Cataphatic Emptiness

rGyal-tshab on the Buddha-essence Theory of Asaṅga's *Ratnagotravibhāgavatīkhya*ā

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ABSTRACT

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This doctoral dissertation studies the Ratnagotravibhūga (Uttaratantra), the only surviving Indian Buddhist treatise on the Buddha-essence doctrine, by way of one of its major Tibetan commentaries, rGyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen (1364-1432)'s Theg pa chen po rGyud bla ma'i ũkā. This project consists of three parts: a special edition of the first chapter of the Theg pa chen po rGyud bla ma'i ũkā, an English translation of the selected sections of that commentary, and a comparative analysis which follows six distinct lines of inquiry.

The six lines are: rGyal-tshab's doctrinal classification of the text; his critiques of absolutism, skepticism, and quietism in connection with diverse interpretations of the Buddha-essence doctrine in Tibetan traditions as well as a tentative comparison with critiques of the theory of "Original-enlightenment" in modern Chinese Buddhism; his analysis of the title of Tibetan version and the structure of the text; rGyal-tshab's philosophical positions on reality, Element, and natural luminosity of the mind; his expositions of the tripartite Buddha-essence, its ten aspects, and the eighteen similes; and the notion "spiritual gene" understood by dGe-lugs-pas.

This comparative approach will provide a broader synthetic understanding of the role that Buddha-essence played as a doctrinal genre in Tibetan intellectual history.
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Throughout this dissertation, Sanskrit and Tibetan words are transliterated. Transliteration of Tibetan is done in accordance with a system devised by Turrell Wylie; see "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Vol.22, 1959, 261-267. The root and not the first letter is capitalized in Tibetan transliterated proper names and text titles (e.g., \textit{rGyal-tshab} not \textit{Rgyal-tshab}). The full Sanskrit titles are to be found in the list of abbreviation, while the full Tibetan titles are to be found in the bibliography, which is arranged alphabetically according to the authors. When both Sanskrit and Tibetan terms are used in a footnote, Sanskrit term comes first (asterisk indicates Sanskrit reconstruction not attested).

For referencing Chinese sources, both Chinese characters and romanization are used. I have followed the \textit{pinyin} romanization system for it is increasingly used in both scholarly and popular literature. Modern Chinese works are listed alphabetically in the bibliography according to an author's first name.

The present Tibetan edition of the \textit{Theg pa chen po rGyud bla ma'i \textit{fikā}} has been compiled on the basis of two previously published texts:


These two texts are basically identical; both have the same typos that I mentioned in the Tibetan edition.
As an interlinear commentary, rGyal-tshab's glosses are closely intertwined with the RGV and RGVV in the rGyud bla ma'i fikā. I have tentatively highlighted the words of RGV and RGVV in bold face in the Tibetan text in order to aid in finding them. The differences between rNgog-lo's translation used in the rGyud bla ma'i fikā and the Derge edition of the Theg pa chen po rgyud bla ma'i bstan beos kyi rnam par bshad pa (D.225. 74b-129a = rNgog) are mentioned in the footnotes.

For the sake of clarity, an English translation of the RGVV (1.1-7.5 and 21.1-78.22) is made separately based on both E.H. Johnston's Sanskrit edition (Patna: The Bihar research Society, 1950) and rNgog-lo's Tibetan translation. The RGV verse numbers follow Johnston's Sanskrit edition.
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PART I
The Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika Interpretation of the Buddha-essence Theory
Introduction

My dissertation studies the exposition of Indian "Buddha-essence"\textsuperscript{1} doctrine formulated in the dGe-lugs school of Tibetan Buddhism based on previously untranslated sources. The Buddha-essence doctrine refers to a seminal class of Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings that articulated a spectacular and unique vision of reality following a cataphatic or positive linguistic approach, as opposed to the standard apophatic or via negativa approach of most Mahāyāna sūtra and treatise literature. Developed out of early, pre-Mahāyāna themes of "natural luminosity of mind,"\textsuperscript{2} the Tathāgatagarbha literature asserted that all living beings have an innate potential for both liberation from samsāra (the uninterrupted cycle of suffering) and for the attainment of full-fledged buddhahood with all its miraculous powers. It matched this radically positivist soteriology with a radically positivist theory of language. Whereas mainstream Madhyamaka and Yogācāra literature elucidates ultimate reality by evoking it performatively through apophatic language, such as "non-substantiality,"\textsuperscript{3} or "emptiness,"\textsuperscript{4} the Tathāgatagarbha doctrine elucidates ultimate reality in cataphatic terms that stress its innate and primordial presence in all things. This vision of ultimate reality as an immanent absolute is full of ideas resonating with Indian Vedaṇṭic monism, and its relationship to the concept of emptiness has been a subject of controversy for hundreds of years. Nevertheless, it shaped many fundamental Mahāyāna orientations towards ethics, soteriology, and

\textsuperscript{1} tathāgatagarbha, bde bzhin gsegs pa’ snying po, 如來藏.
\textsuperscript{2} prakīrtipaśubhāsvavacittra, sens kyi rang bzhin ’od zer,心性光明.
\textsuperscript{3} nairṛtmya, bdog med, 無我.
\textsuperscript{4} sunyaṭā, stong pa nyid, 空性.
ontology and was the source from which key doctrines such as “Original-enlightenment” and “Other-emptiness” later emerged in different geographical regions.

