tibetan Buddhism see G. Tucci, The Religions of Tibet, trans. from the German and Italian by G. Samuel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); D. Snellgrove, Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, vol. 2 (Boston: Shambhala, 1987). One of the best available sources on the subject, written from a dGe lugs pa perspective, is Thu’u bkwon bLo bzang chos kyi snyi ma’i Grub mtha’ shel gyz me long (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, n.d.), which has yet to be translated into English.

14. The rTogs dpal sNang ba (Th. no. 5461), Collected Works, vol. ka, and the rNam ‘grel tik chen (Th. nos. 5505–5506), Collected Works, vols. lha and da, respectively. References are to the listings in the Catalogue of the Thokho University Collection of Tibetan Works on Buddhism, P. Kanakura et al., eds. (Sendai, Japan: The Seminary of Indology of the Tohoku University, 1953). On mKhas grub rje’s pramāṇa works, see van der Kuijip, “Studies in mKhas grub rje I,” p. 78 passim.

15. Tsong kha pa left us no major work in the field of pramāṇa studies, and his great commentary on the Abhisamayalampa, the gser phreng, is considered by the later dGe lugs plag scholars to be too difficult and radical in its views. The oral traditional stresses that it is to be used cautiously, as Tsong kha pa wrote the work “in the rashness of his youth.” In any case it differs, sometimes radically, from the views expressed by rNgo’og thab rje in his rNgo’og bshad, the full title of which is Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa ma nang gi bsan bcos mgon par rNgo’og pa’i rgyan gyi ‘grul ba don gsal ba’i rnam bshad snying po’i rgyan (Th. no. 5433). Collected Works, vol. lha. The other work referred to is rNgo’og thab rje’s Tshad ma rnam ‘grel gyi thig le’ur byas po’i rnam bshad thar lam phyin ci ma lugs par gsal bar byed pa (Th. no. 5450), Collected Works, vol. cha. On orders of commentary and textual layering in the scholastic tradition see my doctoral dissertation, The Development of a Buddhist Philosophy of Language and Its Culmination in Tibetan Madhyamaka Thought (DBPL) (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1987), Chapter 2. I have also discussed the nature of the commentarial enterprise and some theoretical problems related to it in a paper delivered at the 1987 meeting of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, “Is the Rest Commentary? The Hermeneutics of Tibetan Monastic Exegesis,” soon to be published as part of a book entitled Buddhism and Language.

16. dbu ma la’ jug po’i rgya cher bshad pa’i dgyongs pa rab gsal (Th. no. 5408), Collected Works, vol. ma; and dbu ma rtsa ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa’i rgyas rab ces bya’i rnam bshad rigs po’i rgya mtho (Th. no. 5401), Collected Works, vol. ba. His Drang nges legs bshad snying po (Th. no. 5536), Collected works, vol. pha, might very well also be added to this list.
17. sDe dbud yid kyi mun gsal (Toh. no. 5501), Collected Works, vol. tha, his synthetic work on pramāṇa. Concerning this work, see SK-I, p. 78. The rGyud sde spyi’i rnam (Toh. no. 5489), Collected Works, vol. nyla, has been edited and translated by F. Lessing and A. Wayman in Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras (The Hague: Mouton, 1959).


20. This is set forth in what is perhaps Atiśa’s most famous text, the Bodhipāṭhasāradīpa, trans. with the autocommentary by R. F. Sherbourne, S. J., A Light to the Path and Commentary. Wisdom of Tibet Series, vol. 5 (Boston: George Allen and Unwin, 1983); see also H. Eimer, Rnam thar rgyas pa. Materialien zu einer Biographie des Atiśa (Dipamkarasūryā) (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1979).

21. See note 16; the first five chapters of this work have been translated into English by Jeffrey Hopkins in Meditation in Tibetan Buddhism (London: Rider, 1980). The sixth chapter, the longest and most important of the work, is being translated by Jeffrey Hopkins and Anne Klein, but has not yet appeared in published form. One might also include as the fourth major work influencing the structure of the TTC, Tsong kha pa’s rTsa ba shes tik chen, which, though not as important as the dBus ma’i dgon bsad gsal in terms of its influence on the TTC, is nonetheless influential.

22. Although the entire TTC is renowned in the Tibetan dGe lugs pa tradition for its extreme clarity of exposition, it seems that the Svātāntrika section has enjoyed special popularity among scholars. Se ra rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544), a disciple of the second Dalai bla ma and the author of the yig chas for the Se ra Byes College, for example, says in his dBus ma’i spyi don (Byalakuppe: Se ra blockprint edition, undated), folio 102a:

You are the supreme one among scholars,
Oh pandit who has been so often praised
By the ‘Yama Dharma-king’ and others
And within the scriptures of the second Lord Victor [Tsong kha pa].
You, oh mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang, have explained
The system of the ‘Chief of the Svātantrikas’ [Bhāvyā].
Based only upon [your interpretation] do I explain [their doctrine],
Unsatisfied with [the analyses] of others who explain it without reference to you.

23. These are sometimes referred to as the “eight great difficult points” (dka’ gnas chen po brgyad) of the Madhyamaka and there are several texts devoted exclusively to mKhas grub rje; but there does exist a work in eighteen folios by Tsong kha brgyud gyi zin bbris rje’i gsung bzhi brjed byang: more accurately, it is a work written and purposes, to one found in the ka volume of the latter’s Collected Works (Toh. no. byang. rGyud tshab rje is also the author of the rTsa ba shes rab kyi dka’ gnas chen po brgyad; the brjed byang kyi bsad pa, Collected Works, vol. ja (Toh. no. 5451). Each of these texts is in eated as follows (folios 1–2a):

Related to the Basis (geri)
1. The Prāsaṅgikas do not accept the foundation consciousness even nominally.
2. They do not accept even nominally the existence of svalakṣanas.
3. They accept external objects.

Related to the Path, That is, the Methods for Understanding Reality
4. They do not accept the svātantra form of reasoning.
5. They do not accept autocognition.
6. The exposition of the two obscurations (sgrub pa).
7. Why they accept that śrāvakas and pratīyakabuddhas have an understanding of the selflessness of phenomena.

Related to the Result
8. How a buddha’s wisdom of the conventional world functions, which involves the acceptance of four facts and the rejection of four others.

The bShad pa has an identical enumeration of the eight points, mKhas grub rje never explicitly identifies the eight points, though he covers, usually in greater detail, all of the eight points mentioned by rGyud tshab rje. Most of this discussion is to be found in section 4.2.3.1.2.2. of the TTC. Compare also to the “seven questions” of Mi pham rgya mtsho (1846–1912), discussed in F. K. Ehrard, “Observations of Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka in the rNying-ma-pa school,” in Tibetan Studies (Proceedings of the Fourth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies), ed. H. Uebach and J. L. Panglung (Munich: Kommission für Zentralasiatische Studien Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988), p. 140, n. 7.

24. SNT, folio 7b, states that although mKhas grub rje spread the knowledge of the protectors Nāgārjuna, the special Prāsaṅgika system as interpreted by the Lord Tsong kha pa.’’

25. We find in the rNam thar (hagiobiographical) literature mention of more explicit polemical works, the records of debates (rtsod yig) between the early dGe lugs
Bo dong and mKhas grub rje and (folio 11a) one of a debate between Rong ston pa and rGyal tshab rje, documents that must have been circulating in the fifteenth century, but that, for the most part, have either been incorporated into more systematic treatises or else lost to us completely. In any case, few (if any) of these works exist in what must have been their original "debate" format.

26. Though much of mKhas grub rje's work is incidentally polemical in nature, some texts are explicitly so. In the field of Madhyamaka, for example, the Lam nag ngan mun sel sgron ma, Collected Works, Vol. II, folios 171a-15b, is explicitly a refutation of "evil views" concerning the practice of vipassayana, or insight (and, therefore, concerning emptiness). Whether this is the same text as the Tila ba'i dogs good lla ngan mun gsal, attributed to mKhas grub rje in the KYP, folio 9b, remains to be seen, as the later does not seem to be part of the edition of the Collected Works presently available to us. The genre of polemical literature is generally known as ddog lan or rtsod lсан, literally "critique-rebuttal." Later dGe lugs pa polemical literature focused on the Madhyamaka includes the first Pan chen chia ma's (bLo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan's) (1567-1662) sGras pa Shes rab rin chen pa'i rtsod lсан lung rigs pa'i seng ge'i nga ro, in Miscellaneous Works of the First Panchen Lama from the Zangla khar Manuscript Collection (Gemur Monastery, Himachal Pradesh, India: Topden Tsering, 1979), his answer to the eighteen critical questions raised by sTag tshang lo tsha ba Shes rab rin chen (b. 1405) against the views of Tsong kha pa on the subject of Madhyamaka (see Appendix 2). TgI bzton Chos kyi rgyal mtshan's (1469-1544) rebuttal of Sakyā mchog ldan (1428-1507) and Go rab 'jam pa bSod nams senge (1429-1489), the zab mo stong pa nyid kyi tla ba la log r blo 'gog par byed pa'i rtsod lサン bcos tla ba ngan pa'i mun sel (Delhi: Champa Choegyal, 1969) and his critique of the eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje's commentary on phreupjam dpa'g. In sGung lan klu sgar dgon ges rig (Delhi: Champa Choegyal, 1969) are perhaps more paradigmatic of works of this sort. The fifteenth century Sa skya scholars Go and Sàk, as they were known to dGe lugs pas, were also fond of polemics, many of their criticisms being directed against Tsong kha pa's interpretation of the Madhyamaka. Especially important in this regard is Go ram pa's Tila ba'i shan 'byed theg mchog gnad g.ya tar sar (SaBzhok: Sa skya Students' Union, 1988) and his dBo ma'i spyi don, collected in the Complete Works of the Masters of the Sa skya Sect of Tibetan Buddhism (Sa skya bKa' bum) (SK) (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968), vol. 12, pp. 348-451; as well as Sakyā mchog ldan's 'dBo ma'i byung thshul nram par bshad pa'i gsum yid bzhin lhan po in his Collected Works, in SK, pp. 209-240; his Shing ral'i sret chen gnis las 'byung ba'i dBo ma chen po'i lugs gnyis nram par dbye ba and its autocommentary, in his Collected Works, SK. pp. 407-499. Polemical literature of this kind, moreover, extends to the present day with the controversies surrounding dGe 'dan chos phel's interpretations of the Madhyamaka. See also Williams's "A Note on Some Aspects of Mi bskyod rdo rje's critique of dGe lugs pa Madhyamaka.''

27. Concerning his reputation as a debater, even in his early years, see KYP, folio 3b.


29. mKhas grub rje does mention by name nNgog lo tsha ba bLo Idan shes rab (1059-1109), Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109-1169) and brTsugs dBang phyug seng ge, according to CTBE, p. 99, where he is called rTSngs dBang phyug seng ge a disciple of Phya pa's and a teacher of Sa skya Pandita. On Phya pa and rTseg sgon see also S. Onada, "Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge's Classifications of Thal 'gur," BIS Band 2 (1986): 65-85. Others whose views concerning the doctrine of emptiness he may have very well found anathema, but whom he does not mention by name in the TFC include Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292-1361), Rong ston Sakyā mchog mtshan (1367-1449), Ma bya pa Byang chub brtson 'grus (twelfth century, also a disciple of Phya pa, CTBE, p. 99), Pa shab Nyi ma grags (twelfth century), sTag tshang lo tsha ba Shes rab rin chen (b. 1405), and the Indian pandit Jayānanda. After mKhas grub rje many of the critiques of these earlier masters were expanded upon and systematized by later, somewhat brilliant, scholars such as Sakyā mchog Idan (1428-1507), Go ram pa bSod nams seng ge (1429-1489), and the eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507-1534). SNT, folio 7 mentions among his other opponents nGor Kun bzang ba (1382-1456), who was Go ram pa's ordination abbot (CTBE, p. 120, see also EGW, p. 18), Sa skya pa dGe bshes Kan ting gu shri, and also (folio 9b) Karma dkon gzhon. That the main opponents of the early dGe lugs pas were Sa skya pa seems clear. See David Jackson, "Madhyamaka Studies Among the Early Sa-skya-pas," Tibet Journal, 10, no. 2 (1985): 20-34, and The Entrance Gate for the Wise: Sa skya Pandita on Indian and Tibetan Traditions of Pramāṇa and Philosophical Discourse (EGW) (Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhismuswissenschaftliche Studien Universität Wien, 1987), Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 17, 2.

30. For another discussion of this view, specifically for a discussion of how mKhas grub rje perceives it as arising from the repudiation of logical analysis (rgigs pas tsha ba rtsal mi dgos pa), and as implying quietism, see mKhas grub rje's Lam nag ngan mun sel sgron ma, Collected Works, Vol. II, folios 177a-b. It is interesting that even in the dGe lugs pas sources we find the claim that this was a view adhered to by Tsong
kha pa himself in "the rashness of his youth."’ Thu’u kwan Chos kyi nyi ma, in Grub mtha' shel gyi me long (Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, n.d.), p. 296, recounts the following episode in which Tsong kha pa, during a vision of Mahājñāna asks, ‘’Is my view that of the Prāsaṅgikās or that of the Sāvantikās?’ (Mahājñāna) replies, ‘It is neither.’’ And Thu’u kwan adds, ‘’At that time the Lord had a slight affinity for the view that nothing was to be accepted, that nothing was to be grasped on, or studied. Then, asking (Mahājñāna) many questions and even debating with him extensively, the Lord Mahājñāna spoke these words over and over to him, ‘Do not overemphasize either the side of appearances or the side of emptiness and, in particular, consider the importance of appearances.’ From that time on, . . . the Lord made great efforts to refute those who held as the supreme Madhyamaka view the tremendously nihilistic view that cast aspersions as to the possibility of cause and effect by claiming that establishment of the nominal world through valid cognition is baseless, that it is engaged in only when confronting others, intertwining their errors into one’s exposition, but that in our own system there is no basis for anything.’’

31. I have attempted to disentangle some of the different threads of doctrine attributed to those who hold such a position in my DBPL (pp. 7–18). The creation of a philosophical sacrificial lamb to which a variety of philosophical positions that were found anathema could be attributed is of course well known in the Tibetan context, the figure of the Chinese monk Hva Shang Mahāyāna being the most famous; D. Seyfort Ruegg, Buddha-Nature. Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in a Comparative Perspective: On the Transmission and Reception of Buddhism in India and Tibet, the Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion 13, (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1989), has argued that whether or not the positions ascribed to the Hva Shang are historically justified, they are nonetheless intelligible from other viewpoints that involve structural or “family resemblance” criteria. L. W. J. van der Kuip (CRTE, p. 45) has also pointed out how some of Tsong kha pa’s defenders mistakenly ascribe to his critics the view of Hva Shang.

32. In his Lam ngan mun sel sgron ma, folio 193a, a polemical text focused on Madhyamaka theory and practice, he lists in his conclusion several of the views he has criticized throughout the text. These include ‘‘relaxing without feigning anything,’’ “thinking about the consciousness present now,” “noticing whatever conceptual thought happens to arise,” ‘‘meditation on the ineffable object,’’ “seeking who you are,” and “looking for the mind.”

33. Perhaps one of the best examples of the confusion we have spoken of repeatedly is to be found in KLong rdol bla ma Ngag dbang blo bzang’s Synonyms Related to Madhyamaka that Occur in the Mahāyāna Abhidharma Piṭaka, They chen gyi mgon pa’i sde snod las byung ba’i du’u ma’i skor gyi mngi rnam grangs (pp. 408–448) in the section “Identifying the Teachings of the Various Tibetan Lineages” (Bo’od gangs can gyi sgrub rgyud kyi bstan pa’i ‘dzin pa), The Collected Words of Longed Lama, Parts 1 and 2 (Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1973), where he states, “The views of Dzogs po lha’od gzhon nu, of those who hold to the lineage of Pahé mdo gru pa ‘do rje rgyal po etc., of the Bri khang, stTag lung, ‘Brug pa, and of the Karma skam gsang of stöd lung mThur phy, and most other Tibetan teachings on the view, such as the Zhi byed of Pha dam pa and the Dzogs chen view, may differ as regards the preliminary practices of accumulating virtue and purifying sins, and, regarding the actual practices, may differ as to how the body should be positioned or in their teachings concerning bodily exercises and so forth. They are all similar, however, in regard to the way they apprehend the view of emptiness, for the supreme sage and siddha dGel dbang, the sole spiritual son of the Dharma king of the three worlds, the great Tsong kha pa, has said in his Digest that Opens the Eyes of the Fortunate: ‘‘Those fools who consider themselves to have reached the pinnacle of sageship, but who in reality have only a passing acquaintance with the doctrine, when it comes to meditating on the definitive meaning, consider any conceptual thought to be the apprehension of signs or the apprehension of true [existence]. Hence, they set their minds on nothing, that is, no object whatsoever, and they all agree that this is what it means to find the true nature of the mind.’’ Those who are partisan to the Cittamātrin system first claim that all phenomena contained within samsāra and nirvāṇa are of the nature of the mind, and then based on their perception of the clear and formless nature of the mind, for months and even years practice restricting themselves from entertaining even the tiniest conceptions. In this way, guarding against mental excitement and lethargy, some of these scholars obtain samatha focused on the mind. Since that brings in its wake the experience of the bliss of psycho-physical suppleness, that bliss temporarily suppresses the gross affictions. Even though extra sensory perception does not arise in those who practice this samatha alone, their dreams at night and the extreme clarity that arises from their focusing on the mind does resemble extra sensory perception. This brings on a certain exhilaration, leading them to think that they have obtained the different stages of the sātra path or the completion of the Anuttarayoga Tantra.

“But the great meditators of today, who are inexperienced at guarding against mental excitement and lethargy, even if they attain single pointed concentration on the nature of the mind, by meditating on silence and blankness as their object, they are in actuality accumulating a subtle form of mental lethargy. By accustoming themselves to this for long periods of time, the dispersion of the air (rlung) within their bodies gives them a certain type of lightness and ease in actions. It seems to them as though they are abiding like space in the midst of space, or as if, having pushed their minds into a state of nakedness, they are emerging from the skin of a snake. It appears to them as though they are making their home on the pinnacle of Mt. Meru and that they are no longer solid as before, but are now like a rainbow. This leads to extreme elation and to thinking that one has traversed a variety of stages and paths, causing these masters to claim that the teachings of the Mahāmudra which perceives the nature of the mind are the most important and profound instructions of the Buddha, that they are teachings which allow one to attain the state of buddhahood in this very life.

In response to this the great lord Tsong kha pa and most of his followers have stated that the single pointed equipoise on the nature of the mind is only a slight mental avoidance of the self of the person or the self of phenomena and is only a slight break in the proliferation of conceptualization in regard to other things. Hence, they say that it does not eliminate in the least either the delusion or the self-grasping that has arisen innately from beginningless time in samsāra, since it does not in the least negate the object that appears in grasping at true [existence]. For example, if one is frightened at
the possibility of a snake in a cave, one rids oneself of this fear by examining with a lamp whether or not there is a snake. How can one rid oneself of it simply by not focusing the mind on whether or not there is a snake? Therefore, analyzing things over and over again with valid reasoning, examining the minutiae of an erroneous object, the conventional, there arises an ascertainment consciousness. If one then meditates forcefully on that with śamatha, one will be able to fathom within one’s own mind all of samsara and nirvāṇa and one will be in accordance with the view that possesses a mindset of confident ascertainment."

34. In contemporary scholarship this view has been expressed by N. Katz, “Prāṣāṅga and Reconstruction: Tibetan Hermeneutics and the Yāna Controversy” in PEW 34, no. 2 (1984): 5, when he says, “all interpretation is a form of subjectivism bordering on solipsism.” It will become evident by reading the TTC that the dGê lugs pa such as mKhas grub rje will want to preserve the validity of some sorts of interpretation.

35. D. Seyfort Ruegg, “On Thesis and Assertion in the Madhyamaka/dBu ma” in CTBRP, vol. 2, pp. 224–225, 234–236, himself seems to consider the Prāṣāṅgika critique of the svātantra form of reasoning to be a critique of a formal trimalodal (traṅg sbyed, tshul gsum) syllogistic reason. From a dGê lugs pa perspective this can be agreed to if one is willing to add the qualified “real” or “truly existent” to the kind of trimalodal syllogistic reason being negated. Tsong kha pa and his followers, of course, accept trimalodal syllogisms, something that they consider the svātantra to be. See also my “The Prāṣāṅgika’s Views on Logic: Tibetan dGê lugs pa Exegesis on the Question of Svātantras,” JIP 16 (1988): 217–224.

36. Ruegg, “On Thesis and Assertion,” CTBRP, has described variants of this position in both the Indian and Tibetan traditions. Katz, “Prāṣāṅga and Deconstruction,” p. 9, puts forth the idea that even in the Pāli literature the notion of holding to no position was present. He states that “agreement or disagreement is understood as mere opinion (diṣṭā) and opinionatedness” and that this “is precisely that which prevents one from true seeing (darśana). By the time of the great Pāli commentaries, escape from opinion was itself made into a hermeneutical principle.”

37. Interestingly, the parallel between these different philosophical strands seems to have been evident to Western philosophers as well. See Donald Davidson, “The Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme,” in J. W. Meiland and M. Krausz, eds., Relativism: Cognitive and Moral (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982) pp. 67–68.

38. It was a tradition of the time for scholars to travel from one monastery to the next, to receive teachings from the elder spiritual masters resident at these centers of scriptural studies, and to subject their own views to the test by sitting for examinations in the courtyards of these establishments. See “A Short Biography of mKhas grub rje,” which follows. Of the works consulted in composition of the latter, the gSang ba’i rnam thar of Chos kyi rgyal mthar, to be found in mKhas grub rje’s Collected Works, vol. 2, most gives one a feeling for the importance of monastic dialectical disputation (risod pa) in the life of mKhas grub rje. See also EGW, pp. 251–299, 323–367; and David Jackson and Shinzo Onada, eds., Rong ston on the Prajñāpāramitā Philosophy of the Abhisamayālākāra: His Sub-commentary on Haribhadra’s ‘Spuṅgartha,’ Bibliia Tibetica 2 (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo, 1988) p. iv, where he states that Rong ston pa also made a similar debating circuit (gywa skor).

39. Concerning mKhas grub rje’s exegesis of the prāṃśa literature, van der Kuijff makes a similar point in his “Studies in mKhas grub rje I,” pp. 77–78, when he states that the importance of his work “lies not only in the testimony to the rigor of his philosophical analyses, but also in its references to numerous other interpretations that had been proposed by his precursors and contemporaries. A careful examination of these should enable one to understand in broad outlines the twists and turns of the exegesis of the PV during the fourteenth century for which to date no texts have come to light. Regrettably, with only a few exceptions... these references are all anonymous and prefixed by the uninformative ‘some say’ or ‘Tibetan commentators say,’ etc.”

40. These works include the Grub mtha’ kun shes of sTag tshang lo tsa ba; the Madhyamakāvatāra commentary, De ’kho na nyid gsol ba’i sgron me, of Red ma’ ba gZhon nu blo gros; Rong ston Śākyā rgyal mthar’s commentary to the Madhyamakāvatāra, the rNam bshad nges don rnam nges; Go ram pa’i lSa ba’i shan ’byed and his dBu ma’i spyi don; the dBu ma’i byang tshul, the dBu ma chen po’i sgom rim, and the Shing rtsa’i srol byed chen gnyis la byang ba’i dBu ma chen po’i lugs gnyis rnam dbyes, with the autocommentary, all works of Śākyā mchog Idan; the Madhyamakāvatāra commentary, rNam bshad, called Dus gsum mkhyen pa’i lha lung of the eighth Karma pa, Mi bsbyod rdo rje; the various polemical and yIG cha texts of Se ra rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mthar; and a variety of early and late dGê lugs pa philosophical literature, including works by the first Pan chen bla ma, by ‘Jam dbyangs bshad pa, by IChang skya Rol pa’i rdo rje, by dKon mchog’ jigs med dbang po, and others.

41. KYP. folio 9b, reads sTsong bdun (Seven Emptinesses or Seven Thousand), most likely an error as it is unsubstantiated by any other source. Still, this is probably the earliest reference (late fifteen century) to anything resembling sTsong than (as a work of mKhas grub rje’s) with which I am familiar. The word stong can have two meanings in Tibetan. It can refer to “emptiness” (as in sTsong pa nyid) or to “thousand” (as in brgyud stong). Both Elizabeth Napper (DAE) and Donald Lopez (A Study of Svātantrika) (SOS) (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1987), p. 253, translate the title of the work as the “Three Thousand Doses.” In my initial studies of this text I opted for the reading “A Dose of Emptiness,” a title that because of its aesthetic flavor, I have given to this volume as a whole, realizing that it is not the most accurate translation of the title of the Tibetan text. My earlier reading of the words sTsong than was influenced both by the oral commentary I received on the text, a commentary that glossed the title as sTsong pa nyid kyi dbyung, as well as by certain considerations of Tibetan grammar. It was my belief then that the translation of the title as “Three Thousand Doses” would be more likely if the Tibetan had read dbyung stong, with the noun being modified by the adjective that it precedes. Since that time I have come across several other references to the term sTsong than, references that have led me to believe, first of all, that this is a term with strong connections to the medical literature, not because it is itself a medical term but
because of its prevalence in the titles of texts of that genre. A glance through the Nepali Manuscript Preservation Project’s catalogues of Tibetan works, for example, yields many medical works that contain in the title the words stong thun. In the medical literature it seems to have the meaning of “digest,” that is, a condensation of larger works into simpler forms. Jeffrey Hopkins, following bsTan_ha rama pa, translates stong thun, “Distillation on Emptiness”; Collected gSung ’bum of Bstan-dar-pha-rab of A-lag sha, vol. kha (New Delhi: Lama Guru Deva, 1971), p. 593. L. W. J. van der Kuip, in his review of Donald S. Lopez, A Study of Svatantrika, Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, 52 (1989): 160, suggests as possible translations “general survey” or “synopsis.” It must be emphasized that the term is not exclusively a medical term and that it was taken up in the philosophical literature from early times. The term stong thun does occur, for example, in the titles of other Madhyamaka works. Paul Williams has pointed out that there is a work by the same name attributed to rMa bya pa; see his “rMa bya pa Byang chub brtson ‘grus on Madhyamaka Method,” p. 207. In the da volume of the Collected Works of Jam dbyangs bzhad pa rdo rje (1648–1722), we find a work in sixty-nine folios called Tshig gsal stong thun gyi tshad ma’i rnam bshad zab rgyas kun gyal tshad ma’i ’od rgya ’bar ba skal bzang snying gi mun sel. On a work called Tshad ma’i stong thun mKhas pa’i yid phrog by Mu sras pa, see SK-I, p. 75. Also attributed to the translator Gos seems to be a work on tantra bearing the name stong thun chen mo. The Bod rdo rgya thig mod cten mo of Krang dbang phyi et. al. (Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1985–86) gives a definition of the term stong thun (p. 1109). “a general overview accomplished by collecting many thousands of points into discreet portions” (gna’ad don stong phrag du ma thun du dbuds pa ste spyi don). The medical dictionary of dBang ‘dus, Bod ganags can pa i go rigs pa’i dpal ldan rgyud zhi sogs kyi brda dang dka’ gnad zhi sogs bkrol ba sngon byon mKhas pa’i gsal rgyan gnyu thog dngongs rgyan (Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982), p. 210, however, gives the most clear definition, citing as its source a commentary on the Four Medical Tantras by bKa’ ‘bum pa, “the collection of many thousands of difficult points of a scriptural system into discreet, which is to say brief, portions” (gshungs lugs kyi dka’ gnad stong phrag du ma thun te dam dam du dbuds pa’i don). Hence, within the present context I opt for translating stong thun chen mo by the expression “Great Digest.”

42. Hence, to find the folio in the Zhok gStungs ’bum edition one need only take the MTS Arabic numeral (interspersed in the translation at the appropriate points) and divide by two (in the case of odd numbers rounding up), so that the notation “p. 99” found in the translation, and to the Arabic enumeration of the MTS, corresponds to folio 50a of the gStungs ’bum. In a similar fashion, “p. 100” refers to folio 50b.

43. The discrepancy here is because two folios (folio 97) bear the same Tibetan page number, so that the second folio 97 has come to be labeled 97-below (go dbdan ‘og).

44. For an edition and translation of Tsong kha pa’s text, see Gyaltsen Namdol and Ngawang Samten, Prajnayasaṃputāpā staṭi subhāśita hṛdayam of Acārya Tsong kha pa (Sarnath: Tibetan Institute for Higher Studies, 1982).

45. This has been a source of confusion in Western scholarship, leading some scholars to claim that the entire TTB is but Zhang zhung pa’s notes on lectures by mKhas grub rje. There is neither internal-textual nor historical evidence for this claim.

Instead, it seems to be a view that has arisen due to a confusion as to the status of the appendices. See note 1184.


A Short Biography of mKhas grub rje

1. I remain unclear as to the identity of the author of this latter work. He calls mKhas grub rje “our glorious holy master” (bdag cag gi dpal ldan bla ma dam pa) (p. 422) and also “my tutor” (bdag gi yongs ‘dzin) (p. 493). This, of course, implies that the author must have been a direct disciple of mKhas grub rje, ruling out both Se ra rJe bsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544) and the first Pan chen bla ma, bLo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1567–1662), both of whom were not born until after mKhas grub rje’s death. The most likely candidate, therefore, seems to be mKhas grub rje’s younger brother, Ba so Chos kyi rgyal mtshan. However, in the autobiography of rJe bsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (Se ra xyllograph edition of a mongolian original of the Yid dga’chos ’dzin gling College, Delhi: 1975) folio 25b, rJe bsun pa states that he has composed a short biography of mKhas grub rje. This was also known to KLong rdol bla ma who states that there exists a biography of mKhas grub rje similar to that written by Kun dga’ bde legs rin chen rgyal mtshan (KYP) and written by Se ra rJe bsun pa, this statement to be found in the former’s bKa’ gsalams pa dang dGe lugs bla ma rug rim gi gsung ’bum mtshan tho ba, in his Collected Works, ed. Lokesh Chandra, Śataipataka Series, vol. 100 (Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1973), p. 1378.

2. KYP, folio 6b. With these words the author of the TTC describes himself to an opponent reputed to have run away from him in the debate mentioned below.

3. The first part of his name, mKhas grub, is actually more a title than a proper name. It is, at least in theory, to be applied to those who have excelled not only in scholarly achievement (mKhas pa), but in inner spiritual realization (grub pa) as well. It seems, however, that there was another reason why mKhas grub rje was given this title. He was popularly believed to have been the incarnation of Dharmakirti’s disciple Devandrabuddhi, and as the latter is known in Tibetan as mKhas grub Lha dbang, the title mKhas grub seems to derive from this source.

4. It is ironic that SNt, a text that goes to extremes to make known mKhas grub rje’s expertise as a polemicist, should admit that, from among Red ma’ ba’s seven chief disciples, rGyals brtab rje was “renowned as the most proficient in the art of debate” (folio 8a).

5. See SNt, folio 6b; KYP, folio 10a; LRLN, vol. 1, p. 877; and the TTC’s colophon. In another famous incident Tsong kha pa is said to have given mKhas grub rje, as a
relic, one of his own teeth that had fallen out accidentally. At that time he described mKhas grub rje as being "like Mt. Meru among the Golden Mountains." The incident is described in detail in a work to be found in Tsong kha pa's Collected Works, vol. ka, called mKhas grub rje la tshems gnang skor, and is based on an account by mKhas grub rje's disciple, rje lobsun dam pa Sangs rgyas rin chen. The incident is mentioned in A Short Biography and Letter of rje Tsong kha pa (5B) (Dharmasala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1975), p. 31, which is based on a biography of Tsong kha pa by mKhas grub rje called rNam thar dad po'i 'ju gs Ngag Car, the first work of Tsong kha pa's Collected Works, vol. ka, folios 1–72. SNT discusses the relationship and status of Tsong kha pa's three main disciples, rGyal tshab rje, 'Dul ba' dzin pa and mKhas grub rje (folio 5b); see note 35 and also Khlong rdol bla ma's comments in "Introduction, " note 33.

6. This is not to say that this was his only area of tantric expertise, for he also wrote extensively on the practice of other deities such as Caksasajvaya, Hevajra, and Yamantaka. His commentary on the generation stage (bskyed rim) of the Guhyasamāja Tantra, the bsKyed rim thugs grub rgya mtsho (Collected Works, vol. ja) is considered a classic, as is his synthetic work on the four classes of Tantra, the rGyud sde spyi rnam (Collected Works, vol. nyla).

7. In the field of Madhyamaka studies his most famous work by far is the rGes thun chen mo, to be found in his Collected Works (gSung bum), vol. ka. Toh. no. 5459.

8. His commentary to the Abhisamayālaṃkāra, the rTogs dka'i sngon ba (Collected Works, vol. ka), again, though not relied on as heavily as rGyal tshab rje's rNam bshad snying po'i rgyan and Tsong kha pa's own gSer phreng, is nonetheless considered an extremely important work, sometimes presenting opinions contrary to those of his elder contemporary, rGyal tshab. This also seems to be the case in other areas where the two overlap exegetically (in Pramāṇa, for example). Though most of the disagreements are minor, mKhas grub rje does at times depart quite radically from the interpretations of the latter in many different fields.

9. Most of the rnam thar's begin not with the accounts of this life, but with a list of his previous incarnations. According to KYP (folios 2a–2b, 3b) these include the Buddha's disciple, Subhūti, the disciple of Nāgārjuna—Vidyākūlī, the king of Śambhala—Manjuśrīkirti, Bhāvaviveka, Devendrabuddhi, Abhayākara, the translator 'Gos, Sa skya Pandita, and the rNyung ma siddha—gYung ston rdo rje dpal (his last incarnation before being born as mKhas grub rje). These lists are interesting in that they often give us hints as to how the personality (both religious and scholarly) of the figure in question was perceived. KYP, folio 8a, suggests that many of his previous incarnations may have been suggested to mKhas grub rje during visions he had of Tsong kha pa, in which the latter extolled his various qualities and indicated the reasons for them by relating them to his past lives.

10. BS (p. xxii) calls it La stod byang, and this is indeed the name under which this area of gTsang is known today.

11. BS (p. 12) has mDogs gzhung, but the contemporary spelling seems to be sDogs gzhung.

12. KYP (folio 2b) has bkra shis dpal ldan.

13. KYP (folio 2b) has Ru 'dren rgyal mo.

14. Of his family, van der Kuijpp states in his SK-IV, p. 29, states that it was "an old Tibetan family that could trace its origins to Xixia."

15. LRLN, p. 878.

16. See KYP, folio 3a.

17. On the relationship between Red mtha' ba and Tsong kha pa, see SB, p. 12 passim; as well as SK-1, p. 75ff, especially p. 94, n. 1.

18. On this system of praxis, see van der Kuijpp, CTBE, p. 97 and notes 276–278.

19. KYP, folio 3b, also mentions among his early teachers Lam 'bras pa Ye shes dpal ba, Byang sems Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, Buddhā śri, and 'Jam dbyangs rin chen po.

20. On the monasteries of the Sa skya order founded by dbon chen Byang pa. See van der Kuijpp, CTBE, pp. 117–119. SNT, folios 6b–8b, paints a fascinating picture of Ngam ring and Sa skya during this time, with factions that were both pro and contra Tsong kha pa and his innovations in interpretation. In one incident, for example, Chos rje gYag pa, one of the great scholars of the Sa skya tradition, who a few years earlier was said to have lost to mKhas grub rje in a debate (SNT, folio 6b), writes to Tsong kha pa asking for some clarifications on the subject of the doctrines of provisional and definitive meaning (drangninges). In response to this Tsong kha pa composes his famous Legtshad snying po and sends a copy to Sa skya. Chos rje gYag pa is overwhelmed (shin tu 'phrog) by the profundity of the work and decides to visit Tsong kha pa but, we are told, "is stopped from going by disciples whose minds were filled with attachment and hatred" (folio 8a).

21. One of the greatest of Tibetan exegetes, he was from the monastery of Jo mo nang. He is considered one of the teachers of Tsong kha pa, the master from whom he was supposed to have received the lineage of Kālacakra; see EE, pp. 69–70. See also KYP, folio 3a; van der Kuijpp (SK-IV, p. 49, n. 10) gives his dates as 1373/6–1451.


23. SNT, folio 6b, by far the most vivid and interesting account of the debate.

24. Ibid.
25. The account seems to exaggerate the situation. Because mKhas grub rje and Bo dong differed in age by only ten years, this would mean that the latter was a mere twenty-six years of age when the debate took place in the year 1401. The date of 1401 is confirmed by TTKT, p. 210, contra van der Kuip's (SK-I, p. 48, n. 10) 1400.

26. LRIN, p. 880.

27. How much of this story is historically accurate is questionable. Portions of it certainly fit the very popular hagiographical scenario of "The Great Debate" typified by the Āryadeva-Āvaghoṣa disputations in India. At the same time, mKhas grub rje was always renowned for his great skill in dialectics, so there is no reason to question the veracity of the overall account. See Introduction, note 25, concerning a document said to have preserved an account of the proceedings.

28. See also KYP, folio 3b. This puts the ordination date at 1405, agreeing with the R'u mig of gSUM pa mkhen po, and almost agreeing with the gSdan yig (Collected Works, vol. ka, folio 3a.) which puts the date at 1406, but disagreeing with other sources that put the date at 1415. See Ruegg, "On Thesis and Assertion," p. 216, n. 29, for a discussion of the inconsistencies in the sources regarding these dates. The chronology in the appendix to the Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo, p. 3244, also puts the date at 1405.

29. Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo, p. 3244.

30. A retreat place above the present monastery of Se ra where Tsong kha pa is said, among other things, to have written his famous commentary to MMK, the Rigs pa'i rgya mtho. See SB, p. 27.

31. The most interesting account of the dreams and visions had by mKhas grub rje on his way to and after his meeting with Tsong kha pa are to be found in SNT, folios 4b–5b.

32. A more detailed account of the meeting based on different sources is to be found in the extensive biography of Tsong kha pa by the Se ra sMad bla ma bLo bzang phrin las rnam rgyal, the 'Jam mgon chos kyi rgyal po chen Tsong kha pa chen po rnam thar thub bstan mdzas pa'i rgyan gzig ngo mthar nor ba'i 'phreng ba (Indian edition, 1967), pp. 281–284.

33. LRIN, p. 887. For a translation of a praise of Tsong kha pa written by mKhas grub rje see "Song of the Triscomic Master" in R. A. F. Thurman, ed., The Life and Teachings of Tsong kha pa (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1982).

34. This refers to the private life story, which includes the record of visions and spiritual attainments usually never spoken of in public. To be found in Tsong kha pa's gSUM bum, vol. ka (Toh. no. 5261), the work is only sixteen pages in length but highly regarded in the dGe lugs pa tradition. See also his RIN po che snye ma, Collected Works, vol. ta (no. 29 of his ThoR bu, Toh. no. 5500, folios 46b–62a); a work related to the former is the rJe btsun bla ma bLo bzang grags pa'i dpal gyi gzung ba'i rnam thar gsal 'debs by Byam dbyangs chos rje bKa' shis dpal Idan (1379–1449), preserved in Tsong kha pa's Collected Works, vol. ka (Toh. no. 5262), and translated in the Life and Teachings of Tsong kha pa, pp. 47–55.

35. In the traditional artistic representations of "Tsong kha pa, the father, and his two spiritual sons" (Tsong kha pa yab sras gsum) one usually finds a central Tsong kha pa holding a sword in one hand and a text floating on a lotus in the other (the symbols of Matjuñjñi) surrounded on the one side by an elderly congenial Gyal tsab rje and on the other by a scowling mKhas grub rje (in debate posture, rosary brandished at an imaginary opponent). At times, however, in place of mKhas grub rje one finds the figure of 'Dul 'dzin grags pa rgyal tshan. When represented in this way the implication is that mKhas grub rje, being the "inner sole spiritual son," is in a category all by himself as Tsong kha pa's closest disciple; this according to an oral tradition. The dGe lugs pa believe that it is a later incarnation of 'Dul 'dzin that, having died a violent death, transformed himself at the moment of death into the protector rDo rje shugs Idan, concerning which there has been very bitter sectarian polemics in recent years.

36. van der Kuip, SK I, p. 78, states that ICang rwa'wa "was built in 1413 by his [mKhas grub rje]"s patron Rab-brtan kun-bzang-'phags (1389–1442), the ruler of Rgyal-rtse. It was in this year or shortly thereafter that mKhas-grub was invited from Ngam-ring to take charge of the religious affairs of this monastery." See BS, p. 122; KYP, folio 5b.

37. These are preserved in his Collected Works, at the end of vol. tha, in a short text of four folios (Toh. no. 5504), although the place of composition is listed as the lHas byin gling gi gtsug lag khang. It may be that mKhas grub rje used mdang as a retreat from where he would travel to different centers in Western Tibet.

38. See BS, p. 122; KYP, folio 6b. Sometimes called dPal 'khor chos sde, this is one of the most interesting monasteries in all Tibet because of its eclectic character and administrative organization. Besides having several dGe lugs pa colleges, Nor bu dga' Idan pa, rGyong ro lha khang pa, Zhi gnas pa and Grang mo che ba, Las grub pa and gSer khang khong, and 'Gug, it had colleges devoted to Kālacakra, one to the teachings of Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364), and at least one (Gur pa) that belonged to the Sa skyê sect. Given the eclectic character of the monastery, whether mKhas grub rje was the sole founder of it is questionable. Nothing concerning this question, for example, is to be found in SNT, one of the most extensive sources for mKhas grub rje's life. It may be, therefore, that mKhas grub rje may have had a direct role only in the founding of the dGe lugs pa colleges, something that is eluded to in KYP.

39. This is despite the fact that BS (pp. 122–123) implies that he composed this, and instead most of his other major works, during the last few years of his life when he occupied the throne of dGa' ldan.

40. KYP, folios 6a–7a.

41. SNT, folios 10a–12a, as well as the case of the Bo dong debate, the most extensive, vivid, and interesting (though also the most partisan) account.
43. My source here is the Se ra Byas gTsang pa dGe bshes Thabs mkhas, a member of this monastery before he left for Central Tibet to engage in higher studies, he resides at present in Se ra Byas Monastery in Byalukpe, South India.

44. BE (p. 122) states that the reason for mKhas grub rje’s departure had to do not with the debate, but with disagreements over the status of the dGe lugs pa colleges at dPal 'khor sde chen. Van der Kuip, SK-I, p. 98, n. 18, states that mKhas grub rje’s departure had to do with his sponsor’s displeasure at some rather strong statements the former had made regarding the tenets of some leading Sa skya scholars, especially Ngor-chen Kun-dga’ gzang-po (1382-1456).”

45. It is interesting that according to the oral tradition mKhas grub rje at first refused the invitation. Eventually, under pressure, he is said to have agreed and the event was scheduled.

46. KYP, folio 6a. The oral tradition adds interesting details. During this series of events it seems as though mKhas grub rje became estranged from his sponsor, feeling as though the monarch had taken sides with his adversary, Rong ston pa. Finally, when mKhas grub rje, after leaving his throne on one occasion, had his seat cover (ging ba) removed from the throne and handed to him, he took this as a sign that his presence was no longer required and he left the monastery, never to return; this, according to the oral account, is despite the later pleas of Rab brtan kun bzang who, repentful of his having caused the departure of mKhas grub rje, beseeched him to return; see Appendices, note 3.

47. dGe bshes Thabs mkhas tells me that during his time at dPal 'khor sde chen this letter was open for public viewing. Its most unusual feature was that it was written in Chinese characters! He himself could not explain the phenomenon.

48. KYP, folios 6a–6b.

49. SNT, folios 7b, 9b.

50. SNT, folio 10b.

51. SNT, folio 11a; David Jackson, in his introduction to Rong ston on the Prajñā-pāramitā Philosophy, where he gives a synopsis of the life of Rong ston, mentions no debate with mKhas grub rje, nor one between Rong ston and rGyals tshab rje, but he does (p. v) mention that, according to bZad pa bLo gros rgya mtsho, a debate occurred between Rong ston and Tsong kha pa in which the latter was defeated. D. Seyfort Ruegg, La Théorie du Tathagatagarbha et du Gotha: Études sur la Sotéiologie et la Gnoséologie du Bouddhisme (TTG) (Paris: École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1969) vol. 70, pp. 202, 204, compares several of the positions of Tsong kha pa, rGyals tshab, mKhas grub, and Rong ston in the context of the AA commentarial literature.