Owing to its religious importance and philosophical complexity, over the last eighty years we saw a considerable number of works of scholarship treating of the “Buddha-essence” doctrine, directly or indirectly, which cover its development and ramifications in various periods and geographical locations. While these works provide us with revealing insight into some of the historical and doctrinal questions concerning the subject in question, surprisingly, not much has yet been done in a holistic manner using broader comparative studies to cross spatiotemporal boundaries. Furthermore, most recently works by Western scholars on the subject are based on the perspective of “Other-emptiness,” or variant forms thereof in Tibetan Buddhism. In brief, this interpretation of Buddha-essence asserts that while the relative world does not exist at all, ultimate reality does truly exist, a claim that is starkly at odds with the mainstream Mahāyāna assertion that neither relative nor ultimate reality truly exists. Except for a few studies in English with brief and passing references language, the dGe-lugs schools’s version of the Buddha-essence doctrine as the antithesis of the “Other-emptiness” philosophy and the most elaborate exposition of this sort in the history of Buddhist thought, has not yet been the subject of a systematic scholarly analysis.

In Sanskrit Mahāyāna literature, we frequently encounter a set of specialized terms: prakṛtiprabhāśvaracitta (natural luminosity of the mind), gotra (spiritual gene), dharmadhātu (ultimate element), tathāgatagarbha (buddha-essence) and so on. These terms are often employed interchangeably to indicate a key factor intrinsic to each living

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5 honkagu.
6 gzhan stong.
being. This key factor is, in David Seyfort Ruegg's words, the "'buddhamorphic' base or support for practice of the path, and hence the motivating 'cause' (hetu: dhātu) for the attainment of the fruit (phala) of buddhahood." Ruegg's succinct account of this key factor is expressed in the normal soteriological scheme of Mahāyāna Buddhism, where the "base or support" is the foundation for the "path" and the "fruit;" and the latter two, "path" and "fruit" are the meditative praxis and expected outcome of that basis. Thus, terms of this sort have strong soteriological connotations.

Teachings centered upon or associated with this key factor are usually subsumed under the rubric "Buddha-essence thought" or "Buddha-essence doctrine" in modern Buddhist studies. The danger of simplification notwithstanding, this categorization remains useful to a certain extent in identifying the shared characteristics or "family resemblances" of those teachings. In addition to a deep soteriological significance attached to its terminology, a salient feature that characterizes the Buddha-essence doctrine is its unique vision of paramārtha-satya (ultimate reality) articulated with a cataphatic or positivist linguistic approach, as opposed to the standard apophatic or via negativa approach of most Mahāyāna sūtra and treatise literature. The latter tended to describe the ultimate reality in the apophatic terminology of "non-substantiality".


8 In her research of the connection between medieval Japanese Buddhism and the Original-enlightenment thought, Jacqueline I. Stone discusses at length this key discourse of East Asian Buddhism that drew much of its inspiration from the Indian Buddhist tradition. Stone (1999, 51-52) argues that Original-enlightenment thought is best understood "not as a monolithic philosophy, but as a multivalent discourse" against the attempt to establish a singular or unified hongaku thought in the discipline of Japanese Buddhist studies. I would further argue that the Buddha-essence doctrine is no more than a modern scholarly construct in the same vein of the Original-enlightenment thought. Even when seen as a "purely philosophical enterprise," the Buddha-essence doctrine is a far cry from being as singular and unified as Stone may think of. Stone uncritically equates the Original-enlightenment thought, which was largely derived from the Awakening in the Faith of Mayūra (大乘起信論, Da cheng qi xin lun - QXL), with the Buddha-essence doctrine found in Indian Buddhist literature. However, as we shall see in the present work, neither is it singular as much as it consists of at least three key interlinking ideas: natural luminosity of mind, spiritual gene and Buddha-essence itself, evolved in different textual sources from different time periods. Nor is it unified, because each Buddhist school has its exclusive exegesis of the doctrine concomitant with each school's unique philosophical propositions.
(nairatmya) and “emptiness” (śunyatā) which asserted that all things are empty of selfhood and exist only inter-relationally and in dialogue with each other. The Buddha-essence doctrine, by contrast, articulated the ultimate reality in broadly cataphatic terms asserting that all living things have an innate and primordial predisposition for enlightenment. In the process, the Buddha-essence scriptures deeply impacted mainstream Mahāyāna orientations towards ethics, soteriology, and ontology and provided the philosophical foundation for the later emergence of distinctive theories such as the Original-enlightenment and the Other-emptiness (gzhan stong) theories in East Asia and Tibet respectively.

From the end of third century to the seventh century, we see the advent of a number of scriptures closely related to the Buddha-essence doctrine, including the

\textit{Tathāgatotpattisambhavaparivarta-sūtra},\footnote{Da fangguang fo huayanjing} the \textit{Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra} (TGS); the \textit{Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchā-sūtra} (DIR); the \textit{Dr̥ḍhādhyāsa-parivarta-sūtra};\footnote{Rulai Xingxian ling} the \textit{Ratnadārikāparipṛcchā-sūtra};\footnote{Phags pa lhag pa’i bsam pa brtan pa’i theg pa chen po mdo, Toh.44.} the \textit{Gaganagaṇjasamādhi-sūtra} (GGS); the \textit{Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra} (MMPS); the \textit{Tathāgatagunājñācintyaviśayatārāṇīrdeśa-sūtra};\footnote{‘Phags pa thog pa’i bsam pa brtan pa’i le’ur shes bya ba theg pa chen po mdo, Toh.224.} the \textit{Ratnaacūḍā-sūtra} (RCS); the \textit{Kāśyapaparivarta-sūtra};\footnote{Phags pa gisug na rin po che shus pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po mdo, Toh.91.} the \textit{Mahāyānabhīdharma-sūtra} (MAS); the \textit{Śrīmālā-devīśiṃhanāda-sūtra} (SMS); the \textit{Jñānālokālaṃkāra-sūtra} (JñāĀ); and the

\textit{Tathāgatotpattisambhavaparivarta-sūtra};\footnote{Da fangguang fo huayanjing} Chapter 32, T.9.278; \textit{Rulai Xingxianjing} Chapter 35, T.10.279; \textit{Fo huayan ru rulai de zhi busiyi jingjie jing} T.12.352; \textit{Moheyan baoyanjing} T.12.351; \textit{Yiri mounibao jing} T.12.350; \textit{Du zhufo jingjie zhi gudian jing} T.12.302; \textit{Da fangguang fo rulai de zhi busiyi jingjie jing} T.10.304; \textit{Du zhufo jingjie zhi gudian jing} T.10.302; \textit{Du fangguang fo ru rulai de zhi busiyi jingjie jing} T.10.303; \textit{Phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa’i yon tan dang ye shes bsam gis mi khyab pa’i yul la ‘jug pa bsam pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po mdo, Toh.87.}
Anūnatvāpūrtvamitrdeśa-sūtra (AAN). The Mahāyānottaratantra or Ratnagotravibhāga (RGV) along with its commentary (RGVV), composed in the early fifth century, was a treatise devoted to systematic treatment of these scriptures.\(^{14}\)

These texts were composed approximately during the Gupta dynasty (ca.320-700) in India. The establishment of the Gupta Empire was the beginning of India’s classical age, inaugurating a new era in civilization which marked the apogee of art and culture. Throughout this period, Buddhism not only remained a powerful religious force in India but also exerted profound influence upon Chinese and Southeast Asian cultures via pilgrimage and commercial trade routes. Although royal patronage was lavished upon many varied faiths including Buddhism, Brahmanical religion was instituted as the state religion that provided the central ideology of the imperial Guptas. As Gavin Flood points out, “this brahmanical religion was concerned with the ritual status of the king, the maintaining of boundaries between social groups, and the regulation of individual behavior in accordance with the overarching principle of dharma.”\(^{15}\) The kernel of this varṇāśrama-dharma (caste and life-stage system) is the caste (jāti, literally, “birth”) system. The term jāti originally had a biological meaning, indicating a property of the body similar to the concept of the gene in modern science. As stated by Gavin Flood, this term is used to show that “differences between human castes might be regarded as being as great as differences between different species.”\(^{16}\) On the basis of ritual purity and pollution, the Brahmans are deemed the most pure, thereby in the most privileged position to have access to knowledge and so forth, while the Untouchables are the most polluted and, thus, remain at the bottom of Hindu society, deprived of human rights.

\(^{14}\) The Ratnagotravibhāga-yālaḥya does not cite other important scriptures concerning the subject of matter. The Mahāmāyika, the Mahābhārata, and the Angulimaliya were probably composed in the same period (before mid-fifth century) when the SMS was written.


\(^{16}\) Ibid., 59.
From its inception, Buddhism developed a penetrating critique of the Vedic/Brahmanical religion in regard to its public sacrifices and the Brahmans' own claims to authority. On the sociopolitical level, in my opinion, the overriding aim of the Buddha-essence doctrine formed during the early Gupta period was to directly undercut the repressive ideology of varṇāśrama-dharma. Akin to the term jāti, various locutions of the Buddha-essence doctrine, such as the Element of living beings,\textsuperscript{17} the Buddha-gene,\textsuperscript{18} and the Tathāgata-element, bear the biological and sociopolitical overtones of the main point that Mahāyāna Buddhism was making, just as the Buddha earlier had revolutionized the Brahmanical idea of dharma. Based on the notion of the natural luminosity of the mind, the Buddha-essence doctrine intended to argue that all living beings (not just human) are fundamentally equal in terms of the deepest level of being ("Element of living beings"), and everyone is entitled to have proper education and become enlightened ("Buddha-gene"). While it is true that the former portion of the MMPS states that all livings have the Buddha-essence except the icchantikas, who are fully occupied with achieving the aim of this life and feel strong antagonism toward Mahāyāna Buddhism, this sort of statement only served a pedagogical purpose when Mahāyāna Buddhism was struggling against both an antagonistic imperial court and Nikaya practitioners. This artificial restriction was immediately removed in the latter portion of the same text, indicating that Mahāyāna Buddhism had triumphed over the adversity in society during that time. It is clear that the idea of an "ultimate unique vehicle" is an integral part of the Buddha-essence doctrine as attested even by the titles of the Chinese versions of the SMS and the RGV, which explicitly incorporate this phrase.

\textsuperscript{17} satvadhitātu, sems can gyi khangs.