52. Many different accounts of the debate are preserved in oral tradition, however. According to the account of rGyals smad mkhen zur dGe bshes bLo bzang bstan 'dzin and the gTsang pa Khang tshan of Se ra Byes, for instance, the debate did take place, and as Rong ston pa realized that he was losing, he fled in the direction of his home town in Western Tibet where, in the Rong Byams chen Monastery, there stood a huge statue of Maitreya (Byams pa) several stories tall. Rong ston pa, who was acknowledged even by many of his opponents to be an incarnation of the Buddha Maitreya, is said to have sought refuge from the pursuing mKhas grub rje by melting into the statue to become one with it, not an uncommon theme in hagiographical literature. mKhas grub rje pursued Rong ston pa, and arrived in Rong. At this point the accounts diverge. According to one, mKhas grub rje is said to have approached the statue and uttered the Dhiḥ sound, the traditional invocation uttered at the beginning of a debate, in response to which the statue of Maitreya, with the presumably nervous Rong ston pa inside, began to sweat! According to another account mKhas grub rje prostrated to the statue, reciting at the same time the following verse, preserved orally in the dGe lugs pa tradition to this very day, a verse that is recited in all of the great dGe lugs pa monasteries (gden sa) before every recitation of the Abhisamayalakāra of Maitreya. “The fire of your great love (byams chen) burns up the firewood of anger. The brilliance of your gnosis clears away the darkness of ignorance. I bow down to the one who resides in Tusiša heaven, the regent of the doctrine, the protector of beings”; the Tibetan reads: byams chen me yis zhe sding bud shing bshreg / ye shes 'od kyi ma rig mun pa sel / chos kyi rgyal tshab 'gro ba'i mgon mdzad pa'i dGa' ldan bshugs pa de la phyag 'tsal lo. The implication is that mKhas grub rje was prostrating himself not before the Rong ston pa—filled statue before him, but before the true Maitreya in Tusiša.

53. An interesting supplement to this is his Rong gi rtogs pa gsum du bskyed pa, Collected Works, vol. 1a (Thor bu, Thob. no. 5500–25), folio 35b–37b.

54. See SB, pp. 34–35. Although mKhas grub rje seems to have been a visionary even during his early life, it seems that the most intensive period of visions came toward the end of his life when he took up the throne of dGa'. These are described in great detail not only in SNT, folios 16a–37a, but also in the KYP, folios 7b passim.

55. BS (p. xii) puts mKhas grub rje’s ascension to the throne of dGa' at 1431, a date confirmed by TTKT, p. 216. If this is correct, then all of the events from the meeting of rGyals tshab rje in gNas rnying to his enthronement took less than a year.

56. He is said to have completed his enormous commentary on the Kālacakra Tantra during this time, specifically in 1434, just four years before his death.

57. SB states that he was fifty-four. It recounts that he had a vision of Tsong kha pa and requested that he too may enter parinirvāṇa to be with him. Tsong kha pa agreed. He then had a vision of the six-armed Mahākāla who requested him to remain for the benefit of beings. mKhas grub rje, however, passed away and “went to the land of the dākinis” (SB, p. 35).

The Translation

1. The reference here is to mKhas grub rje’s (KDJ) own spiritual master, the Great Tsong kha pa bLo bzang grags pa.

3. This refers to the repetition of mantras, and hence this third category clearly refers to the adepts of the tantras.

4. A work of Mātrīceta. Tohoku no. 1150; P no. 2041, bsTod tshogs ka, folio 214a. P varies from TTC and reads instead: ‘jing mtha’ med pa’i khör ba yi / rgya mthong na rd gon par gnas / ’dod chags la sogs mi bsad pa / i cha sris gyis ni lus zos pas / de ring gang la skyabs su mch'i / ji srid bdag la sems yod na / gang gi bstan la gnas pa dang / gang bsod gang la bsmnyan bkhr bsig'i / gang zhi la ni yod pa kun / gian nas yod ye mi mda’ zhih / gang la’ang rd gon par thams cad du / yon tan thams cad gnas gyur pa.’” On Mātrīceta, see LMS, pp. 119–120.

5. For a summary of the bibliographical sources concerning Nāgārjuna, see Ruegg’s The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India (LMS) (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), pp. 5–8. An interesting and brief Tibetan biography is also to be found in Go ram pa’s RgYad ba thams cad kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa zab mo dBo ma'i de kho na nyid spyi'i ngag gis ston pa nges don rab gsal, known colloquially as the dBo ma'i spyi don (BPfD), in Sa skya bka’ bum, vol. 12, pp. 349–350, folios 4b–5b.

6. For a similar discussion, see Rong ston pa’s dBu ma la ’jug pa’i nnam bshad nges don nnam nges, in Two Controversial Madhyamaka Treatises (Bhutan) pp. 60–62; also BPfD, pp. 350–351, folios 6a–7a. For bibliographical references to Tsong kha pa’s discussion of the prophecies, ’Jam dbyangs bshad pa’s (1648–1721) attempts to reconcile contradictions, and recent Western scholarship on the question, see E. S. Napper’s DAE, p. 922; also see her translation of the Annotations (mChan) on pp. 356–362, which cites many of the works mentioned later and discusses in detail the dGe lugs pa attempts at reconciling them. Sākya mchog Idaho makes the point, quite rightly, that even before Nāgārjuna, the great siddha Saraha also expounded a form of the doctrine of emptiness. He calls this the ma brtag pa’i sems kyi rdo rje brjod byar ston pa’i dBo ma. He adds, interestingly, that this emphasis on the mind in Saraha’s thought is the equivalent (don gcig) of Asanga’s notion of a storehouse consciousness (dLayavijñāna) and of the idea of the sathāgataartha. He thus implies by this that Saraha’s was a Madhyamaka different from Nāgārjuna’s, a notion that would of course be anathema to the less historically minded dGe lugs pa exegetes. See his dBo ma’i byang tshul, in his collected works, Sa skya bka’ bum, compiled by bSod nams rgya mthong (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968), vol. 4, pp. 217–218.

7. The pramāṇādī bhāmi (rab tu dga’ ba’i sa), the first of the ten bodhisattva stages. The Annotations to the Lam rim chen mo (DAE, p. 358) explain that this implies that Nāgārjuna had himself realized emptiness directly.


10. Toh. no. 542, folio 325b. For this and other references to Nāgārjuna in the Maṇjūśrīmālākalpa, see LMS, pp. 104, n. 120.

11. P no. 888, mDo sde tshe folio 105a. P varies slightly from TTC and reads in its entirety: ‘de lutar de bzhin shes pa de gzhon nu de la gi gis tu ’jig rten gi yig kham pa mi’jed mgon po shā kya thub pa zhes pa’i byung ba de’i tshi / rgyal po chen po khrod li tsa byi gzhon nu’i ’jig rten thams cad kyi mhung na dga’ bshes bya bar ‘gyur te de’i nas ’jig rten kyi kham de mgon po byo yongs su mya ngan las’ das pa’i og tu bstan pa nab pa’i dus kyi tshi / lo gryud cu lon pa na dang slob blo behang zhes bya bar gyur nas rig gi srog la yang mi bta bar byas te i mdo’i ’dzin par ’gyur ro’i de nas to lo gang lon pa’i og tu shi nas ’jig rten gi yig kham sde ba can du skye par ’gyur ro’i.


13. A commentary on the Guhyasamāja Tantra attributed to Candrakīrti, P no. 5340, rGyud ’grel sar, folio 232a. Ruegg (LMS, p. 105 n.) suggests that it might be the work of a tantric Candrakīrti distinct from the author of the Madhyamaka sāstric works. See also A. Wayman’s Yoga of the Guhyasamājatantra (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977). The TTC passage varies from that found in P, which (in portraits) more extensive and provides a comment on the Guhyasamāja passage quoted by mKhas grub jeg rje earlier: ‘r’rgo gcen rnam kyi yul min na so sor rang rig ye shes ni phyi ma’i’ dus su gyur pa na i mgon po su zhiq ’dzin ’gyur gsungs i bde shes mya ngen ’das pa’i ’og i dus das ’das nas’ byung ba ni / gang zhiq sten pa’i ’dzin ’gyur te’i blo gros chon po khrod shes byo lho phyo byi da’i yul du ni / dge srong dpal ldan shes bya ba’i de dnges kha zhed bod pa ste i yod dang med pa’i phyo byi ’jig pa’i ngya sten pa’i ‘jig rten dir / bla med thon neg rab bshad nas / Rab tu dga’ ba’i sa sbgrubs te i de ba can du de’gro’i zhes pa’i rim pa’i nas na de bzhin gshes po bya’i sngag la mya ngen las’ das kyang / ji srid ’jig rten du dam pa’i chos gnas pa de srid kyi bar du / rdo rje the pa la run / byor chen pa’i rgyud kyi lung la bya’i nas bskyed pa’i rgyis rtags pa’i rim pa rtags po bya ba / stob dpon chen po KLaa sgrub kyi zhal snas nas brtse te steg dang / dra bar / stob dpon rnamz bygyud pa’i rgyis bla ma’i zhal nas i so sor rang
can serve as the cause of complete buddhahood. See also mKhals grub rje’s rGyud sde phyi rnam. Toh. no. 5489. Collected Works, vol. nyo, which has been edited and translated by F. Lessing and A. Wayman (The Hague: Mouton, 1959), for further discussion on this point; Ruegg, TTT, p. 357, makes reference to mKhals grub rje’s treatment of this subject in his Kālacakrā commentary.

20. Refers to the six major philosophical works of Nāgārjuna, enumerated by mKhals grub rje below as follows: (1) the Mālamadhyamakākārikās, (2) the Yuktāsūṭkākārikās, (3) the Śāntasaptapatti, (4) the Viprahaśvatara, (5) the Vaidalyasūtra and (6) the Ramāvatī. For Western scholarly treatment of the subject, see van der Kuip’s bibliographical note in “LLong ston Shes rab dpal,” p. 61, n. 3. The point being made here is that the emptiness taught in the tantras is no different from that taught in the sūtras, namely the emptiness of Nāgārjuna and his followers. mKhals grub rje is known to have criticized certain Sa skya scholars for their overly Cittamātrā interpretation of emptiness in a tantric context.

21. Sākya mchog ldan implies the existence of a Madhyamaka school based on the doctrine of emptiness as taught in the Kālacakrā and in the rDo rje gur. This most likely refers to the ‘emptiness of what is other’ interpretation of the Madhyamaka popular among the Jo nang pas. See his dbu ma’i byung tshul, p. 215.

22. KLong rdol bla ma, among others, makes it clear in his writings that this is the Tibetan name under which the Śrī Pāramārthaśevas of Purandarika, Toh. no. 1348, rGyud na, folios 1–20a, was known. As it turns out, however, the passage is not found in that work, nor in one by a similar name, the Vimalaprabhā section entitled Rang dang gzhon gyi lla ba rigs pas rnam par dpal pa mdo bsdus. P no. 2064, rGyud ‘grel ka, folios 213a–227a. See also Ruegg’s TTT, pp. 340, 357 and the following note.

23. The source is cited incorrectly by mKhals grub rje. Instead of being found in the Pāramārthaśevas (see previous note) we find the verse in the work that follows it in the bsTan gyur, namely the Srimān Vimalaprabhāntāntrāvatānāvadāhdayādityāloka. Toh. no. 1349, rGyud na, folio 20b. Sākya mchog ldan treats this verse in his dba’i ma’i byung tshul, p. 216–217; and also in his Shing rta chen po srol gnis kyi rnam par dbyer ba bshad nas nges don gcig tu bgrag pa’i bstan bcos kyi rgyas ‘grel, in Two Controversial Madhyamaka Treatises (Thimphu, Bhutan: n.d.), pp. 323, 349–350, where the word rnam dpal (analysis) reads instead rnam bca’ (negation). Hence, in this latter work Sākya mchog ldan takes the passage as criticizing a strictly negative approach to emptiness; that is, as criticizing emptiness as mere negation. In the former it is clear that he cites the verse in his treatment of certain proponents of Tibetan Madhyamaka who believed that the view of emptiness could be arrived at experientially or intuitively rather than through analysis. Be that as it may, it seems clear that this passage was utilized by the Jo nang pas and gZhan stong pas as a scriptural source for their more positive and experiential approach to reality.

24. That this is in fact a Jo nang pa view (see previous note) is also witnessed by the fact that Mi bskyod rdo rje attributes a very similar view to the Jo nang pas sect when he states: “Jo nang pas’i thal rang sogs nge bo nyid med smra’i dbu ma de rang"
stong chu shing lai snying po med cing rtags pa ma yin pas 'khor lo tha ma dang gsang sngags nas bshad pa'i dbyu ma'i lha ba ma yin te'i gzhDan stong 'das ma byas rtags pa rang 'byung rten 'brel las 'das pa'i don dam bden pa ma yin pa'i phyir.'" dbyu ma la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad, folio 9a. Consider Sākyamchog Idan's remarks in his Shing ra chen po'i srol gnys kyi rnam par byed ba bshad nas nges don gcig tu bsgrub pa'i bstan bcos kyi rgyas 'grel, pp. 322–323: "yang gzhDan dag ngo bo nyid med par smra ba'i gzhung lugs su bshad pa'i stong po nyid ni! phung po rnam bcead kyi stong po nyid ces bya ba chu shing lai snying po med pa de kho na yin gyi." He then goes on to criticize this strictly negative conception of emptiness by showing that there are Madhyamaka texts that offer a positive conception of emptiness as "the emptiness experienced by the gnosics of yogis" (rnal 'byor pa'i ye shes kyi nyams su myong bar bya ba'i stong nyid).

25. An exhaustive search of this enormous work has failed to produce these lines.
26. P. no. 2064, rGyud 'gle kha, folios 207b–262a, especially folio 220a passim.
27. Ibid., folio 136b.
28. Ibid., folio 136b.
29. Ibid., folio 219b.
30. Ibid., folio 224a.
31. Whereas the Prajñāpāramitā, that is, the vehicle of the perfections, explains it to be objectless (dmigs med). See, for example, the Aryaprajñāpāramitāsamantāvasūtra, folio 3a passim.
32. Ibid., folio 222b.
33. P. no. 5330, dbyu ma'ki, folio 241b; see also the Catus̄katakiṣā of Candrakīrti, P. no. 5266, dbyu ma'yu, folio 103b passim. The following five citations are all taken from the Sūtrasamuccaya.
34. I have been unable to find any reference to this work in the bKa' 'gyur, though it is cited in the Sūtrasamuccaya.
35. Cited in the Sūtrasamuccaya, P no. 5330, dbyu ma'ki, folio 241b, which differs somewhat from the TTC: "'Jam dpal byang chub sems dpa' thabs la mkhas pa dang bral ba bskal pa brgya stong du pha rol du phyin pa drug la sbyod pas gang gi chos kyi rnam grang 'di la thshom dang bcas pa rnam pa'i bsdos rnam de bas ches bsdos rnam mang du bskyed na! gang dag la thshom med par rnam pa lha ci smos'
37. I have been unable to find reference to this work in the bKa' 'gyur, though it is cited in the Sūtrasamuccaya, folio 242b. But ston, in his Chos 'byung, p. 226, states that this work, in four bams pos, has been lost. The passage is also cited by Tsong kha pa in rTsa shes 'tik chen (Sarnath: DGe lugs pa Students' Welfare Committee, 1973), p. 11.
38. Sometimes translated as "heinous sin"; literally, a "sin without intermission," referring to actions so severely nonvirtuous that (at least according to the Ti-betan tradition) they bring immediate rebirth in hell without the usual rebirth into the intermediate state (bar do). See Mark Tatz, Asanga's Chapter on Ethics with the Commentary of Tsong kha pa (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), p. 176.
39. There exists a chapter in the Lalitavistara by this name but the present citation is not from this source. Cited in Sūtrasamuccaya, folio 243a.
40. Toh. no. 216, mDo sde tsha, folio 267b; cited in Sūtrasamuccaya, folio 243b; also cited in rTsa shes 'tik chen, Sarnath ed., p. 12.
41. Compare to BPD, p. 349, folio 3b, p. 354, folio 13aff.
42. See Introduction. This is an attack on a view prevalent among certain Tibetan Madhyamakas interpreters called not existence, not nonexistence (yod min med min), which claimed that emptiness was a middle path between existence and nonexistence instead of being the path between inherent existence and nonexistence, the view of Tsong kha pa and his followers. Some members of this school apparently distinguished between nihilism (med par lla ba) and "the view that things do not exist" (chos rnam yod par ma yin par lla ba), the latter being their own view. KDJ here says that there is no difference between these two views, implicitly equating the position of this school to nihilism. Consider, in this regard, Sākyamchog Idan's remarks in dbyu ma'i byung tshul, p. 214: "ngo bo nyid med par smra ba'i dbyu ma'i lam ni r rang gi dbyu ma'i lla ba'ngos 'dzin gyi tshes na' 'di lta bu shes ngos 'dzin par mi nus! de'i tshes na mthar ma sngon ba'i shes bya mi srid pa'i phyir / dper na yod med dang yin ma yin dang ring thung la sogs pa' 'jig rten pa dang / ogros sma phan tshun spangs te gnas par khas len pa de dag go!" For a more extensive discussion and critique of this view, see Se ra'gle ston Chu'khyi rgyal mtshan, Zab mo stong po nyid kyi lla ba la log ral 'go par byed pa'i bstan bcos lla ba ngan po'i mun sel (Delhi: Champa Choegyal, 1969), his two volume critique of the Sa'kyas scholars Sākyamchog Idan and Go rab' byams pa.
44. (II, 19); P mDo 'gle grel, folio 134b.
46. (XII, 12cd); P dbyu ma' tsha, folio 15a. See also, Karen Lang, Āryadeva's Catus̄katakiṣā: On the Bodhisattva's Cultivation of Merit and Knowledge (AC), Indiske Studier 7 (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1986), pp. 114–115.
47. A work of Candrakīrti; P no. 5246, dbyu ma'yu, folio 256a.
49. MA (VI, 5d-7a), pp. 78-79.

50. See Chr. Lindtner’s Nāgārjuniana (Copenhagen: Academisk Forlag, 1982), pp. 88-89. Lindtner here mistranslates the first line by ignoring the particle nas, which clearly is meant to connote the fact that the belief in karma is a direct result of an understanding of emptiness, an important point for mkhas grub rje.

51. P no. 5336, dBu ma ki, folio 52b. See Tsong kha pa’s remarks on this particular vow of the bodhisattva in Tatz, Asanga’s Chapter, pp. 176-177.

52. P no. 5266, dBu ma ya, folio 212b-213a.

53. mkhas grub rje is paradigmatic of the dGe legs pa exegetes in having great disdain for short and pithy teachings known as man ngsag. The point that he makes here he will make again and again throughout the TTC, namely, that the way to a true understanding of Buddhism is not through mystical oral traditions, passed down in secret from master to disciple, but through the long and arduous study and analysis of scriptures. A later critique along these same lines is to be found in kLong rdo rla ma; see Introduction, note 33.

54. LRCM. folios 367b-369b.

55. One of the most important concepts in the work, mkhas grub rje, following Tsong kha pa’s Drang nges legs bshad snying po (LSN), Collected Works, vol. pha (all references to the Lhasa Zhol edition unless otherwise specified), attempts to set forth in the TTC a hermeneutical theory, one that gives the Mahāyāna adepts a key to the correct interpretation of the Mahāyāna sūtras. He does this by showing how three Mahāyāna schools, the Yogācāra, Vātsyānātra, and Prāsaṅgika, use the concepts of definitive and provisional meaning to interpret the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras. Although we shall have the opportunity in what follows to witness for ourselves the complexity of this hermeneutic, for now suffice it to say that a sūtra (or sūtra passage) is of definitive meaning if it teaches the Buddha’s ultimate and final perfections. A sūtra is of provisional meaning if it must be interpreted; that is, if it cannot be taken literally. In recent years a great deal of literature has appeared on this topic. See R. A. F. Thurman, “Buddhist Hermeneutics,” Journal of the American Academy of Religion (JAAR) 46 (1978); J. I. Cabeza, “The Concepts of Truth and Meaning in the Buddhist Scriptures,” JAAS 4, no. 1 (1981); E. Lamotte, “Assessment of Textual Interpretation in Buddhism” (a translation of an article that first appeared in French in 1949), in D. O. Lopez, ed., Buddhist Hermeneutics (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), pp. 11-28; and Lopez’s own article in that volume, “On the Interpretation of the Mahāyāna Sūtras”; See also EE, p. 116ff; A. Wayman, CMDR, pp. 178-180; DAE, pp. 244-251.

56. Vasubandhu, throughout his Vyākhyāyukti, P no. 5562, Sems tsa si, folios 31b-156a; D Toh. no. 4061, Sems tsa si, folios 29a-134b, characterizes his śrāvakas opponents as hermeneutically naive because of their adherence to the position that the Buddha’s words need no interpretation. I am currently engaged in a project of critically editing and translating this text. See my “Vasubandhu’s Vyākhyāyukti on the Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Sūtras,” forthcoming in the Minoru Kyōto jissōkō volume. See also the Bhusya on Abhidharmakosā (AK) (III, 28ab) for a debate between a Sautrāntika and a Vaibhāṣika on the nature of definitive and provisional sūtras.

57. See previous note. This subject is also treated in great detail in the fourth chapter of the Tarkajāvalī, P dBu ma dza, folio 160aff; in the literature associated with Bodhicaryāvatāra (BCA) (IX, 40-46), P no. 5272, dBu ma la, folio 36b-37a; especially interesting are the remarks of Prajñākaramati’s Pañjikā, Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva with the Commentary Pañjikā of Prajñākaramati, ed. P. L. Vaidya (Darbhanga: Mathila Institute, 1960), pp. 202-208, P no. 5273, dBu ma la, folios 242bff; see also BCA Vīrtipāñjikā, P no. 5274, dBu ma la, folio 390aff, which comments on verses that seem to be unknown to Prajñākaramati.

58. See André Bareau’s Les Septes Bouddiques du Petit Véhicule (Saigon: École Francaise d’Études du Vietnam, 1955) for more on the history of the early splits within the Buddhist order. The best philosophical discussion of dGe legs pa views concerning the Sautrāntika school and its relation to the Madhyamaka is Anne Klein’s Knowledge and Liberation (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1986). An interesting discussion is also to be found in the fourth chapter of the Tarkajāvalī; see previous note.

59. See LSN, folios 24-41a; EE, pp. 191-252. According to the dGe legs pa, the Yogācāra or Cittamātra (“mind-only”) school is one of the two main philosophical schools (siddhānta, grub mtha) of the Mahāyāna. The chief human exponents of the school, such as Asanga and Vasubandhu, interpret essential Mahāyāna texts such as the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras to teach a brand of idealism that claims the nonexistence of external objects; see L. Schmithansen, “On the Problem of the Relation of Spiritual Practice and Philosophical Theory in Buddhism,” in German Scholars on India, Contributions to Indian Studies, vol. 2, (Bombay: Nachiketa Publications, 1976) for a different perspective on this question. Hence, for the Yogācāra, emptiness refers to the lack of duality (advaya, gnyis med) between perceiving subject, that is, mind, and perceived object, and hence the name mind-only, for in the dissolution of subject and object the former (the mind) was given ontological supremacy. In this system everything is said to be of the same substance as the mind. What mkhas grub rje will argue here is that over and above this more ontological presentation of Yogācāra tenets is an alternative linguistic formulation of the Yogācāra doctrine of emptiness, based on Asanga’s Bodhisattvaśāstra, a fact that was overlooked by Tibetan exegetes until Tsong kha pa. It must be remembered that mkhas grub rje is here expounding upon a system the Yogācāra or Cittamātra he believes ultimately to be faulty, in so far as its views differ from the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka, the highest viewpoint (mthar thug pa'i lta ba) according to dGe legs pa exegetes. At times, however, his analysis is so sympathetic, it gives one the false sense that these views he actually ascribes to, which is not to say that everything that he is covering is anathema to his own views. Still, the reader is advised not to be lulled into a false sense of security. Introductory overviews of the Yogācāra can be had by consulting A. K. Chatterjee, The Yogācāra Idealism, BHU Darsana Series no. 3 (Benares: Benares Hindu University, 1962); A. K. Warder, Indian Buddhism (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidis, 1970), pp. 423-462; P. Williams, Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations (London and New York: Routledge, 1989); and B. K. Matilal, “A Critique of Buddhist Idealism,” in L. Cousins et. al., eds., Buddhist Studies in Honor of I. B. Horner (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1974), pp. 139-169. More specialized studies include L. de la Vallée Poussin, Vijnaptimātratāsadhi: La Siddhi de Hiuan-tsang (Paris: Geuthner, 1928-29, 1948), 2 vols.; G. Tucci, On Some Aspects of

60. In his Vyākhāyuktī (P ed., folios 118a ff) Vasubandhu portrays the Madhyamaka interpretation of the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras as hermeneutically problematic because of this school’s insistence on taking these scriptures literally. What he then goes on to do is to show how these texts should be interpreted. Yogācāras such as Vasubandhu and Asaṅga use a three-step hermeneutic based on the Sanātana-Mahāyānacana Sūtra. The first step involves dividing all of the Buddha’s words into ‘three turnings,’ the second involves the creation of a hierarchy to the turnings such that the third becomes the definitive one (and hence the Buddha’s true purport); finally the last step involves going back to the second turning and explaining it (specifically, explaining why the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras claim that nothing exists) in terms of the doctrines of the final wheel (the three natures). See sTag tshang lo tsā ba, Grub mtha’ kun shes, pp. 188–194, for a similar treatment; also Verdu, Philosophy of Buddhism, pp. 59–64; also G. Nagao, ‘The Buddhist World-View as Elucidated in the Three Nature Theory and Its Similes,’ The Eastern Buddhist (1983): 1–18.


63. The reference is to Chapter 2, SS, vol. 1, pp. 24–47.


65. To say that it does so in condensed form is an understatement. As hardly mentions the three natures theory. See Le Compendium de la Super-Doctrine (Philos-
79. See sTseg tshang lo tsa ba’s Grub mtha’ kun shes, p. 153, who follows the same line as mkhas grub rje (and his master, Tsong kha pa) on this question to the point of even referring to the Legs bshad snying po at this point in his work.

80. Śākyā mchog Idan, throughout Shing rtu chen po gnyis kyi rnam dbyes . . . kyi rgyas ‘gre (see for example p. 472), takes the position that the doctrine that the real and the dependent truly exist is valid. He states, moreover, that this is a doctrine, not of the Cittamātra, but of the ‘‘Yogācāra Madhyamaka.’’ mkhas grub rje, of course, makes no such distinction between Yogācāra and Cittamātra and in addition maintains that the Madhyamaka would repudiate the fact that anything truly exists.

81. Regarding this point see Se ra lde brtsun pa’s critique of Go rab ‘byams pa in Zab mo . . . la ba ngan po’i mun sel, p. 585: ‘‘gzhlan dbang bden med du ’dod pa ni / Byang sa sogs Thogs med kyi gzhung dang ’gal thing t.’’

82. Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, folio 21a. See also SS, vol. 1, p. 77, vol. 2, pp. 200–201; and EE, p. 199.


85. Tö̃h. no. 4038, Sems tsam zi, folio 42b.

86. From the Viniśayasaṃgrahā, C Sems tsam zi, folio 43a; D Sems tsam zi, folio 42b.


88. (I, 1); R. C. Pandeya, Madhyāntavibhāga (Delhi, 1971), pp. 9, 13. For a complete discussion (one that in some ways goes contra to mkhas grub rje’s own commentary) and bibliographical references to sources that deal with this verse see Nagao, ‘‘What Remains,’’ pp. 69ff. See also EE, p. 226.

89. The dependent entity, a table, say, is what is empty, and the imputed, specifically duality, is what it is empty of. Hence, a typical Yogācāra formulation of the doctrine of emptiness (for them nonduality) is to say that the dependent is devoid of the imputed.


91. Also a work of Sthiramati; P Sems tsam ri, folios 142a–143b. See also EE, p. 228.


93. Ibid., pp. 136, 166, respectively. See also EE, p. 242, n. 81.


95. This subject is treated more extensively in Dignāga’s Pratīyāramātipiṇḍāraha; see G. Tucci’s edition of the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts and his English translation in JRAI (1947): 53–75.

96. Abhidharmasamuccaya (II, 2); Rahulā ed., pp. 141–142.

97. What is actually meant or intended when naturelessness or emptiness is taught in the Pratīyāramātipiṇḍāraha. On this concept see D. S. Ruegg, ‘‘Purport, Implicite and Presupposition: Sanskrit Abhidharma and Tibetan dCongs pa / dCongs gzhis,’’ HP 13 (1985): 309–325.

98. See, for example, D mDo sde ca, folios 19b–20a.

99. This refers to those who have a definite śrāvakā vocation (nyan thos rig gnas). For more detailed discussion of this in the Yogācāra sources, see TTG, p. 73 passim.

100. Toh. no. 4038, Sems tsam zi, folio 114a. This seems to have as its source the Samdhinirmocana. See TTG, p. 74.

101. Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, folio 49a.

102. (XI, 54); Lévi, Asaṅga, p. 69; Vaidya, Madhyāntavibhāga, p. 69.

103. The hermeneutic here is similar to the one at work in the interpretation of the claims concerning nonarising. Here, however, the problem comes with the claims concerning one final vehicle (ekayāna), a notion anathema to (at least this branch of) the Yogācāra. The idea is to find ulterior motives for why the Buddha taught these doctrines if they were not meant to be taken literally.

104. Certain advocates of the ‘‘emptiness of what is other’’ tradition rely very heavily on the Cittamātra texts. See my comments on this subject in ‘‘The Canonization of Philosophy and the Rhetoric of Siddhānta in Tibetan Buddhism,’’ forthcoming in the Minoru Kiyota Festschrift.

105. Samdhinirmocana Sūtra, folio 22b.

106. Ibid., folio 17b.


108. As portrayed by mkhas grub rje here and by Go ram pa in his Ta ba’i shan ‘byed, pp. 3–8, 25–40, the advocates of this view claim that there are two versions of emptiness taught in the sūtras, a lesser one called the emptiness of self and a superior and more subtle one called the emptiness of what is other. The real ultimate truth is not the fact of a thing’s being empty of own nature but the fact of the ultimate’s emptiness of everything that is different from (other than) itself. This latter ultimate, they are
portrayed as claiming, truly exists, is stable, permanent, unchanging, and is further associated with the buddha-nature. An exhaustive study of this form of Madhyamaka interpretation is one of the great desiderata in the study of Tibetan Madhyamaka. Several short works on the subject do exist: D. Seyforth Ruegg, "The Jo nang pas: A School of Buddhist Ontology According to the Grub mtha’ shel gyi me long." JAOS 83 (1963): 73–91; and M. Broido, "The Jo-nang-pas on Madhyamaka: a sketch," Tibet Journal, 14, no. 1 (1989): 86–90. Works that deal with the topic only indirectly include P. Williams, "A Note on Some Aspects of Mi bskyod rdo rje’s Critique of dGe legs pa Madhyamaka." JHP 11 (1983): 125–145; and my own article, "The Canonization of Philosophy." Exponents of the doctrine include Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan, Tārānātha, Śākya mchog Idan, the eighth Karmapa pa Mi bskyod rdo rje, and a variety of figures from the Rīs med (nonsectarian) movement in eastern Tibet.

109. This is the beginning of mKhas grub rje’s critique of a view that must have been quite prevalent in Tibet. When Śākya mchog Idan, for example, describes in dbu ma’i byang tshul, p. 221, what it means to be “empty of own nature” (rang gi no bos stong pa), he gives an interpretation that in part involves the rang stong doctrine being criticized here. He states that there is a pillar of empty of two natures: the conventional nature of the pillar, which is the pillar itself (ka ba kha bas stong pa), and the ultimate nature of the pillar, which cannot be found under analysis.

110. See EE, pp. 197–199, 225–226. The classical example is that of a magician arranging stones and pieces of wood together as the basis onto which he will cast a spell that will make it seem as if this basis is a real horse or elephant.

111. Lêvi, Asanga, p. 59; Vaidya, Madhyāntavibhāga, p. 59. See also EE, p. 225.

112. The Madhyamaka theory of the illusion is treated later in great detail, see the Svātantrika section (4.2.3.1–3.2).

113. A work attributed to Aryadeva, P dbu ma rsha, folios 32a–32b; see IB, p. 245; also K. Mimaki, “Le Commentaire de Mi Pham sur le Jñānaśārasamuccaya,” in Hércules et al., Indological and Buddhist Studies, pp. 353–376.

114. See the explanation of the Bodhisatvatvamāna passage on pp. 43–44.

115. This is the linguistic formulation of the Yogācāra doctrine of emptiness, which will be dealt with in more detail later. mKhas grub rje’s point is that up to the time of Tsong kha pa this alternative (and more profound) exposition of the Yogācāra theory of emptiness was unknown in Tibet. See the next note.

116. Compare the first few paragraphs of this section with mKhas grub rje’s remarks in Lam ngan mun sel sgyon ma. Collected Works, vol. ta., folios 173a and 174a, where he characterizes Tsong kha pa’s interpretation of the Cittamātra as superior (khyad par du phags pa) to those existing in Tibet at the time because of its compatability with the fourfold siddhānta schema of doctrinal classification. See also my “The Canonization of Philosophy.” What follows is one of the most difficult sections of the TTC. Briefly, mKhas grub rje is trying to make four major points here.

1. Tsong kha pa was unique in pointing out a linguistic formulation of the Yogācāra doctrine of emptiness, based on the Bodhisatvatvamāna.

2. The formulation states that there is no essential relationship between an object and its name, so that form, for example, does not exist as the linguistic referent of the word form (or as the basis of the thought form) by virtue of its own characteristic.

3. This linguistic formulation has several features in common with the Sautrāntika school of Buddhist philosophy. At face value it may seem to be saying nothing more than that the meaning of words is something unreal, a universal. mKhas grub rje maintains, however, that the Yogācāra theory is more subtle than this, implying as it does a more general theory of the relationship between language and reality.

4. This linguistic formulation of the doctrine is the equivalent (and mutual implication) of the more popular formulation, namely, that of the nonduality of subject and object.

117. That is to say, the Legs bshad snying po; see Introduction, note 18.

118. I am using the noun predicate and the corresponding verb, to predicate, in what is perhaps a nonstandard way that includes simple naming. Hence to call form is to predicate of it an essential predicate, that is, a name; to call it impermanent is to predicate of it a particular predicate ("particular" in the sense that it points out a distinctive quality, as opposed to pointing out an essential quality, of form). Everything of which one predicates "form" must be form, but not everything of which one predicates "impermanence" need be form.

119. The critique that follows speaks not only to those among mKhas grub rje’s contemporaries who held such a view but to many a contemporary scholar who held to the fact that the idealistic (Cittamātra) theory of nonduality was a later innovation, unknown to Asanga.

120. The concept of viññapti is one of the most difficult in Buddhist literature to understand because of the diversity in its use. Explanations of the term in Yogācāra contexts occur in a variety of sources, see n. 59; see also B. C. Hall, “The Meaning of Viññapti in Vasubandhu’s Concept of Mind,” JABS 9, no. 1 (1986): 7–23.


122. SGV, vol. 1, p. 31; vol. 2, p. 105. The classic example being implied here is that of water. It is said that a man will see a fluid as water, a prata as pus and blood, and a god as nectar. This is seen as substantiating the idealistic claim that everything is of the same substance as the mind. This subject is treated in great detail in the Prāsangika section. See the section entitled “Sens Perception Across World Spheres: The Case of Water.” See also MA, pp. 164 passim; also BGR, folio 152a passim; the subject is also dealt with by Go ram pa, see Tla ba’i shan ‘byed, pp. 61–65.

123. See Tucci, “Prajñāpāramitāśāntā”; and also EE, p. 242, n. 81.

124. In kLong rdol bla ma Ngāg dbang blo bzang’s Rgyas ‘bring bsdus gsum, Byam chos sde Inga, bKa’ gdams gzhungs drug, bZhi rgya pa sogs kyi ming gi rnam
grangs (Buxador edition, undated) (p. 4) he says: "The ten misconceptions are: (1) eternalism (ttag lta), (2) nihilistic view (chad lta), (3) reification (sro 'dogs), (4) nihilism (bskur 'debs), (5) viewing unitarity as a true thing (gcig tu 'bden par lta ba), (6) viewing differentiation as a true thing (tha dad du 'bden par lta ba), (7) viewing specific [properties] as true and (8) viewing essential properties as true (khyad par dang ngo bo la 'bden par lta ba), (9) viewing names as true and (10) viewing meanings as true (ming dang don la 'bden par lta ba). Or again, the ten unstable conceptions [can be explained as] ten forms of misapprehending these ten things as true: names and meanings (ming don), the existence or nonexistence of the nature [of things] (ngo bo yod med), reification and nihilism (sro bsuk), unitary and differentiation (gcig dang tha dad), and essential and specific [properties] (ngo bo dang khyad par)."

125. See RGYal tshab Dar ma rin chen's comments in Thar lam gsal byed (Sarnath: dGe ldan spiyi las khang, 1974), vol. 1, p. 79, on the meaning of the term svalaṅkaṇa (rang mthshan) in Dharmakīrti and the Madhyamaka, respectively. Here KD1 makes it clear that the own-characteristic within the expression "existing by virtue of its own characteristic" is the same svalaṅkaṇa qua particular of Dharmakīrti's system by his contrasting it to universals (sāmānyalakṣaṇa, spyi mthshan) of the latter. See also A. Klein, Knowledge and Liberation (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1986), especially pp. 13–140, for more detail on the background of the issues being discussed here.

126. "Form's being" is an abstract fact and, therefore, by definition, it is something that exists only nominally.

127. Which is to say that form is form and that it does arise.

128. See the section entitled "The Proof of the Linguistic Interpretation of Emptiness" for a translation of the complete verse, considered to be the locus classicus for the proof of the linguistic interpretation of the theory of emptiness in the Yogācāra school. See also SGV, vol. 1, p. 36; vol. 2, p. 119; and STag tshang lo tsa ba's Grub mtha' kun shes, for an explanation of this and related verses.

129. According to the epistemological theories of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the chief object of sense perception is a real particular (svalaṅkaṇa), whereas the chief object of conceptual thought is a universal (sāmānyalakṣaṇa), a phenomenon that exists only nominally. mKhas grub rje is here making the point that even though sense perception does not apprehend nominal entities, such entities can nonetheless appear to it.


131. SGV, vol. 1, p. 25; vol. 2, pp. 88–89.


133. See the section entitled "On Latent Potentialities."

134. The reason for this being, of course, that in the Sautrāntika system all entities (vastu or svalaṅkaṇa) exist by virtue of their own characteristic, their own particularity. For an alternative view on this point see STag tshang lo tsa ba, Grub mtha' kun shes, p. 117: "'do sde pas dngos po la rang gi mthsan nyid kyi grub pas khyab par smra'o zhes Bod na mang po mgren gcig tu smra ba ni / gzhung lugs rgya chen po la ma sbyang par ma zad"; see also his p. 125.

135. In other words, because sensory perception gives rise (or elicits) conceptualization, it is said to contain within it, in a latent form, that is, in the form of appearance, the seeds for that conceptualization, namely, the appearance of blue as the basis of statements like "this is blue," "blue is form," and so on.

136. Cognizing (chen pa) also has the connotation of "appearing to conceptual thought." Hence, the psychological process being described here is one in which form first appears to sense perception to be the basis of everything that can be predicated of it, in which this then appears to conceptual thought and in which linguistic-conceptual thought then makes the actual predication.

137. mKhas grub rje's usage of the term zhen pa, which I am translating "cognition" or "to cognize," is such that it need not be inerrant, as in the present case.

138. LSN (all references to the Zhod ed.), folio 30b. See EE, p. 234 n. 4 for a lengthy discussion of this passage.

139. This is an implicit critique of the quietists, who maintain that all forms of conceptual thought must be abandoned. mKhas grub rje, following the Indian gradualists like Kamalāśīla, claims that though all conceptual thoughts are erroneous, that is, mistaken in terms of what appears to them, they are not all mistaken, (that is, in regard to their principal object). Certain nonmistaken ones, moreover, can and do serve as the basis for systematic mental purification.

140. These refer, of course, to the three causal conditions that are said to give rise to a sensory consciousness: the immediately antecedent condition (de ma thag rkyen), that is, the previous moment of consciousness; the objective condition (dmigs rkyen), that is, the external object that will be experienced; and the dominant condition (bdag rkyen), that is, the appropriate sense organ.


142. On the four kinds of conditions (pratītya), see AK (II, 61c), passim. The problem here is simple: the objects that these particular latent potentialities are presumably "causing" are, for the most part, unreal, imaginary things (and therefore un-caused, permanent phenomena). mKhas grub rje sees himself as solving the problem by making the distinction between "causing" and "conditioning." These latent potentialities "condition" these imaginary objects without causing them, for they have no causes.

143. See LSN, folios 31a–31b.

144. SGV, vol. 1, p. 36; vol. 2, p. 119, which has nges for 'dres in the second line, and 'gal bar for 'gal bas in the fourth. I follow the SGV reading in the first case, and KDJ's in the second in my translation.

145. This is the classical definition (mthsan nyid) of a vase or pot. See Klein, Knowledge and Liberation, pp. 188–189. One of the most complete treatments of the
issue of definition is to be found in G. B. J. Dreyfus, "Some Considerations on Definition in Buddhism: An Essay on the Use of Definitions in the Indo-Tibetan Epistemological Tradition" (Master's Thesis, University of Virginia, 1987).

146. The fictitious opponent in all of these arguments is the realist who maintains that phenomena are inherently the referents of the terms that name them.

147. See Mahāvyutpattī (MV), entry no. 3848.

148. Here the words exist by virtue of being a svalakṣaṇa (rang mthos gis grub pa) and exist by virtue of its own characteristic (rang gi mthos nyid khyis grub pa) are used interchangeably by mKhas grub rje, though whether this is appropriate is a point debated in the commentarial tradition.

149. On this concept, see section 4.2.3.1.2.2.3.

150. In other words, sense consciousness involves duality because it is a perception in which subject and object appear to be different (yul dang yul can tha dad du snang ba).

151. LSN, folio 32a. See also EE, p. 238 and n. 77.


153. In other words, if the only valid exposition of the Viśṇupītādīrā was that of nonduality, then all of the times the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras negate phenomena ("there is no form . . . "), it would have to be taken by the Viśṇu-pītādīrā as referring to nonduality and nothing more. But in the case of something like noncompounded space, an overly imaginary entity, there is never the doubt that it is anything but the result of human mental conceptualization, and hence never any doubt that it is an external object in the first place, making the repudiation by the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras of this fact alone an absurdity. Hence, claims mKhas grub rje, there must be another (more profound) interpretation, namely the linguistic one, that the Yogācāra take to be the ultimate meaning of the apparently nihilistic claims of the Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras.

154. LSN, folio 34a.

155. This is evident from the fact that it is a consciousness and hence an impermanent or dependent entity.

156. This represents a logical break in the text, and what follows of the Yogācāra section seems to be a series of addenda more than a real continuation of what has preceded. It could very well have been added as an afterthought, especially because at other portions of the text stanzas of intermissions represent major transition points marked by numerical divisions. On the function of these types of verses see K. Mi-
doctrine must have been the Áryatathāgatamahākarunānīrdeśa. Toh. no. 147, mDo sde pa, folio 181a, where it states: "nges pa'i don gang yin pa de / don dam pa yang yin pa de / gang zug med pa'i don to!"


175. Toh. no. 175, mDo sde ma, folio 150a. For the Sanskrit, see Pras, p. 14, and EE, p. 253. See also MOE, p. 598 and note 537; and DAE, p. 246 and note 311.

176. Sāmādhīrāja (VII, 5); Toh. no. 127, mDo sde da, folio 20b. See Pras, p. 44, and EE, p. 254; see also MOE, p. 600 and note 541, as well as DAE, p. 248 and note 314.

177. For a very lucid explanation of what is meant by a provisional sātra see Napper's translation of the Annotations to LRCM in DAE, pp. 374-375.

178. Here, the father and the mother are said to refer to karma and the afflictions. These are the two chief impediments to liberation, obstacles that must be destroyed to halt the process of involuntary rebirth. The verse is found in the Dhammapada, ed. S. Sumangala Thera, PTS (London, 1914), v. 294, where it reads "mātaram piṭaram hantvā / rājano dve ca khaṭiyā / rathmā sāncararam hantvā / aniggho yāti brāhmaṇo!". It is also found in Netipakaranā, a postcanonical work (London: Luzac and Co., 1961), p. 165. S. De 'dun chos 'phel's translation of the verse reads "ma dang pha ni bsad bya zhing / rgyal po rgyal rgyis po dang / yul 'khor 'bangs bras bsad byas na / nges med bram ze nyid du 'gyur!". For an interesting gloss of a somewhat faulty translation of this verse from the Tibetan, see Dhammapada (Oakland, Calif.: Dharma Press, 1985), p. 149. See also Udānavarga (tib. Tshoms), Toh. no. 4099, mNgon pa tu, folio 31a.


180. The Svatāntrikas believe that a sātra of definitive meaning must deal not only with emptiness as its principal subject matter (a criterion they share with the Prāśāṅgikas), but it must be able to be taken literally. Of course, the latter is never the case if it contradicts the evidence of a valid cognition. So principally, the fact that emptiness is the actual subject matter of a text becomes the common criterion (always necessary but not sufficient) for determining a scripture to be of definitive meaning in the Madhyamaka.

181. See LRCM, folios 369b-371a.

182. For a similar exposition in Tsong kha pa see the rtSa shes tshig chen, in rJe rin po che'i gsung lta ba'i skor (Collected Madhyamaka Works), Dharmasala ed., pp. 463-468. For alternative classifications see Sākya mchog ldan, dbu ma'i byung thsl, pp. 19-220; and Rong ston Sākya rgyal tshan, dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad nges don rnam nges, in Two Controversial Madhyamaka Treatises (Bhutan), pp. 6-7. Go ram pa, BPD, p. 351, folio 7a-b, also discusses different groupings of Nāgārjuna's works popular in Tibet. See also DAE, pp. 384-406; MOE, pp. 591-594; and SOS, pp. 55 passim.

183. sBgyor ba rgya pa, Toh. no. 4306.

184. Shes rab brgya pa shes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa, Toh. nos. 4328 and 4501.

185. mDo kan las bdu pa, Toh. no. 3934. See also D. S. Ruegg, The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India (LMS) (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), pp. 29, 84, 124.

186. As opposed to the Śārasanamuccaya in which he demonstrates the scriptural foundations for the doctrine. Concerning the enumeration of the six treatises, see L. W. J. van der Kuijp, "Dlong-ston Shes-rab-dpal and a Version of the Tshad-ma rigs-pa'i-rgyer in Thirteen Chapters," BIS, Band 2 (1986): 61, n. 3; and J. W. de Jong, "Les Madhyamakafāstrautstriit de Candrakīrti," Oriss Extrema 9 (1962): 48, for a list of Nāgārjuna's texts studied by Candrakīrti.


189. sTong pa snyid bstan cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa, Toh. no. 3827. A complete translation and critical edition exists in D. R. Komito, Nāgārjuna's "Seventy Stanzas" (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1987); also in Chr. Lindtner, Nāgārjunaiana.

190. rTsdod pa bzlog pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa, Toh. no. 3828. Although several translations exist, notably those of Yamaguchi, Tucci, and Streng, the most recent translation, based on the critical edition of the Sanskrit by Johnston and Kunst, is to be found in K. Bhattacharya, The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna: The Vīgrahavyāvartant (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978); see also B. K. Matilal, The Logical Illumination of Indian Mysticism (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978); LMS, pp. 8 passim; IB, pp. 238-239; and M. Siderits, "The Madhyamaka Critique of Epistemology, I," JIP 8 (1980): 307-355.

191. Shib mo rnam par thag pa shes bya ba'i mdo, Toh. no. 3826. Critically edited and translated by Y. Kajiyama in Ashika Zema Commemorative Volume, pp. 129-155. See LMS, p. 8 passim; also IB, p. 239.

192. dbu ma rin po che'i phreng ba, Toh. no. 4158. Translation of Sanskrit fragments by G. Tucci in "Ratnāvali of Nāgārjuna," JRAS (1934): 307-325; (1936): 237-252, 423-435. See IB, pp. 241-242; also M. Hahn, Nāgārjuna's Ratnāvali (Bonn: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1982), vol. 1; N. Samten's forthcoming critical edition (Sarnath: Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies); also, L. W. J. van der Kuijp,

193. These sixteen categories or padārthas are listed in the first verse of the Nyāya Sūtras; see S. C. Vidyabhushana, ed. and trans., revised and edited by N. Sinha, The Nyāya Sūtras of Gotama (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1981; reprint of the 1930 ed.), pp. 1, 2.

194. MMK (I, 3); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 1b.

195. This is the first verse of the Vīramahāvāraṇti. See K. Bhattacharya, The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna, p. 11.

196. MMK (VII, 34). P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 7a.

197. P no. 5225, dBu ma tsa, folio 23a.

198. Ibid. folio 22a.

199. See E. Obermiller, “Nirvāṇa according to the Tibetan Tradition,” Indian Historical Quarterly 10, no. 2 (1934): 211–257.

200. The achievement of higher rebirth based on the accumulation of virtuous action through the practice of morality and so forth is considered but a temporary goal in Buddhism. In contrast to this are the spiritual exercises of the individuals of middling and great scope; if we consider a lam rim classification schema, who strive toward the goals of permanent peace (nirvāṇa) and eventually buddhahood, here called the definitive good. A concise introduction to the lam rim literature, in many ways one of the foundational presuppositions of mKhas grub rje, is to be found in Geshe Rabten, The Essential Nectar, ed. and trans. M. Wilson (London: Wisdom Publications, 1984).

201. For an equivalent treatment from a slightly different perspective see Sākya mchog Idan’s dBar ma’i byang chub, pp. 219–221; Rong ston pa’s dBar ma’i byug pa’i rnam bshad, pp. 7–8; and Go ram pa’s BPd, pp. 352–353, folios 10b–12a. See also A. Wayman, Calming the Mind and Discerning the Real (CMDR) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 181–183; EE, p. 33 passim; and LMS, p. 47 passim.

202. The dates of Āryadeva, who is a direct disciple of Nāgārjuna, are roughly those of his master, and as the latter are to a great extent a matter of speculation, the former are as well. See LMS, pp. 50–54; IB (p. 244) gives the dates as 170–270 C.E. See also E. Obermiller, trans., Bu ston’s History of Buddhism in India and Tibet, Part II of History of Buddhism (HOB), Materialien zur Kunde des Buddhismus (Heidelberg: Otto Harrassowitz, 1932), pp. 130–131; AC, p. 7–24; EE, pp. 36–39.

203. bsTan bcos bshi rgya pa shes bya ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa, Toh. no. 3846. A translation from the Chinese exists in G. Tucci, Pre-Diānāgā Buddha Texts on Logic from Chinese Sources, Gaekwad Oriental Series no. 49 (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1929); a critical edition of the Tibetan with Sanskrit fragments and translation is K. Lang, AC. See also IB, p. 244; LMS, pp. 50ff.

204. On this division into two schools, something which appears to be unknown in India, see LMS, pp. 58–59; see also P. Williams, “Introduction—Some Random Reflections,” p. 1. For a bibliography of recent work on the Śvātantra school, see SOS, pp. 427–438.


209. As opposed to being a commentary on a specifically prior extant work.

210. dBar ma’i snying po tshig le’ur byas pa, Toh. no. 3855. The second chapter is considered by V. V. Ghokhale, III 14, nos. 1–2 (1972): 40–42. The first sixteen Kārikās of the eighth chapter were edited by Ghokhale, III 2, no. 3 (1958): 165–180. Most of the text has been studied by Japanese scholars; see IB, p. 284. See also the following note.

211. dBar ma snying po’i grel ba rtog ge’ bar ba, Toh. no. 3856. For the Sanskrit of the Hṛdaya, the Tibetan of the Tarkajāvūra, and an English translation of the entire third chapter, see Iida, Reason and Emptiness, pp. 52–242. For a study of Chapter 1, see V. V. Ghokhale and S. S. Balulkar, “Madhyamakādhikārakā Tarkajāvūra, Chapter 1,” in Miscellanea Buddhica, pp. 76–108.

212. See LMS, pp. 68–71. See also M. D. Eckel, Jñānagarbha’s Commentary on the Distinction between the Two Truths (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987), pp. 1–34; and SS, pp. 21 passim, especially p. 446. Nakamura (IB, p. 283) gives the dates of Bānagarbha as 700–760 C.E.

213. bDen pa gnis rnam par’ byed pa’i tshig le’ur byas pa, Tohoku no. 3881. Edited and translated by Eckel, Jñānagarbha’s Commentary (see previous note).
214. See LMS, pp. 88–93. There is considerable controversy over the dates of both Šantaraksitā and Kamalāśīla. On this see Nakamura’s comments in IB, p. 281, n. 73.

215. dbu ma rgyan gvi tshig le’ur byas pa, Toh. no. 3884. Kennard Lipman has undertaken a thorough study of this work in his doctoral dissertation (University of Saskatchewan, 1979), “A Study of Šantaraksitā’s Madhyamakālakāra.” See also I. Masamichi, “A Synopsis of the Madhyamakālakāra of Šantaraksitā,” Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies, (1972); I. Masamichi, ed. and trans., Madhyamakālakāra of Šantaraksitā with His Own Commentary or Vṛtti and with the Subcommentary or Pañjikā of Kamalāśīla (Kyoto: Buneido, 1985); and D. Jackson’s review of the latter in “A Recent Study of Šantaraksitā’s Madhyamakālakāra,” BIS, Band 2 (1986): 13–22; also IB, pp. 282–283.


217. dbu ma snang ba, Toh. no. 3887; LMS, pp. 94–96.


219. See LMS, pp. 101–102; he was a direct disciple of Šantaraksitā’s (see IB, p. 283); also HOB, pp. 156–159.

220. A disciple of Haribhadra. See LMS, p. 102; also HOB, pp. 159–160.

221. See LMS, pp. 114–115; IB, p. 335; also HOB, p. 219.

222. According to oral commentary on this point, the extent of Haribhadra’s similarity to Šantaraksitā is questionable, for he is said to dispute the fact that the Samdhinirmocana Sūtra teaches emptiness and that it is of definitive meaning, both attributes of Yogācāra Svāvāntarika Madhyamikas like Šantaraksitā. See also LMS, p. 115, as well as sTag tshang lo tṣā ba’s comments on the way that different Tibetans mistakenly subdivide the Svāvāntarika school in Grub mtha’ kun shes, pp. 212–213.


224. For a detailed summary of the controversy, one of the most important in the history of the Madhyamaka school, see MOE, pp. 441–530, and LMS, pp. 79–80; N. Katz, “An Appraisal of the Svāvāntarika-Prāsaṅgika Debates,” PEW 25, no. 3 (July 1976): 253–267. See also IB, pp. 247–252, 284–287; also EE, pp. 91–111.

225. dbu ma rtsa ba’i ’grel ba tshig gcal, Toh. no. 3860. The standard Sanskrit edition, used throughout the present work, is that of L. de la Vallée Poussin, Pras. For other editions and (partial) translations (de Jong, May), see IB, pp. 237–238. The latest portion of the work to come out in English is M. Sprung, Lucid Exposition of the Middle Way (Boulder: Prajna Press, 1979).

226. Rig pa drug cu pa’i ’grel pa, Toh. no. 3864; a translation of which is forthcoming from Cristina A. Scherrera-Schaub.

227. Byang chub senz dpa’i rnal ’byor spyod pa bshi rgya pa’i rgya cher ’grel pa, Toh. no. 3865.

228. dbu ma la ’jug pa and Rang ’grel (bShad pa), Toh. nos. 3861 and 3862. I have used throughout the present work the edition of the Tibetan by L. de la Vallée Poussin, MA. C. W. Huntington’s EOE is, to my knowledge, the only complete English translation of the root text; see also L. de la Vallée Poussin’s partial French translation (Paris), Le Mœvre, vols. 8, 11, 12 (1907, 1910, 1911); see also IB, pp. 285–287; LMS, pp. 7 passim.


230. Byang chub senz dpa’i spyod pa la’ jug pa, Toh. no. 3871. For a bibliography of available translations in Western languages, see IB, pp. 287–289. A translation of the entire text from the Tibetan was done by S. Batchelor, A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1979); it contains the mchan of Thogs med bzang po on the ninth chapter. See also LMS, pp. 82 passim.

231. Commentaries 2 through 5 are no longer extant, but see IB, p. 238, where Nakamura claims that fragments of Gunamati and Devaśarma exist in Tibetan. See EE, p. 265 and footnote. Ruegg (LMS, p. 49) states that the works mentioned in this list are mentioned in the colophon to the Akutobhāvya. This is most likely mKhas grub rje’s scriptural source. See also IB, pp. 236–238.

233. Ruegg (LMS, p. 49) has pointed out that Atiśa has substituted a commentary by Gunadhāta for that of Devārāma's, which he states is instead a commentary on the Prajñāprādipī of Bhavaya.

234. Preserved only in Chinese: Ta-ch'eng-chung-kuan-shih-lun, the first half of which is to be found in Taishō no. 1567, vol. 30; the latter half in the Manjū zōkyō. See IB, p. 238.

235. Prajñāprādipīkā, P no. 5259, dBu ma wa, folios 225a–226b. See LMS, p. 49, and EE, p. 265 n. If this is true, it contradicts Atiśa's belief that Devārāma's was a commentary on the Prajñāprādipī, implying the converse, that the Prajñāprādipī was based on Devārāma. An asterisked word signifies that it is a tentative reconstruction into Sanskrit based on the Tibetan.


237. Concerning this controversy see LMS, p. 48, especially note 120; also IB, pp. 236–237.

238. P no. 5229, folio 113a. Toh. no. 3846, dBu ma tsha, folio 98a. The verse from Āryadeva is from the Catuḥśatakā (VII, 5); AC, pp. 70–71. The slightly variant reading of the verse to be found in TTC does not affect the meaning. See also LMS, p. 48, n. 120.

239. MMK (1, 1); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 1a.

240. MMK (1, 3ab); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 1b.

241. MMK (1, 3cd); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 1b.

242. MMK (1, 2); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 1b.

243. MMK (1, 5ab); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 1b.

244. See LMS, pp. 104–108.

245. I have taken this as referring to the lineage of Guhyasamājā, though one could take the 'dus pa in its literal sense of "assembled". Nāgārjuna is held by the tradition to be the founder of the "Ārya" lineage of the Guhyasamāja, having composed a commentary on the root tantrā and on the pañcakramā. Candrakirti's Prādīpoddyotana (another important work of the Guhyasamāja lineage) has already been cited and discussed (p. 41). Western scholarship has opted for considering the tantric Nāgārjuna, Candrakirti, Āryadeva, and so forth as different from the Mādhyamikas by the same name; see LMS, pp. 105–106.

246. The verse is obscure and the reference to Buddha could be referring to Buddha-pāliita who, in the lineage, lies between Nāgārjuna and Candrakirti. More likely, however, the verse has been mistakenly quoted. See the next note.

247. The verse is quoted by Tsong kha pa in his Lam rim chen mo, folio 510b–511a, as follows: "ston nying gang gi tsogs she na i de bzhin gyag pas dang bstan cing i cho nying bden pa zigs pa yi i klu sgrub bslob ma Zla grags yin i de las bgyud pa'i man nes gis i cho nying bden par phags pa 'gyur i." In this version the last line of the TTC citation has been replaced by another line so that the entire passage now reads as follows: "How does one come to understand reality? One truly understands reality by means of the instructions of the lineage that descends from Candrakirti, the disciple of Nāgārjuna, who has perceived the true reality and who has been prophesied by the Buddha." Sākyā mchog Idan's dBu ma'i byung thsal, p. 233, has the same reading as the Lam rim chen mo version. The former adds this interesting aside: "Even though the works of Candra had not actually been translated when the Lord Atiśa came to Tibet, he composed several short explanatory treatises such as The Elucidation of the Two Truths, taught them to the virtuous friend Stōn pa, and since the profound philosophy in the lam rim tradition of the three individuals (of small, intermediate, and great scope) was then taken to be Candrakirti's system, in this way has it has passed down to this very day." For a similar view in another of Atiśa's texts, see R. Sherburne, A Lamp for the Path and Commentary, Wisdom of Tibet Series, vol. 5 (London: George, Allen and Unwin, 1983), p. 146, v. 26. See also Chr. Lindtner's "Atiśa's Introduction to the Two Truths and its Sources," JIP 9 (1981): 161–214.

248. Toh. no. 1785, rGyud ha, folio 1a (v. 1).

249. On Saraha and his relationship to Nāgārjuna, see LMS, pp. 54, 105, n. 333; and H. Guenther, trans., The Royal Song of Saraha (Berkeley and London: Shambhala, 1973).

250. These verses are not found in the Pradīpoddyotana, but they are to be found in Bhavyakirti's commentary to the latter, the Abhisamādhiprakāśikāmanda, Toh. no. 1793, rGyud ki, folio 2a. See LMS, p. 106, n. 339.

251. Toh. no. 1791, rGyud 'a, folio 171a.

252. See LMS, p. 107 and n. 343. There is a yogi by this name who is roughly a contemporary of Nāropa and Maitrīpa and perhaps a teacher of Atiśa, placing him approximately in the tenth century. But 'Gos lo tsa ba gZhon nu dpal, Black Annals (BA), trans. G. Roerich (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1976; reprint of the 1946 ed.), pp. 380, speaks of a Kṛṣṇācārya/cārin as belonging to the Cakrasamvara lineage, two generations before Tilopa, hence considerably earlier than the tenth century.

253. Also known as Nādapāda; see H. V. Guenther, The Life and Teachings of Nāropa (London: Oxford University Press, 1963); LMS, p. 116; and BA, pp. 180 passim.

254. Also known as Advayavajra; M. Tatz, "The Life of the Siddha-Philosopher Maitripa," JAOS 107, no. 4 (1987); see LMS, p. 107 and n. 342; BA, pp. 227 passim.

255. See earlier note 221. He was, of course, one of the leading figures in the Yogācāra Śvātantrika Mādhyamika school. See LMS, pp. 103, 114–115; BA, pp. 32 passim.

256. See note 250.
257. See note 251.

258. See BA, p. 1051, which puts him three generations after Jetari, presumably the earlier one c. 800 (see LMS, p. 100, n. 312), and two before Mal gyo lo tsba ba (eleventh-twelfth century).

259. If it is the same as Lalitavajra, then an eminent figure in the Vajrabhairava cycle; see BA, pp. 204, 367 passim.

260. De kho na nyid bcu pa, P nos. 2358 and 3080. CBTE, P no. 3099.

261. See van der Kuip's discussion in CBTE, p. 23 and especially n. 61; he was the abbot of Snar thang who flourished toward the end of the thirteenth century. None of his works seem to have survived, and what we know of him comes either from the critiques of his opponents or from historical sources. He is mentioned in Taranātha's Zab mo gzhon stong dbu ma'i brgbud 'debs (CBTE, p. 41). His principal logical work seems to have been the Tshad ma bstan bcos sde dbdan rgyan gyi me tog, though mKhas grub rje here seems to be referring to a separate commentary of his on the Pramāṇavimuccaya. See also EGW, p. 406, n. 106.

262. Of course, the extent of the harmony between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is a controversy that persists even today. See, for example, E. Franco, "Once Again on Dharmakīrti's Deviation from Dignāga on Pratyakṣābhidhāna," JIP 14 (1986): 79–97; see also R. Hayes, Dignāga on the Interpretation of Signs (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988).

263. Both this and the next passage are to be found in a text attributed to SNyam grags bzang po, the Sarvaguhyaśrīpadāja, Toh. no. 1787, rGyud ha, folio 234a.

264. Though perhaps the view of Tibetans, this could very well have its origins with Ratnakāraśānti, whose Madhyamakalāmākāropadēsa seems to have been written in part as a critique of Candrakīrti. See LMS, p. 122.

265. Toh. no. 1785, rGyud ha, folio 155a (Chapter 15).

266. The same point is made by Sākya mchog ldan in his dbu ma'i byung tshul, p. 220. The reference is to a passage in Candrakīrti's commentary to the Catuḥśatāka (p. 5266, folio 34b); see LMS, p. 51.

267. As mentioned earlier, this is an overstatement, for Ratnakāraśānti does just that in his Madhyamakalāmākāropadēsa; see p. 80 and note 264.

268. The reference may be to some incident in which a monk, threatened with physical violence due to his philosophical position, reverted to lay life. Though perhaps a well-known anecdote at the time of mKhas grub rje, the incident (if there was one) has undoubtedly been lost to history.

269. DAE, pp. 386–397. Go ram pa, BPD, p. 359, folios 24a–b, speaks of another division that is also mentioned in the Phar phyin literature, that between the gZhung phyi mo'i dbu ma po and the Grub mtha' phyog 'dzin gyi dbu ma po, although he then goes on to discuss the various views concerning the partition of Madhyamikas in Tibet in a more general way. An interesting gzhon stong classification of Madhyamikas is to be found in Sākya mchog ldan, Shing rta chen po gnyis kyi . . . rgyas 'grul, p. 326: 'dbu ma pa ni gnyis te / rnal 'byor spyod pa'i dbu ma po dang / ngo bo nyid med par smra ba'i dbu ma pa'o / dang po la rang stong du smra ba dang / gzhon stong du smra ba'o / ngo bo nyid med par smra ba de la'ang / gnyis te / that gyur ba dang / rang rgyud pa'o / de la'ang gnyis te / gnas skabs mdo sde pa laur khas len pa dang / sems tsham pa laur khas len pa'o /.' Schematically, this is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yogācāra</th>
<th>Madhyamikas</th>
<th>Nihsvabhāvāvādins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emptiness of self advocates</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emptiness of other advocates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prāsaṅgikas</td>
<td>Svāntāṅka</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quasi-Svāntāṅka</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quasi-Yogācāra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

270. This is a view that sTag tshang lo tsba ba seems to advocate in Grub mtha' kun shes, p. 203: "lugs de gnyis la rim bshin du dbu ma rab tu mi gnas pa dang sgyu ma ri dang grub kyi dbu ma pa zhes bod na grags pa laur 'phags sogs bshad de !." He then goes on to discuss the sources for this distinction. The same division is given by Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po (eleventh century) in Dharma bha dras mchad pa'i la ba'i brjed byang, in Selected Writings (gsung thor bu) of Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po (from the dPal spungs prints), "Khor gdog gTer sprul 'Chi med rig 'dzin, ed. (Leh, 1974, p. 230: "dbu ma'i lta ba mdor bsu na / ma ya ste sgyu ma lla bur 'dod pa dang / a pra ti sti te rab tu mi gnas par 'dod pa'o /." See also MOE, pp. 354, 857–858; DAE, pp. 386–387 and Appendix I, pp. 566 passim. K. Mimaki, "The Blo gsal grub mtha', and the Madhyamika Classification in Tibetan grub mtha' Literature," in E. Steinkellner and H. Taucher, eds., CBTRP, vol. 2, p. 165, suggests that the TTC should be examined as the first possible source to combine Yogācāra and Sāvartāṅka Madhyamikas as the two branches of the Svāntāṅka school, but, as we can see, this is never explicitly done. See also LMS, pp. 58–59, 87; and D. S. Ruegg, "'Autour du Ta bo'i bhyad par de Ye shes sde (version of Touen-houang, Pelliot Tibetain 814)," Journal Asiatique 269 (1981): 207–229. For further critique of this view in the works of mKhas grub rje, see his Lam ngan mun sel sgyor ma, folios 1740–175a.

271. This division was being employed in Tibet as late as 'Jams dbyangs blo gros gzhon phan mtha' yas, who in Phyin hang gi grub mtha' mdor bsus du bkod pa (New Delhi: Sherab Gyaltse Lama, 1983), divided all Madhyamikas into the exponents of emptiness of self and emptiness of another. The first, he says are in turn divided into Prāsaṅgikas and Svāntāṅkas, and the latter division, "kun rdzob chos can sgyu ma lla bu dang / don dam chos dbyor ngo bo nyid med kyi" (folio 3a).

272. See Go ram pa's characterization of rNgog's position in BPD, p. 361, folio 28a.
273. sTag tshang lo tsā ba, *Grub mtha’ kun shes*, pp. 205–206, states that rNgog’s inability to see the validity of this distinction is due to his attraction to Svātāntarika views: “rNgog lo chen pos rang nyid rang rgyud kyi phyogs la shin tu dgyes pa’i . . . dbye ba sogs mi riggs te.” See also *EE*, pp. 54–56; *DAE*, p. 389.

274. The point is somewhat subtle one. Because every phenomenon is empty, it can be said to be the illusorylike composite of appearance (it appears) and emptiness. But because the appearance part is a conventional truth, it makes the conjunction of appearance and emptiness a conventional truth, even though the other half (the emptiness) is an ultimate truth. To make this point more evident, consider that “the illusorylike conjunction of appearance and emptiness” is not a nonaffirming negation, as it affirms “conjunction,” “appearance,” and so forth, all positive entities.

275. This term is extremely important in Tibetan Madhyamaka exegetical literature. Within this context, an inferential cognition refers, almost without exception, to the knowledge gained through logical reasoning that analyzes the ultimate (*don dam dpod byed kyi rigs pa*). This is born from the understanding of a logically valid syllogism of the type:

Subject: the sprout
Predicate: is truthless
Reason: because it arises interdependently

Here mKhas grub rje defines the direct object of the inferential cognition based on this syllogism to be the conjunction of subject and predicate. This must be qualified, however, for it would not be appropriate to say that the fact that “the sprout is truthless” is what is being referred to here as the conjunction. The former is a nonaffirming negation, whereas the conjunction, “the truthless sprout,” for example, in which truthlessness is communicated in a secondary way as a characteristic of the main object being expressed, namely, the sprout, is an affirming negation.

276. See rJe bsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan’s *Khabs dang po’i spyi don* (Byalakuppe: Sera Je Monastery blockprint, undated), folio 99b.

277. In the discussion that follows, the word terminology (tha snyad) has a wider connotation than it ordinarily does in English, including not only words qua language, but propositions qua beliefs. Hence, it connotes also “philosophical positions” regarding the conventional. The discussion that follows assumes considerable knowledge of dGe lugs’ *pa doxographical (grub mtha’)* literature. Here the reader is referred to Geshe L. Sopa and J. Hopkins’ *The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 1976), pp. 48–145.

278. The resemblance between this position and that of many modern Western interpreters of the Madhyamaka is striking, the basic position being that Mādhyamikas have some sort of allergy to philosophical terminology and concepts, being ordinary language philosophers par excellence. This position is refuted by mKhas grub rje later. For a more expanded discussion of this very question see *DAE*, Chapter 6. This division into Svātāntarika, Yogācāra, and ‘Jig rten grags sde spyod pa’i Mādhyamikas has been discussed by Ruegg and Mimaki (see note 270). Interestingly, Rong zom, *Dharma bha dras*, pp. 225–227, also speaks of Sautrāntika and Yogācāra Mādhyamikas: “de yang don dam pa’i lta ba mthun yang kun rdoz kyi bye brag gis / mdo sde dbu ma dang i rnal ’byor spyod pa’i dbu ma gnyis su byes so / de la mdo sde dbu ma ni kun rdoz nyan thos mdo sde pa dang mthun pa . . . / rnal ’byor spyod pa’i dbu ma ni / kun rdoz sems tsam dang mthun par smra bas.” Consider also sTag tshang lo tsā ba’s comment in the sGrub mtha’ kun shes, p. 102: “o na dbu ma rang rgyud pa phal cher tha snyad sens tsam pa yin la’;” Go ram pa’s characterization of rJe bsun grags pa rgyan tshan’s position, in his *BPD*, p. 360, folios 26a–27a; and Śāky a mchog ldan’s discussion of a similar division, *Shing ra chen po srol gnyis kyi rnam dbye . . . kyi rgyas ’ger*, pp. 482–483.

279. *khor gsun khas so*. This is a common expression in Tibetan polemical literature and debate. It is a statement implying that the opponent is without a means of escape from contradiction. For example, imagine an opponent who accepts that sound is permanent, that it is produced, and that all produced phenomena are impermanent. When the following reductio argument is posited against such an opponent:

Subject: sound
Predicate: is not a product
Reason: because it is permanent

the opponent is bound on three sides, unable to negate any of them without contradicting his or her own position. To say that the predicate does not follow from the reason (ma khyab pa) is to deny that all produced things are impermanent. To deny the relationship of the subject to the reason (phyogs chos) is to contradict the premise that sound is permanent, and to deny the proposition (sgrub bya) is to deny that sound is produced, leaving no escape free from contradiction. The present case is analogous. See S. Onada, “Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge’s Classification of That ’gyur,” p. 67.

280. The acceptance of external objects being the most striking common feature between them.

281. See also the section entitled “The Meaning of ‘Accordance with The World’ in the Prāsaṅgika System:” Go ram pa’s views on this subject, which clearly differ from those of mKhas grub rje, are to be found in *Tsa ba’i shan byed*, pp. 121–122.

282. Compare to the position that KLong rdol bla ma attributes to the early sTag tshang lo tsā ba: “phyug rtsi rgyan po sogs grub mtha’ la blo kha ma phyogs pas ma brag ma dpod pa’i snang ngor bden pa gnyis ’jog stshul gcig,” in his *Theg chen gyi mgon pa’i sde snyod*, p. 436.

283. In other words, when ordinary beings are under the influence of ignorance, how could the Mādhyamika’s notion of “accordance with worldly conventions” be referring to “accordance with ordinary beings”? It would be tantamount to claiming to be in accordance with ignorance, says mKhas grub rje.


285. See *LRCM*, folios 371a ff.

286. See *LRCM*, folios 374b–375a. See also mKhas grub rje’s *Lam ngan mun sel sgron ma*, folios 187b–188b for a similar discussion. The view expressed in this section is one that is born from the truly scholastic mind set of dGe lugs pa thought, one that
A Dose of Emptiness

seeks a synthesis of logic (reasoning) and Madhyamaka thought. It seems to be a view shared by other Tibetan Madhyamikas as well. For example, Sākya mchog Idan, in his *dbu ma’i byung tshul*, p. 215, attributes to Kamalaśīla the position that, to ensure that the view one is realizing is that of Nāgārjuna, it is necessary for the experience to be preceded by a valid cognition (*txhag ma*) born from the logical reasoning of either of the two Madhyamaka schools. At the same time, it is clear that there were exponents of the Madhyamaka school in Tibet who maintained that emptiness did not have to be approached logically, which is to say through the systematic negation of a clearly defined object. Later in the same text (pp. 215–216) Sākya mchog Idan distinguishes two separate ways of ascertaining the meaning of the Madhyamaka, one he calls an “experiential Madhyamaka, based on nonconceptual meditation” (*nam par ma brtags pa sgom pas nyams su myong ba’i dbu ma*), the other “a Madhyamaka that operates through the elimination of the reification that apprehends conceptual signs” (*nam par brtags pa mtsan ‘dzin gyi sgru ‘dogs gcud pa’i dbu ma*). This has resonances to a similar distinction in the *dbu ma la jug pa’i rnam bshad Dus gsum mkhyen pa’i zhag lung* of the Karma pa Mi bsbyod rdz rje, folios 34a–35a. In a sense, what Mkhabs grub rje is emphasizing here is that to ensure that one is experiencing emptiness as it was intended by Nāgārjuna (and, he would say, even by the Buddha himself,) one must operate through the avenue of logic, and this involves a process of negation. It involves the refutation of something. He claims that unless this object to be negated is first properly identified, it is impossible to ensure the purity and validity of the subsequent experience. For Mkhabs grub rje, then, there is no experiential Madhyamaka born from meditation alone. The First Pan chen bla ma, in *rtSod lan*, pp. 379–380, attributes the position that in “setting forth the reality of phenomena it is improper to refute an object of refutation or to add a qualifier such as *ultimately in the process of refutation*” to nTshag tshang lo tsa ba, to whom he also attributes the view that qualifying the negation, as the dGe lugs pas do, is a Svātantrika position. See also CMDR, pp. 188 passim; DAE, pp. 447 passim; MOE, pp. 625 passim; and also J. Hopkins’s *Empinness Yoga* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1987), pp. 123–155.

287. For the role of the mental image in the workings of conceptual thought, see KL, pp. 115–140.


289. See LRCM, folios 375a–375b.

290. See LRCM, folios 375b–376b.

291. The implicit reference here is to the *yod min med min* (“neither existence nor nonexistence”) view. The dGe lugs pas, of course, maintain that things do exist and that the Madhyamaka critique of existence must be qualified as a critique of true existence. It is not clear whether there were any historical exponents of the view criticized here. We do find passages in the writings of Sākya mchog Idan, for example, that suggest that he was a more literal interpretation of the critique of existence offered by the Madhyamaka scriptures. Hence, he characterizes the Madhyamaka as “eliminating the extreme of existence through the lack of the experience of the existence, from

Notes

time primordial, of all phenomenal, both appearances and reality” (*ji la ba dang ji snyed pa’i shes bya mtha’ dag gdog ma gnas yod ma myong bas na yod pa’i mtha selt, dBus ma’i byung tshul*, p. 213. Later in the same work he states that because the pot has neither a conventional nor an ultimate nature, (the meaning of lacking own nature according to him,) “it does not exist, but it is not thereby accepted as being nonexistent” (p. 221). We also know, for example, that the later dGe lugs pa exegete Se ra tshu bun Cho kyi rgyal mtsan (1469–1544), in his critique of the Sākya mchog Idan and Go rab ‘byams pa (1429–1489), does attribute such a view to them. See Zab mo stong pa nyid kyi la ba la rlog rtsog ‘gog par byed pa’i bstan bcos lta ba mun sel (New Delhi: Champa Choegyal, 1969). Go ram pa, however, states very clearly in *Tla ba’i shan ‘byed*, p. 121, that he is not an adherent of the *yod min med min* view: “snga rabs pa ‘ga’ zhih gis tha snyad kyi rnam bshag la’ang yod min med min khas len pa ni gzhang gi dgyongs pa min te.” For a view that concurs with Tsong kha pa’s and that may very well have been the source of it, see Red ma’ ba’s *dBus ma la jug pa rnam bshad*, pp. 220–223. Only an in-depth study of the wide range of Madhyamaka views to be found during this and succeeding centuries, however, will be able to allow us to state definitively the extent to which the views criticized in the polemical literature were historical ones.

292. Compare this to the dGe lugs pa position, which is that only the object to be negated, true existence, is what is repudiated by the logic analyzing the ultimate. To say that the Madhyamaka reasoning repudiates all phenomena, in this view, is tantamount to nihilism. Though the dGe lugs pa position is also that no phenomenon can withstand logical examination, crumbling under the weight of an analysis that seeks to find its ultimate mode of being, this does not imply for them that the phenomenon itself has been repudiated, implying instead the more limited notion that it lacks true existence.

293. The passage is to be found in *Madhyamaka Sālistambhasūtra, in Mahāyāna sūtrasamgraha*, ed. P. L. Vaidya (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1961); and also in the Ye shes snying po kun las bstsus pa, Toh. no. 3582, dBus ma ta ba, folio 27b. The passage is also cited, without being identified, in the First Pan chen bla ma’s *rtSod lan*, p. 381.

294. Sākya mchog Idan bases his entire *dbu ma’i byung tshul* around an interpretive scheme in which he shows how the different Buddhists philosophical schools all avoid the two extremes of existence and nonexistence. For his interpretation of the catuṣkoṭi, which occurs in the context of his explanation of the Madhyamaka, see pp. 213–214. For an extensive discussion of the four positions, see MOE, pp. 850–854, and D. S. Ruegg, “The Uses of the Four Positions of the Catuṣkoṭi and the Problem of the Description of Reality of Mahāyāna Buddhism,” *JHP* 5 (1977): 1–71.

295. See note 197.

296. Ratnāvali, Toh. no. 4158, sPring yig ge. (1, 57).

297. MMK (XY, 10); P no. 5224, dBus ma tsa, folio 10b.

298. From the *Od stungs kyi tshus pa’i le’u, Toh. no. 87, dKon brtsegs cha, folio 131a. For a very similar passage in Nāgārjuna, see MMK. (XY, 7).
299. The TTC is unclear at this point, but it seems to imply that this passage follows the previous one. However, this last passage is to be found in the Samādhīrājasūtra (IX, 27); Tobh. no. 127, mDo sde daf, folio 28a; Mahāyānasūtrasamgraha, ed. Vaidya, p. 48.

300. MMK (XIII, 7), P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 10a. See later p. 102.

301. Consider Go ram pa’s remark, ita ba’i shan ‘byed, p. 125: “bden pa’i stong pa nyid gnas lugs su gzang du mi rang ste i dyag bya bden pa med pas de bka’ag pa’i bden stong nyid kyang ma grub pa’i phyir ro.”

302. According to Buddhist logic-epistemology, everything that exists must be epistemically validated by a valid cognition. This, in fact, is the definition of an existent thing, namely, that it be established by means of a valid cognition (tsid mas grub pa). Hence, to deny this is to deny the very foundations of Dharmakīrti’s logical system. See the First Pan chen bla ma’s rTsis lan, pp. 376 passim.

303. This is in contrast to a valid cognition, which understands the ultimate, like the gnosia of an āryan. Nominal valid cognitions understand and establish the existence of the world of nominal or conventional entities. That the dGe lugs pa enterprise of reconciling Dharmakīrti’s epistemology with the Madhyamaka was one of their most controversial “innovations” is witnessed by the fact that their notion of “nominal valid cognition” was severely criticized by opponents the likes of sTag tshang lo tsa ba and Go ram pa.

304. The only thing that this state of equiposed meditation perceives is emptiness. No conventional phenomenon is either perceived within nor does it appear to this gnosia. For this reason it is called a mind in which the appearance of duality has waned (gnyis snub nub pa’i blo).

305. P no. 795, (IX, 23). See also MA (VI, 31). For a similar position attributed to the Mahāsāṃghikas by Vasubandhu, see Vāyākyayukti, P no. 5562, Sems tsa ms, folio 128a.

306. See, for example, MMK (I, 1–2) and (XII, 10).


309. Tobh. no. 156, mDo sde pha, folios 206a–253b. See also EE, p. 278; MOE, pp. 161–162.

310. Of course, for the advocates of these views the nominal existence of something does not imply its existence, as for them both existence and nonexistence are objects to be negated. So, although willing to accept that things exist nominally, the person who holds these views is not willing to accept that they exist.

311. Because of its importance to the Tibetan scholastic tradition, numerous references are to be found concerning the “four reliances” in Tibetan philosophical literature. One of the more extensive expositions is to be found in ICang skyA Rol pa’i rdzog rje’s Grub mtha’ (Varanasi: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings, 1970), pp. 144, 162; see also MOE, pp. 425, 597; EE, pp. 113–114. There are a variety of ways of enumerating the four. The MV enumeration, which takes into account that wrongly attributes to the Aksjamatarnārāja, with a slight change in the order. Though the order differs from MV, the second through the fourth of this list correspond exactly to elements within the Aksjamatarnārāja version. The first, however, does not, and the disparity is an interesting point. Whereas MV, following an unspecified Indian source, states that doctrine (dharma, chos) is to be relied on, the Aksjamatarnārāja states that it is reality (dharma, chos nyid). Thurman (p. 113, note) states that their enumeration is the Bodhisattvabhāmi of Asanga is the earliest source of the “four reliances.” The Aksjamatarnārāja, however, predated Asanga, casting aspersions on Thurman’s statement. In yet another interesting variation, the Bodhisattvabhāmi enumerates them as follows: rely (1) on the meaning of what is spoken (bhāsaḥsūtra) and not on words (vyākhyāna), (2) on reasoning (yuktis) and not on the person (pudgala), (3) on the definitive meaning and not on the provisional meaning, and (4) on the gnosia obtained by means of meditation (bhāvanāmayena adhigamajñāna) and not on the mere ordinary consciousness based on hearing and thinking (śrutacāravijñānānapātra); see Bodhisattvabhāmi, ed. N. Dutt (Pata: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1966), pp. 175–176.

The Aksjamatarnārāja passage, which, as mentioned, varies from that cited in TTC, reads, in its entirety: “[154a] What is more, Venerable Sāriputra, those four things on which bodhisattvas rely (pratītyaśrava, rion pa) are also inseparable. What are the four? They are as follows: (1) to rely on the meaning (artha, don) and not to rely on words (vyākhyāna, tshogs brus), (2) to rely on gnosia (māna, ye shes) and not to rely ordinariness (vijñāna, rnam par shes pa), (3) to rely on the scriptures of definitive meaning (nirārtha, nges pa’i don) and not on the scriptures of provisional meaning (nirārtha, drang pa’i don), and (4) to rely on reality (dhammatā, chos nyid) and not on the person (purāṇa, gung gagn).” (from Chapter 9 of the Aksjamatarnārāja Sātra. P mDo na tshogs bu, folios 153b–156b. The commentary to this section is found in P mDo ’gel ci, folios 266b–267a.)

312. Though somewhat obscure, the position here seems to be that all the conventional entities spoken of in the scriptures, though of definitive meaning, nonetheless exist, as they exist nominally or conventionally. On the other hand, the statement that the definitive meaning does not exist ultimately does not imply its nonexistence. Hence, claims this opponent, it would have been more fitting for the Buddha to have advised us to rely on the scriptures of provisional meaning, whose purport is more straightforward (statements of conventional existence indeed implying existence), rather than on the scriptures of definitive meaning, whose purport is more obtuse (statements of nonultimate existence not implying nonexistence).

313. Again, this proceeds as in the previous argument. The appearance of true existence is always said to be present within the consciousnesses of all sentient beings, except for its absence in the gnostic wisdom of an āryan. This being the case, all ordinary forms of consciousness are said to be mistaken, in that things appear to them in a way that they do not exist (appearing as if they were true and independent things when they are not). Yet mistaken forms of consciousness can still be valid cognitions and can therefore serve as sources validating the existence of phenomena. The gnosia of an āryan, however, perceives emptiness alone. Hence, the mere absence of something
within the purview of an áryan’s gnostic wisdom is not a sufficient criterion for determining that thing to be nonexistent because by default, (that is, by virtue of the fact that it is perceivingemptiness and nothing else,) that thing is not present within this gnosisc. With this as background the opponent then urges that, if mkhas grub rje’s position was correct, it would be more appropriate for the Buddha to have urged reliance on ordinary consciousness, which can validate the existence of phenomena when they are in its purview, rather than on gnosisc, which cannot validate the nonexistence of something when that is missing from its purview.

314. See LRCM, folios 376b–382a; DAE, pp. 462–487.
315. P no. 5225, dbu ma tsa, folio 25a.
316. This refers to an understanding of the two truths.
317. That is to say, without an understanding of dependent arising, doubt as to the workings of causality in the moral sphere will be inevitable, impairing both one’s desire and one’s ability to engage in virtue and hence to accumulate the mass of merits. The same is true as regards the understanding ofemptiness as a prerequisite for accumulating the mass of gnosisc. Hence, only when dependent arising and emptiness are seen as mutual implicates can these two masses (and buddhahood) be attained. For an almost identical point in sTag tshang lo tsa ba, see Grub mtha’ kun shes, pp. 214–215.
318. MA (6, 79); Toh. no. 3861, dbu ma’ a, folio 208a.
319. This is the first verse of the Vigrahavyāvartani; see also SOS, pp. 39–42 for similar verses of homage.
320. See LRCM, folios 382a–383b; DAE, pp. 508–517. An almost identical discussion is to be found in the First Pan chen blaa ma’s rtSod lan, pp. 378–379.
321. MA (VI, 115); Toh. no. 3861, dbu ma’ a, folio 209b.
322. A correct “pervasion” (put simply, an if-then statement of the form “if reason, then predicate”) would be of the form “if there is smoke there, is fire,” whereas a contradictory pervasion would be of the form “if there is smoke, there is no fire,” where the consequence is exactly the opposite of what it should be.
323. MMK (XXIV, 1); P no. 5524, dbu ma tsa, folio 17b.
324. MMK (XXIV, 14); P no. 5524, dbu ma tsa, folio 18a. See also Pras, p. 500.
325. In other words, instead of emptiness implying the impossibility of functionality, all functionality, causality, and moral retribution become possible by virtue of the fact that things are empty.
326. The term is an abridgement of two separate terms, into which all doctrines, those describing the afflictions to be avoided (kun nas nyan mong pa) and those describing all positive purificatory practices (rnam byang kyi phyogs), are subsumed.
327. Which is to say that, as this opponent believes that the Madhyamaka critique repudiates the existence of things, including functionality, from the outset, even without the absurdity having to be urged on him, this opponent suffers from a fault that both realists and Madhyamikas consider to be of utmost gravity.