\textsuperscript{18} buddhagotra, sangs rgyas kyi rigs.
On the philosophical level, the Buddha-essence doctrine must be consistent with the fundamental tenets of Mahāyāna Buddhist thought, especially the śūnyatāvāda, in order to corroborate its criticism of Brahmanical religion at a social level. However, a distinct feature that characterizes the Buddha-essence discourses is its trenchant critique of the śūnyatāvāda as being the teaching that requires further interpretation. If the term śūnya (emptiness) used in these discourses were left on the surface, it would refer to the mere adventitiousness of the impure addictions, while nirvana, tathāgata and buddha excellences are said to be asūnya (not empty). For instance, the SMS talks about the twofold empty-intuition of the Buddha-essence in the following words:

Lord, the Tathāgatagarbha is void of all the defilement-stores, which are discrete and known as not liberated. Lord, the Tathāgatagarbha is not void of the Buddha dharmas which are nondiscrete, inconceivable, more numerous than sands of the Ganges, and known as liberated.¹⁹

In contrast to the emptiness discourse of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, the Buddha-essence or the buddha-gene is said in these texts to be steady and everlasting, the foundation of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the real Selfhood, even endowed with the great treasure of the powers, fearlessnesses, special qualities of a buddha. It seems that the Buddha-essence scriptures intended to postulate some form of reified absolute. Indeed this absolutist-sounding theme had laid itself wide open to doctrinal/philosophical attack.

as well-attested in these texts themselves where we found a harsh voice denouncing fellow Buddhists who dissented from this newly emerged doctrine.

Resonant with Hindu Vedantic monism, this vision of ultimate reality spawned centuries of debate about whether or not the Buddha-essence doctrine could be reconciled with the more orthodox Mahāyāna vision of ultimate reality. The issue has also polarized the opinions of modern Buddhist scholars. On the one hand, traditional and contemporary appreciation or acknowledgement of this cataphatic feature has led a few to accord the Buddha-essence doctrine high status, as a distinctive school of Indian Mahāyāna philosophy that shows no allegiance to the two mainstream Mahāyāna philosophical schools, Madhyamaka and Yogācāra. On the other hand, it has been dismissed entirely by others as being a type of absolutism parallel to Vedāntic monism in opposition to the Buddhist principle of pratītyasamutpāda (dependent origination). Some scholars have endeavored to avoid these extremes by accepting it as a genuine Buddhist doctrine but not a distinctive philosophical school. However, their opinions differ in response to the questions onto whether the Buddha-essence scriptures have any philosophical proposition or not, and whether the Buddha-essence doctrine is a definitive teaching or an interpretable one. These discussions are helpful in understanding the complexity and possible pluralistic reading of this intriguing aspect of Buddhist thought.

Richard King, for example, asserts that “in terms of philosophical content it is difficult to reconcile the standard Madhyamaka conception of emptiness with the notion as it is understood within the tathāgatagarbha tradition.” He argues that “even if not as systematically developed as the philosophical views of the Mahāyāna schools, the Indian tathāgatagarbha texts that we have been considering seem, at least at face value, to uphold a form of absolutism based upon the hypostatization of the unconditioned
(asamskṛta) dharmakāya." King justifies his position by saying that "to argue that all Indian Mahāyānists agreed unanimously in the interpretation and meaning of fundamental Buddhist doctrines is to fail to acknowledge the diversity of human expression and the pluralistic nature of the Mahāyāna movement." While it is true that Mahāyāna Buddhism was a pluralistic movement, it had self-regulation in its doctrinal terms and it is unlikely that advocates of the Buddha-essence doctrine would have developed something akin to Brahmanical ātmavāda in the sociopolitical climate of imperial Guptas, a time when different religious groups were pitted against each other for royal patronage. Most importantly, this inclination towards absolutism would seriously undercut the force of the Mahāyāna's own repudiation of the repressive ideology of varṇāśrama-dharma as just aforementioned.

Some scholars have made endeavors to reconcile this apparent doctrinal discrepancy by asserting that the Buddha-essence doctrine is completely soteriologically oriented in intent, and as Paul Williams has argued, the doctrine is "relating to a letting-go, and the range of that letting-go and the possibilities of its occurrence." Williams suggests that "the very context within which the issue of the tathāgatagarbha emerged was conceptually not one which was concerned with relating it to questions of ontology," According to traditional Buddhist hermeneutics, a teaching with cathartic and didactic purpose that attracts ordinary people and non-Buddhists is usually classified as an interpretable teaching requiring further explanation. Hence, this sort of assertion implies that this doctrine is marginally important in Indian Mahāyāna philosophy. Indeed, a

21 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
certain type of Buddha-essence teaching has this purpose; the one mentioned in the
Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra (LAS) states that the Buddha-essence is “naturally luminous,
primordially pure, endowed with the thirty-two marks, and existing within the bodies of
all living beings” and within the text itself immediately questioned whether this sort of
theory is similar to the soul-theory of the non-Buddhists in India.24 But to argue that all
Buddha-essence scriptures are interpretable in meaning is somehow problematic; for the
RGV, the most important Indic treatise on the subject, articulates the doctrinal position of
the Buddha-essence theory as uttara ("later"), the most important doctrine after the
Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra.

On closer inspection, these two kinds of treatment are largely based on premises that
tend to lay emphasis on linguistic discrepancy, in terms of ultimate reality, between the
emptiness discourse of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, and the absolutistic sound of the
Buddha-essence doctrine. Paul Williams suggests that “the mere presence of an
attribution of śūnya/śūnyatā to something in Buddhism does not in itself entail that these
expressions are being used with the Madhyamaka sense of ‘absence of inherent
existence’, or ‘merely having conceptual existence.’ If the question of the actual
ontological status of the tathāgatagarbha arises, it has not yet been settled simply by the
use of śūnya/śūnyatā.”25 Thus in his view this linguistic discrepancy necessarily leads to a
doctrinal/philosophical discrepancy. A close reading of the RGV and its commentary
reveals that not only does the Buddha-essence scriptures accord with the emptiness
discourse of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra in terms of philosophical propositions, but also it
offers a new language that restates and enriches the śūnyatavāda with Mahāyāna

24 See Robert A.F. Thurman, The Central Philosophy of Tibet: A Study and Translation of Jey Khapa’s Essence of True
25 Williams, Buddhist Thought, 165.
soteriological significance; it only reflects the dynamic instability of language which changed in different religio-social milieus.