329. Pras, pp. 500–501; Pras-tib, p. 166a. The TTC omits a verse after the line “yasmaṇappratīṣṭhānānāṁ hi vayam suṣṇavatī vśćakavat,” and again after the line “dharmaḥ samantānāṁ tathālakṣaṇānāṁ eva vascakavat,” there are several lines missing in TTC’s citation.
330. I have been unable to trace this passage. See DAE, p. 515.
332. See LRCM, folio 391b ff; also CMDR, pp. 202 passim.
333. See section 4.2.3.1.3.4; LRCM, folios 391b–396a.
334. Compare to Śākyamnog take’s statement in dbu ma’i byang tshul, p. 213: “[The Madhyamaka view] eliminates the extreme of nonexistence through the fact that neither reasoning nor the knowledge of áryan negate the existence of something that already exists” (sngag yod pa zhi rigs pa’am ’phags pa'i shes mthong gis med par byas pa ma yin pas na med par mtha' sel); and to Go ram pa, Ita ba'i shan 'byed, p. 120, who expresses a similar position; see also the discussion of rNgo't's position in the chapter “The Two Truths and Their Cognition.”
335. Only valid auditory cognition can directly perceive sound, but because the other sense consciousness do not perceive it do not imply that they perceive it to be nonexistent.
336. The seven aspects of the analysis involve whether or not the chariot is its parts, the collection of its parts, its shape, and so forth. These will occur in more detail in the analysis of the self in a later section. They are described in detail in MA; see EOE, pp. 175, 176.
337. See LRCM, folios 411a–414b; also section 4.2.3.1.2.1, argument [2]. On the four positions or four alternatives (catuṣkoti), see D. S. Ruegg’s masterful study, “The Uses of the Four Positions of the Catuṣkoti”; also S. S. Chakrabarti, “The Madhyamika Catuṣkoti or Tetralemma;” JIP 8 (1980): 303–306. Go ram pa’s position on this point varies substantially from mkhas grub rje’s in that the latter believes that none of the objects cognized as a result of each of the four negations is the true ultimate. He implies instead that the ultimate is cognized through a gestalt that arises after analyzing all four alternatives, through the transcendence of conceptual thought; see Ita ba'i shan 'byed, pp. 125ff.
338. KDK is here simply stating the law of excluded middle, something repudiated by his opponent. See DAE, pp. 542 passim. I have discussed the Buddhist scholastic
commitment to the law of excluded middle in a forthcoming article, "A Link of Non-being: Buddhism and the Concept of an Hierarchical Ontology."

339. Literally "double negation," that is, the negation of a negation of \( x \) is tantamount to the affirmation of \( x \). The repudiation of the law of excluded middle is a position that the First Pan chen bla ma attributes to the early \( t\)s\( t\)ag thang lo t\( s\)a ba, \( r\)T\( s\)od \( l\)an, p. 381. See also Go ram pa, \( T\)la ba'i shan 'byed, pp. 52 ff; and also his \( B\)PD, p. 358, folio 22b.

340. Direct contradiction (\textit{dngos 'gal}) refers to the relationship of any two things that divide reality into two parts in such a way that every phenomenon is in one of the two categories. \textit{Bod rgya tshad ma rig pa'i tshig mdzod} (China: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1987), p. 79, reads, as the definition of \textit{dngos 'gal}: "'gal ba gang zhi g/ phan tshun dngos su mi mthun par gnas pa.'" For example, permanence and impermanence are in direct contradiction because anything that exists must be either permanent or impermanent. In addition, it seems that each must be defined in terms of the negation of the other, like \( x \) and \( \neg x \), whereas "internal contradiction" (\textit{nang 'gal}), though satisfying the first property, does not seem to require the very strict almost "contradictory by definition" status of things that are in direct contradiction. Hence, permanence and production are said to be internally contradictory, but not in direct contradiction.

341. See the citation from the \textit{Ratnak\( a\)\( a\) S\( a\)\( r\)\( a\)\( s\)\( r\)a} earlier, p. 91.

342. Just as pots and pillars do not exhaust all the possible kinds of entities, according to the opponent, neither do existence and nonexistence. Hence, if it makes sense to conduct an investigation in terms of nonexclusive categories in the latter case, it should not be unreasonable to subdivide entities into pots and pillars, which is absurd.

343. v. 26cd; Toh. no. 3828, \( d\)Bu ma \( t\)sa, folio 27b. See also K. Bhattacharya et al., \textit{The Logical Method of N\( a\)g\( a\)r\( u\)na}, pp. 20, 27.

344. Toh. no. 3828, \( d\)Bu ma \( t\)sa, folio 127b. Bhattacharya, ibid., p. 27.

345. This is a reference to a famous line in the \textit{Praj\( a\)\( p\)\( a\)r\( a\)m\( a\)\( s\)\( h\)\( a\)\( y\)a S\( a\)\( r\)a}, commonly known in English as the \textit{Heart S\( a\)\( r\)a}; for more on the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist understanding of this line, see D. Lopez, \textit{The Heart S\( a\)\( r\)a Explained: Indian and Tibetan Commentaries} (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), pp. 49ff.

346. v. 28; P no. 735, Sher phyin tsi, folio 3b.

347. \textit{MA} (VI, 165) p. 287; \textit{EOE}, p. 177.

348. \textit{MMK} (XIII, 7); P no. 5224, \( d\)Bu ma \( t\)sa, folio 10a.

349. Toh. no. 4158, sP\( r\)ing yig \( g\)e, folio 10b, (II, 3).

350. Toh. no. 3846, \( d\)Bu ma \( t\)sha, folio 17b; (XVI, 7); see also \textit{AC}, pp. 144, 145.

351. I remain unconvinced that this is what m\( k\)Has grub rje means to say here. Alternatively, a textual emendation may be in order at this point to avert this rather farfetched interpretation. To keep the example consistent with the doctrinal point being made, a negative might be added to make the passage read, "the lack of rabbits' horns does not exist because rabbits' horns do not exist."

352. Toh. no. 3865, \( d\)Bu ma \( m\)a, folio 232b.

353. \textit{MMK} (XIII, 8), P no. 5224, \( d\)Bu ma \( t\)sa, folio 10b.

354. Toh. no. 3842, \( d\)Bu ma \( t\)sa, folio 220a, has ngo bo nyid kyi yod pa ma yin no, as opposed to the yod pa yin no of the \( t\)TC, completely changing the connotation of the passage, so that it instead reads something like: "It is to thoughts of the kind 'things do not exist by virtue of their own nature' that we apply the term emptiness." But the \( t\)TC reading is confirmed a few lines further along in \textit{BUD}. When it states that teaching emptiness has the "ability to counteract that misconception," obviously referring to the misconception that "things exist by virtue of their own nature" expressed in this first line.

355. The \( D\) edition is missing stong pa nyid, reading instead simply dngos po rnam s kyi ngo bo nyid du rab to bstan pa; that is, "to say that things do not exist by virtue of their [own] nature is to teach the nature of things."

356. \( d\)Bu ma \( t\)sa, folio 248b.

357. As opposed to the fault lying in apprehending the lack of money to be money and the lack of true existence (emptiness) to be truly existent, as the analogy must obviously be interpreted.

358. Notice that the last three categories of which nonultimate is predicated are vacuous, and hence claiming their nonultimate is redundant. When something does not exist how can it \textit{ultimately} exist? They are: something is nonexistent, something is both existent and nonexistent, and something is neither existent nor nonexistent. Hence, for m\( k\)Has grub rje, the refutation within the \textit{catu\( s\)koti} is tantamount to the refutation of the ultimate or true existence of phenomena, of what exists (the first of the four positions), which makes one wonder about the need to refute the other three. See \textit{MOE}, pp. 850–858.

359. See the \textit{Ratnak\( a\)\( a\) S\( a\)\( r\)\( a\)\( s\)\( r\)a} citation, p. 91.

360. The view being expressed here is exactly that criticized by S\( a\)ky\( a\) mchog ldan in \( d\)Bu ma'i byung tshul, p. 214, when he states: "Bod phyi ma dag / tha snyad du yod pa'i phyir med mtha'/ sel la / bden par med pa'i phyir yod mtha'/ sel l'o / zhes pa ni / lung dang ma mthun te." For an extensive discussion of the two extremes in the M\( a\)hymaka, see Ratnak\( a\)ras\( a\)nti, \textit{S\( a\)\( r\)\( a\)\( s\)\( a\)\( m\)u\( c\)c\( a\)\( y\)a\( b\)h\( a\)\( y\)a\( s\)}, P no. 5331, \( d\)Bu ma a, folios 336b passim.


362. See \textit{AK} (I, 5–6); and the commentary (b\( s\)\( h\)\( a\)\( d\) pa) in P no. 5591, vol. 4u, folio 29b.
363. What I translate "inherent existence" in the text could just as well (and perhaps in this case better) be translated "existence by virtue of its essence." To be consistent, however, I have kept the former, and here simply draw attention to the multifarious uses of the term rang bzhin.

364. MMK (XV, 11ab); P no. 5224, dBU ma tsa, folio 10b; see also BUD, folio 226b; and Pras., p. 273.

365. This, of course, is a reference to the Cārvāka view; see Sharma, Critical Survey, pp. 40–48; E. Frauwaller, History of Indian Philosphy, trans. V. M. Bedeker (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984), pp. 215–226.


367. See AK (III, 11); bShad pa, folio 135b.

368. MMK (XV, 11cd); P no. 5224, dBU ma tsa, folios 10b–11a.

369. In the earlier example, it is something that inherently exists that mKhas grub rje claims cannot change or be destroyed in the second moment. In general, the Prāsāntikas uphold the doctrine of momentariness, though they claim that for a realist to do so is tantamount to nihilism. On the theory of momentariness, see K. Mimaki, La réfutation Boudhique de la permanence des choses (shirasiddhidharma) et la preuve de la momentanéité des choses (kṣanabhangaśiddhi) (Paris: Publications de l'institut de civilisation Indienne, 1976) série in-8, fasc. 41.

370. MMK (XV, 11ab); P no. 5224, dBU ma tsa, folio 10b.


372. MMK (XXIV, 16); P no. 5224, dBU ma tsa, folio 18a; Pras., p. 502; Pras-tib, folio 166b; see also J. May, Candrakirti, p. 236, whose translation seems to miss the significance of the term dngos rnam.

373. Or of "inherent existence" (rang bzhin gyis stong pa).


377. For a more detailed discussion of this question, see Se ra rje btsun pa, dBU ma'i spyi don (Bylakuppe, India: Se ra blockprint edition, undated), folio 127b.

378. Usually a "mistaken cognition" (log shes) is one that has as its main object an entity that does not exist. An "erroneous cognition" (khrul shes) is one that is mistaken, not in regard to its main object (dzin stang gi yul), but in regard to the way in which that object appears (snang) to it. All inferential cognitions (rjes dpag), for example, are nonerroneous in regard to their principal objects, but because those objects become confused with their generic images, they appear in a false way and are hence erroneous, though not mistaken. See DBPL, pp. 86–128; KL, pp. 26 passim, which translates 'khrul pa by the word mistaken (as opposed to my erroneous).

379. So that it would appear as vividly to memory as it would to direct perception (mgon sun). This is the connotation of the word directly here. The later tradition, in its attempt to fine tune the philosophical terminology that it employs, will claim that the measure of whether or not a consciousness directly perceives its object has nothing to do with whether that consciousness is a form of direct perception, but with whether the object appears (snang) to it when it apprehend it. Hence, even a conceptual consciousness can directly apprehend its objects. Nonetheless, in the present context it is clear that the words direct apprehension (dngos su 'dzin pa) are referring to the way the senses apprehend their objects, for otherwise no absurdity would ensue.

380. Commentary on CS (XI, 11); Toh. no. 3865, dBU ma ya, folio 175b; AC, pp. 104–105.

381. See earlier p. 100.

382. Pras., p. 368; Pras-tib, folio 117b.


384. v. 88; see Lindtner, Nāgārjuniana, pp. 210–211. Compare to MMK (XVII, 20), which states:

Emptiness is not nihilism and samsāra is not eternalism.

That karma is never destroyed is the doctrine taught by the Buddha.


386. P no. 5658, mDo 'grel nge, folio 134b (II, 18); see also MMK (XXIV, 12). D. Kalupahan, in Nāgārjunā: The Philosophy of the Middle Way (Albany: SUNY Press, 1986), p. 336; also discusses the canonical sources regarding the Buddha's hesitancy to begin preaching.

387. See Introduction, notes 32 and 33. For a similar treatment of the subject in which he actually cites mKhas grub rje, see KL, rdol bla ma, dBU ma'i ming gi rnam gongs, folio 431 ff.

388. Consciousness is formless, and so has neither color or shape. Hence, it should be no surprise that no consciousness should be found when it is searched for
among categories that are irrelevant to its nature. We have seen this argument before (see note 342). On the Tibetan Buddhist scholastics' notion of mind see Lati Rinpoche et al., *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1980).

389. Namely, cognizing emptiness is tantamount to blanking out the mind. In *Lam ngan mun sel sgron me*, folios 176a–177a, mKhas grub rje is more explicit on the relationship of quietism to what he considers to be other misconceptions concerning the doctrine of emptiness, especially the relationship of quietism to the view that does not understand the fact that emptiness is an absolute, that is, nonaffirming, negation. He then goes on (folios 177b–178a) to list various types of quietism, using sleep as a metaphor for the view he is criticizing. This makes for a very interesting account of what may have been diverse views of meditation in Tibet at the time.

390. See earlier, p. 6; and also D. Seyfort Ruegg, "The Jowo nag pa: A School of Buddhist Ontologists According to the Grub mtha' shel gyi me long," JAOS 83 (1963); and his *TTG*, pp. 8–9, 434–435, 442.

391. According to Buddhist logic-epistemology it is possible to deduce a cause from its effect. The point that mKhas grub rje seems to be making here is that a faulty philosophical viewpoint (cause) can be deduced from a faulty system of praxis (effect). On this type of reasoning see, for example, *Nyiddabindu* (III, 16ff).


393. In other words, it is relatively easy to generate a blank mind, much easier than it is to realize emptiness.

394. We cannot discount the possibility that the critique presented here is a critique of the practices of the Great Perfection (*rDzogs chen*). On this system of meditation, see S. Karmay, *The Great Perfection* (*rDzogs Chen*): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988).

395. This is a high-level meditative absorption in which one is said to lose all gross mental function. See *AK* (II, 42) and Paul Griffiths, *On Being Mindless: Buddhist Meditation and the Mind-Body Problem* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1986).

396. The argument here is this. Because all beings, at some point or another in their infinite history, have been reborn in every conceivable state of cyclic existence, they must all have, at one point in the past, obtained this *samāpatti* and been reborn into the corresponding state. The fact that this alone has not freed them from cyclic existence, therefore, should indicate that this is not a state that leads to emancipation.

397. This might be characterized as incontrovertible knowledge, the culmination of extensive and profound analysis, as opposed to, say, belief, which is something that can arise spontaneously on merely hearing or seeing certain doctrinal passages.


399. The fact of selflessness is something that can be established by either direct perception or inference. In the present case, the fact that things are empty is a fact that can be established by inference, so that dependence on scriptural verification becomes unnecessary. Only in cases of "extremely hidden facts" (*shin tu lobs kyi mdgs*), such as wealth in a future life arising from charity performed in this one, is validation by means of scripture required, because this is something not amenable to direct means (that is, to direct perception or inference). See my "The Concepts of Truth and Meaning in the Buddhist Scriptures," *JIABS* 4, no. 1 (1981): 7–23.

400. Chapter 13; Toh. no. 3865, *dBya ma nya*, folio 205b.

401. Ibid., folio 201b.

402. Not found anywhere in Chapter 20 of *BU*.

403. See section 4.2.3.1.2.1.1, argument [3]; see also *CMDR*, pp. 221 passim. Concerning the Prāṣankīya critique of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, see M. Siderits, "The Mahāyāna Critique of Epistemology, I," *JHP* 8 (1981): 121–160; Rong ston, *dBya ma la ’jug pa’i rnam bshad*, pp. 120–121.

404. Rong ston pa, in *dBya ma la ’jug pa’i rnam bshad*, pp. 71–72, also makes it quite clear that Mādhyamikas do accept the functioning of valid cognition and that they do have theses.

405. Hence, there are two classes of valid cognitions: those that analyze or serve as sources of verification for conventional or nominal entities (such as arising), and those that analyze or serve as sources of verification for emptiness, the ultimate truth. There has been considerable controversy in Tibet concerning whether the ultimate is a knowable object; that is, an object cognized by a valid cognition. See, for example, Śākyamchogöd’s treatment of this in *Shing ra chen pa* ’i . . . rgyas ’greel, pp. 335–336; Go ram pa, *Ila ba’i shan’ byed*, pp. 14 passim.

406. This is the first line of the *Samādhirāja Sūtra* passage cited earlier (see section 4.2.3.1.2.1.1, argument [3]).

407. In other words, the quote, if taken literally, as the opponent would have it, seems to imply that the acceptance of the notion of valid cognition is tantamount to the claim that there is no need to rely on the *āryan* path. See the last two lines of the *Samādhirāja Sūtra* passage (see previous note).


410. This portion of the commentary precedes verse 30, and is not a direct commentary on the verse quoted earlier.

411. The verse [*MA* (VI, 30)] continues:

Since the world would perceive reality, then what necessity would there be
For the *āryan*’s alternative [way of seeing]; what function would the *āryan* path perform?

It is incorrect to consider the [perceptions of the] foolish to be valid cognitions.
MA, pp. 111–112. This citation must be seen in context. The opponent claims that the repudiation of arising from what is other (expounded by the Mādhyamikas) is in opposition to worldly perceptions. Candrakīrti’s reply seems to be that it is permissible for this claim to contradict worldly perception because this is a claim as to the ultimate nature of things, as to their emptiness. Worldly perceptions have no say in this sphere. If, however, one accepts that what the world sees is valid even in regard to ultimate reality, then the absurdity follows that the world should have perceived emptiness from beginningless time, making the āryan path obsolete. For a more extensive treatment of this, see Tsong kha pa’s remarks on this portion of the Avatārābhāsya (dBus ma dgongs pa rab gsal, vol. ma, folios 112a passim).

412. Here is a portion of Tsong kha pa’s remarks mentioned in the previous note: “Some believe that we are expounding opposition to the world when we refute the ultimate arising from another. If they accept that even what the world sees is a valid cognition in regard to reality, when reality is analyzed, then let us suppose it is so. If the perceptions of the world are valid cognitions in regard to reality, ordinary worldly beings would directly perceive reality . . . , they would understand it. We would have to accept that, as samāsāra is beginningless, they had abandoned ignorance. What then would be the need for the āryan’s alternative when it comes to directly understanding reality? There would be no need. What would be the need to even seek out the path of the āryan? There would be no need. It is not correct to consider fools, that is, ordinary worldly beings, to be valid in regard to reality.

“Therefore, when it comes to analyzing reality, worldly perceptions are not valid cognitions in regard to reality in all respects; that is, in every way. The world cannot oppose one when it comes to reality. Both those who advocate that the verse, ‘the world is not valid in every respect,’ (p. 112a) teaches that this system [the Mādhyamika] does not at all accept [the notion of a] valid cognition, and that the system is therefore erroneous, and also those who advocate that [because they repudiate the notion of a valid cognition] they are free of error, are just making these claims [with no basis in scripture], having missed the point of what the Acārya himself believes. Hence, they are only demonstrating their own nature [as incompetents], for they interpret the teaching that the perceptions of the world are not in every respect valid cognitions in regard to reality to be a repudiation of valid cognitions in general. I will explain later how both the valid cognition and the phenomenon [which is verified by it] are, as taught in the Prasannapadā, repudiated as things that exist by virtue of their own nature and how one must consider a valid cognition and a phenomenon as posited independence [on each other].”

413. Pras., p. 75; Pras-tib, folio 25b. This line is taken by mKhas grub rtse as showing that the Prasannapadā upholds the notion of a valid cognition in general. It remains a conundrum why Candrakīrti chose to cite four types of valid cognitions (as the Nājīyākas do, for example), and not the standard two of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

414. Toh. no. 3865, dBus ma ya, folio 196b; commentary on verse 301 (Chapter 13).

415. Toh. no. 3865, dBus ma ya, folio 196b. For a discussion of this passage and its implication to the thought of Tsong kha pa, see DAE, p. 164 and n. 178.

416. Consider Rong ston pa’s comment on this subject in dBus ma la ’jug pa’i rnam bsad, pp. 71–72: “tshad ma yang riog ge pas bris pa ni ‘jig rten gyi tha snyad las ’das te rang dgar snang ba la dgongs nas de dag bkag pa yin gyi ‘jig rten na grags pa ni tshed pa yin te.’”

417. Hence, in mKhas grub rtse’s interpretation of the Madhyamaka, every consciousness (except for the gnosis of an āryan in equipoise) is erroneous (‘khrul pa) in so far as the object being perceived appears as if it truly existed. Every valid cognition (except again for an āryan’s direct perception of emptiness within equipoise), though erroneous, is nonetheless unmistakable (mi sba ba) because it does not confuse its main object for something different.

418. This passage is not to be found in the Cautukakatikā but is found, almost verbatim, in the Prasannapadā, Tobh. no. 3860, dBus ma ’a, folio 25b.

419. See LRCM, folios 408b–411a; also section 4.2.3.1.2.1.1, argument [4]; and Rong ston, dBus ma la ’jug pa’i rnam bsad, pp. 121 passim.

420. The point being that they do not find the need to analyze it into four possibilities as they already accept one of the four, namely, arising from what is other, which is (in mKhas grub rtse’s interpretation) another way of saying true arising.

421. In other words, if something exists nominally, without being analyzed, it does not mean that under analysis it would be found to exist. All phenomena exist nominally but none can withstand an ultimate analysis.

422. MA (VI, 115), p. 228; EOE, p. 171.

423. MA (VI, 114), p. 226; EOE, p. 171.


425. MA, p. 122.

426. MA (VI, 111), pp. 221–222; EOE, p. 170.

427. v. 48; P no. 5225, dBus ma tsa, folio 22b.

428. Toh. no. 3864, dBus ma ya, folio 26b. mKhas grub rtse’s citation is based on a different translation than that found in D, though the meaning is essentially the same.

429. See section 4.2.3.1.2.1.1, argument [3] for the full citation.

430. See Prasannapadā, Tobh. no. 3860, dBus ma ’a, folio 167b.

431. See section 4.2.3.1.2.1.1, argument [5].

432. The opponent’s implicit argument here is this. If the former takes precedence, then this is going against the “fourth reliance,” namely, to rely on gnoscs and not on consciousness. If the latter takes precedence, then it presumably validates the opponent’s claim that the Madhyamaka critique is a repudiation of all phenomena. See DAE, pp. 166ff.
433. LRCM, folios 414b–419b; also CMDR, pp. 253 passim.


435. MMK (XV, 1–2), P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 10b. See Buddhāpāla’s remarks on this verse in Toh. no. 3842, folio 224a.

436. See stIGN tshang lo tsa ba, Grub mtha’ kun shes, pp. 55 ff.

437. The second argument presented here is a straightforward one. The emptiness of an essence possessing the three characteristics cannot be reality because its antithesis cannot be the object of innate ignorance, for innate ignorance is something that does not involve concepts as complicated as those involved in having to come to an understanding of the three qualities of this essence. Every sentient being, for example, has innate ignorance but many do not have the kind of developed linguistic-conceptual apparatus to think that something is “unchanging,” “independent,” and so forth.

438. MMK (XV, 2); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 10b.

439. Heat is not an essential property of water because it is a changing quality of water, but if something is the essence of x, then it must always exist within x in an unalterable way, as is the case with emptiness.

440. In other words, these two qualities spoken of here are predicates of reality, and since reality (and indeed every phenomenon) is interdependent, the “independence” spoken of here cannot be independence in contradistinction to interdependence.

441. In other words, the concepts of “over there” and “over here” are relative and mutually dependent, just as “long” and “short” are.

442. This is a reference to the Prasannapadā’s comments on this verse, Pras, p. 263; Pras-tib, folio. 89a.

443. See the commentary on MA (VI, 180), pp. 305–306; and EOE, pp. 179–180.


446. LRCM, folio 419b ff.

447. Commentary to v. 27; Toh. no. 3832, dBu ma tsa, folio 128a. mKhas grub gruṅ rje omits several lines. See Bhattacharya, The Dialectical Method of Nāgārjuna, pp. 21, 27–28.

448. The notion that there are two forms of ignorance, one innate, nonlinguistic, and unlearned, the other philosophical, acquired, and related to conceptuality, was certainly an important one in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Tibet. Besides being mentioned, of course, in many of Tsong kha pa’s works such as Legs bshad smyang po, Lam rim chen mo, and dBu ma dngongs pa rab gsal, we also find that it is a pivotal notion in the writings of stIGN tshang lo tsa ba, who in Grub mtha’ kun shes, p. 52.

449. This is because the repudiation of the fact that matter is made up of such point particles is to the repudiation that matter truly exists what the overturning of philosophical misconception is to the overturning of the innate variety. In both cases the former is a part of achieving the latter, but in no way constitutes the latter.

450. One of the most detailed treatments of the material that is to follow is to be found in A. Engle, The Buddhist Theory of Self According to Acārya Candrakīrti (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1982).

451. Again, this has to do with the fact that the apprehension of a person as permanent, unitary, and independent requires relatively advanced conceptual-linguistic abilities, which animals lack. The innate misapprehension of the person, however, is prelinguistic (or perhaps only minimally so) and possessed by every sentient being who is still bound to samsāra. Therefore, the arhat’s having rid himself of the former alone is insufficient to be considered a perfected understanding of the selflessness of the person.

452. The point being made throughout this argument is that simply because x implies y logically does not mean that psychologically or epistemologically doing away with the apprehension of y through analysis and meditation is going to eliminate the apprehension of x. mKhas grub rje is here relying on Dharmakīrti’s epistemology and its subsequent exegesis; see my discussion of the dGe luugs pa theory on the workings of inference in DBPL, Chapter 3.


454. MA (VI, 125) p. 243; EOE, p. 172.

455. The implication here being that these too are merely philosophical undertakings that have no direct impact on the elimination of the innate misapprehension of arising.

456. The positions of the opponent here are not presented in the most lucid fashion, nonetheless it is basically a continuation of the critique of the view that understanding that there is no permanent, unitary, and independent self is to realize full-blown selflessness. The opponent here seems to be repudiating the distinction between innate and philosophical misapprehension, at least to the point of claiming that what it means to understand selflessness is to refute the general characteristics of the self as it is accepted by an opposing philosophical school, and hence that the nonexistence of a permanent, unitary, and independent self is the selflessness of the person because permanence, unitarity, and independence are qualities held by an opposing philosophical school to be the general characteristics of the self. mKhas grub rje’s response, which follows, is this. He argues that, if what the opponent says is true, to understand full-blown nonarising, (that is, the fact that there is no true arising,) it would be sufficient to refute one general characteristic of arising, namely, arising as it is misapprehended by a philosophical school (here the Sāṃskṛta’s notion of arising from self). If this were so,
then the absurdity would follow that even realists, who refute the self-arising accepted by the Sāṃkhya, realize nonarising. The point here is that if by refuting one aspect of the self of the person, that is, permanence, one can come to understand full-blown selflessness, then by refuting one aspect of inherent arising, that is, self-arising, one should be able to come to a true understanding of the selflessness of arising, which is absurd. Only refuting a very special kind of object—an object that is apprehended by the innate mind (and not an object that is the concern solely of philosophers)—qualifies the understanding born from the refutation of that object as an understanding of emptiness.

457. Here the idea is to set up a correspondence between (1) accepting the nonexistence of a permanent, unitary, and independent self as the full-blown selflessness of the person and (2) accepting the fact that there is no self-arising as full-blown truthlessness, as the reality, the emptiness, of arising. Presumably the opponent is loathe to accept the latter, and by showing that it is in every way similar to the former (which he does accept), mKhas grub rje leads him to the absurdity of the former view. The reasons that follow attempt to demonstrate the correspondence between these two positions.

458. In other words, these two viewpoints resemble each other in that they are both philosophical (and not innate) viewpoints: one being a refutation of a phenomenon (arising); the other a refutation of the person. Hence, the argument goes, if the repudiation of the latter, (that is, the repudiation of a permanent, unitary, and independent person,) is the full-blown understanding of the selflessness of the person, then the repudiation of the former (the repudiation of arising from self) should be the full-blown understanding of the selflessness of phenomena; that is, of truthlessness.

459. Which is to say that in neither case do these two viewpoints constitute the totality of what it means for arising and the person to be refuted, even philosophically, so that both arising from self and being "permanent, unitary, and independent" are at most subsets of all of the logical outcomes of inherent existence, neither capturing the essence of what it means for something to exist inherently in its entirety.

460. This I find questionable, for if arising existed as it is grasped by innate ignorance, then it seems to me that it would have to be one of the four positions of the catuṣkoṭi, though not necessarily the first, (that it arises from itself).

461. This, presumably, is the stance of the Vātsiputryās. mKhas grub rje's comments here are very revealing, for they imply that in his opinion this school does not accept the selflessness of the person because he cites them as an example of a philosophical viewpoint that, though disclaiming the permanence of the self and so forth, nonetheless accepts a self of the person. Whether the Vātsiputryās believe in selflessness, and hence whether they are Buddhists, was (and still is) a point of great controversy among Tibetan exponents. See the section entitled "The Diamond-Gratule Reasoning."

462. We must keep in mind that, according to the dGe lugs pa interpretation of arising via the four extremes (from self, from another, from both, and causelessly), the second, "arising from another," is not merely the arising of an effect from a cause that is different from it, but the arising of an effect from a cause that is inherently different from it, which, of course, is an object to be refuted.

463. MA (VI, 32), p. 114; EOE, p. 161. An alternate interpretation might suggest that even in worldly terms there is no such thing as a cause different from its effect, but that, says mKhas grub rje, is blatantly false, as the world does consider causes to be different from their effects. In mKhas grub rje's view, as we have seen, "arising from another" implies more than just that a cause is different from its effect, instead referring to the fact that a cause gives rise to an effect that is inherently different from it. What is more, this, he says (see the following note) is a philosophical and not an innate form of misconception. He therefore interprets Candrakīrti's statement to mean that, because the misapprehension that things arise from another is a philosophical and not an innate attitude, it is something that ordinary worldly, (that is, nonphilosophical,) beings do not possess.

464. The point being made here is that the agent that opposes the innate misconception that things truly exist is the ascertainment of truthlessness. In the present case, it specifically says that the agent that opposes the innate misconception that arising truly exists is the ascertainment of the truthlessness of arising. Although realizing that things do not arise from themselves, others, and so on, a philosophical understanding, serves as a stepping stone to the full-blown ascertainment of the truthlessness of arising, it is not the counteractive force that opposes the misconception of true arising. This, however, must be seen in its proper perspective. It does not mean that the understanding of truthlessness immediately destroys in an irrevocable way all apprehension of true existence. rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen, in rNam 'grel thar lam gsal byed (Varanasi: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings, 1974), pp. 87–88, states quite clearly that an inferential consciousness, like the ascertainment of truthlessness, cannot overcome even the manifest (much less the latent) form of the innate misconception. The most that it can do, for as long as it is a matter of one's mind does not degenerate, is to preclude the arising of the manifest (though not even the latent) form of philosophical misconception. Once repeated meditation on this inferential-conceptual understanding is brought to the level of direct yogic perception, the innate misconception is said to be overcome during the equipoise. In any case, we must, within this context, take this to be what mKhas grub rje means by the statement that the ascertainment of truthlessness opposes innate misconceptions, assuming of course that he concurs with rGyal tshab's analysis. Another question arises in regard to the status of the misapprehension that things arise from another. Here mKhas grub rje seems to be quite explicit in regarding it as a philosophical and not an innate attitude, the ascertainment whose negation cannot oppose the misconception of the true existence of arising. Much of the later dGe lugs pa exegesis, however, maintains that the understanding that there is no arising from another is an understanding of the emptiness of arising, something that certainly should oppose the misconception that arising truly exists. Hence, there seems to be disagreement within the tradition on this point.

465. This is reference to the inference based on the following syllogism:

Subject: sound
Predicate: is impermanent
460. A Dose of Emptiness

Reason: because it is a product.

466. LCUM, folio 415b; in CDMS, p. 254, the passage is mistranslated.

467. Most likely a reference to the Jō naṃ pa doctrine. See Broido, "The Jō naṃ-pa on Madhyamaka," p. 87; Go ram pa, Ita ba'i shan 'byed, pp. 3–8; Long rdol bla ma, dbu ma'i ming gi rnam grangs, pp. 432–433; my "The Canonization of Philosophy"; and TTG, pp. 139 passim.


469. See mKhas grub rje's remarks in Lam ngan mun sel sgron ma, folios 17a passim; also Go ram pa, Ita ba'i shan 'byed, pp. 11–12, 70–76, 111.

470. According to rje tsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan, BDP, folios 94a–95a, the stones and sticks do not always have to appear as the horn of the elephant but the "basis of the conjuring," by definition, must; which is to say that the latter refers to the collection that, having had the spell cast on it, is ready to appear as a horse or elephant as soon as it is seen by a spectator. The basis of the illusion has within it the potential to immediately appear in this way, as opposed to the stripped rope in the corner, for example, which in general is not said to always appear as a snake, depending not on some spell for attaining its deceptive power, but simply appearing as a snake in given situations and to certain people with certain predispositions. See also section 3.1.3.5.1.1.3.

471. The word posited ('jug pa) has the connotation of verification here. The mind that posits an entity is the valid cognition that acts as the source of verification for it. In almost every case this is simply the valid cognition that perceives the object itself, though, as we shall see later, this is not invariably the case.

472. Keep in mind that the Svātāntrikas and the Prāsāntikas differ in several respects, this being one. In the latter, the fact that all things are imitations or labels of the mind is sufficient to determine them as truthless, as not existing from their own side. This is not the case in the Svātāntrika system, where things are seen to be both posited by the power of the mind and inherently existent.

473. As opposed to the Prāsāntikas' example of the rope, which, from its own side, has no power to appear as a snake and does so simply due to external conditions.

474. As mentioned earlier, though reality itself is the ultimate truth, the existence of reality is strictly a conventional truth. Hence, the gnos is of an āryan, which perceives only the ultimate truth, cannot perceive the former and cannot be the source of verification of the existence of reality.

475. In other words, if this gnos is has no conventional entities within its purview as far as appearances are concerned, there can be no question of it having any conceptions of the kind mentioned, appearances being much more difficult to abandon, as well as being the source of their corresponding conceptions.


477. For a more extensive discussion of this passage, see Se ra rje btsun pa, dbu ma'i spyi don, folios 92b–93a.

478. Tobh. no. 3887, dbu ma sa, folio 228b. See also EE, p. 283.

479. Tobh. no. 3887, dbu ma sa, folio 229b. See EE, p. 284.

480. On the meaning of this term see the following note; see also Rong ston pa, dbu ma la 'jug pa ra na bshad, p. 112.

481. According to oral commentary on this point, in the discussion that follows the "knowledge" (rig shes) being spoken of, which almost exclusively refers to the inferential knowledge of emptiness, here refers instead to the equipated wisdom of an āryan; for otherwise, it would make no sense to say that conventional objects do not exist within the purview of that knowledge. To use the word rig shes in this way, however, is an anomaly. What is more, mKhas grub rje's associating it with the knowledge- selfie gained from study and contemplation might make this interpretation suspect. Nonetheless, it is even more absurd to suppose that no conventional phenomena appear to a conceptual understanding of emptiness, the alternative.

482. Which is to say that emptiness fits the first definition of ultimate because it exists within the purview of that knowledge.

483. Here we have emended the text to read gnas lugs su ma grub pa as opposed to the existing reading of gnas lugs su grub pa, as the only possible reading that makes sense.

484. Legs ldan shes rab, one of the greatest Tibetan translators. See van der Kuip, CTBE, pp. 29–53, and especially pp. 35–48, where he discusses the relationship of 85n, MOE, pp. 406–411, 535.


486. The basic error, says mKhas grub rje, is in confusing the two connotations of the word ultimate in the expression ultimately existing as explained. rNgoṅ, he claims, confuses the analytical reasoning that examined reality with reasoning in general.
mKhas grub rje visualizes him reasoning as follows: even reality cannot withstand an ultimate analysis... hence, it cannot withstand reasoning in general... hence, it cannot be established by a valid cognition and hence reality, that is, the ultimate truth, does not exist. Phya pa, on the other hand, he perceives to reason as follows: reality, the absence of true existence, exists within the purview of the gnosia that understands reality... hence, it truly exists, and hence, the absence of true existence truly exists. Only further scrutiny of the views of these authors, to the extent that they are available, will bear out mKhas grub rje’s claims, however.

487. See CMDR, pp. 227 passim; also MOE, pp. 574, 632. Go ram pa, *Ila ba shan byed*, pp. 20–22, discusses this view of the dGe lugs pas and then (pp. 109–116) goes on to refute much of what we shall find later. Go ram pa believes, for example, that “on the conventional level there is no difference between the Svātantrikas and the Prāśāṅgikas” (p. 109), a view that is anathema to mKhas grub rje who maintains that the Svātantrikas accept “existence by virtue of own characteristic” on the conventional level, whereas the Prāśāṅgikas do not.

488. For a similar interpretation see Kamalaśīla’s remarks in *Madhyamakāloka*, Toh. no. 3882, dBu ma sa, folios 134a–b.

489. Toh. no. 3853, dBu ma tsha, folio 242a; C dBu ma tsha, folio 243b. See also SOS, pp. 69–70, for more detailed discussion of this passage and the following one from the commentary.

490. Toh. no. 3859, dBu ma za, folio 274a; P no. 5259, dBu ma za, folios 325a–b. TTC has dongs po for ngo bo, see previous note. The passage is not cited in Tsong kha pa’s Legs bshad snying po but is cited in his *Lha`a mtshung chen mo*, in the collection *rJe’i Tsong kha pa’i gzung dbyu ma’i lla ba’i skor* (Sarnath: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Press, 1975), p. 64.

491. In other words, if composite things did not exist by virtue of their own characteristic, they would have to be labeled phenomena, but we know from certain scriptural passages (cited later) that Bhāvaviveka accepts that such things are substantially existent phenomena, hence the two categories would have shared members and not be mutually exclusive, which is absurd.

492. P no. 5256, dBu ma sa, folio 231b.


494. This could be a direct quote but is more likely a paraphrase, as mKhas grub rje is for the most part quite strict about identifying the text from which he quotes. Bhāvaviveka’s theory of sense perception is in many ways similar to Dignāga’s. See M. Hattori, *Dignāga on Perception* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968); and R. P. Hayes, “Dignāga’s Views on Reasoning (Śvārthānūmāna),” *JIP* 8 (1984): 219–227.

495. See ICang skya’s comments on this point, as translated by Lopez in *SOS*, pp. 285–286.

496. This most likely refers to the *Tattvasāngrāha* (P no. 5764) and its *Paññikā* (P no. 5765), both of which are considered works of *pramāna* found in the section by that name in the Tibetan canon.

497. Here the word *reasoning* is meant to connote not only the type of logical argument, but the resulting philosophical position as well. Given mKhas grub rje’s presuppositions, as it is a Cittamārtrin tenet that the dependent and the real exist by virtue of their own characteristic, if this is something shared with the Svātantrikas, as his reading of Sāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla implies, it means that the latter then also hold the view that things exist by virtue of their own characteristic.

498. Actually from the commentary, Toh. no. 3883, dBu ma sa, folio 5b. See Eckel, *Jñānagarbha’s Commentary*, pp. 75, 78–79.

499. This passage demonstrates mKhas grub rje’s somewhat controversial position that the Svātantrikas do not accept that things are *mere* labels by name and conceptual thought, a position repudiated by certain later dGe lugs pa exegetes (who claim that both Prāśāṅgikas and Svātantrikas accept things to be mere labels).


502. There has been a textual emendation made here to conform to what it is that mKhas grub rje has explained in the preceding passage: “dongs smra ba’i kun rdzob dbyu ma pa’i don dam du ’dod’ has been changed to read ‘dongs smra ba’i don dam dbyu ma pa’i kun rdzob du ’dod.’”


504. TTC has dongs sun incorrectly for dongs su.

505. Toh. no. 3883, dBu ma sa, folio 6b. See Eckel, *Jñānagarbha’s Commentary*, p. 79. D has chu la sog pa for TTC’s incorrect tshul sog pa and also the modifier ’jigs rten gyi that TTC omissions.

506. For example, the Prāśāṅgikas, who do maintain that all phenomena are only conceptual labels, make no such distinction, though it is never completely clear why making this distinction, as the Svātantrikas do, and specifically why positing the existence of this category of correct, nonerroneous conventional entities, dooms one to accepting that things exist by virtue of their own characteristic. The implication might be that if something is correct and nonerroneous, it must be a truth, and hence must exist by virtue of its own characteristic. The Prāśāṅgikas, on the other hand, claim that all phenomena are false.
forward pervasion exists because, among other things, the reason (smoke) exists exclusively in things concordant with the predicate (fire); that is, exists exclusively in things like wood fire or kitchen fires, and nowhere else. If it existed, for example, in water then there would be a case of something having smoke that does not have fire. The pervasion would fail, and the syllogism would be invalid.

511. Jlei btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan, in Khab dang po'i spyi don (folio 26b), has slightly different wording for this criterion. He calls it "a valid cognition which ascertains that that [subject = person, for example,] is devoid of being either [truly one or many,]" whereas rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen, in Thar lam gsal byed, calls it "a valid cognition which ascertains an exemplification (mthshan gshi) of the reason," in other words, a valid cognition that ascertains something which is the reason. mKhas grub rje is saying that the first criterion is simply that the reason itself must be ascertained by a valid cognition. That the difference in wording reflects basic philosophical differences is evident. According to rJe btsun pa, the criterion seems to become synonymous with the ascertainment of the presence of the reason within the subject (phoyog chos), whereas according to rGyal tshab rje's interpretation, it is sufficient to ascertain a chair, for example (that is, anything that is neither a true unity or plurality). mKhas grub rje's position seems to follow a middle path between these two, requiring that more than a mere exemplification of the reason be ascertained, but not requiring the ascertainment of the full phoyog chos. For more discussion on the discrepancies of interpretation among the major dGe lungs pa exegetes on this point, see SOS, pp. 371–379. See also Bod rgya tshad ma rig's pa tshig mdzod, pp. 206–207.

512. As earlier, this criterion says that nothing can be both devoid of being a true unity and plurality and truly existing. According to rJe btsun pa (folio 26b) this is the most difficult of the three criteria to ascertain. The wording of this criterion in the latter is almost identical to mKhas grub rje's here, but rGyal tshab rje has instead "the valid cognition which refuses (gogs byed) the reason's (rigs) [existing] in the object to be refuted (dagg bya'i choa)."

513. In other words, the mutually exclusive character of true existence and non-existence is understood by analogy to the case of existence and nonexistence. mKhas grub rje seems to be implying that, strictly in an abstract way, having to do with the formal logical nature of the dichotomy, one comes to understand that they are mutually exclusive, regardless of the categories being dealt with. There is a reason for this, and it has to do with the fact that this reasoning is meant to prove truthlessness for the first time. If, in the process of understanding the reasoning, the person to whom the syllogism is posited would have to understand truthlessness to understand the mutually exclusive character of true existence and truthlessness, then this reasoning could not be considered one that for the first time established truthlessness, which it is. It seems, therefore, that mKhas grub rje gets around this by showing how, through analogy to a much more straightforward example, this relationship can be intuited without having to fully ascertain truthlessness. Intuitively here has the connotation of an understanding that does not rely directly on logical reasoning, but comes about simply by turning one's mind toward the object; see also the section entitled [The Reasoning Used to Prove That One Phenomenon Is Empty Applies to All Phenomena, Including Emptiness].
514. The question is this: does not true existence itself represent a case of something that is the reason, the absence of being a true unity or plurality, and something discordant to the predicate, that is, something not "truthless?" If so, is not the second criterion for the existence of pervasion violated?

515. The point being made here is that such a common locus must exist, and "true existence" does not. What is more, because it is nonexistent, nothing can be predicated of it; that is, it cannot be said to be "the absence of . . ."

516. See Catuṣṭihāsaka (IX, 6, 12–19), (XIII, 5) and (XIV, 14) as well as the Tikā, P Dību ma ya,folios 167b, 171a–174a, 210a, and 244a. See also AC, pp. 89–93, 118–119; and MOE, pp. 39, 337–338, 346, 347, 432, and 587–588.

517. This is, of course, a critique of the Abhidharmika notion of partless moments and not of momentariness in general. See K. Mimaki, La réfutation Bouddhique de la permanence; and S. Mookerjee, The Buddhist Philosophy of Universal Flux (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1980; first published in 1935). See also Catuṣṭihāsaka (IX, 17) and Tikā, P Dību ma ya,folios 186b–187a; AC, pp. 106–107.

518. See notes 140, 142.

519. Here noncomposite refers to permanent entities such as space, nirvāṇa, reality, and so forth. See AK (I, 5–6). See also Catuṣṭihāsaka (IX, 56); Tikā, P Dību ma ya,folio 167a; AC, pp. 88–89, n. 5. With this mKhas grub rje completes his proof of the fact that nothing (whether composite entity—matter or consciousness—or noncomposite entity) can be partless.

520. In the Tibetan scholastic tradition path most often refers to a form of consciousness, so that it is permissible to say that "a path perceives."

521. The essence body of a buddha is one kind of phenomenal body or dharmakāya, the other being the gnostic body or dhānakāya. An essence body is said to possess two purities: (1) "the purity or freedom from true existence" is the aspect of the essence body that is the emptiness or reality of a buddha’s mind; and (2) "the purity or freedom from all defilements, "the cessation of all negative factors attained by a buddha. Only a buddha is said to be able to directly perceive another buddha’s essence body. See D. Snellgrove, Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, pp. 36–37, 115–116, and 250–251. A detailed study of this subject is currently being undertaken in a doctoral dissertation by John Makransky; see also his "Controversy over Dharmakāya in the Prajñāpāramitā Commentaries of India and Tibet" (unpublished, March 1987); P. J. Griffiths, "Buddha and God: A Contrastive Study in Ideas about Maximal Greatness," Journal of Religion 69, no. 4 (1989): 502–529; MOE, pp. 117–123; Warder, Indian Buddhism, pp. 401 ff. IB, pp. 39 passim.

522. The Abhisamayālaṃkāra, especially in Chapter 4, explains the properties of each of the ten stages or bhāmis. Because a bodhisattva of the first stage has not rid himself of the stains of the second, he cannot perceive the cessation of these stains; and because that cessation is reality, he cannot perceive the reality of the second stage; that is, the reality perceived by being on the second level, much less the reality of buddhahood.

523. This refers to the pot in the case of "emptiness or reality of the pot," for example.

524. blob’i yol du byar rung ba, "being able to be taken as an object of the mind," that is, being able to be known, is the definition of a phenomenon, or an existing thing, given in many of the Tibetan exegetical works. See, for example, Geshe L. Sopa and J. Hopkins, The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism (London: Rider, 1976), pp. 92–93; Bod rgya tshad ma rig pa’i tshig mdzod, p. 328.

525. For a similar discussion concerning the example of the magician’s illusion see the section entitled "The Analysis of the Svātantrika’s Object of Refutation Based on the Example of the Illusion."

526. See section 1, "Citing the reason," at the beginning of this section.

527. mKhas grub rje is here making several profound points. First of all, he is making the nontrivial claim that the opponent to whom the syllogism is directed is a realist who has never understood truthlessness. He is also stating that realizing truthlessness in regard to the example (of the reflection) does not constitute realizing truthlessness in general. Finally, he is claiming that if the opponent had understood truthlessness already, then the syllogism would be pointless, for understanding truthlessness in regard to one phenomenon allows one to intuit the truthlessness of any other phenomenon without having to go through the inferential process over again. It should be noted that this goes counter to Se ra rje brtan pa’s theory of the workings of the unity-plurality reasoning in specific and his views on the workings of the inferential understanding of emptiness in general. To go into the details of how this is so would require a more elaborate exposition than is appropriate here. It is a subject to which I plan to devote an article in the near future.

528. We have seen that what makes a mirage or reflection incorrect is that an ordinary being of the world can perceive that it does not exist as it appears. If, however, to ascertain that something does not exist as it appears, one must ascertain truthlessness, then no ordinary being of the world could understand that a mirage does not exist as it appears, and so the basis for making this distinction between correct and incorrect conventionalities would vanish.

529. In general, reasoning from nonperception (ma dmigs pa’i rtags), one of the three main types of reasoning, is said to be of two types: nonperception in which what is negated (dgag bya’i chos su thugs pa’i don) could in principle appear (snang rung ma dmigs pa’i rtags), and nonperception in which what is negated, even in principle, could not appear (mi snang ba ma dmigs pa’i rtags) to the person to whom the syllogism is being posited. Consider an example of the former:

Subject: in the place where a pot is not perceived by a valid cognition
Predicate: there is no pot
Reason: because it is not perceived by a valid cognition.

What is being negated, the pot or its existence, in principle can appear—we see pots all the time. This is also a type of syllogism called "nonperception of the essence" (rang bohn ma dmigs pa) because the reason, nonperception by a valid cognition, is the essence of the nature of, or we might say the defining characteristic of, nonexistence.
Now consider another example of this first kind of syllogism:

Subject: on the cliff devoid of trees
Predicate: there are no Sha ba trees
Reason: because there are no trees.

Here tree is a category that is wider than, that is, extends over, the smaller category of "Sha ba trees," and it should be noted that the oral tradition adds that Sha ba are low-lying bushlike trees that the opponent in this syllogism cannot perceive (because of his/her distance from the site, say). In addition to being a reason in which the object of negation in principle could appear to the opponent to whom the syllogism is posited, this type of reasoning is also a kind of syllogism called nonperception of a more extensive category (khyab byed ma dmigs po).

The question then becomes whether the reasoning from the lack of being a unity or plurality is a form of reasoning from "the nonperception of the essence" or from "the nonperception of a more extensive category." Though mkHas grub rje claims it is the latter, based on the passage from the Áloka, the bsut pa seems to imply that the two are not mutually exclusive, and that it is both.

In addition, the syllogism based on the reason from "being devoid of being a unity or plurality" is said to be "reasoning that establishes only the term" (tha snyad 'ba' zhi sgurb kyi rtags). What this means is a point of some controversy. Some claim that the opponent to whom the reasoning is posited has understood the entire meaning (don) or essence (rang bsizin) of the predicate, but has never heard the subject called by that name (ming), that is, is unaware of the linguistic symbol (rda) or term (tha snyad) found within the predicate; in other words, that the opponent, in dependence on such a reason, has understood all that is implied within the meaning of "truthlessness" and now merely learns to predicate the term truthless of the subject.

Other scholars within the tradition maintain that this reasoning does not simply allow the opponent to name something as truthless, but that it is the vehicle through which the opponent comes to negate that the subject truly exists, hence bringing it with a deeper understanding than mere linguistic learning.

The classification of this form of reasoning brings up very profound and important issues, which, unfortunately, can be dealt with here only in a cursory way. It is normally the case that all forms of reasoning from nonperception that establish only the term are forms of reasoning from the nonperception of the essence (because the predicate and reason, related as defined-definition, are of the same nature). As mkHas grub rje makes it quite clear that the reasoning from the lack of being a unity or plurality is a form of reasoning from the nonperception of a more extensive category, however, his position is that not all forms of reasoning from nonperception that establish the term are forms of reasoning from the nonperception of the essence.

530. There was in Tibet a controversy concerning whether all reasoning that established only the term had to be reasoning from the nonperception of essence. KDI makes it clear here that this form of reasoning is not both reasoning from the nonperception of essence and from the nonperception of an extending category, but only the latter, contra Se ra tle bsut pa's opinion. See the previous note.

531. See CMDR, p. 276; MOE, pp. 54–57, 131–150, and 639–650.
547. It is clear how it is that this refutes one lone cause giving rise to one lone effect, but not how it refutes the second extreme, that a lone cause can give rise to many effects. This is left unexplained.

548. mKhas grub rje here is implying that the combination of the three does give rise to the threefold aspects of consciousness, but that it does not do so in an ultimate way; hence, he seems to be implying that the fourth alternative needs to be qualified by the word ultimately.

549. This is part of v. 49 of Atiśa’s Bodhipathapradīpa, Toh. no. 3947, dbu ma ki.

550. So that it would be pointless to take this as the interpretation of the verse, as the verse is attempting to refute a strictly realist position, which this is not, it being one advocated by the Mādhyamikas as well.

551. See LSN, folios 63a–113b. As mentioned earlier, the distinction between Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika as the two branches of the Madhyamaka is one we find only in Tibet, and there only as one among several different ways of subdividing this school of tenets (grub mtha’). In the present context the term Prāsaṅgika refers to the tradition founded by Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti. General treatments of the Prāsaṅgika school from Tibetan dGe lugs pa perspectives are to be found in Geshe L. Sopa and J. Hopkins, The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1990), pp. 301–320; MOE, pp. 36 passim; J. Hopkins, ed. and trans., Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism (London: Rider, 1980); J. Hopkins, Emptiness Yoga: The Middle Way Consequence School (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1987). See also EOE, pp. 33–336.

552. See LRCM, folios 419b ff.

553. A portion of Tsong kha pa’s dbu ma dgongs pa rab gsal that deals with this subject is to be found in C. W. Huntington, “A Non-referential View of Language and Conceptual Thought in the Work of Tsong kha pa,” PEW 33, no. 4 (1983).

554. Catubtatasaka (VIII, 3); P no. 5246, dbu ma tsha, folio 10a. See also AC, pp. 78–79.

555. P no. 5266, dbu ma ya, folio 149a.

556. (1, 80); P no. 5658, mDo ‘grel gTan yig nge, folio 132b.

557. (XI, 16), (XII, 7). Cited in Pras in the commentary on MMK, Chapter 4. See CMDR, p. 371.

558. Toh. no. 13, Sher phyin ka, folio 3a.

559. It is, of course, principally the Jo nang pas who maintain that the ultimate, qua positive luminous entity, truly exists. See, for example, Döl bu pa Shes rab rgyal mtsang, Ri choi nges don riya mtho (Delhi: Dodrup Sangye Lama, n.d.), pp. 4 passim. mKhas grub rje, however, makes a distinction between truly existing and being the truth, between ultimately existing and being the ultimate truth. Emptiness, that is reality, is the latter in each case but never the former. Indeed in the dGe lugs pa ontology nothing truly or ultimately exists. On other polemics concerning this point, viz. between sTag tshang and ‘Jam dyang bzhad pa, see MOE, pp. 171–173. mKhas grub rje, in Lam nag man sel sgron ma, folio 174b, discusses such positions as don dam bden pa bden grub du ‘dod pa with a view to refuting them, as he does here. Consider also a similar view to the one being criticized here, namely that the "non-dual wisdom that cognizes emptiness" truly exists, in Śākya mchog ldan, Shing rta chen po’i srol gnyis . . . kyi rgyus ‘grel, pp. 430 ff.

560. See the section entitled [The Reasoning of the One and the Many].

561. The point of this argument is to show that one cannot maintain that conventional phenomena are truthless while claiming that reality, the ultimate quality of conventional phenomena, truly exists. As is clear, this follows from their relationship as basis and dependent.

562. P no. 5224, dbu ma tsa, folio 1a.

563. MA (VI, 19), p. 95.

564. The several arguments that follow are very difficult to render into English because they play off of a fundamental ambiguity in the Tibetan language concerning the nature of adverbial constructions. This last passage might also be translated "perceives reality to be ultimate." See n. 571.

565. Again, this same phrase might just as well be rendered "that reality is perceived as an ultimate."

566. See MOE, pp. 381–397, 616–623, TTG, pp. 146 passim; see also note 521.

567. In other words, if the reality of sentient beings’ minds are their nature bodies, and if this reality is contained within the continua of sentient beings, how could the opponent repudiate that sentient beings have nature bodies, and are thus fully enlightened buddhas?

568. The nature body is not only something that belongs to the buddha, but in fact it is the buddha.

569. kLong drod bla ma gives a list of eighteen. MA (VI, 179–218) and its ancillary literature are the locus classicus for the list of sixteen. See also MOE, pp. 201–205. A similar list is also found in the Asatasahasrikā Pīndārthā of Dignāga. For bibliographical references to the different lists of the different emptinesses, see EOE, p. 215, n. 57.

570. This refers to permanent phenomena like noncomposite space, cessation and so forth. See AK and Bhāṣya, especially on verse (II, 55).

571. The argument here, and throughout this section, is at times extremely difficult to put into English because it is based on an ambiguity of Tibetan syntax, in which statements like "x is an ultimate" and "x ultimately exists" are expressed in the same way as x don dam par grub or don dam par x grub. See n. 564.
572. See earlier, pp. 160–161; see also CMDR, pp. 365 passim.

573. Catuhśataka (VIII, 16); Toh. no. 3846, dBU ma tsha, folio 9b; an extremely important verse in dGe lugs pa exegetical literature. For the Sanskrit and for references to its citation in other works, see AC, p. 83, n. 16. This and the following two passages are cited in Pras, as the last stanzas of Chapter 4. See J. May, Candragīrī, p. 95. This section from Pras is clearly the source for mKhas grub rje’s present discussion.

574. For a detailed discussion of this passage, see May, ibid., p. 95.

575. See note 557.

576. There is an alternate version of this line that has dngos gcig for bden nyid, making the alternate reading, “He who sees the reality of one thing.” This passage is also found cited in Pras. See n. 573.


578. MMK (VII, 32).

579. Following the epistemology and ontology of Dharmakīrti, mKhas grub rje emphasizes maintaining the traditional parallel between composite-impermanent-particular-real-eficacious things on the one hand and noncomposite-permanent-universals-unreal phenomena on the other. See, for example, M. Hattori, Dignāga on Perception, Being the Pratyaksapariccheda of Dignāga’s Pramāṇasamuccaya (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 14, 80, n. 14; also the literature surrounding PV, Pratīyāsa Chapter, v. 1 passim. Emptiness, because it falls into the latter, is considered a non-functioning, permanent fact, which is not to say that the cognition of emptiness (wisdom—which is a functioning real particular) cannot help human beings to achieve desired goals.

580. See Hayes, Dignāga on the Interpretation of Signs, especially section 5.2.5 ff.

581. See the section entitled [The Meaning of “According with the World” in the Prāsaṅgikā System].

582. Within the present context this most likely refers to minds that still have conceptions, unlike the buddhas, whose omniscient minds are said to perceive all phenomena directly, without the intervention of images (don spyi).

583. For example, when they are hungry, they eat without analyzing what “hunger” is.

584. See section 4.2.3.1.2.1.2.1. This is the central theme of DAE; see also MOE, pp. 38 passim.

585. The problem is a simple one. If the Buddha does not think conceptually (because his omniscient mind perceives all phenomena directly, as our senses, for example, perceive their objects) then, if phenomena are things that, to exist, require being labeled by conceptual thought, (this being the only kind of existence they possess), how can phenomena originally posited by the Buddha be said to exist before they form part of the conceptual thought patterns of worldly beings? This is the paradox that mKhas grub rje is attempting to address here. What he means by the Buddha’s having created these linguistic symbols “in dependence upon the conceptual thought of the disciples” remains vague but gives us the impression that even religious-philosophical terminology (whose aim after all is the pragmatic one of eliminating suffering) has its ultimate origins in the source of suffering, namely, in the conceptual minds of worldly sentient beings, and is an enlightened adaptation of already existing terms to fulfill soteriological goals. According to this theory, then, the Buddha did not teach any new concepts (terms). He simply employed old concepts in new syntactical structures.

586. Cited in Pras. For a complete discussion of this passage, see May, Candragīrī, pp. 156–157. My translation here varies slightly from May’s.

587. Cited in Prasannapadā, ed. Shastri, p. 60; Toh. no. 3860, dBU ma ’a, folio 48b.

588. Samādhirājasūtra (XXXVIII, 24); Vaidya, ed., p. 267; Toh. no. 127, mDo sde da, folio 147a. The last line is actually from another verse: Samādhirājasūtra (XXXVIII, 32); Vaidya, ed., p. 238; Toh. no. 127, mDo sde da, folio 147b.

589. Cited in Prasannapadā, ed. Shastri, p. 148; Toh. no. 3860, dBU ma ’a, folio 113a.

590. Cited in Pras. See May, Candragīrī, p. 204, for complete references concerning this passage.

591. Toh. no. 60, dKon tsregs nga, folio 43a.

592. From Śatasāhasrīka Prajñāpāramitāsūtra, Toh. no. 8, Sher phyin ka, folios 74b–75a.

593. See previous note.

594. P no. 5225, dBU ma tsa, folio 24a.

595. (1, 99–100); P no. 5658, gTan yig nge, folio 133b. The Sanskrit to this passage is found cited in Prasannapadā, ed. P. L. Vaidya (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1960), p. 179, as in Abhisamayālaṃkāroka.

596. (II, 14); Toh. no. 4158, sSpring yig ge, folio 111a. Also cited in Tsong kha pa’s dBU ma ’dgos pa rab gsal (Sarnath: Gelukpa Students’ Welfare Committee, 1984), p. 140.

597. As they do not exist, they are refuted by means of demonstrating a contradiction when assumed or hypothesized to exist.

598. Catuhśataka (XIV, 23cd); P no. 5346, dBU ma tsha, folio 17b. See also AC, pp. 134–135.

599. P no. 5266, dBU ma ya, folios 250b–251a.
600. See LRCM, folios 433a–447a. See also Jeffrey Hopkins, "A Tibetan Delineation of Different Views of Emptiness in the Indian Middle Way School," *Tibet Journal* 14, no. 1. (1989): 10–43. Paul Williams, in his introduction to this volume, "Introduction—Some Random Reflections on the Study of Tibetan Madhyamaka," comments (p. 4) that "it is interesting in reading Hopkins' paper to see just how slim is the Indian evidence for the distinction as drawn by DGe lugs pa scholars between Prasangika and Svatantrika Madhyamaka. A corollary of this is the scope for creative development, and for rival interpretations and therefore genuine debate within Tibetan thought."

601. A position held historically by Go ram pa. In BPD, p. 361, folio 28a, he states very clearly: "thod gnyir ba dang i rang rgyud pa gyis te i don dam gis thod tshul la ni khyed par med do."

602. This is reminiscent of an argument that occurs at the beginning of LS in which a similar position is ascribed to the "Great Chinese Commentary" on the *Sāṃdhinirmocana Sūtra*. See EE, p. 192 and n. 3.


604. Whereas the realists at least are consistent in maintaining a strictly realist position throughout.

605. The gist of this rather involved argument seems to be that simply because a consciousness is nonerroroneous in one respect (in perceiving the whiteness of the moon or in the sense that a pillar appearing to it can function as the pillar that it appears to be) does not imply that it is nonerroroneous in every respect (for example, it may be erroneous, in the former case, in having two moons appear to it instead of one, and in the latter case in having that pillar appear as if it existed from its own side). How this is a response to the opponent's argument, or indeed that such an argument even needs a response, is baffling to me.

606. The former is not true because in the Svatantrika system such a difference is a mere conceptual imputation that has no status as a real entity. See the "Svatantrika" chapter of dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po's *Grub mthu* rin chen phreng ba, translated in Geshe Sopa and Hopkins, *The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*; and also Anne Klein, *Knowledge and Liberation* (KL) (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1986), pp. 33–67.


608. *PV* (I, 40). See R. Gnoli, *The Pramāṇavārttikam of Dharmakirti* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1960), p. 24; see also KL, p. 46. In the case of a table, for example, a concordant entity would be another table, whereas a discordant entity would be, say, space. In the Svatantrika system, every entity is said to be specific unto itself because it is the opposite of or different from every other entity, both those concordant and discordant to it.

609. This shows quite clearly that for mKhas grub rje "existing by virtue of own characteristic" (rang gi mshan nyid kyi grub pa) and "being a svalaksana" (rang gi mshan nyid yin pa), in the Sautrāntika system, are equivalent statements. This is a disputed point in the tradition.

610. This is commented on by Klein, KL, pp. 139–140.

611. *PV* (I, 112c); Gnoli, *The Pramāṇavārttikam of Dharmakirti*, p. 58.

612. *PV* (I, 76); Gnoli, ibid., p. 44.


617. *MA* (VI, 61), p. 154; *EOE*, p. 164, which corrects la Vallée Poussin’s text and translation of this verse.

618. The argument baffles me, for all that mKhas grub rje has managed to prove by citing these passages from Candrakirti is that he does not accept existence by virtue of own characteristic, something the opponent seems willing to grant. It entails nothing of the Svatantrika position, which is where the real disagreement seems to be. In other words, it does not in any way prove that the Svatantrikas do accept this kind of existence.

619. Although the entire argument confounds me, I find this third option especially baffling. It would seem to me that what the opponent is trying to urge here is that there is no scriptural basis on which to make a distinction between "existence by virtue of own characteristic" and "true existence," and hence that this is no basis on which to distinguish the Svatantrikas and Prāśāntikas.

620. *MA* (VI, 34), p. 117; *EOE*, p. 161, where the last line has been mistranslated.

621. *MA*, p. 117.

622. This is the syllogism that will be spoken of in what follows.

623. That is, no subject in the syllogism.

624. *MA* (VI, 35), p. 120; *EOE*, p. 161.


626. This is an extremely significant point in Tsong kha pa's and mKhas grub rje's interpretation of the Madhyamaka. Elsewhere, specifically in the rebuttal of the one who does not go far enough in his refutation, see section 4.2.3.1.2.2. both authors
criticize the viewpoint that the Madhyamaka is involved in a critique of essences. Both are also quite willing to accept that nominally a thing's definition (mīshan nyid) is its essence or nature, and both repeatedly use terminology such as “of the same nature” (rang bzhin gcig).

627. See note 461.

628. The Sautrāntikas, for example, consider them essenceless because such entities are not considered to be potentially efficacious. See PV (III, 3); also KL, pp. 35, 222, n. 3; also Y. Kajiya, “‘Three Kinds of Affirmation and Two Kinds of Negation in Buddhist Philosophy,’ Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens und Archiv Für Indische Philosophie (1973); also MOE, pp. 113 passim, especially Appendix 4.

629. Hence, contradicting the first verse of MMK, “yaḥ pratyāyasyamutpādam prapanicāpratamasīvatam.”

630. See section 4.2.3.1.3.4.

631. MMK (XXIV, 18).

632. Compare to kLong rdol bla ma's characterization of a related position that he attributes to the early sTag tshang lo tsa ba, in dBu ma'i ming gi rnam grangs, p. 436.

633. P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 10b.

634. Toh. no. 3864, dBu ma ya, folio 8a.

635. Ibid., folio 7b.

636. The opponent accepts the “cycle” that if something is posited by the mind, then it must be created.

637. The former refers to the classical “twelve links” formulation as it applies to the cyclic process of rebirth of sentient beings. The latter refers simply to the independent nature of causality in general. See MOE, pp. 275–283; also DAE, especially pp. 223–235 and 287–298; and D. Kalupahana, Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1975).

638. The text reads “don de ma yin bzhin du don de yin par rtog pas btags pas rtog btags su brjod pa ma yin la." This passage is obscure and may very well be a corruption in the text. All corrections that seem plausible, however, seem to be equally as obscure.

639. MMK (XXIV, 33d). Svabhāva kriyate na hi. Kalupahana, Causality, p. 350, mistranslates “For, self nature does not perform.” See section 4.2.3.1.2.2.23.

640. MA, pp. 261–262.

641. Here mKhas grub rje (and the dGe legs pa in general) follow the Abhidharma notion that speech, being the physical sound of the words, is itself a real entity (dngos po). See AK (I, 10b); L'Abhidharmakōsa de Vasubandhu, trans. In Valéée Poussin, p. 17; also, P. Jaini, “The Vaibhāsika Theory of Words and Meaning,” Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (1959): 95–107.

642. The point here seems to be that non true existence does not imply false existence any more than not being nonerroneous implies being erroneous. Empires, for example, does not truly exist but it is also not a false thing: it is the truth. It is worth clarifying this point in general, as it is an important one in dGe legs pa exegesis. Only emptiness is considered to be nonerroneous (mi slu ba) because its mode of appearance corresponds to its mode of existence, at least when it is perceived by the direct gnosis of an áryan. All other phenomena are considered erroneous (slu bo), for, although they do not inherently exist, they appear to do so. There are times, however, when conventional phenomena, like cause and effect, are called unerring (mi slu). This does not mean that they are nonerroneous, but that they are unerring; that is, that a cause, for example, always produces its effect unerringly, without fail. In general, false (rdzun pa) is a synonym for erroneous. Hence, all conventional phenomena are said to be false (or falsities), whereas emptiness is said to be true (or the truth) and nonerroneous. Though it is true (bden pa yin pa), it does not truly exist (bden par ma grub pa). This last claim is slightly more problematic in Tibetan than in English, for the Tibetan expression bden par grub pa can plausibly express two things: (1) truly existing, where the bden par (truly) is taken as an adverb modifying the verb grub pa (to exist), or (2) “being the truth,” more literally, “existing as the truth,” for the construction x y (in locative) verb to exist is often used to signify that x is y, as in, for example, sgnyur mi rtog par grub pa (“sound is impermanent”). To avoid this ambiguity, the convention first of these two significances and express something’s being the truth by another expression (such as bden par yin pa). A confusion between these two possible meanings of the expression bden par ma grub pa, claims mKhas grub rje, brings the opponent to claim that because emptiness is not truly existent, it is not the truth.

643. Madhyamakaloka, D dBu ma sa, folio 210b, attributes this, with a slightly different reading, to the Śrīmaddevī Śūtra. The passage is also cited in Buddhapālita’s commentary, Toh. no. 3842, dBu ma tsa, folio 217b; in Pras, pp. 41, 237; and, according to the latter, in the commentary to Bodhicaryāvatāra (IX, 2).

644. MMK (XIII, 1); P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 9a. Kalupahana's (p. 217) translation of the title of this chapter (the Samskāra chapter) as “Examination of Action and Agent” is misleading, as is his interpretation and critique of the Tibetan translation.


646. The latter is a common and indisputable property of such an equipoise, a corollary of its being a mind in which the appearance of duality has waned (gyen snang nub pa’i blo).

647. This refers to the object that actually exists, but is unperceived by ignorance and refuted into a truly existent entity. In other words, it is the conventionally existent self, as opposed to the false self that is constructed with this former entity, the conventionally existent self, as its perceived object. On the distinctions made in dGe legs pa
A Dose of Emptiness

exegesis between the different kinds of objects (dngos yul, gzung yul, jug yul, snang yul, and so on), see KL, pp. 38 passim. See also MOE, pp. 177–178, 678–679.

648. This begins the section on the selfishness of the person. See MMK, Chapter 18; PS, pp. 340–381; CS, Chapter 10 (AC, pp. 95–103); and MA (VI, 120 ff). For a detailed treatment of this subject in Tsong kha pa, see CMDR, pp. 336–371; EE, pp. 141 ff; and in ‘Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, MOE, pp. 677–697. For a brief exposition of the nature of the self in the different Buddhist philosophical schools as systematized by a later Tibetan exegete, dKon mchog ‘jigs med dbang po (1728–1790), see Sopa and Hopkins, The Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism, pp. 111–321; also MOE, pp. 175–193; A. Engle, ‘‘The Buddhist Theory of Self According to Acārya Candrakīrtis’’ (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1982); J. Duerlinger, ‘‘Candrakīrtis’’ Denial of the Self,’’ PEW 34, no. 3 (1984).

649. MA, pp. 261–262.

650. See Pudgalaviniśāya, an appendix to T. Scherbatsky, The Soul Theory of the Buddhists (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1986; reprint); AK, Chapter 9; trans. L. de la Vallée Poussin, vols. 5–6, pp. 227–302. The Vyākhyā explains the opponents being refuted therein to be ‘‘the Vātsuputrapiṣṭhas; that is, the Ārya Sammitiyas’’ (la Vallée Poussin, p. 227). The view that mKhas grub rje ascribes to the Sammitiyas here does not, however, seem to correspond to that in AK. See also the Vatsiputra chapter of the Tattvasamgraha, trans. G. Jha, Gaekwad Oriental Series (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1929–37); and also A. Barue, Les sectes bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule (Saigon: Bulletin de L’École Française d’Extrême Orient, 1955).

651. This sūtra is also quoted in Bhāṣya to AK (V, 7) and in the ninth chapter of AK; la Vallée Poussin (Chapter 5, p. 17; Chapter 9, p. 253) identifies the origin of the citation as Samyutta Nikāya (III, 46); see also mDzod rang ’gyel (Abhidharmakāśābādhyāya) (Dhayamala: Council for Religious and Cultural Affairs of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 1967), p. 287; the two citations (the latter and TTC’s) vary insignificantly. The passage as cited in AK, however, is quoted not by the Vatsiputra (who is portrayed as accepting the view that the self is neither the same as nor different from the aggregates, but an ineffable substance) but by Vasyubhandhu in support of his own position (that no such ineffable self exists). See previous note. This same citation is paraphrased in MA (VI, 126cd).

652. Many similar passages are to be found in the Udānāvarga (XXIII, 10 ff), but nothing exactly like the present one.

653. Udānāvarga (Tshoms, XXXI, 1).


655. See, for example, AKR, trans. la Vallée Poussin, Chapter 3, p. 57 [commentary on (III,18)]; also Chapter 9, pp. 258–259.

656. See AK, Chapter 9; Abhidharmakāśābādhyāya of Vasyubhandhu, ed. Pradhan, pp. 470–471. P no. 5591, mNgon pa ngu, folio 102b. Neither this nor the previous passage seem to correspond exactly to TTC.

Notes

657. See AK, Chapter 9; Pradhan ed., ibid., pp. 470–471; P no. 5591, mNgon pa ngu, folio 102b.

658. This refers to the Sautrāntikas who base themselves on the works of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

659. For an extensive discussion of Bhāvaviveka’s position regarding the self according to later dGe lugs pa exegetes and their defense of the views expressed here and in Tsong kha pa, see MOE, pp. 897–903, and n. 791.

660. Tob. no. 3856, dBu ma dza, folio 80b; C dBu ma dza, folio 80b. See also EE, pp. 301–303; MOE, pp. 898–900.

661. The reasoning is similar: arising’s being a labeled entity does not imply that all composite entities are labeled, even though arising itself is such an entity.

662. Whether all these realists actually accept that the self is a substantial entity is questionable. In any case, mKhas grub rje’s stance is that it is a view they are forced into through reasoning, and the point here is that if that mind apprehends the self to be such an entity, and it indeed is, then they have accepted the absurdity that the innate misapprehension of the self is not a mistaken mind.

663. Cited in Catuṣṭihatattakātikā, folio 155b; and also in Tsong kha pa’s dBu ma dgongs pa rab gsal, ed. Sarnath, p. 369.

664. Cited by Bhāvaviveka in Tarkajñārā, P no. 5256, dBu ma sa, folio 36. Also cited in the Bhāṣya to MA (VI, 135); see also MA (VI, 166–167); MOE, pp. 694, 698; EE, pp. 303 and n. 47; and CMDR, p. 337; Wayman (CMDR, p. 473, n. 328) speculates on the possible source. See also Milendapāka, trans. T. W. Rhys Davids, in The Questions of King Milinda (New York: Dover Books, 1963; reprint of the 1896 ed.), pp. 43–44.


666. Of course, there is no such thing as tortoise skin.

667. This is one of the famous ‘‘undeclared views’’ (avyākṛta-vastu). See my discussion of this subject in DBPL, pp. 129–156.


670. The argument, to put it mildly, is a bit circular, oftentimes assuming presuppositions the imaginary opponent would never agree to.

671. See note 651.

672. The innate view of the self of the person is a general misapprehension of the self based on anyone’s aggregates. The view in regard to the perishable group of ag-
gregates (‘jigs tshogs la lha bo) refers specifically to the misapprehensions of the self based upon one’s own aggregates alone. See MA (VI, 120), p. 179 passim.

673. In other words, all of these logical attacks are against the self as perceived by this innate misapprehension of the self. Were this not an erroneous mind, such contradictions would not only be meaningless but impossible.

674. The direct object, that is, the object that actually appears to this innate apprehension of the self, of course, is nonexistent. The perceived object is the entity actually being perceived and mistaken for this false self, and it exists.

675. On these meditative states see Paul J. Griffiths, On Being Mindless (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1986).

676. “‘ci yang med pa’i skye mchéd’” the third samāpatti or formless absorption. See previous note.

677. When he goes into single pointed concentration on emptiness, for example.

678. This is usually said to refer to the śrāvakā and pratyekabuddha’s direct understanding of the selflessness of the person.


680. Toh. no. 3887, DBu ma sa, folio 227a.


683. This seems to contradict what is said at the end of section 4.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3., namely that to negate the existence of the object of the philosophical apprehensions of a self is not to negate the existence of the object of the innate apprehension of the self. One is almost tempted here to propose a radical emendation so that the text reads, “if one negates the existence of such a permanent, unitary, and independent [self] one does not also negate the existence of a person who is a self-sufficient, substantial [entity].”

684. There are four aspects, that is, characteristics, associated with each of the four noble truths. Hence, the truth of suffering has associated with it the aspects of impermanence, suffering, selflessness and emptiness, and so forth. For a detailed discussion of this subject, see MOE, pp. 292–296.


686. See Rong zomchos kyi bzung po, "Ta ba dang grub mtha' sna tshogs pa brjed byang", pp. 335–339, and especially pp. 365–374, for a treatment of this subject from a substantially different perspective.

687. This very subject is treated at length in the fourth chapter of Vasubandhu’s Vvyākhyātki. See my "Vasubandhu’s Vvyākhyātki on the Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Sātras," forthcoming from SUNY Press in an anthology of essays on traditional hermeneutics in South Asia, ed. J. Timm.

688. This refers to the path of accumulation (tshog lam).

689. This could alternatively be translated “within one lifetime.” It is clear from other contexts, however, that one meditative session is being referred to, as the bodhisattva, according to the śrāvaka schools, proceeds through all of these stages in one final sitting under the bodhi tree. The word rten, however, oftentimes does connote a bodily existence, that is, a lifetime.

690. AK (VI, 24); see also trans. in Vallée Poussin, Chapter 6, p. 177.

691. There are different ways of enumerating these, for example:

1. the transfer from Tuśita
2. the conception
3. the birth
4. the mastery of conventional arts and sciences
5. the great renunciation
6. the six years of ascetic practices
7. the journey to Vajrāsana (Bodhgaya)
8. sitting under the bodhi tree
9. the overcoming of the Māras
10. the enlightenment
11. the turning of the wheel of the doctrine
12. the nirvāṇa (passing away)

For more on this, see Mi bskyod rdo rje, rGuYad bla ma'i rnam 'grel (Sikkim: Rumtek Monastery Press, undated blockprint), folio 174a; also rGyud tshab Dar ma rin chen, rGyud bla Dar thik, in the Collected Works (New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1982), pp. 677–678; The Twelve Deeds of the Buddha (Lalitavistara), translated from the Mongolian by N. Pope, Asiatische Forschungen 23 (Wienbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967) and The Voice of the Buddha: The Beauty of Compassion, 2 vols. (Berkeley: Dharma Publications, 1983).

692. This is in contradistinction to the Mahāyāna claim that all twelve actions were the playing out of an already enlightened being. See rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtsan, sPyi don to the first chapter of AA (Bylakuppe: Sera Monastery, blockprint edition, undated), folio 9a ff.

693. See the section entitled [Innate and Philosophical Misconceptions].

695. See CMDR, pp. 336 ff; see also my remarks concerning the "eight great difficult points" (da’i’ gnas chen po brgyad), in the Introduction, note 23.

696. MA (VI, 179) p. 301.

697. P no. 5262, dBu ma yu, vol. 98, folio 103. See also MOE, p. 637; CMDR, pp. 271–272.

698. Toh. no. 3842, dBu ma tsa, folio 198a; commentary to MMK, (VII, 34); see also EE, p. 299. For a disagreement between Bhāvaviveka and Buddhapaśita concerning this passage, see SOS, p. 106.

699. See section 4.2.3.1.3.5.1.1.1 for a discussion of the notion of a "perceived object."

700. For a discussion of this passage, see p. 285 and n. 905.

701. The six elements are earth, air, fire, water, space, and consciousness. Touch refers to the meeting of sense object and sense organ in the production of sense consciousness—the five sense consciousnesses and the mental consciousness. The eighteen functions most likely refer to the eighteen dhātus (khams); that is, the six objects, six organs, and six types of consciousness.

702. That is to say, those that belong to oneself, as opposed to someone else’s eyes, ears, and so on.

703. In other words, they are mine.

704. For example, to contemplate one’s eyes without thinking of them as “mine,” and to conceive of them as truly existent is not the apprehension of mineness; but to specifically think of them as “mine” and to think that this mine exists from its own side, that is, truly exists, is the apprehension of mineness.

705. Other scholars, notably tse bsun pa, would go even further and declare that not only need this not be the apprehension of mineness, but that it cannot be. He states, in a very famous passage in dBu ma'i spyi don, that to apprehend “mine” as truly existent is the apprehension of the self of the person because the word mine actually or directly expresses “I,” but that to apprehend “my eyes,” “my ears,” and so on as truly existent is not the apprehension of mine because the words my eyes and so on actually or directly express exemplifications of mine (and not mineness itself). This discussion could serve as a springboard for a discussion of the nature of predication and adjectival modification in the Madhyamaka, which is unfortunately beyond the scope of this work.

706. This section is one of the longest and most detailed of the entire TTC. Despite the complexity of the section, especially of the exegetical material that sets forth the "correct" interpretation of certain scriptural passages, such as the one found in the Dāsabhāmikā Sūtra, the point being made is a very simple one. Srāvakas and pratyekabuddhas attain arhatship. Of this there is no doubt. To accomplish this they must forever rid themselves of the afflictions. The only method to accomplish this, in turn, is through the direct perception of reality; that is, through the direct understanding of emptiness. Hence, Srāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, despite their impoverished attainments in the area of "method" (upaya), do cognize not only the selflessness of the person, but also the selflessness of phenomena; that is, full-blown emptiness. In short, the difference between Srāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, on the one hand, and bodhisattvas, on the other, lies not in the realization of emptiness. Both groups accomplish this. It lies, instead, in the degree of their compassion and altruism and in the extentiveness of their understanding of emptiness, bodhisattvas having an understanding of reality that is more in-depth, by virtue of the fact that they have mustered many forms of reasoning that establish emptiness, a feat that the Srāvakas and pratyekabuddhas cannot claim for themselves. Similar treatments of this subject are to be found in Tsong kha pa's Lam rim chen mo (see CMDR, pp. 383–385); dGongs pa rab gsal (see CTB, pp. 150–181); and LSN, folios 73b–77b (see EE, pp. 299–305). See also MOE, pp. 296–304; SOS, pp. 104–107; and Guy Newland, Compassion: A Tibetan Analysis (London: Wisdom Publications, 1984), p. 156, n. 15. For discussion of this subject in non-dGe lungs pa works the reader is referred to the detailed treatment in the Karma pa’s dBu ma la ’jug pa’i rnam bshad, folios 46b–56b; as well as the rNam bshad of Rong ston pa, pp. 24–31. Tsong kha pa’s position, that Srāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do understand the selflessness of phenomena, is criticized by Mi bsiskyod rdo rje in dBu ma gzhon stong smra’ ba’i srol (undated blockprint), folio 17b.


709. Ibid., p. 17.

710. This refers to those non-Buddhists who, by the power of meditation, have managed to temporarily suppress their afflictions. The bodhisattva of the first level, by his or her direct perception of emptiness, already has uprooted many of those afflictions and thus surpasses these non-Buddhist yogis by virtue of this accomplishment.

711. See CTB, p. 151. This is a point of some controversy in the tradition. Some sources seem to imply that the selflessness of the person is realized first and that of phenomena (of the aggregates, for example) later. This passage, however, seems to imply just the opposite. Some scholars, most notable among them being Pan chen bsod nams grags pa, claim that this refers only to the order in which they are understood by direct perception (myong thob khyis) and not to the way they are understood by inferential, that is, conceptual, thought.

712. V. 35–37. P no. 5658. gTang yig nge, folio 132b. See also CTB, p. 165.

713. Here mKhas grub rje’s explanation seems to be almost identical to that found in Tsong kha pa’s dBu ma dgongs pa rab gsal. This passage is quite controversial and involves the issues of (1) whether the selflessness of the person (or that of phenomena is cognized first and (2) whether a person’s cognition of the selflessness of
x entails his or her cognition of the emptiness of any other phenomena at will. See CBT, pp. 151, 160, 166.

714. P no. 5658, gTam yig nge, folio 145b. See CBT, p. 168.

715. See CBT, p. 168.

716. Raināvali (IV, 86); see also CBT, p. 169.

717. MA, p. 22. Quoted is MMK (XV, 7), see Pras. p. 269, and also see rJe bstun pa, Khab dang po'i spyi don, folios 99b passim. As for the Indian commentaries on this verse in the Tibetan translation see Buddhāpālita (folio 225b), Aukutobhāyā (folio 61a), and Prasannapadā (folio 91a); references are to Peking editions of these texts. See also EE, p. 300.

718. See CBT, p. 172.

719. Toh, no. 3853, D dBu ma tsha, folio 113b. Here, however, he cites this stanza as if it were the opinion of another: “khang des ni nyan thos la gang saq gi bdag med pa'i sgra'i don bye brag tu rogs par bya ba yin pa'i phyir chos bdag med pa nyid bstun pa mi nus so'i nus par gyur na ni thig pa gzhahn yongs su bzang ba don med pa nyid du'gyur ro tshes zer ro.'

720. P no. 5658, gTam yig nge, folio 147a.

721. Toh. no. 1120, bsTod tshogs ka, v. 65. See also L. de la Vallée Poussin, "Les quatre odes de Nāgārjuna," Le Museon (1913); and Lindner, Nāgārjuniana.

722. The peak junction refers to the series of stages extending from the Mahāyāna path of preparation through the paths of seeing and meditation. It is a series of paths belonging exclusively to bodhisattvas.

723. The stream enterer who experiences the four fruits, those of stream enterer, once-returner, no-returner, and arhat, in that very life.

724. This is the view ascribed to Rong ston pa by Se ra tse bstun pa; see the yang dag mtha' section of his Khab dang po'i spyi don.

725. This section assumes a great deal of knowledge of the "path system" of the Mahāyāna (as systematized primarily in the Abhisamayālamkāra and in the Abhidharma-kāravyutpāda). Lucid literature on this topic in Western languages is scarce. See E. Conze, Abhisamayālamkāra, Serie Orientale Roma 6 (Rome: IsMEO, 1954); E. Obermiller, "The Doctrine of the Prajñāpāramitā as Exposed in the Abhisamayālamkāra of Maitreya," Acta Orientalia 11 (1932): 1-133; Rahulā, trans., Le Compendium de la Super-doctrine.

726. This by virtue of considering them merely conventional truths. See my DBPL, Appendix 1; KL, pp. 25–88.

727. Here it is the opponent’s belief that if the seventh bhūmi bodhisattva surpasses the śrāvaka arhat "by virtue of his wisdom," he must do so in every respect. To this, mKhas grub tje responds by saying that if that were true, then at the first bhūmi to not surpass by virtue of his wisdom must mean that in no respect can the first bhūmi bodhisattva’s wisdom surpass that of the śrāvaka, but in at least one respect (his ability to eliminate the obscurations to omniscience connected with the path of seeing) his wisdom does surpass that of the śrāvaka arhat at the first bhūmi.

728. Oral commentary maintains that this refers to the apprehension of true existence (dben 'dzin).

729. The point being that if the opponent’s criterion for "surpassing" is that a wisdom must be able to eliminate the subconscious afflicted obscurations, then, even from the first level the bodhisattva’s wisdom, which, by the opponent’s own admission, is not bound by the apprehension of true existence and hence capable of later acting as the agent that eliminates these subconscious afflicted obscurations, would surpass the śrāvaka arhat’s wisdom. Hence, this cannot be the proper criterion.

730. The "knowledge of the basis" is one of the three knowledges (mkyen gsum) described in the Abhisamayālamkāra. Specifically it is the one that leads śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas to their desired goal of liberation, namely the wisdom that directly understands the selflessness of the person.

731. According to oral commentary this refers to the latent potentialities for the apprehension of true existence (dben 'dzin gyi bag chags).


733. Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsam phi, folio 92b.

734. More specifically, it is the result of meditation on the four noble truths and the eightfold path that is being spoken of. See Rahulā, Le Compendium, p. 124.


738. MA (VII, 1), p. 261. In the auto commentary it states: ‘‘To enter into equipoise on cessation means to enter into equipoise on the ‘‘perfect end’’ (yang dag pa’i mtha’), [that is, emptiness]. Hence, we call reality cessation because in the [equipoise
on reality) all proliferations cease. In the seventh bhūmi, called Gone Ajar, the bodhisattva, in one instant, enters into and in one instant [emerges from] the cessation obtained in the sixth bhūmi." The views of Tsong kha pa and mKhas grub rje on this point correspond to and most likely are derived from those of Red mda’ ba gZhon nu blo gros; see the latter's rNam bshad on this verse, pp. 310–312. The entire question, as presented in this verse, is based on the quote from the Dsa略hānmika Sūtra cited in MA, p. 261.