On the philosophical consistency between these two discourses, the RGVV asserts that the Buddha-element or Buddha-essence is the general characteristic of the pure reality of all things as taught in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*:

It should be understood that [engagements with] Buddha-element have been taught to bodhisattvas in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, etc., with reference to the non-conceptual intuition. There are three different kinds of engagement with the general characteristic of the pure reality of all things; as taught [in the *Sūtra*]; for naïve people who do not perceive the reality, for the noble ones who do perceive the reality, and for tathāgatas who have obtained the ultimate purity in perceiving the reality.²⁶

By clear implication, it asserts that the notion of ultimate reality has to be understood in accord with the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, for the non-conceptual intuition is the direct perception of the ultimate reality. Even more explicitly, the RGVV declares:

In this regard, the existence as it should be is the limit of the selflessness of all beings including things and persons; it should be known through proper realization. This realization of the imperishability of individuals and things in terms of their eternal peaceful natures is produced by two causes; that is to say, because of the

perception of the natural luminosity of the mind, and because of the perception of the
primordial extinction and cessation of addictions.27

In this context, it is not difficult to see that the discussions of “natural luminosity” and
“primordial extinction” are germane to selflessness, the ultimate truth as postulated in
general Mahāyāna philosophy. More specifically, the mind is said to be “natural
luminosity” for it is not defiled by addictions in ultimate reality; the addictions are said to
be “primordial extinction” because they do not have truth-status.28 Above all, the
Buddha-essence scriptures do make inquiries into the ontological status of the mind akin
to the deconstructive Madhyamaka approach, for example, as found in the following
statement of the SMS:

   Lord, this intrinsic purity of the Tathāgatagarbha stained by adventitious
   secondary defilements is the domain of the Tathāgata, who is the inconceivable
   master. Why so? The virtuous consciousness, being momentary, is not defiled by
defilements. Lord, since neither do defilements touch that consciousness nor does that
consciousness touch defilements, in that case, how does consciousness, having a
noncontacting nature, get defiled? Lord, there is both the defilement and the defiled
consciousness. Therefore, the meaning of the defilement on the intrinsically pure
consciousness is difficult to understand.29

This clearly indicates that the notion of “intrinsically pure consciousness” is not simply
referring to being empty of defilements, but has the connotation that the mind is empty of
its intrinsic identifiability, as asserted in the emptiness discourse of the Prajñāpāramitā-
sūtra, etc. Consequently, it can be argued that from its incipience, the Buddha-essence
thought has been germane to the ontological inquiry into the nature of the mind.

27 RGV 14.13-16: tatra yathāvad-bhāvikatā kṛṣṇasya puñjala-dharmāḥkhyasya jagato yathāvān nātrātmya-koṭer
avagamād vedītavād | sa cāyam avagamā tvaṃtād-sānta-svabhāvatayā puñjala-dharmānāśa-yogena samīśata
dvābhīyām kāraṇābhīyām upadāyate | prayti-prabhāsvaratā-darsānāc ca citasyādī-ksaya-niruddha-darsānāc ca tad-
upakleśasya ||
28 bden par grub pa.
29 Wayman and Wayman, The Lion’s Roar of Queen Śrīmālā, 106.
This brings about another possibility of interpretation explored by Ruegg on the basis of Tibetan dGe-lugs-pa exegesis, which considers the Buddha-essence theory as “in fact a restatement of the śūnyatā doctrine.”30 As to the positive descriptions of the Buddha-essence and the Truth Body being “permanent,” “blissful,” “real-self,” etc., Ruegg asserts that “it is not because this reality is regarded as some kind of permanent substantial entity endowed with these attributes as inhering properties, but rather because the paramārtha [ultimate truth] is so characterized in order to distinguish it from the saṃvṛti [conventional] level that is properly characterized by the saṃskṛtalakṣaṇas [created characteristics] of impermanent, painful, etc.”31 Thus, according to him, the Buddha-essence doctrine is “meta-theoretical” in its scope, not “[referring] to some objective, first-order entity.”32 In particular, Ruegg suggests that the Buddha-essence scriptures are definitive in meaning “because the doctrine of the tathāgatagarbha relates in the last analysis to śūnyatā and nairātmya it must be of definitive meaning (nītārtha); for following the definition provided by the Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra, a Sūtra in which śūnyatā, ānīmitta[causeless], apraṇihiṭa [aimless], anabhisaṃskāra [unaffected], etc., are taught is nītārtha.”33

The Theg pa chen po rGyud bla ma'i ṭikā - rGyud bla ṭikā for short - is the foremost important dGe-lugs-pa exegetical work on the Buddha-essence doctrine. It was composed by rGyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen (1364-1432), one of the founding figures of the dGe-lugs-pa school in Tibet. It was first introduced to the West by E. Obermiller in his

31 Ibid., 37.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 37-38.
English translation of the RGVV.\textsuperscript{34} Ruegg's pioneering works on the subject are excellent technical treatises.\textsuperscript{35} William Magee has discussed the dGe-lugs-pa interpretation of the Buddha-essence doctrine on the basis of Ngag-dbang-dpal-lidan's (b.1797) \textit{Annotations} for 'Jam-dbyangs-bzhad-pa's (1648-1721) \textit{Grub mtha' chen mo}.\textsuperscript{36} To date, however, few scholarly studies have systematically addressed or analyzed the dGe-lugs interpretation of the Buddha-essence doctrine or its claims to reconcile the seemingly unorthodox propositions of the Buddha-essence theory with the mainstream philosophical doctrine of emptiness propounded in the Mahāyāna Buddhism in a move that firmly critiques the better-studied interpretations of the theory by non-dGe-lugs-pas in recent English scholarly works.\textsuperscript{37}