739. See CTB, pp. 154–160.


742. BCA (IX, 41cd), p. 195.


744. This most likely refers to Prajñākaramati’s Paṭijīka; see P. L. Vaidya, ed., Buddhist Sanskrit Texts no. 12 (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1960), pp. 203 ff.

745. BCA (IX, 45), p. 196.

746. “nyon mongs spangs pa grol na des i de ma thag tu der ‘gyur ro’.” BCA (IX, 46ab), p. 197. I have translated the passage to fit KDJ’s gloss, which follows. Here it follows Tsong kha pa (BGR) almost verbatim. Both of them clearly cite this passage because it might be, (and most likely was, historically) interpreted to support the view that Śāntideva was of the opinion that meditation on the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths leads to emancipation qua extinction of the affections (though not to buddhahood), a position both of them battle throughout this section and that they of course find anathema.

747. BCA (IX, 46cd), p. 197.

748. BCA (IX, 47ab), p. 197.

749. BCA (IX, 47cd–48ab), p. 197.

750. The craving that the Mādhyamikas and Abhidharmaists hold in common is what is called afflicted craving. It is the craving explained in the Abhidharma as one of the afflictions. The nonafflicted craving referred to here is the apprehension of true existence, which the Mādhyamikas accept as an affliction and the Abhidharmaists do not (because they perceive the apprehension of true existence as being unmistaken). When the Mādhyamikas call it nonafflicted, however, it is not because the apprehension of true existence is not an affliction but because it is not an affliction according to the common standards they share with the Abhidharmaists. This is the point being made here.
762. Commentary to v. 40; Toh. no. 3791, Sher phyin cha, folio 48a.

763. See the Vṛtti of Ārya Vimuktasena, p. 77. The scriptural line in question, "asamskrta-prabhāvita by āryapratyakṣaḥ," is to be found both in the Āṣa (Chapter 2) and in the Vajracchedikā (section 7); see references to this and rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen’s comments translated in TTG, p. 170. See also TTG, p. 350.

764. This is a sarcastic remark. Ārya have the dharmadhātu by virtue of the fact that they exist and nonexistent phenomena do not contain anything.

765. See note 749, Vajracchedikā, p. 111.

766. AA (VIII, 2). Toh. no. 3786, Sher phyin ka, folio 5a. On the misconception concerning object-subject, see also AA (V, 5–7) and TTG pp. 132–133. On the pratyaek-abuddha’s elimination of this form of misconception, see TTG, pp. 156, 238–239, 397–398; see also MOE, pp. 106–108, 378–379. See also Rong zom chos kyi bzang po, Tā ba dang grub mtha’ sna tshogs pa brjed byang du byis pa, pp. 369–374.

767. This has the format of a “stanza of intermission” but it is not actually identified as such. Because the view expressed in the verse is a position mKhas grub rje seems to be criticizing, it is also possible that it is a quote from some existing work of the time. In any case, the meaning of the verse is unclear.

768. This same point presumably is made by Nāgārjuna in MMK (XV, 7) when he states that this same doctrine was taught in the Kāvyāyanavāda Sūtra.

769. It is not clear what “the two sets of two” refers to. It could refer to the fact that śrāvakas do and do not understand the selflessness of phenomena and that pratyaek-abuddhas do and do not understand it, or it could refer to the two explanations in AA and the two in the Hinayāna stārapīṭaka.

770. In other words, the latter also caters to two audiences, Sautrāntika and Yogācāras, the former of whom accept the existence of external objects and the latter of whom do not.

771. Presumably this is because in their system all śrāvakas and pratyaek-abuddhas understand the selflessness of phenomena. And yet mKhas grub rje says in his comments later that Ārya Vimuktisena and Haribhadra accept that these two methods of interpretation (one that considers all śrāvakas and pratyaek-abuddhas to have realized the selflessness of phenomena and the other that considers only some of them to have done so) exist in regard to the AA. The only way to reconcile these two statements then is to say that, though they recognize these two methods of interpretation in principle, they opt for the former as opposed to the latter.

772. Tsong kha pa, dBus ma dngongs pa rab gsal, Collected Works, vol. ma, Zhol ed., folio 40b; (Sarnath: Gelukpa Students Welfare Committee, 1984), p. 73. See also TTG, p. 397 and n. 1.

773. See above p. 220.

774. As with the previous section, much of the material here is covered in great detail in TTG. The Commentary referred to, of course, is the Vākyāhāra that is here attributed to Asanga. The root text and commentary have been edited by E. H. Johnston (Patna: Bihar Research Society, 1950); the most complete work on these texts in English is J. Takasaki, A Study of the Ratnasūtra-vākyāhāra (Uttaratantra). Being a Treatise on the Tathāgatagarbha Theory of Mahāyāna Buddhism, Serie Orientale Roma 33 (Rome: IsMEO, 1966).

775. Ratnasūtra-vākyāhāra (RGV) (1, 153cd), E. H. Johnston, ed., The Ratnasūtra-vākyāhāra Mahāyānottaratantrasūtra (Patna: Bihar Research Society, 1950), p. 74; Toh. no. 4024, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 61b. See also (1, 2), (1, 32–33), (1, 133), and TTG, pp. 269–272, 275, 317, 378, and especially pp. 300–301 and Chapter 6.

776. Ratnasūtra-vākyāhāra (RGGV), commentary on RGV (1, 153); Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 112b. Ruegg identifies the scriptural citation as being from the Srimaladevi Sūtra.

777. RGV (1, 153ab); Johnston, Ratnasūtra-vākyāhāra, p. 74; Toh. no. 4024, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 61b. See also TTG, pp. 298–299.

778. RGV (1, 33); Johnston, ibid., p. 27; Toh. no. 4024, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 56a. See also TTG, pp. 269–270, 346, 364.

779. RGVV commenting on RGV (1, 32); Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 89b.

780. Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 89b.

781. RGVV commenting on RGV (1, 33); Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 90a.

782. Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 80b.

783. Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 81a.

784. Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsa m phyi, folio 80b.

785. The five works attributed to Maitreya (at least in the Tibetan tradition): (1) the Uttaratantra, (2) the Abhisamayālamkāra, (3) the Sūrabālaṃkāra, (4) the Dharmadharmatāvibhāga, and (5) the Madhyāntavibhāga. In the dGe lugs pa tradition the first two works are considered Mādhyamika texts, the last three, works of the Yogācāra. This is not a position that goes unchallenged, however, as is evidenced by rJe btsun pa’s defense of this position in dGap lan klu grub dgon gsan. See also TTG, pp. 50–55.

786. See MOE, pp. 292–296; the sixteen aspects are also dealt with extensively in AK (VII, 13) and its commentaries.


788. Of the three forms of suffering, (1) the suffering of suffering (sdug bsngal kyi sdug bsngal), (2) the suffering of change (’gyur ba’i sdug bsngal), and (3) the
suffering of the pervasive composite (khyab pa ’du byed kyi sdug bngal), the aggregates themselves are said to be the exemplification of the third category, which is said to be the most fundamental form of suffering in that it is to be found in every sentient being in every realm of existence. See AKB’s commentary on AK (VII, 33), as well as the extensive corpus of lam rim literature on this point.

789. Toh. no. 4049, Sems tsam ri, folio 90b. See also Le Compendium, trans. Rahula, p. 99, where it is noted that the Sanskrit differs in this passage from the Tibetan.

790. This passage is somewhat misleading. It makes it seem as though the Cittamātrins accept that the selfishness of the person, which is the śrāvakas’ principal object of meditation, is a dependent entity. This is not the case, for they consider it to belong to the category of the real. Of course, the real and emptiness are synonyms for the Praśāntikas but not for the Cittamātrins. For the Cittamātrins, the former is a more extensive category than the latter.

791. Much of the material in this section is based on Tsong kha pa’s dBu ma dngongs pa rab gsal, but whereas the latter falls short of actually citing the lengthy passages from the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, mkhas grub rje does quote them here. See CTB, pp. 160 ff.

792. Toh. no. 224, mDo sde dza, folio 165b. Cited in part in Pras-tib, folio 14b, though the full citation occurs in Pras, p. 463, Pras-tib, folio 152b. See also CTB, p. 161; and my "Women and Illusion: Towards an Aesthetics in Buddhism" (unpublished paper, delivered at the 1987 meeting of the American Academy of Religion).

793. Most likely referring here to the four vipāryāsas; namely, apprehending the impure to be pure, what is of the nature of suffering to be of the nature of happiness, what is selfless to possess a self, and what is empty to be not empty.

794. The sātra is mentioned in Pras, pp. 295–296, and cited in Pras, p. 516. The latter is undoubtedly the source from which mkhas grub rje takes this passage. See also CTB, pp. 162–163.

795. See previous note.


797. Ibid., p. 113.

798. Toh. no. 9, vol. 1, folio 44b.

799. Toh. no. 9, vol. 1, folio 45a.


801. Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra, ed. P. L. Vaidya (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1960), p. 3; Toh. no. 12, Sher phyin ka, folio 3b. See also Conze, *Perfection of Wisdom*, p. 84. The line is cited and discussed in Haribhadra’s Abhisamayālamkārvṛtti.

Notes

802. Toh. no. 118, bsTod tshogs ka, v. 1. See also D. S. Ruegg’s treatment of this work in the *Études Tibetaines Dédiées à la Memoire de Marcelle Lalou* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1971).

803. vv. 70b–72; see also Lindtner, Nāgārjuniana, pp. 206–207. See further CTB, pp. 168–169, where a portion of the same passage is cited in a similar context.

804. P no. 5658, gTam yig nge, folio 147a. Ratnāvalī v. 386, cited in CTB, p. 169. See also my "Vasubandhu’s Vyākhyāyukti on the Authenticity of the Mahāyāna Sūtras," in Tirm, ed., *Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*, where this verse and its commentaries are discussed.

805. Cited in Candrakīrti’s Vṛtti on the Yuktiśāṣṭkī; this is also cited (without being identified) by Tsong kha pa in BGR; see CTB, p. 170.

806. P no. 5225, dBu ma tsa, folio 23a.

807. This particular passage seems to be missing in the portion quoted earlier.

808. Again, these are portions not present in the citation that mkha grub rje quotes.

809. vv. 10–11ab; Toh. no. 5225, dBu ma tsa, folio 23a. See Lindtner, Nāgārjuniana, pp. 104–105.

810. Toh. no. 5225, dBu ma tsa, folios 23b–24a.

811. The point being that simply because other schools consider such a direct realization to be the path of seeing and so forth does not mean that it actually is.

812. See LRCM, folios 489a–492b. A very useful general treatment of this subject with reference to the Mahāyāna sātra literature is to be found in N. Dutt, *Mahāyāna Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978; revised edition). For a general exposition of the two types of obstructions and how they are purged in the different stages of the path, see MOE, pp. 104–109. Hopkins (MOE, p. 300) also gives a chart comparing the nature of the two forms of obstruction in the different philosophical schools. This is also treated in detail (with reference to a great deal of Tibetan exegetical material) in TTG (see pp. 74 passim). See also EE, pp. 221, n. 1, 311–312; SS, Chapter 3, especially pp. 116–118; P. W. Griffiths, "‘Buddha and God: A Contrastive Study in Ideas about Maximal Greatness,'" *Journal of Religion* 69, no. 4 (1989): 506 passim; and Gomez, "‘Primer Tratado,'" pp. 188, 217, n. 125.

813. MA, p. 107.


815. P no. 5265, dBu ma ya, folios 251b–252a; commentary on CS (XIV, 25); see AC, pp. 134–135; also CMDR, pp. 264, 394; and MOE, pp. 30, 556.

816. P no. 5246, dBu ma tsha, folio 8a; CS (VI, 10); AC, pp. 66–67.
830. Compare to Rong ston’s statement in dbu ma la ‘jug pa’i rnam bshad, p. 57: “sa drug pa la ni myunam par bshag pa’i ye shes kyi ‘od zer gya dra bas rjes thob kyi gnas skabs na yang dngos po la mngon par zhen pa dang i stong pa nyid la mngon par zhen pa’i gschags ma las pa rnam par bsal bas ‘gog pa thob zhes brjod do.’”

831. See MOE, p. 105.

832. Much of this discussion has been influenced by the Pramāṇika treatment of reification and its counteractive antidote in valid cognitions; see DBPL, pp. 122–125 for a more extensive discussion of this point in the Pramāṇika context.

833. See LRCM, folios 447a–462b.

834. For a fascinating treatment of this subject by Rong ston pa, who in fact holds views and uses arguments very similar to those of mKhas grub rje here, see the former’s dbu ma la ‘jug pa’i rnam bshad, pp. 71–73. Especially interesting is his discussion of the different ways in which Mādhyamikas accept things, which he classifies as being threefold: “‘dgos pa’i dbang gi gshan ngor khas blangs pa dang i rang gshan mshun pa’i khas len pa dang i rang kho nas khas len pa’o.” See also Go ram pa’s Ta ba’i shan ‘byed, pp. 94ff; and his section, Thal ’gyur ba khas len thuns ced dang bral bo ni ‘gog pa, BPD, p. 360, folio 25aff. Also, P. Williams, “’Ra bya ba Byang chub brisun ‘grus on Mādhyamaka Method,’” and my “The Prāsaṅgikas on Logic: Tibetan dGe legs pa Exegesis on the Question of Svaṭantras,” JIP 15 (1988): 217–224.

835. The First Pan chen bla ma, bStod lan, pp. 381–382, ascribes this position to rTag shang lo tsas ba, and he criticizes it very much as mKhas grub rje does here.


837. v. 50, P. no. 5225, dbu ma tsa, folio 24b; see also Lindtner, Nāgārjuniana, pp. 114–115.

838. P. no. 5246, dbu ma tsha, folio 20a; CS (XVI, 25); AC, pp. 150–151. Also cited in Pras., p. 16. See CMDR, pp. 289, 300–301; and MOE, p. 585.

839. According to Tsong kha pa and mKhas grub rje, a svatantra form of reasoning is a syllogism in which the traśraṇya (traśul gsum) conditions truly exist. I discuss this question in more detail in “The Prāsaṅgikas on Logic: Tibetan dGe legs pa exegesis on the Question of Svaṭantras.”

840. Pras., p. 16; Pras-tib, folio 6a.


843. MA (VI, 81), p. 179; EOE, p. 167.

844. P. no. 5228, dbu ma tsa, folio 33b, v. 63; Bhattacharya trans., p. 41, skt. p. 47.

823. MA, p. 393.

824. Dausphuyo—arhants, because of previous potentialities that exist within their continua, without being influenced by the affictions or ignorance, at times will engage in offensive behavior. It is said to be like a reflex action because it does not involve any act of volition, but happens spontaneously in response to a situation, due merely to previous habit. Normally the demeanor of arhants is very dignified, but due to these subtle propensities, some may at times exhibit these strange kinds of behavior, walking in strange ways, or even insinuating another. See AKB on AK (III, 29cd); Abhidharmasamuccaya, trans. Rahula. p. 9, 12b, n. 2; Trimikla, trans. Levin. in Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi, p. 27; Mahāyānasūtra-lamkāra, ed. Levin (VI, 2), (VI, 9), (XI, 11), (XI, 49), (XIV, 20), (XIX, 51), and (XXI, 31). See also, E. Lamotte, “Passions and Impregnations of the Passions in Buddhism,” in Buddhist Studies in Honour of I. B. Horner, ed. L. Cousins et al. (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1974), pp. 91–104.


826. These latter two divisions being the actual divisions of the obscurations to omniscience.


828. For a treatment of this subject from a Nyīnings ma scholastic perspective, see Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po, Ta ba dang grub mtha’ sna s thugs pa brjed byang du byigs pa, pp. 375 ff.

845. I have dealt with the question of whether the Prāsaṅgikas have a viewpoint of their own in my DBPL (Introduction and Chapter 4); see also E. Napper, DAE, pp. 174–192; Ruegg, "On Thesis and Assertion in the Mahāyānaṃ digum mete:"

846. In other words, it is a category error.

847. This expression, gzhon ngo tsam, which I translate at times "for the sake of others," and at times "when confronting others" has the sense that only when interacting with others are such positions accepted, and not because they are actually a part of a Prāsaṅgika system of beliefs.

848. In other words, the claim to no claims are self-defeating, like the liar’s paradox.

849. The underlying assumption being that apart from the scriptures that belong to the different school there are no other, (that is, generic) scriptures because apart from these Buddhist schools there are no other Buddhist schools. I discuss this issue in my "The Canonization of Philosophy and the Rhetoric of Siddhānta in Tibetan Buddhism."

850. Which is to say that the claim as to the ineffability of x does not make one immune from fault in regard to x. If it did, then the Vāśipatropa claim concerning the relationship between the self and aggregates would be immune from fault, which of course is anathema to a Prāsaṅgika.

851. P no. 5228, dBu ma tsa, folio 32a, v. 28; see Bhattacharya trans., p. 21, skt. p. 28. The emphasis in each of the following citations is my own.

852. P no. 5225, dBu ma tsa, folio 24a; see MOE, p. 472; CMDR, p. 195.

853. v. 4; Toh. no. 1120, bs'Tod tshogs ka, folio 68b; see also L. de la Vallée Poussin, "Les Quatres Odes de Nāgārjuna," Le Musée (1913); and CMDR, p. 307.


855. Pras. p. 54; Pras-tib folio 18b.

856. Pras. p. 67; Pras-tib folio 23a.

857. MA, pp. 279–280.

858. MA, p. 277.


861. MA (VI, 8a), p. 82.

862. MA, p. 82.


865. v. 1; P no. 5228, dBu ma tsa, folio 32a; see also Bhattacharya trans., p. 5, skt. p. 10.

866. This is the second verse of the Vigrahavyāvartani passage cited earlier.

867. C5 (XIV, 21a); P no. 5246, dBu ma tsha, folio 246a; see also AC, pp. 132–133.


869. v. 23; P no. 5228, dBu ma tsa, folio 32a; see also Bhattacharya trans., p. 18, skt. p. 24.


871. Nyan thos chen po gnyis kyi dris lan gyi mdo, which seems to be a reference to a passage of the Paracavintai cited in Candrakīrti's autocommentary to MA; see also EOE, pp. 263–264.


873. MA (VI, 115), p. 228; EOE, p. 171.

874. MA (VI, 104ab), p. 216.


877. MA, pp. 296–297.

878. Jayānanda, the twelfth century author of the Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā and the Tarkamudgarakārikā, is refuted on several points of interpretation in Tsong kha pa's Lam rim chen mo (see CMDR, p. 284), Legs bshad snying po, and in other Madhyama texts of the dGe lugs pa tradition; see also MOE, pp. 868–871; N. Roerich, trans., The Blue Annals (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), p. 272; EE, pp. 58, 105–106, 324, n. 106, 326, n. 112, 346.

879. MA, p. 295.

880. (I, 28); P no. 5658, gTam yig nge, folio 130b.

881. (I, 29); P no. 5658, gTam yig nge, folio 130b.

882. (II, 11); P no. 5658, gTam yig nge, folio 134a.


884. See D. Lopez, Jr, The Heart Sutra Explained, especially Chapters 5 and 6.
885. According to the dGe lugs pa interpretations of the theories of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, a syllogism must fulfill three modes or criteria for it to be valid. These involve the understanding on the part of both the proponent of the syllogism and the opponent to whom it is presented that (1) there is a relationship between the subject and the reason (phye rangs chos), (2) that there is a forward pervasion (trjes khyab), that if reason, then predicate, and (3) that there is a reverse pervasion (ldag khyab), which is the contrapositive, that if not predicate, then not reason. For example, in the following syllogism:

Subject: sound
Predicate: is impermanent
Reason: because it is produced

the first mode involves the understanding that sound is produced, the second that if something is produced, then it must be impermanent, and the third that if something is not impermanent, then it cannot be produced. See note 509.

886. Of course, according to the interpretation of Tsong kha pa and mKhas grub rje, it does take more than mere acceptance of the trimedal criterion for a syllogism to be accepted as being a svaṅvara. It requires that the trimodal criterion be considered to exist inherently. This allows for the general acceptance of the principles of Buddhist logic while at the same time allowing for the rejection of svaṅvara syllogistic reasoning.

887. Pras, p. 16; Pras-tib, folio 4b; see MOE, p. 475.

888. Pras, p. 25; Pras-tib, folio 7a; see MOE, p. 500.

889. In other words, subjects that can be perceived by the senses. On the division of entities into evident (mgon gyur), concealed (lkog gyur), and extremely concealed (smin tu lkog gyur), see my DBPL, Chapter 2, and also my "Truth and Meaning in the Buddhist Scriptures," pp. 7-23.

890. See KL, pp. 89-114.

891. MMK (III, 2), P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 4a has rang gi brtag nyid for TTC's rang gi bdag nyid, which is obviously an error on the part of the former. This is confirmed in Buddhāputrā's citation of the same verse that coincides with TTC. This verse is also reminiscent of the discussion in VV ( XXXI-LI), see Bhattacharya trans., pp. 25-34, skt. pp. 26-33; and in Śāntapātaka (47-57), Komito trans., pp. 159-169. See also Kalupahana, Nāgārjuna, pp. 132-134.

892. Pras, p. 34; Pras-tib, folio 11a.

893. P no. 5242, dBu ma tsa, folio 197b. The citation is from CS (XIII, 16); see AC, pp. 122-123; CMDR, p. 332.

894. MMK (III, 3ab). P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 3b; Kalupahana's comparison of the eye's seeing itself to the Cartesian cogito (Nāgārjuna, p. 134) is questionable.

895. See LSN, folios 83b-91a; also MOE, pp. 499-530; and CMDR, pp. 309-335.

896. See my DBPL, Chapter 3; also KL, pp. 126-130.

897. Vāyākṛta; Poussin identifies the position as "theses du Mimāṃsaka," citing Vaiśeṣika Śāstra (II.2.28, 30) as his source.

898. Pras, pp. 28-29; Pras-tib, folios 9a-9b. Poussin gives the references in such works as the Vaiśeṣika Śāstra to the non-Buddhist positions expressed.

899. Pras, p. 29; Pras-tib, folios 9b-10a.

900. The distinction between mistaken (phyn ci log) and erroneous ('khrul pa'i) consciousness, though important in dGe lugs pa exegesis in general, tends to be lost throughout much of this discussion, especially in what follows.

901. Pras, p. 30; Pras-tib, folio 10a.

902. Pras, p. 30; Pras-tib, folio 10a. The syllogism being referred to here is as follows:

Subject: the eye and so on
Predicate: do not truly arise
Reason: because they exist.

903. Pras, p. 31; Pras-tib, folios 10a-10b.

904. See section 4.2.3.1.3.5.1. and its subsections; LSN, folios 103b-104a; LRCM, folios 462b-483a; and mKhas grub rje, Lam ngan mun sel, folios 179b-181a; also CS, Chapter 10; AC, pp. 94-103; MMK, Chapter 18; Pras, pp. 340-381; A. English, "The Buddhist Theory of Self According to Acārya Candrakīrti" (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1982); J. Wilson, Chandrakīrti's Sevenfold Reasoning (Dharmasala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1980); CMDR, pp. 336-371; MOE, pp. 44-66, 175-192, 296-315; EE, pp. 298-308.

905. MA (VI, 151), p. 271; compare to MMK (XVIII, 1).


907. P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 12b; MMK (XVIII, 1).

908. P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 12b; MMK (XVIII, 1cd): "skandhebhyo 'nyo yadi bhaved bhaved askandhalaksanah"—tib. "gal te phung po nmams las ghan / phung po'i mshan nyid med par 'gyur." Kalupahana translates: "If it were to be different from the aggregates, it would have the characteristics of nonaggregates." The Tibetan, however, interprets the negative (a) prefix as applying to the entire compound (skandhalaksanah).

909. Implicit here is the presupposition that shape and anything having shape must be material. In other words, shape is both matter and a property of matter. This derives from the Abhidhammikas; see AKB on AK, IV, 2-5.

910. P no 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 12b; MMK (XVIII, 2ab).
911. See LRCM, folios 483a–489a; LSN, folios 104–108a. mKhas grub rje, in Lam ngan mun sel sgrom ma, folios 181b–187a has an interesting discussion of the self of phenomena based on what he considers to be faulty views on the nature of mind. See also Red mdu 'ba's dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad, pp. 207–220.

912. This is of course the subject of MMK, Chapter 1. The Prasannapada commentary on this chapter has been translated by Stecherbatsky in The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana (Leningrad: Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1927). For an even more extensive exposition of this form of reasoning, see mKhas grub rje's dbu ma rta ba'i 'grel pa Tshig gsal gyi mtha' bszi sye ka'i 'gog pa'i stong thun, an appendix to the stong thun chen mo. Madhyamika Text Series, vol. 1 (Delhi: Lha mkhar yongs 'dzin, 1972), pp. 473–506. See also CMDR, pp. 372–376; MOE, pp. 131–150, 637–638;


914. According to the dGe lungs pa interpretation of MMK (1, 1), "arising from another" does not refer to a cause arising from an effect that is different from it, but to a cause arising from an effect that is inherently different from it.

915. On the Jain theory of anekāntavāda, see Dasgupta, History of Indian Philosophy, pp. 175–176.

916. See MOE, pp. 327–333; CMDR, p. 375; Dasgupta, ibid., p. 345.

917. Candrakīrti's defense of Buddhapāliṇī's interpretation of the refutation of arising from self is discussed at length in MOE, pp. 469–498. This begins an extensive discussion of the polemics concerning the interpretation of the Buddhapāliṇī-Bhāvaviveka-Candrakīrti debates on the nature of proper logical strategies in the Madhyamaka. Although this is also discussed in the Lam rim chen mo, the present discussion is based principally on that in the Legs bshad snying po; see EE, pp. 321–344.

918. Pras, p. 14; Pras-tib, folio 5b.

919. For an exposition of Bhāvaviveka's interpretation of Buddhapāliṇī's reductio (including translations of Bhavya's Prajñāpradīpa and Avalokitavrata's commentary) and the polemic surrounding it, see MOE, pp. 455–468.

920. For example, in the reductio—it follows absurdly, that sound is not a product because it is permanent—to determine what the proponent, the Buddhist, believes one must reverse both the proposition (yielding "sound is a product") and the reason (yielding "it is permanent"). Hence, the proponent (the Buddhist) believes that sound is a product and that it is permanent. This is what is being referred to in general. Its application to the present case concerning the refutation of arising from self will be discussed later.


922. This is a reference to PV (I, 213); see Gnoli, The Pramāṇavārttikam of Dharmakīrti, pp. 107–108.

923. MA, p. 89.

924. MA (VI, 14), p. 89; EOE, pp. 158–159.

925. MA, p. 90.

926. prasāṅgavakya-vārttī. See Pras, pp. 15, 14, n. 5, for the variant in Bhāvaviveka.

927. Tsong kha pa, dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya msho, in Collected Works, vol. 6a, folio 31b; also (Varanasi: Pleasure of Elegant Sayings Press, 1973), p. 53.

928. Ibid.

929. Ibid.

930. Ibid.

931. Ibid.


933. The point here being that if affirming arising from another, as Bhavya accuses Buddhapāliṇī of doing, is tantamount to affirming ultimate arising from another, as this opponent suggests Bhavya is accusing Buddhapāliṇī of doing, then the opponent is refusing Bhavya himself because he too affirms arising from another, but not ultimate arising from another.

934. This is said in response to Bhavya's assertion that this first stanza teaches a syllogism of the form:

Subject: all things
Predicate: never ultimately arise
Reason: because they do not arise from self, other, both, or neither.

According to the Prāsaṅgikas, this first stanza teaches just the four positions and not a syllogism. This is why Tsong kha pa makes the point that the adjectives and adverbs do not form the separate predicate of a syllogism, but are to be construed as applying to each of the four positions as part of position statements.

935. Tsong kha pa, Rigs pa'i rgya msho, folio 31b; Sarnath ed., p. 53.

936. See p. 291.

937. Tsong kha pa, Rigs pa'i rgya msho, folio 32b; Sarnath ed., p. 55.

938. Pras, p. 24; Pras-tib, folio 8a.
939. See above p. 290.

940. See LSN, folios 73a–81b. For sTag tshag lo tsa ba’s discussion of this topic, see his Grub mtha’ kun shes, pp. 225–228; for Rongston pa’s, see his dBu ma la ‘jug pa’i ram bshad, p. 121; and for Go ram pa’s, see BPD, p. 411, folios 127b ff. See also CMDR, pp. 373–379.

941. bcos ma can have two meanings here. It can mean “created,” as in “produced,” or “made,” or it can mean “feigned,” as in “false” or “unreal.” Both translations make sense here. Of course, in the Madhyamaka, whatever is dependent on other entities cannot exist inherently and therefore is empty and illusorylike, hence “false.”

942. P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 14b; MMK (20, 20cd).

943. MA (VI, 14), p. 89; EOE, pp. 158–159.

944. mKhas grub rje accepts that cause and effect are different. Thus, if this implied that they must be cotemporal, the fault would apply even to his own position.

945. Reasons in which the presence of an effect (smoke) is used to infer the existence of a cause (fire); and in which the presence of one coessential property (production) is used to infer another (impermanence). The theory is explained in detail in PV; see also Moṣkṣākaragupta’s Tarkabhāṣa, trans. Y. Kajiyma, in An Introduction to Buddhist Philosophy, Memoirs of the Faculty of Letters, no. 10 (Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1966), pp. 72–77.

946. Take for example the following reductio:

Subject: darkness
Predicate: arises from fire
Reason: because it is different.

If, as the opponent claims, it is the mere difference of two things that is being used as the reason to show absurdities in the theory of causality, then it should work to disprove that cause and effect are different, that is, in the case of reductio where the things being spoken of are causally related, and not, as in this reductio, where they are not. Yet it is this very kind of reductio that Candrakīrti urges. This means that the opponent is wrong in thinking that it is the mere difference of the two things that is being posited as the reason. Instead, says mKhas grub rje, a truly different difference is posited by Candrakīrti as his reason. This argument is extremely powerful.

947. Pras. p. 54; Pras-tib, folio 18b. See also section 4.2.3.2.1.

948. MA (VI, 36), p. 122.

949. That cause and effect are different things is something that mKhas grub rje claims even Nagārjuna and Candrakīrti would accept, but as they refute arising from another, the latter cannot be as simple as merely the position that a cause gives rise to an effect different from it. Hence, says mKhas grub rje, it is a cause giving rise to an effect that is an inherently different object from it that is the meaning of “arising from another,” and it is this that is being refuted.

950. The Pāśaṅgikas of course refute svatvaṃvedāṇi in such works as BCA (IX, 15–24); see later section 4.2.3.3.1.2.2.3.

951. The implication here seems to be that, according to mKhas grub rje, the Pāśaṅgikas accept cognition of something that is of the nature of the cognition itself but do not accept autocognition. Likewise, they accept the arising of an effect that is different from its cause but do not accept arising from another. In other words, “arising from another” and “autocognition” are technical terms whose meanings cannot be inferred from their etymologies.


953. P no. 5246, dBu ma tsha, folio 14a; CS (XI, 15cd); AC, pp. 106–107.

954. MA (VI, 115), p. 228; EOE, p. 171.

955. Put simply, this is the fact that “all things (subject) arise interdependently (reason).”

956. This involves the fact that “if something arises interdependently (reason), then it cannot exist by virtue of its own characteristic (predicate).”

957. According to the dGe lugs pa, the Pāśaṅgikas held a series of special tenets that were uncommon to what other Buddhist philosophical schools believed. These were systematized in a list of the “eight great difficult points,” (di ka gnas shen po brgyad); see Introduction, note 23. Although what follows is not exactly an exposition of these eight points, there is much overlap with what eventually came to be systematized into the list of eight.


959. Most of the positions that follow are based on the lengthy discussion that follows from the Sautrāntika objection to AK (V, 24cd), a discussion that takes place in the context of AK (V, 25–27); la Vallée Poussin, trans., L’ Abhidharma-kosa de Vasubandhu, pp. 49–66.

961. An Ārya Vasumitraśanāgītāsāstra has been preserved in Chinese and translated into Japanese. See also IB, pp. 107, 108 note, 111, 125.


963. La Vallée Poussin, in his translation of the fifth chapter of AK (p. 54, n. 2) translates Vībhāṣaṇa (77, 1): "Les Sarvāstivādins ont quatre grands maîtres qui établissent différemment la différence des trois époques... 1. Vasumitra qui dit qu’elles diffèrent par l’état (avastha); 2. Buddhadeva qui dit qu’elles diffèrent par le point de vue (apekṣā); 3. le partisan de la différence quant au bhāva, qui dit: le dharma, changeant d’époque, diffère par le bhāva, non pas par la nature...; le dharma, passant du futur dans le présent, quoiqu’il abandonne le bhāva futur et acquiert le bhāva présent, cependant ni ne perd ni acquiert sa nature...; 4. le partisan de la différence quant au laikāna."

964. AKB, commenting on AK (V, 274), puts it in a more simple way, "what arises is the future, what ceases is the present."

965. P no. 5266, dBU ma ya, folio 193a; Chapter 11 of CS is dedicated to a critique of the notion of time in other philosophical schools (both Buddhist and non-Buddhist).

966. Hence, because it is a nonentity, space could not (for such an opponent) ever exist in the present, and if this were the case, there could be no referent for a past or future space.

967. Which is to say that there are plenty of phenomena that are neither the passing away of the pot nor the pot. A mutually exclusive pair must divide all phenomena into two categories such that, if something is not in one, it must be in the other. For example, pot and nonpot are two such categories. It is because they are mutually exclusive that double negation brings us back to the affirmative; that is, that a non-nonpot is a pot.

968. mKhas grub rje here is saying that being "arisen and not yet ceased" is a necessary but not sufficient condition for being "the present," and he takes as his example the nonarising of the sprout, a future entity. According to him, this is arisen and not yet ceased, as it is a produced entity, but it is not a present entity, as the mode of its appearing to the mind depends on a phenomenon that has not yet arrived at the sprout's own time.

969. This presumably means that if the disputation is held in winter, when no sprouts are growing, it does not mean that "present sprouts" do not exist because they exist at their own time; but to my mind, mKhas grub rje has not resolved the problem, for at that time are not those sprouts that will exist in the summer future entities and not present ones?

970. Presumably because effects, being later, they must be future, which means that they must be nonarising, whereas effects, by definition, arise.

971. Here the word entity (dgegs po) is used in the technical sense of "an efficacious entity," which is impermanent, caused, and has the ability to produce effects. The rationale for maintaining this is clearly explained in the previous section. It has to do with explaining the workings of karma in a system (the Prāsaṅgika) in which a foundation consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna) is not accepted. Tsong kha pa does not deal with this topic in LSN and instead refers the reader to his exposition of this in his Rigs pa'i rgyu mtho (commentary to Chapter 7 of MMK, Sarathani ed., pp. 187–191); see EE, p. 316, n. 92, 93.

972. Indeed, much of the material that is to follow is based on the discussion in Pras, pp. 174–176 [in the commentary following MMK (VII, 32)].

973. Toh. no. 44, Phal chen kha, folio 221b. This of course is part of the famous formula from the teaching of the twelvefold dependent arising (pratityasamutpāda), describing the last two members of the chain. See E. Lamotte, Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien: Des Origines a l'Ère Saka, Bibliothèque du Muséon, vol. 43 (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1958), p. 38 ff.

974. Toh. no. 44, Phan chen kha, folio 221b; paraphrased in Pras, p. 174. See la Vallée Poussin's extensive note on this page, Pras, pp. 174–175, n. 4.

975. P no. 5224, dBU ma tsa, folio 19a; MMK (XXV, 13).

976. v. 20ab, P no. 5225, dBU ma tsa, folio 23b; Lindtner, Nāgārjuniana, pp. 108–109.

977. Pras, p. 173; P edition (29–2–6) differs from the passage quoted in TTC, but agrees with Pras. It reads rgyu med pa nying instead of rgyu med; more significantly, the khapsupaavad is missing in TTC. I have followed Pras in the translation.

978. Periodic (skt. kadācīti-ka) here means that it exists at some periods and not at others.

979. Toh. no. 3862, dBU ma ya, folio 15b.

980. Which is to say that in the Madhyamaka system everything that is a conventional entity, like cause and effect, exists only nominally. This is what it means for something to be a conventional truth. For a Madhyamika there is no difference between a seed giving rise to a sprout and the exhaustion of a lamp giving rise to darkness, whereas other schools have reservations concerning the involvement of past and future entities in causal processes because of their philosophical commitment to certain positions concerning the nature of the entities involved, positions that ultimately bring them beyond the worldly usage of words. Hence, for a Madhyamika, the lack of fuel in a lamp giving rise to the exhaustion of the lamp and to subsequent darkness is just as real as seeds giving rise to sprouts. They both are conventional truths, and as such both are posited merely nominally; that is, in accordance with worldly usage.

981. The main point of this section is to show that the Madhyamikas can still posit a theory of cause and effect (especially in the sphere of moral retribution), without needing to posit the existence of a foundation consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna). Con-
cerning the foundation consciousness, see also note 64. Tsong kha pa is the author of a separate treatise dealing with the theory of the foundation consciousness. Yid dang kun gzhi'i dka' bo'i gnas rgya cher 'grel pa legs par bshad pa'i rgya mtho, in gSungs 'bum (Collected Works), vol. tsha, folios 1–57 (Toh. no. 5414), which has been commented upon by Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me, among others. Sákya mchog Idan treats the question of the foundation consciousness throughout Shing rta chen po srol gnyis kyi rnam dbye bshad nas nges don gcig tu bsgrub pa'i bstan bcos kyi rgyas 'grel, p. 345ff. The main Prāsaṅgika critique of the dālaya is to be found in MA (VI, 39 ff) (see the following section in TTC). For a Svātantrika critique of the foundation consciousness see Eckel, “Bhāvaviveka’s Critique of Yogācāra Philosophy,” pp. 68–69, 75; see also MOE, pp. 383–388; EE, pp. 312–321. L. de la Vallée Poussin discusses the dālaya in Mēlanges chinois et bouddhiques 13 (1934–1935): 145–168; see also E. Frauwallner, “Amalavijñānam und Alavijñānam,” Beiträge zur indischen Philosophie und Allertumskunde (Festschrift W. Schubring) (Hamburg: Cram, de Gruyter, 1951), pp. 148–159; for a bibliography of Japanese scholarship on the topic, see IB, p. 255; it is also discussed extensively in connection with the tathāgata-garbha theory in TTC, pp. 35 passim; see also B. K. Matilal, Logic, Language and Reality (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985), pp. 333 ff.

982. This is a point that is made in extenso in DAE; see also MMK (XVII, 11–20).


984. Avijñānas. See MA (VI, 39). This doctrine is also mentioned in Sūtra-lamkāra (XX–XXI, 10); it is critiqued in Pras., commenting on MMK (XVII, 12–14). Though Nāgārjuna uses the term frequently in this section of MMK, he is not referring to the metaphysical entity of the Vaibhāsikas. See also Vasubandhu, Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa, trans. E. Lamotte, English trans. Leo M. Pruden, (Berkeley, Calif.: Asian Humanities Press, 1988), pp. 24 ff; and especially Abhidharmakośa, Chapter 9, on which much of the material here is based (la Vallée Poussin, trans., Chapter 9, p. 295, n. 4, is especially interesting).


986. See AK, Chapter 9; la Vallée Poussin, trans., ibid., pp. 287–300.


988. The point here seems to be that, if the qualifier ultimately must be applied to Candikirtī’s refutation of the foundation consciousness, then it must also be applied to his acceptance of the possibility of karma and its effects.


990. See EE, p. 316.


992. MA (VI, 43), p. 132; EOE, p. 162.

993. MA, p. 132.

994. Toh. no. 110, mDo sde cha, folio 37b.

995. MA, p. 131.

996. Of course in the Prāsaṅgika system, any statement that does not teach emptiness directly is considered to be of provisional meaning, and this would include statements concerning the existence of the personality and so forth apart from any qualifications like ultimately or truly existing.

997. See section 4.2.3.1.2.1.1.

998. In other words, you would claim, as we are doing here, that there is no scriptural basis for such a belief.

999. Lankāvatāra Sūtra; Vaidyā, ed., p. 68.

1000. Bodhicittavivarana (32–34); Toh. no. 1800, dBu ma ngi, folio 39b.


1002. This differs somewhat from the exposition given in MOE (p. 387) of the nature of the “intended basis” that is held to be the Buddha’s actual intention in teaching the doctrine of the foundation consciousness, of the entity that transmigrates, and so on.

1003. This is referring to the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras in 100,000 lines, in 25,000 lines and in 8,000 lines, respectively. See tle bstan chos kyi rgyal mthan’s Khabs dang po’i phyi don, folios 13a ff for a discussion of this point.

1004. This again hearkens back to a previous discussion (see section 4.2.3.1.3.5.2.3.2.1) concerning the position of the AA on the question of tathāgata-garbha. mKhams grub rje here and in that discussion clearly holds the view that AA is a Prāsaṅgika and not a Svātantrika work, a view that does not go unchallenged in later exegetical literature.


1006. It is a pan dGe lugs pa view that Asaṅga was himself a Prāsaṅgika, and that he wrote Cittāmātra works simply for the benefit of those who could not accept the more advanced Madhyamaka teachings. The fact that he is considered an dpyan implies
that he must be considered to have understood the "correct" (lek Prasangika) interpretation of the doctrine of emptiness.


1008. MA (VI, 92a), p. 192; EOE, p. 168.

1009. MA (VI, 55), p. 146; EOE, p. 163.

1010. MA (VI, 53), p. 155; EOE, p. 163. The former has byung for TTC's gyur.
The commentarial passage quoted precedes the verse.

1011. MA, p. 155, which adds gnas pa that is missing in the TTC citation.

1012. MA, p. 156, identical except for the genitive added in TTC in sqon po la sogs pa'i. The Bhaśya continues: "In regard to the appearance of that as blue and so on, in regard to that which is the appearance itself, the world conceives [of things] as being of the nature of external objects . . . therefore, there do not exist objects external to consciousness."

1013. The argument is a bit convoluted but not difficult to understand. If there were no external objects, then their existence would have to be repudiated or rejected by a valid cognition. There are only two types of valid cognition; those that analyze the nominal or conventional and those that analyze the ultimate. From one viewpoint, the nonexistence of external objects, if it were true, would be a basic or ultimate fact of their nature, bringing the repudiation of the existence of external objects into the sole purview of valid cognitions that analyze the ultimate; but as mentioned in the text, when examined by a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate, even consciousness fails to hold up, much less external objects. So the fact that external objects cannot withstand the test of this latter kind of valid cognition is indicative not of the fact that there are no external objects, but only of the fact that they do not ultimately exist. Hence, because their existence cannot be repudiated by a valid cognition that analyzes the nominal and because nothing is established by a valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate, external objects cannot be rejected by any valid cognition and hence must be accepted as existing nominally.

1014. One of the syllogisms used by the Cittamātrins to disprove the existence of external objects is as follows:

Subject: form and the valid cognition that apprehends it
Predicate: are not different substances
Reason: because of the simultaneity of the referent (form) and its perception (the valid cognition).

Which is to say that the object (form) and its apprehension (the valid cognition) must be related in some way. They cannot be related causally (de byung gi 'brel bo), says the argument, because they occur simultaneously. Hence, they must be related in terms of being of one substance or of one nature (dbag ge gis 'brel). Whether or not the argument works is a different question, here the point being made is that the Cittamātrins use such reasoning into the ultimate nature of phenomena to establish the nonexistence of external objects.

1015. The Vimsatikā of Vasubandhu, Toh. no. 4056, Sems tsam rgi, v. 12. I have discussed the position of different Buddhist schools in regard to material particles in my "Quarks and Paramāṇu," an unpublished paper delivered at the meeting of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (Oxford, 1982); see also KL, pp. 34 passim; and SOS, p. 63.

1016. See EE, pp. 345 ff. For an extensive treatment of this question in a non-dGugs pa source see Red ma' ba gZhon nu blo gros, dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad (Sarnath: Sakya Students' Union, 1983), pp. 198 ff.


1018. AK (III, 1).

1019. The Abhidharmakosa (IV, 1), also AKB (IV, 3c) and (IV, 119-120) explains the former to be the actions of the mind that motivate the latter, which in turn are actions of the body and speech.

1020. Toh. no. 107, dBu mdo sde ca, folio 86b, 124a, v. 133; see also Eckel, "Bhavaviveka's Critique," p. 64, for a similar sūtra passage and a similar interpretation of the word only (mātra) by Bhavaviveka.

1021. The same passage is cited in Tsong kha pa's dBu ma dgongs pa rab gsal, Sarnath ed., p. 317.

1022. Toh. no. 107, dBu mdo sde ca, folios 116a and 246b. Quoted also in MA, p. 194. There we find a Cittamātrin opponent bringing up this passage as proof of the fact that the mind-only doctrine was the Buddha's own purport, and in response, we find Candrakīrti commenting on the meaning of this citation.