The purpose of the present thesis is to fill this scholarly lacuna by presenting a comprehensive study of rGyal-tshab's commentary on the first chapter of the RGVV, with particular attention to the sections on the prelude and the fourth "vajra base" of the "Element," that clearly elucidates how the Buddha-essence theory of the RGVV relates to Madhyamaka philosophy and how it compares to other interpretations of the Buddha-essence doctrine propounded in Tibet. Hence the method I use to approach rGyal-tshab's text is basically comparative. Throughout the entire study, rGyal-tshab's positions are juxtaposed on various points with those of rNgog-lo-tsa-ba bLo-ladan-shes-rab (1059-1109), Dol-po-pa Shez-rab-rgyal-mtshan (1292-1361), Rong-ston Sākya-rgyal-mtshan (1367-1449), and 'Gos-lo-tsha-ba gZhon-nu-dpal (1392-1481) in order to clearly show


\textsuperscript{35} Ruegg (1968, 1969, 1989).


rGyal-tshab's distinctive approach as a radical departure from the dominant trends of Buddhist thought in fourteenth century Tibet. I will also present a short discussion of the "spiritual gene" section of rGyal-tshab's commentary on Haribhadra's *Sphuṭārtha* (*SPh*), the *rNam bshad snying po'i rgyan*, as a complement, in which different opinions on the spiritual gene theory within rGyal-tshab's own tradition will be discussed.

Part I, the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika interpretation of the Buddha-essence theory, consists of seven chapters: Chapter 1 outlines rGyal-tshab's life and writings and describes the historical and doctrinal background of the *rGyud bla thíkā*. Chapter 2 clarifies rGyal-tshab's doctrinal classification of the RGV. Chapter 3 studies rGyal-tshab's critiques of absolutism, skepticism, and quietism in connection with diverse interpretations of the Buddha-essence doctrine in Tibetan traditions as well as a tentative comparison with critiques of the theory of "Original-enlightenment" in modern Chinese Buddhism. Chapter 4 presents rGyal-tshab's analysis of the title of Tibetan version and the structure of the RGV. Chapter 5 presents rGyal-tshab's philosophical positions on reality, Element, and natural luminosity of the mind. Chapters 6 and 7 discuss rGyal-tshab's expositions of the tripartite Buddha-essence, its ten aspects, and the eighteen similes based on his commentary on the first chapter of the RGVV. Chapter 8 discusses the notion "spiritual gene" as understood by dGe-lugs-pas. Part II is a special edition of the first chapter of the *rGyud bla thíkā* (Zh.1a-72a and 64a-170b), preceded by an outline of the whole text. Part III presents a translation of Chapter One of the RGVV (1.1-7.5 and 21.1-78.22) and a translation of the *rGyud bla thíkā* (Zh. 1a-72a and 64a-170b).
Chapter 1

Historical and Doctrinal Background

1. rGyal-tshab's Life and Works

rGyal-tshab’s Life and Works is one of rGyal-tshab’s most important works studied in the dGe-lugs-pa monastic universities, usually in the curriculum of "Transcendence of Wisdom" (Phar phyin). Historically speaking, the works of Tsong-kha-pa, rGyal-tshab and mKhas-grub from the early fifteenth century served to some extent as the "dGe-lugs manifesto," proclaiming the advent of the latest tradition to the world of Tibetan Buddhism. Here I shall briefly delineate the historical conditions under which the rGyud bla tkā was written and analyze the importance of the rGyud bla tkā in the founding process of the dGe-lugs-pa school.

rGyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen was born at Ri-nang in the Nyang-stod areas of gTzang in 1364. His father’s name was rTa-dpon-pa, a direct descendent of minister rBa, and his mother’s name was Shes-rad-ma. At the age often, he took novice ordination in the gNas-snying Monetary from mKhen-chen Rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan and Brag-thog-pa gzhon-nu-tshul-khrims and received the name Dar-ma-rin-chen. He then had excellent training in reading and writing under the guidance of master dPal-mgon-pa and received a variety of master dPal-mgon-pa and received a variety

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38 The RGV(V) and rGyal-tshab’s commentary are frequently cited in dGe-lugs-pa text books on the AA, especially on the key topics of: "nirvāṇa (myang 'das)," "the Dharma wheels (chos 'khor)," "the Four Truths (bden bshad)," "the Three Refuges (skyabs gsum)," "the explanation of spiritual gene (rigs bshad pa)," "establishment of the ultimate unique vehicle (mthar thug theg pa gcig tu sgrub)," "analysis of the possibility whether or not saṃsāra has an end (khor ba la mtha' yod med dpyad pa)," "analysis of the possibility whether or all beings will ultimately become enlightened (sens can thams cad 'tshong rgya mi rgya dpyad pa)," "analysis of the time when śrīvaśaka and pratyekabuddha arhats enter into the Mahāyāna (nyan rang dgra bcom thig chen lam gang nas 'jug dpyad pa)," and the eighth chapter "Truth Body (chos sku)." These are listed in Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa’s (1478-1554) Yum don gsal ba’i sgron mo, (Lhasa: Se ra dgon dpe mzdod khang).

39 According to Dung-dkar bLo-bzang-'phrin-las, this name is a misspelling of gnas-snying, which means the "essence of consecration," because of being blessed by Atiśa Dīpankara Srijāna (982-1054) during his stay at the monastery on the way to the Central Tibet. Dung dkar Tsig mdzod chen mo, (Beijing: Krung go bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2002), 1225.
of exoteric and esoteric teachings from Kun-dga'-dpal, bKa'-bzhi-ba Rin-chen-rdo-rje, Bran-ma-brag-kha-ba Don-grub-rin-chen, bLo-gros-bzang-po and other great masters. Especially under the Sa-skya scholar Red-mda'-ba gZhon-nu-blo-gros (1349-1412), rGyal-tshab studied exoteric texts on Prajñāpāramitā, Pramāṇa, Vinaya, Abhidharma, Madhyamaka, etc., and esoteric texts on Guhyasamaja, etc. Along with Tsong-kha-pa bLo-bzang-grags-pa (1357-1419), rGyal-tshab became one of the seven closest rab 'byams pa disciples of Red-mda'-ba and earned the epithet from Red-mda'-ba rtsol bzang mchog gyur, namely "the best in debate."

RGyal-tshab then went on a "monastic debate tour" of Buddhist learning centers including Sa-skya, gSang-phu, and rTsed-thang where he distinguished himself by debating on ten different philosophical texts. He became famous as a scholar after debating with many Sa-skya scholars and received a formal title called bKa' bcu ba- literally "[a master of] ten texts," the first of this kind in Tibetan intellectual history.

At the age of twenty-five (1388), rGyal-tshab took the vows of a fully ordained monk from Kun-dga'-dpal, Red-mda'-ba, etc. in gTzang and then continued his debate tour in central Tibet. Having defeated two Sa-skya masters, Rong-ston Sākyar-rgyal-mtshan (1367-1449) and mKhan-chen gYag-pa, rGyal-tshab decided to challenge the famed Tsong-kha-pa bLo-bzang Grags-pa. Although several of his hagiographies mentioned this fated meeting which took place at gNyal-stod-ra-grong where Tsong-kha-pa was teaching, the Yon tan chu gter's account is much more detailed and legendary as follows:

Intending to provoke Tsong-kha-pa into debate, rGyal-tshab Rinpoche acted with pride and entered into the monastery without removing his hat [in the customary way]. Lord Tsong-kha-pa noticed him but continued to teach and stepped down from the throne. sLob-dpon Rin-po-che [i.e. rGyal-tshab] proudly strode up to the Lord's
throne, still wearing his hat. As he listened, rGyal-tshab heard eloquent speech that he had never heard before from any other scholar and the mountain of his arrogance began to collapse. First he removed his hat, then he got down from the throne and seated himself among the disciples. The desire to challenge Tsong-kha-pa had left him completely; instead he became his student. [In retrospect] it was said that rGyal-tshab's act of mounting the throne was an auspicious indication that he would be the throne holder of [the dGa'-ldan Monastery].

Tsong-kha-pa taught rGyal-tshab some essential teachings, explaining the most difficult points of scriptures and treatises with stainless reasoning. This inspired rGyal-tshab with such faith and devotion that he requested permission to seek out no other teachers but to remain with Tsong-kha-pa for the rest of his life. His request was granted and then he became the foremost disciple of Tsong-kha-pa, serving as an acolyte for twelve years. Because of his excellence in monastic disciplines and intellectual prowess, even during Tsong-kha-pa's lifetime, many of his students also studied with rGyal-tshab.

When Tsong-kha-pa was establishing dGa'-ldan Monastery, rGyal-tshab, along with 'Dul-'dzin Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1374-1434), assumed responsibility for this great enterprise and participated personally in building the monastery. The main construction was completed in 1410. Before Tsong-kha-pa passed away, he gave his pundit's hat and cloak to rGyal-tshab as a sign that rGyal-tshab was his successor. When Tsong-kha-pa died in 1419, rGyal-tshab became the second holder of dGa'-ldan throne at the age of fifty-six, by unanimous request from Tsong-kha-pa's students, and has been known as rgyal tshab ("regent") since then. He held the position for thirteen years, extensively engaging in teaching, debate, and writing. Following Tsong-kha-pa, rGyal-tshab emphasized the importance of monastic vows and rules to preserve the Buddhist tradition,

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41 Brag-gyab bLo-bzang-bstan-pa, rGyal tshab kyi rnam thar yon tan chu gier, as cited in rGyal-dbang 'Phrin-las-nam-rgyal's 'Jam ngon chos kyi rgyal bo tsong kha pa chen po'i rnam thar thub bs tan mdzes po'i rgyan geig ngo mtshar nor bu'i phreng ba. (Xining: mTsho sngon mi rigs par khang: 1981), 248-249.
in addition to giving extensive discourses on philosophy and esoteric praxis. As a much loved and highly respected teacher, rGyal-tshab was considered by his followers as the same as Tsong-kha-pa himself and one of the founding fathers for the dGe-lugs-pa tradition.