"[Opponent:] Here, the body refers to the sense spheres, such as the eye and so on; possessions refer to objects such as form and so on; abode refers to the external world. Apart from the mind, nothing exists externally, and hence it is only mere consciousness that arises in such appearances as the body, possessions, and abode, and [because it appears in this way,] the nature of objects such as the body and so on manifest as if they were external things separate from consciousness. For this reason [the Buddha said], 'all three realms are mind only.'"

"[Reply:] This sūtra is also of ulterior purport (dgongs pa can), and so I explain:

Some sūtras teach that external objects are not appearing.
But that is the mind appearing as the variety [of things].

But their intention (dgongs pa) is this:

But they too are of provisional meaning, [aimed at] reverting
[The notion] of form within those who are extremely attached to form" (VI, 94) (p. 194).
He then goes on to explain how the teachings of mind only succeed in dispelling the attachment of such individuals.

1023. MA (VI, 95), p. 195, has ‘di ni ston pa’i for TTC’s ‘di ni ston pas,’ and admittedly the latter makes more sense grammatically. See also EOE, p. 168.

1024. Toh. no. 107, mDo sde ca, folio 203b; it seems as though mKhas grub rje was using a different translation of this verse; cited also in MA, p. 196. See also Tsong kha pa’s remarks concerning this verse in dbu ma dgongs pa rab gsal, Sarthāna ed., p. 324.


1026. Tsong kha pa, in LSN, indicates that this scriptural passage in fact does prove the provisional nature of several Cittamātra doctrines, as does Candragāraṇī in MA, p. 196. See EE, pp. 345–347.

1027. LSN gives only four, but see EE, p. 345, n. 1, for the comments of bLo bzang phun tshogs, who in fact gives the five mentioned later.

1028. Mi skbyod rdo rje, in dbu ma’i gzhan stong smra ba’i srol, folio 18b, criticizes those who would claim the merely provisional status of this teaching.

1029. Again, according to Tsong kha pa in LSN, this citation from the Lānkāvatāra is proof of the provisional nature not only of (1), but of (3), and possibly of other Cittamātra tenets as well.

1030. Toh. no. 107, mDo sde ca, folio 86a; P. L. Vaidya, ed., Lānkāvatārasūtra (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1959), pp. 33–34; see EE, pp. 347–348.

1031. MA, p. 196.

1032. This is a reference to the gzhan stong position as expounded in such works as the Ri chos nges don gya msho of rDo pa Shes rab rgyal mtsan (Gangtok: Dodrup Sangye Lama, 1976); mKhas grub rje’s concurrence with Red mda’ ba on this question is clear; see the latter’s rNam bshad, pp. 200–204.

1033. Toh. no. 110, mDo sde cha, folio 55b.

1034. MA, p. 131.

1035. These three criteria are what classify a scripture as of ulterior purport and provisional meaning, namely, that (1) it has a basis of intention (dgongs grub), (2) there is a purpose (dgos pa) in its having been taught, and (3) there ensues a logical fallacy if it is taken literally (dgos la gnod byed). I discuss these three criteria in more detail in “The Concepts of Truth and Meaning in the Buddhist Scriptures.”

1036. See note 1005.

1037. Toh. no. 107, mDo sde ca, folio 85b; Vaidya, ed., Lānkāvatārasūtra, p. 33; see EE, p. 351.

1038. MA, p. 198.

Notes

1039. Toh. no. 107, mDo sde ca, folio 85b; Vaidya, ed., Lānkāvatārasūtra, p. 33.


1041. MA, chapter on the “Resultant Stage,” v. 36; EOE, p. 194.

1042. If the idealist thesis of the Cittamātra were true, it should be provable by a logical syllogism. If there existed such a syllogism, there must exist as part of it a valid example. The idea here seems to be that, unlike the proof of the existence of past and future lives, the proof of idealism must proceed through a syllogism in which a direct example is demonstrated. It is generally said that in the former proof there is no direct example, but only an indirect example related to the syllogism that establishes the continuity of consciousness after death, for were the person to whom the syllogism is posited able to cognize a direct example pertaining to past and future lives, such a person would not need to have the syllogism posited to him or her. This is not the case here, however. If such a valid example existed, it would have to be direct and evident, and as the classical examples posited by the Cittamātrins fail, so too does any syllogism that is supposed to prove idealism.


1044. See MA, pp. 164 passim; also Go ram pa, Ila ba’i shan byed, pp. 123 ff.


1047. Toh. no. 4051, Sems tsam ri, folio 225a.

1048. bRi'an shing gzher ba, the common Tibetan scholastic definition of water (chu’i mtsan nyid). See AK (J, 12–13); la Vallée Poussin trans., vol. 1, p. 22 and n. 3.

1049. The Nigrantas (gcer bu po) are a sect of Jainism; in Buddhist literature the term is often used to refer to all Jains. They advocated the doctrine of bhedābheda, a kind of relativism that repudiated the notion of ultimate reality, and advocated instead that both a proposition and its negation were true in part. Why these opponents are accused of Jainlike relativism here is obvious. See note 915.

1050. Nagārjuna’s Subhālakṣaṇa, Toh. no. 4182, sPrin yig nge, folio 45a.

1051. From the “Pratyakṣa” chapter of the Pramāṇavārttika, v. 413; Toh. no. 4210, Tshad ma ce, folio 134a; Shastri, Pramāṇavārttika of Acārya Dharmakīrti, p. 220.

1052. The various editions agree on the reading gdon lnga, it may make more sense, however, to correct this to read don lnga; that is, “the five objects” of the five sense consciousnesses.
1053. From the “Pramànasthiddhi” chapter of PV, v. 150, Tshad ma ce, folio 134a; Shastri, ed., p. 55.

1054. See the second argument in section 4.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.2.2.

1055. It is the commonly accepted characteristic of a material thing that it take up space, impeding or obstructing the presence of another object that attempts to occupy the same space. Space, on the other hand is the lack of obstruction. See AK (1, 5d); la Vallée Poussin, L’Abhidhammakośa de Vasubandhu, vol. 1, p. 8 and n. 3.

1056. Which is to say that he is refuting an opponent who does not exist, that he is putting the cart of refutation before the horse of an opponent, or to put it even more colloquially, that he is setting up a straw man.

1057. Toh. no. 4056, Sems tsam shi, folio 177a.

1058. Visstlika, v. 4; Toh. no. 4056, Sems tsam shi, folio 3a; see also Tripathi and Dorje, Vijñaptimātratāstidhī, p. 22.

1059. Commentary on v. 8; Toh. no. 4057, Sems tsam shi, folio 6a; see also Tripathi and Dorje, ibid., pp. 30–31.

1060. v. 95; Toh. no. 4182, sPrin g.yig nge, folio 45a; see Geshe L. Tarchin and A. Engle, Nāgārjuna’s Letter (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1979), pp. 116–117.

1061. Here the distinction being made is this. The eye of consciousness of a preta simply does not see the river, but does not see the river to be nonexistent. That is a function of the conceptual thought that follows the eye consciousness. For that reason the preta’s eye consciousness is said not to be mistaken, whereas the subsequent conceptual thought that thinks there to be a river is mistaken (log pa) and in error as to its apprehended object (dizin stang kyi yul la ’khrul pa).

1062. MA (VI, 71), p. 164; EOE, p. 165.

1063. This passage is somewhat difficult to understand. It would seem that mKhas grub rje is implying that the eye consciousness of the patient with eye disease who sees falling hair actually has as its object an external physical entity. The tradition however interprets this to mean that the appearance of the falling hair is being referred to. As in the case of the object of a dream consciousness, this appearance is considered to be external form.

1064. See MA, p. 164.

1065. BCA (V, 7–8ab), p. 54: “sastraññi kena narake gahiśatiññi prayaññataññi / saptaśikkhisñāññam kena kuto jātacca tāha striyāḥ / pāpapaccisaññasamudbhāvaṁ samastaravam jagat munih.” I have, however, opted for translating instead of striyāḥ (tib. mo), that is, “women”, “fire” (tib. me), if only to follow the reading in T7C. The Tibetan in BCA has yin par for samudbhavaṁ, but T7C’s byung bar is more appropriate.

1066. According to dGe lugs pa siddhānta literature, svasamvedanā, or autocognition, is something asserted by Sautrāntikas, Cittamārtins, and Yogācāra-Svātantrika Mādhyamikas. Specifically, it is seen in these schools as a way to explain the workings of memory. How can we, they argue, remember having had a cognition of the color blue if when we first saw the blue that very same consciousness was not perceiving itself? The Prāsāntikas, as will become obvious, repudiate the need for autocognition to explain the workings of memory. See MA, pp. 166 ff for a complimentary discussion of this topic; also JSN, folios 77b–81b; see also KL, pp. 110–113; Sā, pp. 195–196, 310–312 (for a discussion of Bhāvaviveka’s critique based on the Madhyamakādhārya); see Bhāvaviveka, Madhyamakādhārya (V, 20–22) and Tarkāvalī, P no. 5356, vol. 96, folio 93; the implicit reference in MMK (VII, 8–12) may be to svasamvedanā, see Pras, p. 151 and n. 4; also J. May, Cinq Chapitres, p. 113, n. 284, who gives references to sources that discuss the origin of the doctrine; EE, pp. 317–321; MOE, pp. 350–351, 373–374; Dignāga, Pramāṇasamuccayaavatī, trans. M. Hattori, pp. 28–30; PV (Pratīyākṣapariccheda) (II, 423–502), Shastri, Pramāṇavārttika of Acārya Dharmakīrti; CS (XII, 16–17); AC, pp. 122–123; CMDR, p. 332; Sānyatāsapti, v. 52–57, ed. and trans. D. Komito, pp. 162–169; and Mokṣākārupa, Tarkabhyāsa, trans. Y. Kajiyama, pp. 47–53, for an extensive rebuttal of the critiques of the theory, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist.

1067. Toh. no. 3856, dBu ma dza, folio 205a.

1068. Dualistic appearances occur when a consciousness apprehends an object that seems or appears external to itself. In the case of autocognition, even at the level of appearances, no external object is involved because it is but one aspect of the consciousness apprehending another.

1069. PV, Shastri, ed., p. 224 (II, 428d); rGyal tshab rje’s remarks on this verse in Thar lam gsal byed (Sarnath: Gelukpa Students Welfare Committee, 1974), p. 196, are as follows.

“[Opponent:] Even though there is no autocognition, this does not imply that there is nothing to experience [the consciousness which is later remembered], for it is experienced by another consciousness occurring afterward.

[Reply:] How can a later mind possessing the aspect of the entity of that earlier mind experience the earlier mind? It is impossible, for at the time of the later one the earlier consciousness has ceased. It would imply, absurdly, the end of all of the experience of object and consciousness, for not only would it fail in [apprehending] the earlier consciousness, but it would not experience its own nature either. It would follow, absurdly, that the later consciousness which is purportedly what experiences [the earlier one], appears as being directed outwardly because it is a consciousness that possesses the appearance of a saktākṣara of a different substance from itself as its apprehended object (gzung don). It is not correct to accept this because the mind in its subjective aspect, which is what apprehends the mind, is always directed only internally toward its own nature.”

1070. PV, Shastri, ed., p. 198 (II, 330); compare to PV, Shastri, ed., p. 229 (II, 446cd); rGyal tshab rje’s remarks in Thar lam gsal byed. Sarnath ed., p. 158, are as follows.
1079. The subject of autocognition is intimately connected to that of memory. Concerning the latter in Buddhism, see the discussion in the Pudgalavānīc≡aya section of AK (IX), la Vallée Poussin, trans., pp. 273 passim; also J. Gyatso, “Mantra as Memory, but Memory of What?” (paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, 1987); Griffiths, On Being Mindless, pp. 52, 100; EE, pp. 317–320.

1080. MA, p. 169. TTC has byas pa yin na ni for yin te.


1082. This indicates that the syllogism is such that any predicate will do; that is, the predicate is unimportant in what is to follow.

1083. BCA (IX, 24ab), p. 191.


1085. MA (VI, 72cd), p. 166. BCA’s reading of gang gi, as opposed to TTC’s gang gi, is preferable here.

1086. Pras, p. 73; Pras-tib, folio 25a. TTC has been emended to read rjes su phyed pa (versus rjes su phyed pa), in accordance with the latter.

1087. This of course is reminiscent of the famous line in the Pratyakṣa Chapter of the PV (māṇḍū ḍvīvidhān viśayaśravaśiṣṭa) that connects the twofold nature of valid cognitions (direct perception and inference) to the twofold nature of objects ( particulars and universals). See PV, Shastri ed., p. 98.

1088. See section 4.2.3.3.1.2.3.1.2.2.

1089. Usually the term rig shes refers to an inferential understanding of emptiness, the ultimate truth. In the present context, however, it is clear that mKhas grub rje is using it in a much wider sense to refer to any understanding of emptiness, and here specifically to the direct understanding of emptiness in the equipoise of an ārya.


1091. This statement seems to indicate that the person whose view is being expounded accepts that when autocognition directly understands the subjective aspect, that is, the consciousness, it does so without this appearing to it. Otherwise, the position that is so severely criticized in these last lines would seem to be quite consistent.


1094. dBu ma dgongs pa rab gsal, Collected Works, vol. ma, folio 161b; Sarnath ed., p. 293.

1096. As we shall see later, according to dGe lugs pa exegesis, this is one of the uncommon tenets of the Prāsaṅgika school, namely, that every consciousness, whether mistaken or not, is a valid cognition, that is, correct, in regard to what appears to it. Which is to say that, though it may be mistaken in regard to the object it is perceiving, it is nonetheless valid in regard to the appearance itself. In other words, that things are actually appearing to it in this false way is indisputable. That things exist as they appear to it is not.


1098. This section discusses what is being divided into the two truths. For the position of Thang sags pa on this question, see MOE, p. 411. That there must have been varying views of what formed the basis for setting forth the two truths is witnessed by kLong rdol bla ma’s claim that sTag tshang lo tsa ba alone had three different methods on which he based his division, ones, incidentally, that are completely different from the ones delineated by mKhas grub rje as opponents’ positions. See kLong rdol bla ma’s dbu ma’i ming gi rnam grangs, p. 436.

1099. Toh. no. 60, dKon brtsegs nga, folio 62b; cited in MOE, p. 405; SOS, p. 193.

1100. rNgo gLob ldan shes rab (1059–1109). Concerning this controversy, see MOE, pp. 406–407.

1101. For a detailed discussion of this controversy, see M. Sweet, “Bodhicaryavatāra 9.2 as a Focus for Tibetan Interpretations of the Two Truths,” JIABS 2, no. 2 (1979). See also mKhas grub rje, Lam ngan mcn gsal sgrom ma, folio 174b; the first Pan chen bla ma, in rSod lan, folios 376–378, criticizes sTag tshang lo tsa ba for holding a similar view.

1102. BCA (IX, 2), p. 185.

1103. In other words, that the premise does not at all follow from the reason or proof.

1104. To be found in Śākyamuccaya, Chapter 14, Toh. no. 3940, dBu ma kyi, folio 142b.

1105. Toh. no. 3887, dBu ma sa, folio 191a; cited in SOS, p. 194, where the exposition is based on Ngag dbang dpal ldan’s text.

1106. Toh. no. 3887, dBu ma sa, folio 191b.

1107. Toh. no. 60, dKon brtsegs nga, folio 61b; cited in MOE, p. 412; also cited in MA, p. 70.

1108. MA, p. 70.

1109. MA, p. 70.

1110. This is a point disputed in the tradition. rLet bsun pa, for example, holds that it is a belief that is uncommon to the Prāsaṅgikas. The claim of those who assert the latter is substantiated by the fact that Śvātantrikas assert that not all sṛvaka arhants realize emptiness, whereas they do realize cessation. If sṛvaka arhants are then aware of cessation, how could they be unaware of reality, if for them cessation is reality? This is one counterargument to the several proofs now offered by mKhas grub rje.

1111. Though both are states of meditative equipoise on emptiness, during the former the obstacles (mthong spangs) are not abandoned, they are not uprooted. The latter is called a liberative path because, due to the force of equipoise on reality that occurs during the former, the obstacles are overcome, representing one in a series of cessations that take place along the path to buddhahood.

1112. The two purities that the nature body are said to possess are (1) the purity of adventitious defilements (la bur kyi dri masdag pa) and (2) the essential purity (rang bshin rnam dag), which refers to the emptiness of essence or the lack of inherent existence of the Buddha’s mind. The point here is that, on the one hand, the nature body is identified as being the state of cessation of a buddha and, on the other, as the “reality” that possesses these two purities. Hence, it would be contradictory for the Śvātantrikas not to accept cessation to be reality, the ultimate truth.
1132. This, of course, is a noncomposite entity, and therefore lacking the qualities of arising and cessation; that is, it is permanent.

1133. See MOE, pp. 204–205.

1134. V. 9a–b; Eckel, Jñānagarbha's Commentary, p. 161 (also p. 76 for his translation). TTC takes the first line of the commentary following the verse, "don dam yin par kho bo cag 'dod do,'" and adds it to the first two lines as if it were 9c.

1135. Toh. no. 3887, dbu ma sa, folio 149a; cited in the Iṣṭ. skya Grub mtha'; Lopez trans., in SOS, p. 326. Compare to Satyadvaya, v. 11, which is most likely the Aloka's source here.

1136. See LSN, folios 91b–97b.

1137. Satyadvaya, v. 12; Eckel, Jñānagarbha's Commentary, p. 163, see also p. 79 for his translation, which differs slightly from my own in that he does not translate the particle yang, most likely considering it as an insertion for the sake of meter.


1139. For example, based on worldly consciousness one can say that there is such a thing as true or inherent existence, and the Prāsaṅgikas would accept that within the purview of worldly consciousness inherent existence exists because it appears, though they do not accept inherent existence in their own system.

1140. This statement is somewhat surprising. According to both Prāsaṅgika and Svātantrika Mādhyamikas, the eye consciousness, whether mistaken or nonmistaken, being a consciousness, cannot be understood not to exist as it appears by any ordinary being or mind, but only by a mind that understands emptiness. Here, however, the idea seems to be that, as it is an erroneous mind, confusing the reflection and the actual face, it is its mode of appearance that can be understood, even by ordinary beings, not to exist as it appears. This is what seems to be implied here by saying that the eye consciousness involved in perceiving a reflection in a mirror can be understood by worldly beings not to exist as it appears.

1141. MA, p. 190.

1142. MA, p. 174. Several textual emendations have been made in the TTC citation to make it conform to MA, which in this case seems consistently more accurate.

1143. MA (VI, 36), pp. 122–123.

1144. MA (VI, 127d), p. 245.

1145. MA, p. 113. The point here seems to be that it is inappropriate to take the term stuff (skt. dravya) in its technical sense of “substance” when it is being used in a nontechnical, worldly sense. The hypothetical opponent, however, misses the point of the passage and takes this as an indication of the fact that the Prāsaṅgikas accept the concept of substance nominally or conventionally.

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1113. See, for example, Haribhadra's comments in 'Grel ba don gsal (Sarnath: Gelukpa Students Welfare Committee, 1980), pp. 126–127. On the sixteen (or actually eighteen) emptinesses, see also the Aṣṭasāhasrikāpāñḍārtha, attributed to Dignaga, ed. and trans. G. Tucci, JRAS (1947): 53–75.


1115. Pras, p. 494; Pras-tib, folio 163b.

1116. v. 35; Toh. no. 3825, dBu ma tsa, folio 21b.

1117. Toh. no. 3864, dBu ma ya, folio 7b.

1118. Of course, because nothing “really exists,” the second connotation of the word truth refers to the object to be refuted (dgag bya), something that cannot exist.

1119. P no. 5224, dBu ma tsa, folio 9b; MMK (XIII, 1); see Pras, pp. 42, 237, and Pras-tib, folios 13b and 81a. See also note 644; and the First Pañ chen bka’ ma’s rTsdod lan, p. 387.

1120. Pras, p. 238; Pras-tib, folio 81a. The word ekam in Pras is missing in the Tibetan version.

1121. In Sanskrit the words lake born (sarorupa) were an epithet of, and therefore used to refer only to, the lotus.

1122. The reference here is to an elephant, which is metaphorically called the limbed one (lag ldan, stk. hastin) because of its trunk. Now although a man fulfills the etymological criteria for being “a limbed one,” in that he has limbs, this is not enough to make him a referent of the term. Only elephants are “limbed ones.”

1123. MA (VI, 28a), p. 107.

1124. MA, p. 107.

1125. MA, p. 107.

1126. MA (VI, 23), p. 102.

1127. Causal and essential relations are the only two types of relations possible between phenomena. On this, see Mokṣākara-gupta, Tarkabhadra, trans. Kajiya-n, Chapter 2; also DBPL, pp. 91–94.

1128. Although having the same referent, they have different names, different designations, being the opposites of different entities qua names. See L. Zwilling, "Dharmakirti on Apoha" (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1976); and MOE, p. 415, n. 310.

1129. P no. 2665, vol. 61, folio 286; Lindtner, Nāgārjuniana, pp. 204–205.

1130. On this position, see MOE, p. 415, n. 315.


1147. MA, pp. 201–202. I have followed MA where it differs from TTC except for the instance in which TTC’s ma reg par seems to make more sense than MA’s ma rig par. MA’s sang rgyas shes brjod do, as attested to by TTC, obviously is incorrect, to be read instead as shes.

1148. For a similar discussion in sTag tshang lo tsā ba, see Grub mtha’ kun shes, pp. 223–225.

1149. In that the object, if a pot, for example, is determined to be a pot as opposed to a pillar.

1150. See Pras, pp. 41, 53, 109, 289, 443, 518.

1151. See Rong ston pa’s remarks concerning this subject in dBu ma la ’jug pa’i ram bshad, pp. 69–71. See also the opponents remarks in kārīka VI, and Nāgārjuna’s remarks in his commentary to kārīka LI; Bhattacharya, ed., pp. 14, 40 (trans., pp. 9, 34).

1152. For a full discussion of this, see DBPL, Chapter 2, which is a revised version of my “The Concepts of Truth and Meaning in the Buddhist Scriptures,” JIABS 4, no. 1 (1981): 7–23.


1154. Tīkā on CS (XI, 18); P no. 5266, dBu ma ya, folio 203a, has don for TTC’s mistaken de na, and gnyis pas for TTC’s gnyis pa. A somewhat more extensive discussion of vijñāna occurs in (XIII, 12–18). See AC, pp. 108–109.

1155. Tob. no. 3865, dBu ma ya, folio 171b.

1156. Namely, sense consciousness (dbang shes), mental consciousness (yid shes), and yogic direct perception (rnal ‘byor mgon sum). Compare to Dignāga’s theory; see Hattori, Dignāga on Perception, pp. 27 passim; also Mokšākaragupta, Tarkabhaṣā, trans. Kajiya, pp. 44–56.

1157. Pras. p. 75; Pras-tib, folio 25b.

1158. Pras. p. 75; Pras-tib, folio 25b.


1160. In the pramāṇa literature, a valid cognition usually is defined as “a cognition that is newly undeceived” (gsar du mi slu ba’i rig pa). Kajiya, for example, cites the Pramāṇavārttikavṛtti of Manorathandin concerning the characteristics of a valid cognition, which includes this property of being “new”: “pramāṇam samyagjñānam apurvagocaram iti lakṣaṇam,” (Language of Logic, p. 23 and n. 4), a view shared by Mokšākaragupta. The opinion presented here, therefore, is consonant with that of the Pramāṇikas.

1161. For a discussion of this and related problems, see DBPL, Chapter 3.

1162. Here I have tried to use a generic term that could apply both to a consciousness and to its object, while emphasizing the latter, because the object is the real full-blown mgon sum, and the valid cognition that perceives it only labeled mgon sum, without actually being so.

1163. Pras, p. 71; Pras-tib, folio 24b.


1165. Much more extensive explanations of the meditative practices only touched on here are to be found in a genre of literature that becomes especially popular after this time, a genre known as lla khrid, literally, “teachings on the view.” See also mKhas grub rje, Lam nag gnang sel sgron ma (Introduction, note 26), and his third appendix to the TTC.

1166. LRCM, folios 492b ff; see also CMDR, pp. 390–426.

1167. Compare this, that is, the critique of the notion that the essence of the practice is to be found in “secret instructions” apart from the formal study of the great scriptural classics, with that of the Fifth Dalai bLa ma in his Jam dpal zhal lung: “There is no method for establishing any form of happiness, from that of higher rebirth on up through that of the definitive good [buddhahood], that is not taught, either directly or indirectly, in the stainless words of the Buddha. Still, because [these teachings] are profound and subtle, it is difficult for the mind to penetrate them. It is the great treatises which comment on their purport that clearly elucidate them. Hence, there is not the slightest essential instruction (mten ngag) on the practice that is not explained in the scriptures and their commentaries.” (Bylakuppe, India: Sera Byes Monastery, un dated blockprint, folio 7b; translation in my, “The Revelations of Mañjuśrī,” (unpublished manuscript), p. 17.

1168. Much of this section deals with the theory of the three bodies of buddhas (skt. trikāya). The most complete and recent work on this subject is J. Makransky’s doctoral dissertation, (University of Wisconsin, 1990). See also the bibliography in la Valle Poussin, Vijnaptimāratāśiddhi, as well as his “The Three Bodies of the Buddha,” JRAS (1906): 945–977; also, Akamura Chizen, “The Triple Body of the Buddha,” Eastern Buddhist 2 (1922): 1–29. IB, p. 260, n. 43 gives references concerning the sambhoga and nirmanakāyas; and Bu ston’s History of Buddhism, trans. E. Obermiller, trans., part 1, pp. 128–138. gives references to most of the Indian works dealing with the trikāya theory. See also Eckel, Jñānagarbha’s Commentary, pp. 101–103, 187–190, for the comments of the Satyavadyavibhaṅga on this subject.
1169. From the "Qualities of the Fruits and Stages" chapter of MA (XI, 17); see EOE, p. 191, which varies from my translation.

1170. The canonical source for this doctrine seems to be the Lankāvatārasūtra. Nanjio ed., p. 269: "Akaṇṭhaḥ bhavane divye sarva pāpa vibhījita tattva budhayati sambuddhā nirmita tv atha budhayate." See also mKhas grub rje, rGyud sde phyi rnam, ed. and trans. Lessing and Wayman, Fundamentals of the Buddhist Tantras (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1979), which compares different notions concerning the final stages in the process of attaining enlightenment; also Pras, p. 448.

1171. These topics he discusses, for example, in his commentary to AA, the rTogs dka' i snang ba. If this is indeed the text to which he refers, it would indicate that the latter was composed after the TTC.

1172. Compare sTag tshang lo tsa ba's claim that the fundamental error in the dGe lugs pa interpretation of Candrakīrti (the one leading to the eighteen famous "contradictions" that he accuses the dGe lugs pas of, see Appendix 2) lies in their belief that "the valid cognition that analyzes conventional truths is to be found in the Buddha's conventional gnosia," as cited and subsequently criticized by the First Pan chen bla ma, rTsong lсан, p. 376.

1173. According to the First Pan chen bla ma's rTsong lサン, pp. 376, 384 passim, sTag tshang lo tsa ba held a somewhat qualified version of this position, namely, that the Buddha cognizes no conventional truths. In fact, if the former's characterization of the latter's views are accurate, it would seem that the latter's chief complaint against Tsong kha pa and his followers would center on the fact that Tsong kha pa and mKhas grub rje conceive of the Buddha’s gnosia as containing valid cognitions of the nominal-conventional world. See previous note.

1174. Commentary on (VI, 28); this passage is also discussed in Tsong kha pa's rTsa shes tiki chen, Sarath ed., p. 414.

1175. These are discussed extensively in the "Qualities of the Fruits and Stages" chapter of MA; see EOE, pp. 192–194.

1176. For a discussion and listing of these in English, see MOE, pp. 208–211.

1177. I have been unable to find this passage in the MA Bhāṣya. It is discussed also in rTsa shes tiki chen, Sarath ed., p. 415.


1179. Pras, p. 374; Pras-tib, folio 120a. See also MA (VI, 29).

1180. Uttaratantra (I, 93); see also Uttaratantra (I, 153); and TTC, pp. 355–356.

1181. Toh. no. 4025, Sems tsam phi, folio 105b.

1182. Toh no. 3882, dBu ma sa, folio 14b. See Eckel, Jñānagarbha’s Commentary, pp. 102, 188.

1183. Again, see D. S. Ruegg’s translation of the Jo nang pa chapter of Thu'u kvan bLo bzhang chos kyi nyi ma's Grub mtha’ shel gyi me long in JAOS 83 (1963); also TTC, pp. 8 passim.

1184. D. S. Ruegg (TTG, p. 22) wrongly identifies the scribe as Zhang zhung pa Chos dbang gras pa, undoubtedly confusing the preface to the following treatise that was ‘mise par écrit par Zhang zhung pa’ with the ending lines of the colophon to the TTC. In his ‘On Thesis and Assertion . . . ’ he states, ‘the skal bzar mig ’byed was written down by Zhang zhung pa Chos dbang gras pa (1404–1469), a disciple of mKhas grub rje who, according to the colophon of the text, faithfully recorded his master’s teaching without making either unwarranted additions or subtractions’ (p. 216). The editors of the Catalogue of the Tohoku University Collection of Tibetan Works on Buddhism, p. 141, also state of the TTC that it was ‘written by Shang zhung pa Chos dbang gras pa’i dpal as a summary of the lecture . . . by dGe legs dpal bzhang po.’ See Introduction.

1185. This refers to those who, in accordance with Vinaya, practice the special discipline of taking all of their food for the day in one sitting. bLo gros chos skyong (1389–1463/4) was born in gYag sde, in gTsang, and was the fifth holder of the dGa’ ldan throne; see BS, p. 124; TTiTN for the alternative date for his death as 1470; see also KYP, folio 18b.

1186. Meaning that many scholars came from this area of Tibet.

1187. See the “Biography of mKhas grub rje” concerning this monastery; see also van der Kuyp, p. 315, n. 361.

Appendices

1. The two principal causes of buddhahood, the accumulation of merit and wisdom.

2. “‘de dag bdag gis ma bkag ces,’” KYP, folio 6b. The expression is somewhat puzzling, but what it implies is that Rong ston pa at least claimed that it was not he who had put a stop to the debate. Of course mKhas grub rje claims that this is just a pretense on Rong ston pa’s part, as it was he who put up their mutual benefactor to canceling the proceedings.

3. It is said in KYP, folio 6b–7a, that immediately after putting this up on the main door of the monastery, mKhas grub rje recited two verses on his own spiritual accomplishments and left for mDungs can Mountain. The king, bribing some of his attendants to entice him to return to dPal ’khor sde chen, finally gave up hope of his ever returning when, as a response to his efforts, mKhas grub rje sent him the following verse:

What wise person would not laugh at the thought that the king of beasts
Who has taken up his abode in the snow mountains,
Endowed with inexhaustible fangs and powerful claws,
Can be chained up like a watchdog and nourished with filthy water?
Glossary

A

abode .......................................................... gnas
absurd fact ...................................................... thal chos
absurdity ........................................................ thal ba
accordance with [its] object, correct .................... don mthun
accordance with the worldly .............................. 'jig rten pa dang bstun pa
accumulation, assembly, conjunction, grouping ...... tshogs
accurate ....................................................... 'thad ldan
act out ........................................................... tshul ston pa
active [altruistic] mind ...................................... 'jug sens
active opposite .............................................. 'gal bla mi mthun phyogs
actual, direct, real .......................................... dngos
adventitious ................................................... glu (glo) bur
advocate of [a particular] philosophical view or
tenet, philosopher ......................................... grub mtha' smra ba
advocate of the existence of objects ..................... don smra ba
affirmative misunderstandings ........................... 'jug pa gzung riogs
affirming negation .......................................... ma yin dgag
afflicted consciousness .................................... nyon yid
afflicted obscurcation ...................................... nyon mongs pa'i sgrub pa
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Afflicted Phenomenon</th>
<th>kun nas nyon mongs kyi chos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affliction</td>
<td>(kun nas) nyon mongs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregate</td>
<td>phung po</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analogue</td>
<td>mithung ldan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analogy, Comparison</td>
<td>nyer 'jol dpad pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annihilate, Negate</td>
<td>sun 'byin pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annihilation</td>
<td>rgyun chad pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antidote</td>
<td>gnyen po</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appear</td>
<td>snang ba, zhen pa, rnam pa(r) shar ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance of Duality</td>
<td>gnyis snang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearing Object</td>
<td>snang yul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehended Object, Direct Object, Main or Referent Object</td>
<td>'dzin stangs gyi yul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension of a Self</td>
<td>bdra 'dzin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension of Signs</td>
<td>mshan 'dzin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension of True Existence</td>
<td>bden 'dzin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Āryan</td>
<td>'phags pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Āryan Still in Training</td>
<td>'phags pa slob pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As They Seem to Be</td>
<td>ji snyed pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascertain</td>
<td>nges pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascertaining Consciousness</td>
<td>nges shes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>rnam pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirational [Altruistic] Mind</td>
<td>smon sems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Will, Intuitively, Simply by Focusing [on the Object]</td>
<td>blo kha phyogs pa tsam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atom, Elementary Particle</td>
<td>rdul phra rab, rdul phren</td>
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**Glossary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attainment</th>
<th>thob pa</th>
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<tr>
<td>Autocognition</td>
<td>rang rig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis, Referent</td>
<td>gzhi, rten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis for a Perception</td>
<td>dngs rten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis of the Conjuring</td>
<td>sprul gzhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>stong gzhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Basis of Vikalp Conceptions</td>
<td>rnam rtag gi zhen pa'i gzhi</td>
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<td>Basis or Referent on Which Linguistic Terms are Predicated</td>
<td>ming gi tha snyad 'dogs pa'i gzhi</td>
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<td>Being [Human]</td>
<td>skyes bu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>mos pa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belief, Philosophical Position, Thesis</td>
<td>dam bca'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio-Hagiographical Work</td>
<td>rnam thar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily Exercise</td>
<td>'khrul 'khor</td>
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<td>Brief Topic</td>
<td>mdor bstan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddha-Nature, Tathāgatagarbha</td>
<td>bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po</td>
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**C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Causal Relationship</td>
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</table>
cause

certainty

classification, lineage, kind

cognition, cognitive act

cognitive basis

cognize, appear

cognized entity or object

cognized or perceived phenomenon, existent thing

cognizer, cognizing subject

common locus

comparison, analogy

compatibly

completion stage

composite body

composite, produced

compounded

concealed entity, obtuse point

conceived object

conceptual imputation or label

conceptual thought, conceptual consciousness

conceptualization

conceptualize

concomitant relation

concordant

concordant example

concordant latent potentialities

concordant side

concordant ultimate

condition

conjunction, assembly or accumulation, grouping

consciousness

contact

contemplate

continuity

contradict, contradiction

contradictory pervasion

conventional

conventional truth

correct, real

correct, according to its object

correct conventional truth

correctly [really] existent

critique, polemic, rebuttal

crude, gross, rough

D

debating circuit

decide

defilement, stain

mthun dpe

rigs mthun pa'i

bag chags

mthun phyogs

mthun pa'i
don dam

rkyen

tshogs

shes pa,

rnam shes

reg pa

bsam pa

rgyun

'gal ba

'gal khyab

kun rdzob

kun rdzob bden pa

yang dag pa

don mthun

yang dag pa'i kun

rdzob kyi bden pa

yang dag par

yod pa
dgag lan

rag pa

grwa skor

mtha' 'dryad pa

dri ma
definite lineage or kind ........................................... rigs nges pa
definite śrāvaka type ........................................... nyan thos
                                                      rigs nges
definition, characteristic ................................... mtshan nyid
definitive good [buddhahood] ................................ nges legs
definitive meaning ............................................. nges don
deny the existence of, slander ................................ skur ba 'debs pa
depend .............................................................. rag las pa
dependent ........................................................... brten pa
dependent arising ................................................ rten cing
                                                      'brel 'byung
dependent entity .................................................. gzhon dbang
desire realm ......................................................... 'dod kham
devoid of being a unity or a plurality ..................... gcig dang du bral
dharma element .................................................... chos kyi
                                                      skye mchad
different nature ................................................... ngo bo tha dad
direct, actual, real .............................................. dngos
direct contradiction ............................................. dngos 'gal
direct object ......................................................... dngos kyi
gzhal bya
direct object, apprehended object, main
or referent object ................................................... 'dzin stangs
                                                      kyi yul
direct perception ................................................... mgon sum
directly, really ..................................................... dngos su
directly perceptible .............................................. mgon sum pa
disappear ............................................................. snang ba ldog pa
disciplined mind .................................................... spong sems
discordant side ..................................................... mi mthun phyogs
discrimination ....................................................... 'du shes
disparaging the doctrine ....................................... chos kyi
                                                      phongs pa
disputation ........................................................... rtsod pa
dominant condition ............................................... bdag rkyen
doubt ................................................................. the tshom
downfall ............................................................. pham pa
effect ................................................................. 'bras bu,
                                                      bskyed bya
effective action (lit. taking up what is desired and
                                                      avoiding what is not) ........................................... glang dor
efficacious ........................................................... 'bras bu dang
                                                      bcas pa, don byed (nus) pa
ego grasping ........................................................... bdag tu 'dzin pa
egotistic views ....................................................... bdag lta
eight great difficult points ....................................... dka' gnas chen
                                                      po brgyad
eighteen shared attributes ..................................... ma' dres pa
                                                      bco brgyad
elaborations, proliferation ..................................... spros pa
element ............................................................... khams
elementary particle, atom ....................................... rdul phra rab
elementary point particle ....................................... rdul phren phyogs
                                                      kyi cha med
emancipation, liberation ....................................... (rnam par)
                                                      thar pa
eumpiness ........................................................... stong pa nyid
eumpiness of emptiness ......................................... stong pa nyid
                                                      stong pa nyid
empiness of what is other ..................................... gzhon stong
empty .................................................. stong pa
empty of self ........................................ rang stong
enduring ................................................ ther gzugs
enlightenment ......................................... byang chub
entity, thing .......................................... dngos po
equal taste ........................................... ro mayam
equipoised ........................................... snyom par
erroneous ............................................. bslu ba, ’khrul pa
essence, nature ...................................... rang bzhin, ngo bo
essence or nature body ............................. ngo bo nyid sku
essenceless ........................................... rang bzhin med pa, ngo bo nyid med pa
essential instruction ............................... man ngag
essential predicate ................................. ngo bo du
establish, exist ....................................... grub pa
eternalism ............................................ rtag lta
etymology ............................................ sgra bsad
evident ................................................ mgon gyur
example .............................................. dpe
exemplification ....................................... mtshan gzi
exist .................................................... grub pa, yod pa
exist by virtue of an essence, inherently exist ..... rang bzhin gyis yod pa
exist by virtue of being a svalaksana ............. rang mtshan gis grub pa
exist by virtue of its own characteristic ........... rang gis mtshan nyid kyi grub pa
exist by virtue of its own real nature ............. dngos po’i dbang-gis grub pa
exist by virtue of its own reality .................. dngos po’i gnas tshod kyi grub pa
exist from its own side ............................. rang ngos nas grub pa
exist in its own right ............................... sdod lugs su yod pa
exist objectively ................................... yul kyi sdod lugs su grub pa
exist under its own power ......................... rang dbang du grub pa
existent thing, cognized phenomenon ............ gzhal bya, gzhis grub, yod pa
existential state ..................................... srid pa
exist as substances or substantially .......... rdzas su grub pa
exist from the object’s own side ................ don stengs na grub
experience .......................................... myong ba
expressed, meaning ............................... brijod bya
extent, measure ..................................... tshad
external object ...................................... phyi don
extrasensory perception ........................... mgon shes
extreme of nihilism ................................ med pa’i mtha’
extremely obtuse or hidden [point] ............... shin tu ikog gyur (kyi gnad)
eye consciousness ................................ mig (gi rnam par) shes (pa)
eye disease ........................................... rab rib

fact that [can be proven by] direct means ........ dngos stob kyi yul
faith .................................................... dad pa
false ................................................... rdzun pa
false, feigned ................................................... bcos ma
fault ............................................................... skyon
feeling ............................................................. tshor ba
fiction, invention, reification ................................. sgro 'dgos / brtags
find ................................................................. rnyed pa
finite ............................................................... thug pa yod pa
firmness of mind ................................................ yid btran
five aggregates [that are taken up] ......................... (nyer len gyi) phung po lnga
flexible ............................................................ ldom pa
forebear, patience .............................................. bzod pa
form ............................................................... gzugs
forward pervasion ............................................. rjes khyab
foundation [consciousness] ................................... kun gzhi (rnam par shes pa)
four [extreme] positions ...................................... phyogs bzhi
four means for accumulating [disciples] .................. sdu ba'i dngos po bzhi
four searches ..................................................... tshol ba bzhi
four understandings .......................................... yongs su shes pa bzhi
freedom from mental proliferation ........................... spros bral
functionality ..................................................... bya byed

g

G

general, universal ........................................... spyi
generation stage .............................................. bskyed rim
generic image ............................................... don spyi
generic linguistic image ..................................... sgra spyi

H

heartfelt ............................................................ zhe bas
heat [stage of the path] ........................................ drod
heights, higher state of existence ........................... mtho ris
heterodox .......................................................... mlu steg
higher rebirth ................................................... mngon mtho
highest, ultimate .............................................. dam pa
hypothetical ....................................................... mthar gzung

I

I ................................................................. nga, bdag
illusion ........................................................... sgyu ma
[illusion of] falling hair ..................................... skra shad 'dzog pa
imaginary, imputed entity ..................................... kun brtags
immediately antecedent condition ............................ de ma thag rkyen

Glossary

generic or universal characteristic ........................ spyi'i mthas nyid
gnosis ................................................................... ye shes
grasp at or apprehend a self ................................. bdag 'dzin
great bliss ....................................................... bde chen
great love ....................................................... byams chen
great objectless compassion ............................... dmigs pa med pa'i thugs rje chen po
gross, crude, rough ......................................... rag pa
ground of nescient latent potentialities ................. ma rig bag chags kyi sa

grouping, accumulation, assembly, conjunction ......... tshogs
imply ......................................................... 'phen
imprint ....................................................... lag rjes
impure dependent entity ................................ ma dag
gzhan dbang
imputation, label ........................................ biags pa
in the purview [of] ....................................... ngor
inconceivable .......................................... rnam par rtog pa
med pa
incorrect misconception .......................... yang dag ma yin
kun rtog
indefinite ............................................... ma nges pa
indefinite in lineage ................................. ma nges pa'i
rigs can
independent ............................................. ltos med, rang
dbang can, yan
gar ba
indirectly ................................................. shugs la
individual autocognitive gnosis ........... so so rang gi rig
pa'i ye shes
individual members [of a category] ......... gshi ldog
induction ................................................... ldog pa gcig pa'i
dpung 'phul ba
inductive inference ................................. yid ches rjes dpag
ineffable, inexpressible .......................... brjod du med pa
inexhaustible ............................................ chud mi za
inference ............................................... rjes dpag
inference based on what is renowned to or
understood by others (iro) ................. gzhon la grags kyi
rjes dpag
inference renowned or understood in one's
own system ........................................ rang la grags pa'i
rjes dpag

Glossary

inferential cognition [of emptiness] .......... rigs shes
rjes dpag
inherent purity ........................................ rang bzhin
rnam dag
inherently abiding lineage ................... rang bzhin du
gnas pa'i rigs
inherently exist, exist by virtue of an essence ... rang bzhin gyis
yod pa
initiation ................................................. dbang
innate ..................................................... lhun skyes
insight ..................................................... lhag mthong
instruction ............................................ gdamg pa
intellectual, learned, philosophical .......... kun brtags
intended basis, ultimate intention .......... dgongs gczi
intention, purport ................................... dgongs pa
intention to express .............................. brjod 'dod
intermediate state ................................ bar srid
internal contradiction .......................... nang 'gal
internal [sense] organ ............................. nang gi
skye mched
intuitively, at will, simply by focusing on it
[the object] ......................................... blo ka phyogs
pa tsam
invention, fiction, reification .................. sgros 'dogs/brtags
involved in circular reasoning .............. rtogs pa phan
tshun brten

K

karma and its effects, moral causality ......... las 'bras
kind ....................................................... rigs
knowable phenomenon ............................ shes bva
knowledge of the basis ........................................ gzhis shes

L

label ................................................................. btags / 'dogs pa
labeled in dependence upon [other things] .................. btsan nas
biags pa
labeled phenomenon ........................................ btags yod'chos
larger category ................................................. khyab byed
latent karmic potentiality ................................. las kyi bag chags
latent potentiality ................................................. bag chags
latent potentiality for the apprehension of true existence ........................................ bden 'dzin gyi bag chags
latent potentiality of ignorance ................................ ma rig bag chags
latent potentiality of the kinds of existence ............... srid pa'i yan lag gyi bag chags
latent potentiality that perceives the self .................. btags tu lha ba'i bag chags
law of excluded middle ....................................... dtag pa gnyis
learned, philosophical, intellectual ......................... kun brtags
liberation, emancipation ...................................... (rnam par) thar pa
liberative path ..................................................... rnam grol lam
limit of the stream ............................................. rgyun mtha'
limited or ordinary (being) .................................. tshur mthong
lineage, classification, kind .................................. rigs
linguistic latent potentiality ................................. mgon par brjod pa'i bag chags
linguistic referent ................................................... gdags gzhis
linguistic symbol ................................................... rda
logic ................................................................. riog ge

Glossary

logical object of refutation ................................ rtags kyi dgag bya, rigs pa'i dgag bya
logical reasoning, syllogism ................................. gian tshig
logical reasoning analyzing the ultimate .............. don dam dpod byed kyi rigs pa
logical reasoning or argument .............................. rigs pa
logician ............................................................... riog ge pa

M

Madhyamaka ......................................................... dbu ma
main or referent object, apprehended or direct object ...... 'dzin stang gi yul
manifest (v.) ......................................................... sprul pa
manifest ............................................................. mgon gyur
Manifestationist ................................................ mgon par gsal bar bya ba
mantra ............................................................... sngags
mark ................................................................. mthsan ma
marks and signs [of a buddha] ................................ mthsan dpe
material [cause] .................................................. nger len
materialist ........................................................ tshu rol mdzes pa pa
meaning, object .................................................. don
measure, extent .................................................. tshad
meditation ........................................................ sgom pa
meditational deity ............................................... yi dam
memory ............................................................ dren pa
mental .............................................................. sens pa
mental consciousness ......................................... yid shes
mental direct perception .................................... yid kyi mgon sum
mental factor .............................................. sens byung
mental object ............................................ dmigs pa, dpod yul
mental organ ................................................ yid dbang
mental quiescence ....................................... zhi gnas
mentated .................................................... bsam pa
mere general self ......................................... phyir nga tsam
mere name or merely nominal ........................... ming tsam
mere vijñapti, vijñaptimātra ............................... rnam par rig pa tsam
merely nominally labeled ................................. ming du btags pa tsam
merit ............................................................ bsod nams
method ....................................................... thabs
mind, thought ............................................... sens
mineness ...................................................... nga yi (bdag gir) ba
misbehavior (subtle) ...................................... kun tu spyod pa
misconception .............................................. rnam par rtog pa
misconceptualization of the object ...................... gzung rtog
misconceptualization of the subject .................... 'dzin rtog
misguideness ................................................ thabs ma yin pa la thugs pa
misperception of the collection of perishable [aggregates] ........................................... 'jig tshogs la lta ba
misperception of the self ................................ bgag lta
mistaken ....................................................... phyin ci log, log pa
mistaken conception ...................................... log rtog
mistaken consciousness ................................... log shes
misunderstanding of the object .......................... gzung don rtog pa

misunderstanding of the subject ........................... 'dzin don rtog pa
mode of appearance ...................................... snang tshog pa
mode of apprehension .................................... 'dzin stangs
mode of conception ...................................... zhen stangs
momentary ................................................... skad cig ma
moral causality, karma and its effects .................. las 'bras
moral discipline ............................................ tshul khrims
mutually exclusive directly contradicting [things] ........... phan tshan spangs pa'i dngos 'gal

N

Naiyāyika ................................................... rtog ge pa
nature, essence ........................................... rang bzhin, ngo bo
nature [essence] body ..................................... ngo bo nyid sku
natureless .................................................. ngo bo nyid med pa
necessity, purpose ........................................ dgos pa
negate, annihilate .......................................... sun 'byin pa, rnam par bcad pa, khegs pa
negative reflex action .................................... gnas ngan len
nescience ..................................................... gti mug
nihilism ....................................................... skur 'debs
nihilist ....................................................... med pa pa
nihilistic kind of emptiness ............................... chad stong
nihilistic view .............................................. med par lta ba, chad lta
nominal ....................................................... tha snyad pa
nominal valid cognition .................................. tha snyad pa'i tshad ma
nominally .................................................. tha snyad du
nonaffirming negation ................................. med dgag
nonafflicted [form of] ignorance ..................... nyongs mongs can
                                                ma yin pa'i ma
                                                rigs pa
noncomposite ........................................... 'du ma byed
nonconceptual ........................................... rtog bral
nonconceptual consciousness ........................ rtog med shes pa
nonconceptual gnosis ................................... mi rtogs pa'i
                                                ye shes
nondiscrimination ...................................... 'du shes med pa
nonentity ................................................... dngos por med
                                                pa, dngos med
nonerroneous real ...................................... phyin ci ma log
                                                pa'i yong grub
nonestablished .......................................... ma stgrub pa
nonexistent .............................................. med pa, gzhi ma
                                                grub pa
nurtured ................................................... gso par byed

object ................................................... yul
object, meaning ......................................... don
object appearing to conceptual thought .......... rtog pa'i
                                                snang yul
object to be negated or refuted ..................... dgag bya
objective aspect ....................................... gzung rnam
objective condition .................................... dmigs rkyen
obscuration ............................................. sgrib pa
obscuration to omniscience ........................... shes bya'i
                                                sgrib pa

obstacles [removed during the path of] seeing ................................ mthong spang
obtuse points, concealed entity .......................... ldog gyur
omniaspected matter .................................... rnam pa thams
                                                cad pa'i gzugs
one who does not go far enough [in the refutation
that leads to emptiness] ............................... khyab cung ba
one who overextends himself or herself [in the
refutation that leads to emptiness] .................. khyab che ba
opponent ................................................... phyir rgol
oppose, opposition ...................................... ldog pa
opposite ................................................... bzhugs phyogs
oral transmission ........................................ lung
ordinary .................................................... rang dga' ba
ordinary being .......................................... so skye
ordinary or limited [being] ............................ tshur mthong
our own, that is, the Buddhist system ............. rang sde
own characteristic, svalokana, particular .......... rang msthun
own nature .............................................. rang gi ngo
                                                bo (nyid)
own reality .............................................. rang gi
                                                gnas tshod

part ...................................................... yang lag, cha,
                                                cha shas
particular, svalokana, own characteristic .......... rang msthun
path, vehicle ........................................... theg pa, lam
path of faithful activity ................................ mos pa spyod
                                                pa'i lam
path of insight or seeing .............................. mthong lam
path of knowledge that cognizes the path of the āsavaka and pratyekabuddhas

nyan rang gi lam shes pa'i lam shes

path of preparation

sbyor lam

patience, forebearance

bzod pa

peace

zhi ba

peak junction [stage of the path]

rtse sbyor

perceive

dmigs pa

perceived object

dmigs yul, gshal bya

perfect end

yang dag mtha'

perfect object, emptiness, reality

yang dag pa'i don

perfection of wisdom

phar phyin

periodic

res 'ga' ba

permanent

rtag pa

permanent and stable

rtag brtan

permanent entity

rtags dngos

permanent substance

rtag rdzas

permutation

'dres khang

person

gang zag

personal self-knowledge

so so'i rang rig pa

pervaded category

khyab bya

pervading category

khyab byed

pervasion

khyab pa

phenomenal body [of a buddha], dharmakāya

chos sku

phenomenon

shes bya, gzhi grub, chos

philosopher, advocate of a philosophical view

grub mtha' smra ba

philosophical, learned, intellectual

kun brtags

philosophical position, belief, thesis

dam bca'

philosophical school or tenet

grub mtha'

physical

gzugs can

polemics, critique, rebuttal

dgag lam

portion concordant to emancipation

thar pa cha mthun

posit

'jog pa

posited by names and signs

ming dang rda'i bzhags pa tsam

positive

yong su gcod pa

positive purificatory practice

rnam byang ki phyogs

possessing a quality, subject

chos can

possessing an object

dmigs bcas

possessing an ulterior purport

dgongs pa can

possessing aspects

rnam bcas

power

stobs

practice

sgrub pa, sbyor pa

Prāṣangika

Thal 'gyur pa

precondition

byed las

predicate (v.)

'dogs pa

predicate

(bysgrub bya'i) chas

predicated, predication, to predicate

btags pa, sbyor ba

preliminary visualizations

dsngon 'gro'i dmigs pa

proclivity for activity

spyod pa'i phra rgyas

produced, composite

'du byed
product ........................................ byas pa
product or composite thing that is neither [mind
or matter] ........................................ Idan min 'du byed
profound meaning or object, emptiness ............... zab don
proliferation, elaboration ................................ spros pa
proponent ................................................. snga rgol
proposition [subject + predicate] .............. (b)grub bya
provisional meaning ...................................... drang don
pure, purity ................................................. (rnam par) dag pa
pure attainments subsequent [to equipoise] .......... rjes thob dag pa
pure dependent entity ...................................... dag pa
gzhun dbang
pure karma ................................................ zang pa med
pa'i las
purport, intention ......................................... dgongs pa
purpose, necessity ......................................... dgos pa

Q

qualifying predicate ........................................ khyad par
kun brtags
quality ........................................................... chos

R

radiant in nature ........................................ gsal ba'i
rang bzhi' n
real .............................................................. yongs grub, yang
dag pa
real, direct, actual ............................................ dngos
real or correct conventional entity ................. yang dag
kun rdzog
real ultimate ................................................... don dam dngos
realist .......................................................... dngos smra ba
reality .......................................................... chos nyid, gnas
tshoditshul, rnal ma, de kho na
nyid, de bshin
nyid, gnas lugs, sdo lugs
realization ......................................................... mngos rtogs,
grub pa
really, directly ................................................ dngos su
really exist ..................................................... yang dag par
grub pa
really existent ................................................ gnas tshul la
grub pa
really existent in its own right ................. rang gi sdo lugs
su grub pa
reason ........................................................... rtags
[reasoning from the] nonperception of a more
extensive category ........................................ khyab byed ma
dmigs pa
reasoning from the nonperception of essence .... rang bzhi' ma
dmigs pa'i rtags
reasoning of the diamond granule .......... rdo rje gzeugs ma'i
gtan tshigs
[reasoning that] establishes only the term ........... tha snyad 'ba'
zhig sgrub
reasoning that refutes the arising of the existent
and nonexistent ........................................ yod med skye
ddag gi rigs pa
reasoning that refutes arising via the four extremes .... mu bzhi skye 'gog
gi rigs pa
rebuttal, polemics, critique ......................... dtag lan
receptacle consciousness ............................... len pa'i rnam par
shes pa
A Dose of Emptiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recognition</td>
<td>'du shes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>referent, basis</td>
<td>gzhis, don, 'jug gzhis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>referent object</td>
<td>btags don</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflexive experience</td>
<td>rang myongs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reification, fiction, invention</td>
<td>sgrus 'dogs (brtags)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>related in such a way that they have the same nature</td>
<td>btags gcig 'brel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship between subject and reason</td>
<td>phgyogs chos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relying [on other things]</td>
<td>ltos bcas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repudiate</td>
<td>khegs pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reverse pervasion</td>
<td>ldog khyab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right view [that is, the view of emptiness]</td>
<td>yang dag pa'i lta ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rough, crude, gross</td>
<td>rag pa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Glossary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self of phenomena</td>
<td>chos kyi bdag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self of the person</td>
<td>gang zang gi bdag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-grasping</td>
<td>bdag 'dzin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selflessness</td>
<td>bdag med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-power</td>
<td>rang dbang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-reflecting</td>
<td>rang snang ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-sufficient</td>
<td>rang skyas thub pa'i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-sufficient substantially existent [person]</td>
<td>gang zang rang rkyas thub pa'i rdzas yod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sense object</td>
<td>skyod mched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sense organ</td>
<td>dbang po</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensory consciousness</td>
<td>dbang shes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separation between apprehended object and apprehending subject</td>
<td>gzung 'dzin rgyangs chad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sequentially</td>
<td>rim can du</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>series</td>
<td>thebs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>servant</td>
<td>khol po</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set, category</td>
<td>rang ldog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sevenfold analysis</td>
<td>dpyad pa rmam pa bdun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sign, symbol</td>
<td>rda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simply by focusing [on the object], at will, intuitively</td>
<td>blo kha phyogs pa tsam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six external spheres</td>
<td>khams drug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sixteen padārtha of the Naiyāyikas</td>
<td>rtog ge tshig don bcu drug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skill in means</td>
<td>thabs mkhas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slander, deny the existence of</td>
<td>skur ba 'debs pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smaller category</td>
<td>khyab bya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**S**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>samādhi</td>
<td>tding nges 'dzin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sambhogakāya, enjoyment body</td>
<td>longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scripture or scriptural citation</td>
<td>lang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search for essential and specific predication</td>
<td>ngo bo nyid du 'dogs pa dang khyad par da 'dogs pa tshol ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search for the thing</td>
<td>dngos po tshol ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secondary mental event</td>
<td>sens byung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seed</td>
<td>sa bon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seed of concordant latent potentialities</td>
<td>rigs mthan pa'i bag chaugs kyi sa bon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self</td>
<td>bdag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
soteriological object of refutation........................................... lam gyi dgag bya
soteriologically valid doctrine............................................... kun byang gi chos
special, superior................................................................. khyad par du 'phags pa
specific....................................................................................... khyad par
specific predication................................................................. khyad par du kun 'bras gs pa
sphere......................................................................................... skyed mched
sphere of activity........................................................................ spyod yul
sphere of nothingness [the third samāpatti or formless absorption]........................................... ci yang med pa'i skyed mched
spiritual master............................................................................ bla ma
śrāvaka ....................................................................................... nyan thos
śrāvaka type................................................................................. nyan thos rigs can
stable.......................................................................................... brian po
stage of great joy [tenth of the ten bhūmis]................................. rab tu dga' ba'i sa
Stages of the Path......................................................................... Lam rim
stain, defilement........................................................................... dri ma
standard....................................................................................... ltos sa
subconscious................................................................................ bag la nyal
subject........................................................................................ yul can, rig byed
subject matter............................................................................. brjod bya
subject of the inquiry.................................................................... shes 'dod chos can
subject [possessing a quality]..................................................... phyogs, chos can
subjective aspect......................................................................... 'dzin rnam
subsequent attainment............................................................... rjes thob
subsequent consciousness......................................................... bcad shes
substance....................................................................................... rtsas
substantially existent................................................................. rtsas yod, rtsas su grub pa

substratum.................................................................................... gzhis
subtle............................................................................................. phra ba, yang ba
suffering...................................................................................... sdu gbsangal
suffering of change..................................................................... 'gyur ba'i sdu gbsangal
suffering of the pervasive composite....................................... khyab pa 'du byed kyi sdu gbsangal
superior, special......................................................................... khyad par du 'phags pa
superior state [of cyclic existence].......................................... mtho ris
superior thought.......................................................................... lha bsam
supramundane............................................................................. 'jig rten las 'das pa'i
supramundane path..................................................................... 'das lam
supreme emanation body......................................................... mchog gyi sprul sku
svaḷaṅkaṣaṇa, [own characteristic, particular]........................ rgyan mishan
svaṭantra.................................................................................... rgyan rgyud (kyis rgags)
Svāntantrika................................................................................ Rgyan rgyud pa
syllogism, logical reasoning...................................................... gnas tshigs
syllogistic reasoning based on dependent arising.................. rten 'brel kyi gnas tshigs
symbol, sign................................................................................... rda
synonymous................................................................................ don gcig

tathāgatagarbha, buddha-nature................................................ bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po
teaching....................................................................................... khrid
ten powers.................................................................................... stobs bcu
ten unstable misconceptions................................................... rnam gyeng gi rnam rieg bcu
terminology .................................................. thad na nyid
thesis, belief, philosophical position .................... dam bca'
thing, entity ................................................. dangpo
those that can be counted as ................................... rnam grangs pa'i
those who have a definite śrāvaka vocation ................... ryan thos
                                                                            rigs nges
thought .......................................................... blo, sens
three conditions [causal, immediate, and dominant] ............ rkhyen gsum
three cycles ................................................... 'khor gsum
three existences ............................................... srid pa gsum
three knowledges ............................................. mkhyen gsum
three natures .................................................. ngo bo nyid gsum
total knowledge .............................................. tham cad shes pa
trained in terminology ..................................... rda la byang ba
trimodal [criterion] .......................................... tsul gsum
true arising .................................................... bden skye
truly existent ................................................... bden par grub
                                                                            pa/yo d pa
truth ............................................................. bden pa
truth of cessation ............................................. 'gog bden
truthlessness ................................................... bden par med pa
tutelary deity ................................................. yi dam
two truths ...................................................... bden bnyis

ultimate, highest object .................................... don dam pa
ultimate analysis ............................................ don dam dpyod pa
ultimate emptiness ......................................... don dam par
                                                                            stong pa nyid

ultimate intention, intended basis ............................. dgongs gzhi
ultimate purport .............................................. dgongs pa mthar
                                                                            thug pa
ultimate reality .............................................. mthar thug pa'i
                                                                            gnas
ultimate truth ................................................ don dam bden pa
ultimate view .................................................. mthar thug
                                                                            pa'i lha ba
ultimately existent .......................................... don dam par
                                                                            yod pa
ultimately natureless ......................................... don dam pa ngo
                                                                            bo nyid med pa
ultimately [smallest] moment ................................ dus mtha'i skad
                                                                            cig ma
unchanging real ................................................ 'gyur med
                                                                            yongs grub
undeclared view .............................................. lung ma bstan gyi
                                                                            lha ba
under its own power .......................................... tshugs thub tu
undermine ..................................................... gcod
understand ..................................................... rto gs pa
unitary .......................................................... gcig
universal ....................................................... spyi
universal or general characteristic ......................... spyi 'i mthshan
                                                                            nyid
unknowable ..................................................... shes par bya ba
                                                                            ma sin pa
unobstructed path ........................................... bar chad med lam
unreal thing, unreality ..................................... dangpo med
unsatisfied ..................................................... ma tshim par
utilitarian phenomenon .................................... go chod kyi chos
utilizing worldly conventions ............................... 'jig rten grags sde
                                                                            spyod pa
utterly nonexistent imaginary entities ...................... yongs su chad
pa'i kun brtags
utterly unbelievable ......................................... rnam par shes par
bya ba ma yin pa

valid cognition ............................................... tshad ma
valid reasoning from the effect to the cause .............. 'bras rtags
yang dag
view .............................................................. lta ba
view in regard to the perishable [aggregates] .............. 'jig lta
view that nothing is to be thought of ....................... ci yang yid la mi
byed pa'i lta ba
view that things are neither existent nor nonexistent ... yod min med min
gyi lta ba
view that [things] do not exist ................................ yod pa ma yin
par lta ba
vijñānaptimātra, mere vijñāpti .............................. rnam par rig
pa tsam

what depends [on a basis] .................................... brten pa
what gives rise to something, cause ....................... bskyed byed
what has arisen, effect ..................................... bskyed bya
what is experienced ......................................... myong bya
what labels .................................................... 'dogs byed
what possesses an attribute or quality, subject .......... chos can
wisdom ......................................................... shes rab
without aspects ............................................. rnam med

withstand analysis by reasoning ............................ rigs pas
dpyad bzod
word ............................................................. bka', sgra
world ............................................................ 'jig rten
worldly gnosis ................................................ 'jig rten pa'i
ye shes
worldly nominal valid cognition ......................... 'jig rten pa'i
tha snyad pa'i tshad ma
worldly parlance or terminology ......................... 'jig rten gyi
tha snyad
wrong or false view ......................................... lta ba ngan pa
[wrong] view of the self ................................... bdag lta

yogic direct perception ..................................... rnal 'byor
mngon sum
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Abhisamāyālāṃkāra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Lang, Āryadeva’s Catuḥṣataka</td>
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<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>Abhidharmakośa, see, for example, Pradhan ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKB</td>
<td>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Abhidharmasamuccaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>Roerich, Blue Annals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCA</td>
<td>Bodhicaryavatāra, see for example, Bhattacharya ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGR</td>
<td>Tsong kha pa, dBu ma ḏgongs pa rab gsal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIS</td>
<td>Berliner Indologische Studien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPD</td>
<td>dBu ma’i spyi don</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>sDe srid, Baidūr ser po</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUD</td>
<td>Buddhāpālita’s commentary on MMK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Cone ed. of Tibetan canon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMDR</td>
<td>Wayman, Calming the Mind and Discerning the Real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Catuḥṣataka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTB</td>
<td>Hopkins, Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTBE</td>
<td>van der Kuij, Contributions to Tibetan Buddhist Epistemology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTBRP</td>
<td>Steinkellner and Tauscher, Contributions of Tibetan and Buddhist Religion and Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>sDe dge ed. of Tibetan canon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAE</td>
<td>Napper, Dependent Arising and Emptiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBPL</td>
<td>Cabezón, The Development of a Buddhist Philosophy of Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>Thurman, Essence of True Eloquence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EGW  Jackson, The Entrance Gate for the Wise
EOE  Huntington, The Emptiness of Emptiness
HOB  Obermiller, History of Buddhism
IB  Nakamura, Indian Buddhism
IIJ  Indo-Iranian Journal
iro  inference based on what is renowned to, or understood by, others
IsMEO  Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente
JAAR  Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JAOS  Journal of the American Oriental Society
JIABS  Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies
JIP  Journal of Indian Philosophy
JRAS  Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
KDJ  mKhas grub rje
KL  Klein, Knowledge and Liberation
KYP  gNas rnying, rNam thar mkhas pa'i yid 'phrog
LMS  Ruegg, The Literature of the Madhyamaka School
LRCM  Tsong kha pa, Lam rim chen mo
LRLN  Tshe mchog gling, Lam rim bla ma rgyud pa'i rnam thar
LSN  Tsong kha pa, Drang nges legs bshad snying po
MA  la Vallée Poussin, Madhyamakāvatāra par Candrakīrti
MMK  Mūlamadhyamakarikā, see, for example, Inada ed.
MOE  Hopkins, Meditation on Emptiness
MTS  Madhyamaka Text Series edition of TTC
MV  Mahāvibhutti, Sasaki ed.
n.d.  no date
NT  dKong mchog 'jigs med dbang po, rNam thar (of KDJ)
P  Peking ed. of Tibetan Canon
PEW  Philosophy East and West

Abbreviations

PPS  Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra(s)
Pras  Prasannapāda, see, for example, la Vallée Poussin ed.
Pras-tib  Prasannapāda, sDe dge Tibetan trans.
PTS  Pali Text Society
PV  Pramāṇavārttika, see, for example, Shastri ed.
RGV  Ratnagotravibhāga, see, for example, Johnston ed.
RGVV  Ratnagotravibhāgayākyāyā
SB  Thurman, A Short Biography and Letter of rJe Tsong kha pa
SGV  Lamotte, La Somme du Grand Véhicule d’Asanga
SK  bSod rnams rgya mtsho, ed., Sa skya bka' 'bum
SK-I  van der Kuijp, "Studies in mKhas grub rje I"
SK-IV  van der Kuijp, "Studies in mKhas grub rje IV"
SNT  rJe bsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan, gSang ba'i rnam thar
SOS  Lopez, A Study of Svātantrika
SR  Takasaki, A Study of the Ratnagotravibhāga
SS  Lamotte, Explication des Mystères, Samdhinirmocana Sūtra
TTC  mKhas grub rje, sTong thun chen mo
TTG  Ruegg, La Théorie du Tatagatagarbha et du Gotra
TTKT  Tshe tan zhab grub, bsTan rtis kun las byus pa
VV  Vīgrahavyāvarttani, see, for example, Bhattacharya ed.
WZKSO  Wienener Zeitschrift für kunde Süd-und Ostasiens
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Index of Names

Abhayakara, 82, 85, 88, 406
Abhidharma, 14, 192, 218, 219, 249, 309, 324, 466, 476, 486, 497, 501
Abhidharmakosha, 186, 195, 308, 418, 450, 471, 478, 502, 504, 507, 510, 513
Abhidharmakoshabhyasa, 186, 308, 418, 471, 478, 490, 502
Abhidharmapitaka, 248, 249, 309
Abhidharmasamuccaya, 39, 40, 46–48, 50, 192, 193, 214, 233, 393, 420, 421, 484
Advice to Kātyāyana, 205
Ajiñatastra Sūtra, 31
Ajiñatakauśī, 238
Akanisṭha, 382
Aksayamatinirdeśa Sūtra, 36, 73, 77, 95, 445
Akutbhavya, 82–84, 435, 436
Ānanda, 238
Anavatapanagārājapriyaprecha Sūtra, 95, 122
Angulimala, 218
Angulimalika Sūtra, 72
Anuruddha, 238
Aristotle, 1
Āryadeva, 36, 77, 81, 83, 87, 88, 116, 147, 243, 247, 276, 408, 432, 464
Asanga, 2, 36, 39–41, 46–49, 53, 62, 73, 87, 239, 324, 419, 505
Ashvaghosha, 53, 67, 423, 471, 516
Avamit, 238
Atiśa, 5, 25, 84, 437
Avalokitavrata, 82, 83, 144
Avalokiteśvara, 104
Avatāra, see Mādhavakāvatāra
Avici Hell, 32, 33
Ba so Cho kyung rgyal mtshan, 14
bCom ldan ral gris, 86, 438
bDe bzhin gshegs pa'i mdzod gyi mdo, 31
bDu 'dul ba'i le'u, 31
Bhāvanākrama, 27, 28, 82, 414, 434
Bhavyakirti, 85, 192
Bikṣuṁkara, 85
bLo gros chos skyong, 388
Bo dong Phyogs las rnam rgyal, 15, 398, 409
Bodhicādāra, 25
Bodhicaryāvatāra, 40, 82, 92, 217–221, 229, 344, 349, 350, 357, 358, 419, 435, 477, 510, 515
Bodhicittavibhāsā, 34, 111, 122, 239, 318, 322, 323, 364
Bodhipathapriddhi, 157, 396
Bodhisattvabhumi, 39, 40, 43, 44, 46, 47, 54, 214, 229, 445
Atiśa, 5, 25, 84, 437
Avalokita, 82, 83, 144
Bodhikā, 25
Bodhicaryāvatāra, 40, 82, 92, 217–221, 229, 344, 349, 350, 357, 358, 419, 435, 477, 510, 515
Bodhicittavibhāsā, 34, 111, 122, 239, 318, 322, 323, 364
Bodhipathapriddhi, 157, 396
Bodhisattvabhumi, 39, 40, 43, 44, 46, 47, 54, 214, 229, 445
Atiśa, 5, 25, 84, 437
Avalokita, 82, 83, 144

Dharmadātavātu, 238
Dharmakīrti, 3, 53, 65, 85, 86, 145,
337, 388, 426, 438, 444, 457, 472,
474, 496
Dharmanāpā, 87, 88
Dharmatāta, 307
Dhātuyāmātāsūtra, 235
Dignāga, 53, 426, 438, 462, 472,
496, 519
Dol pō pa (Shes rab rgyal mthun), 6,
424, 470, 508
Dpal ’khor bde chen, 16, 17, 388,
409, 410
Drang nges legs bshad snying po, 5, 52,
60, 64, 68, 395, 396, 418
‘Dul ’dzin grags pa rgyal mthun, 16,
406, 409

Elucidation of the Provisional and Definitive, see Drang nges legs bshad snying po
Epistle Called a Drop of Nectar, 89
Essence of Eloquence, see Drang nges legs bshad snying po
Five Honorable Ones, 238
Five Works of Maitreya, 14, 230,
420, 489
Gaganagamjasamādhi Sūtra, 166
Ganges River, 30, 31, 341
Garbhā Sūtra, 72
Ghanavyāha, 319, 331, 332
Gheṣaka, 307
Go ram pa bsdod nams seng ge, 398,
412, 421–424, 438, 439, 441, 444,
444, 447, 448, 523, 474
‘Gos lo tsa ba gzhon nu dpal, 404, 406,
437
Graded Stages of the Path (lam rim), 16,
432
Great Commentary on the Āṣṭasāhasrikā, 222, 229
Great Commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra, 217
Great Exposition of Insight (Uṣnīḍha mthong chen mo), 5, 134, 135, 295,
298, 299, 301, 462
Great Exposition of the Prajñāpāramitā, 294, 295, 301
gSang ba ’i rnam thar, 17, 18
gShen rab, 389
gTsang, 14–16, 388
Guhvasamāja, 29, 87, 323, 324
Guanānātī, 82
Gunasīri, 82
gYung ston rdo rje dpal, 406
Haribhadra, 82, 88–90, 153, 173, 193,
221–225, 434, 516
Heart Sūtra, 82, 270, 448
Hevajra Tantra, 15, 406
Hundred Thousand Scripture of the Čārvākas, 291
Hva Shang, 7, 113, 266, 400
India, 49, 87, 124, 167
Iśvara, 107
Jām dbang bzhad pa, 404, 412, 464,
471, 478
Jām dbang chos rje, 18
Jām dpal zhul lung, 519
Jayānanda, 268, 495
Jñānagarbha, 82, 89, 90, 145, 146,
173, 433
Jñāṇālokaḥākāra Sūtra, 72, 73
Jñānātārasamuccaya, 51
Jo mo nang, 6
Jo nang pas, 398, 399, 407, 415, 421,
424, 521
Kalacakra Tantra, 14, 25, 29, 30, 415
Kamaśilpa, 27, 28, 90, 145, 147,
148, 152, 153, 427, 462
Karma pa, See Mi bskyod rdo rje
Karunāśrīpāda, 85
Kāśmīri Laṃsī, 85
Kāśyapa, 93, 228, 238
Khye’u rin po che byin pa’i mdo, 30
KLong rdol bla ma, 400–402, 415, 418,
425, 426, 441, 451, 471, 514
Kongka (kotiy 60), 85
Kṣirasēkara, 85
Kuladhāra, 85
Kumāra, 85
Lam ‘bras, 15
Lam rim chen mo (see also Great Exposition of Insight), 5, 6, 18, 396, 483,
495, 509
Lamp for Eliminating the Darkness of the Evil paths (Lam nag Nam sel gnyon ma), 1,
398–400, 424, 425, 439, 441, 452, 460, 498, 515, 519
Land of Snows, 112, 266
Lankāvatāra Sūtra, 24, 122, 141, 147,
321, 328–333, 412, 508
IČang rtwa, 16, 409
IČang skya Rol pa’i rdo rje, 444, 462
IDog gzhung, 14
Lilavajra, 85
Litsavi, 25
Locakacāsū (Jig rten mig), 291
Locākītattava, 206, 260
Locāyatīkā, 111
Mādhyamakahādyāya, 82, 270, 433
Mādhyamakālaṃkāra, 82, 89, 434, 469
Mādhyamakāloka, 77, 78, 82, 89, 141,
142, 145, 148–152–153, 193, 358,
365, 477
Mādhyamatāvātāra, 4–6, 33, 34, 82,
85, 94, 95, 98, 100, 104, 114, 118,
121, 129–131, 145, 164, 178–180,
189, 190, 196, 197, 217, 258, 262,
264, 265, 267, 287–289, 291–306,
316–320, 324, 325, 328, 339, 343,
348–350, 362, 363, 365, 366,
369, 370, 371, 382, 417, 453, 454,
459, 507
Mādhyamatārvātāraḥūṣya, 82, 91, 92,
118, 119, 121, 126, 127, 177–179,
182, 185, 186, 201–203, 205, 234,
246, 249, 253, 261, 262, 264, 265,
267, 269, 292, 293, 316, 317, 319,
320, 325, 330, 332, 333, 343, 349,
359, 362, 363, 369, 370, 382, 454,
485, 506
Mādhyāntāvibhāga, 40, 45, 49, 215,
317, 324, 422
Mādhyāntāvibhāgaṭikā, 46, 317
Index of Names

Sūtrasamuccaya, 30, 78, 333
Suvarnaprabhāsā, 25, 319, 413
Tāranātha, 6, 438
Tarkajvalā, 82, 144, 186–188, 193, 345, 346, 419, 433, 479
Tathāgata "Radiance of the Gnostic Source," 24, 25
Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra, 72, 331
Tathāgataarkasūtra, 85
Thar lam gyul byed, 4, 395, 426, 459, 465, 511
Tibet. See land of Snows
Treatise that Perfectly Elucidates Reality, The Profound Doctrine of Emptiness, Called ‘Opening the Eyes of the Fortunate.’,” 3, 388, 403–405, 521
Trimśikā, 39, 41, 317
Trimśikāvṛtti, 46, 317
Tshad ma rig gier, 15
Udānāvarga, 186, 430, 478
Udraka, 27
Upāli, 238
Upālipariroccha Sutra, 170
Uttararātra, see Ratnagotravibhāga
Vaibhāṣikas, 60, 90, 91, 107, 186, 193–195, 307, 308, 315
Vaidalya, 78
Vaidalya (place), 24
Vaipulya (Sūtras), 47
Vairocana, 323
Vaśesākās, 176, 279, 291, 308
Vajrabhairava, 16, 406, 438
Vajračchidāka, 28, 30, 31, 223, 236, 488
Vajradhāra, 25
Vajrasattva, 85
Vārānasi, 39
Vasubandhu, 31, 36, 39, 40, 62, 73, 418–421, 444, 481
Vasumitra, 307, 502
Vātsiputriyās, 207, 299, 210, 260, 458, 478, 494
Vidyākokila, 406
Vimalaprabhā, 29, 30, 415, 416
Vimsatikā, 39, 326, 340, 507
Vimsatikāsvarāvrtti, 340
Vimsatikāsvarāvrtti, 340
Vimuktasena, 88, 89, 153, 221, 223–225, 359, 487, 488
Vinaya, 15, 521
Vinitadeva, 340
Vyākhyāyukti, 39, 418, 420, 421, 444, 481
Ye shes dpal, 15
Ihgaśātaka, 78
Yuktisāstikāvṛtti, 82, 181, 241, 242, 263, 313, 359, 491
Zhang zhung pa Chos dbang grags pa, 521

Index of Subjects

Accordance with the world, 90, 91, 168, 169
Accordance with object, 152, 176
Affirming negation, 295
Afflicted ignorance, 248
Afflicted obscurations, 212, 213, 249–253
Afflictions, 27, 45, 80, 127, 195, 218, 229, 232, 245, 249
Aftermath state of meditation, 383, 384
Aggregates, five, 29, 54, 80, 162, 171, 186, 188, 190, 191, 196, 199, 200, 215, 227, 232, 240, 242, 289, 290
Altruistic mind, see Bodhicitta
Analysis of the ultimate, 29, 101, 271, 272
Anantariya sin, 31
Anger, 170, 214
Annihilation, 264, 265
Antidote, 204, 212, 216, 393
Appearance, 28, 57–61, 90, 328, 333–335, 340–345
Appearing object, 55, 140, 374–376, 427
Apprehended object, 129, 176, 374, 375
Apprehension, of ‘I’, 29, 191, 200; of signs, 211, 229; of substantially existing self, 193, 248, 249; of true existence, 106, 215, 216, 246–248
Arhat, 72, 195, 225; see also Ārya gnosis
Arising, 79, 94, 153, 193, 213, 229, 499; inherently, 120–122, 179, 290; nominally, 120, 121; sequentially, 469; truthlessness of, 459; via the four extreme states, 9, 83, 84, 94, 95, 120–122, 132–134, 153, 261, 262, 291, 293–305, 458, 459; see also Causality
Ārya gnosis, 94, 123, 157, 184, 224–226, 445, 446
Ascertaining consciousness, 114, 115, 335
Assembly of parts, 287, 288, 290
Atoms, 144; refutation of partless, 149; reification by Vātsiputriyās, 207
Attachment, 170, 196, 248
Autocognition, 64, 82, 90, 91, 305, 345–355, 511, 512
Awakening mind, see Bodhicitta
Bhedābheda, 509
Bhāmi, 169, 201, 202, 215–217, 229, 245, 253–256
Bodhicitta, 195, 201, 237, 265
Bodhisattva, 165, 171, 201, 202, 206, 208, 210–217, 237
Body, physical, 96; see also Dharmakāya and Nirmānakāya and Sāṃbhogakāya
Buddha-nature, see Tathāgatagarbha
Buddhahood, 195, 383–368
Buddhist schools, 191, 193, 194
Causal conditions, four, 83, 84; three, 156
Causality, 32–34, 96, 97, 149, 153, 154, 156, 178, 180, 213, 265, 291, 303, 312, 313, 459, 500
Certainty, see Ascertaining consciousness
Characteristic nature, 144
Characterized object, specific and generic, 373
Chariot example, 188, 199, 287–289
Cittamātra, 2, 54, 58–61, 65, 90, 125, 175–177, 187, 196, 198, 233, 234
Index of Subjects

Correct view, 96
Craving, 219, 220, 486
Creator, 182, 185, 319, 328, 344
Cyclic existence, 113, 114, 198, 203, 204

Death, 311, 312
Definitive meaning, 35, 36, 39, 40, 69–73, 78, 329–334

Destruction (vs. arising), 193, 312
Dharmadhatu, 222, 238, 239, 248; see also Reality
Dharmakāya, 45, 96, 213, 228, 229, 381, 466
Diamond-granule reasoning, 153–156
Direct contradiction, 448
Direct perception, 118, 119, 145, 146, 354, 372–374, 377, 378; see also Mental direct perception and Yogic direct perception
Double negation, 310, 311

Dream, example of, 50, 53, 79, 87; see also Illusion
Duality, appearance of, 45, 46, 50, 64, 169, 183, 253, 346, 383

Effect, 315, 316; see also Causality
Efficacy, 65, 168, 174
Eight great difficult points, 397
Eighteen dhātuṣ, 482
Eighteen Great Contradictions, 391, 392
Elements, six, 162, 172, 482
Emancation, 247, 248

Emptiness, 30, 55, 98–100, 166, 167, 247, 248; as absence, 46; bases of, 49; benefits of understanding, 30, 31, 33, 34; definition of, 2; divisions of, 165, 365; in tantras, 28, 29; linguistic interpretation of, 63–66; Madhyamaka theory of, 77–79; misconceptions concerning, 32; of emptiness, 104, 105, 165; of essence, 165; of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, 104; of phenomena, 290–306; of self of the person, 49, 199, 284–290; of what is other, 6, 48, 49; Yogācāra theory of, 39–73
End of the stream, 256
Enlightenment, 213, 237

Erroroneous and nonerroroneous cognition, 147, 278, 279, 280–282, 477
Essence, 101, 116, 124–127, 179, 371
Essence body, 150, 151, 164, 165
Essencelessness, 104, 111, 179, 180, 262, 263, 287–290, 352; see also Naturelessness

Examination, 93, 107, 108; see also Extremes of existence and nonexistence
Excluded middle, law of, 102, 104
Exemplifications of the self, 185–187, 190, 191
Exhaustion of obscurations, 195
Existence, 46, 102, 106, 107; and valid cognition, 124; conventional and ultimate, 44; extreme of, 79, 80, 93, 94; from an object’s own side, 173, 174; inherent, 96, 97, nominal, 91; substantial, 172, 180, 288; true, 101; under an object’s own power, 133, 141, 172, 177; by virtue of object characteristic, 53, 58, 64, 69, 91, 143, 145, 146, 172–176, 281, 305, 306, 463
External objects, 46, 50, 53, 65, 82, 90, 224, 318, 323–327, 329, 333, 334, 340, 506

Extinction, 205, 239, 240

Extremes, four, 30, 102, 106 (see also Arising via the four extremes); of existence and nonexistence, 51, 79, 80, 92–94, 103, 106–108, 188, 205 (see also Nihilism and Refutation, extreme of)

Eye consciousness, 57–61, 156, 157, 338, 346, 347, 351, 368; seeing its own nature, 275–277
Faith, 115, 116, 227
False phenomena, 151, 184

Feelings, 171, 219–221, 373

Finding and not finding what is being analyzed, 100, 101
Fit vessel for teachings on emptiness, 32, 34, 35, 225

Form, 171, 324, 325; aggregate, 192; nature of, 119, 196; ontological status of 122, 123
Form body, 196
Foundation consciousness, 48, 56, 62, 187, 192, 255, 314–324, 326, 329, 331, 332
Four extremes, 30, 102, 106; see also Arising via the four extremes

Four noble truths, 39, 99, 100, 193, 235, 236, 359; four aspects of, 480; sixteen aspects of, 194, 198, 217–219, 378, 379
Four possibilities of arising, 291, 304
Four reliances, 95, 444, 445
Fourteen undeclared views, 189

Functionality, 79, 91, 96, 98, 99, 146
Functions of mind, eighteen, 199

Generalities and particularities, 279, 280

Generic image, 32, 63, 67, 68, 378

Gnosis, 95, 245–247, 254; of buddha, 28, 29; see also Ārya gnosis

Grasping, to ‘I’ and ‘mine’, 29, 200; at extremes, 93; at a self, 113, 114

Great bliss, 414

Heat (stage of the path), 195
Hermaphrodite example, 167
Hermeneutics, 39, 40, 69–73

Hiṇayāna, as distinct from Mahāyāna, 206; path, 195, 196, 214, 241; pitaka, 192, 196, 198, 224
Hommage, 23

‘I’, apprehension of, 29, 191, 200; sevendfold analysis of, 289; that is labeled, 162, 189, 255

Idealism, 509
Ignorance, 1, 2, 131, 142, 172, 203, 214, 219, 245, 246, 456
Index of Subjects

Tantric practice, 414
Tathāgatagarbha, 48, 71, 226–228, 324, 329–332
Ten stages, 466
Ten unstable misconceptions, 54
Terminology, 91
Three final vehicles, see Vehicles
Three natures, see Natures, three
Three poisons, 214
Three times, 307–311
Time, see Past, Present and Future and
Three times
Trainees, three types, 214
Trimodal criterion, 156, 163, 272, 273, 275, 281, 285
True arising and cessation, nonexistence of, 45, 150
True existence, 30, 42, 46, 69, 101, 105, 142, 143, 148, 149, 152, 172, 173, 359
Truth, conventional and ultimate, 97, 181, 357–365 (see also Conventional truth and Ultimate truth); of cessation, 150, 151, 233, 359, 360; of the path, 164; two meanings of, 181, 360
Truthlessness, 152, 163, 210, 467, 468
Truths, four noble, see Four noble truths
Truths, two, see Two truths and Conventional truth and Ultimate truth
Twelve deeds of Buddha, 196, 481
Twelve links of dependent arising, 220, 221, 229, 247
Two truths, 97, 181, 357–365

Ultimate, analysis, 29, 101, 271, 272; arising, 153, 179; cessation, 164; existence, 95, 164, 172; intention, 47; interpretations of the word, 142, 143, 461, 462; mind, 201; of the realists, 146; reality, 52; sūtras that teach the, 77; truth, 51, 81, 89, 174, 181, 182, 198, 357–365
Ultimately, as qualifier, 153, 154, 269, 270; different, 154, 157; natureless, 147, 179, 180 (see also Naturelessness)
Uninterrupted arising, 154, 155
Unity and plurality, 151, 156; see also One or many, reasoning of
Universals, 69, 92, 175
Valid cognitions, 4, 55, 100, 101, 117, 118, 148, 164, 211, 273, 278, 279, 285, 326, 335, 351, 353, 371–379, 454, 455, 514
Valid reason, 148, 149
Vehicles, superior and inferior, 238; three final, 47, 48, 253–256, 329, 333, 334
Verbal elaborations, 170
View, correct, 96; in regard to the perishable, 227; nihilistic, 103 (see also Nihilism); that nothing should be apprehended, 113, 114; that things do not exist, 32; that things are neither existent nor nonexistent, 7
Vijñānavāda, 64, 65, 67, 143, 223; see also Yogācāra and Cittamātra and Vijñaptimātra
Vijñapti, 53, 56, 57
Vijñaptimātra, 52, 54, 57, 66–68; see also Yogācāra
Vows, of bodhisattva, 34
Wheel of doctrine, final, 198, 244; three, 39, 40, 69–73, 232, 233
Wisdom, as antidote, 2, 29; that understands selflessness, 27–29, 228, 246, 247; ultimately has no divisions, 236, 237
Withstanding logical analysis, 143, 174, 177, 180; see also Logical analysis
Worldly beings, 90
Worldly perceptions, 118, 119, 172
Yig chu, 4, 12
Yogācāra, 2, 5, 39–69, 90, 144, 194, 196, 370; sūtras, 198; see also Cittamātra and Vijñānavāda and Vijñaptimātra
Yogic direct perception, 164, 178, 244, 378, 379