During this period rGyal-tshab visited the gNas-rnying Monastery and at the age of sixty-eight (1431), he again visited gNas-rnying for the last time. In the same year, he retired and installed mKhas-grub dGe-legs-dpal-bzang-po (1358-1438), Tsong-kha-pa's other closest disciple, as the next holder of the dGa'-ldan throne. rGyal-tshab lived for one more year, primarily in meditation. He died in 1432 at the age of sixty-nine.

rGyal-tshab's chief disciples proved skilled and vigorous in continuing the widely recognized Tsong-kha-pa/ rGyal-tshab tradition of teaching and praxis. To name a few, mKhas-grub became the third dGa'-ldan khri pa; bKra-shis-dpal-lidan (1379 -1449) founded the 'Bras-spungs Monastery near Lhasa in 1416; 'Dul-'dzin Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan founded bTsun-mo-tshal Monastery; dGe-'dun-grub-pa (1391-1474), the First Dalai Lama, founded the bKra-shis-lhun-po Monastery in gTzang in 1447; Gung-ru rGyal-mtshan-bzang-po (1383-1450) was the third abbot of the Se-ra Monastery; sKyegs-ston bKa'-bcu-ba bLo-gros-brtan-pa (1402-1478) became the eighth dGa'-ldan khri pa in 1473.

rGyal-tshab received the complete transmission and explanation of Tsong-kha-pa's teachings on both exoteric and esoteric subjects. He listened, memorized, and wrote down numerous discourses of Tsong-kha-pa. Some are lecture notes and mnemonic notes, such as the famous bSlab bya gnam tseng lteng ma, the rDzogs rim dpyid kyi thig le'i zin bris, etc., which are included in Tsong-kha-pa's collected works. According to the sKu-
'bum edition of the rJe Tsong kha pa yab sras gsum, Tsong-kha-pa's lectures recorded by rGyal-tshab are listed as follows:

- bSlab bya gnam tseng lteng ma, on the Vinaya vows.
- rDzogs rim dpyid kyi thig le, on the esoteric yogic practice of the perfection stage.
- Tshad ma'i brjed byang chen mo, on the Pramāṇavārttika (PV).
- Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi mgon sum le'u'i brjed byang, on the chapter "perceptual validating cognition" of the PV.
- Rigs pa drug cu pa'i zin bris, on Nāgārjuna's Yuktīsaṭīkā.
- dBu ma rgyan gyi brjed byan, on the Madhyamakālaṃkāra (MA) by Śāntarakṣita.
- dKa' gnad chen po brgyad kyi brjed byang, on the eight difficult points of the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika system.
- sGrub thabs kun tu bzang po'i tsig gi don cung zad bkod pa rgyal tshab chos rjes brjed byang du mzung pa, on Tsong-kha-pa's Guhyasamaja Sadhana called "samantabhadra."
- Shes rab le'u'i zin bris, on the chapter "wisdom" of the Bodhicaryāvatāra (BCA) by Śāntideva.

rGyal-tshab's independent works, including rGyud blaṅkā, are mainly based on the teachings he received from Red-mda'-ba and Tsong-kha-pa, especially the latter. All these works were written during the period he held office as the dGa'-ldan khri pa (1419-1431). A number of his writings are hailed as classic studies. For instance, the oral tradition has the proverb that "it is impossible to debate on the PV if you have not memorized [rGyal-tshab's] Thar lam gsal byed; it is impossible to debate on the Abhisamayālaṃkāra (AA) if you have not memorized [Tsong-kha-pa's] Legs bshad gser
phreng.”\(^{42}\) His works, as included in the sKu-'bum edition, can be roughly divided into six categories:

(1) Central Philosophy (Madhyamaka; dBu ma) works

- \(b\)Den gn\(y\)is r\(n\)am g\(z\)hag so\(g\)s dang l\(t\)a b\(a\)’i khr\(i\)d y\(i\)g r\(i\)n p\(o\) che’i phreng ba, a short treatise on the theory of two realities according to the Prasangika-Madhyamika system, requested by Rin-chen-chos-rgyal.

- \(d\)Bu ma bz\(h\)i br\(g\)ya pa’i r\(n\)am b\(sh\)ad, a commentary on Áryadeva’s Yogācārācatuṣṭatāka on the basis of the teachings received from Red-md\(a\)’-ba and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by bLa-ma Nam-mkha’-b\(z\)ang-po-pa, bLa-ma Grags-seng-ge, and rTe-thang-pa Kun-dga’-seng-ge, written at dGa’-ldan.\(^{43}\)

- \(d\)Bu ma la ’jug pa’i b\(s\)kus don, a commentary on Candrakirti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (MAv) on the basis of the teachings received from Red-md\(a\)’-ba and Tsong-kha-pa with an emphasis on the arrangement of the twofold reality, written at dGa’-ldan.

- \(d\)Bu ma rin chen phreng ba’i don gsal, a commentary on Nāgārjuna’s Rājaparikāthāratnāvalī, on the basis of the teachings received from Red-md\(a\)’-ba and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by Khri Nam-mkha’-d\(b\)ang-po-phun-tshogs-lde-dpal-bzang-po, an aristocrat and direct descendent of the Gu-ge court, written at dGa’-ldan.

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\(^{42}\) “Thar lam gsal byed blo na med tshe rnam ’gyel rtsod rgyu med; Legs bshad gser phreng blo na med tshe phar phyin rtsod rgyu med.” Khyung-Phrug bLo-bzang-dar-rgyas, Bod rig pa las btserams pa’i sna tshogs dpnyad gleng. (Lanzhou: Kan sù’u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1999), 404.

\(^{43}\) An English translation was made by Ruth Sonam, Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas: Gyet-tsap on Áryadeva’s Four Hundred, (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1994).
• sPyod ’jug gi rnam bshad rgyal sras ’jug ngogs, a commentary on Šāntideva's BCA on the basis of the teachings received from Red-mda’-ba and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by bLa-ma Chos-sgo-ba bSod-nams-dpal-pa and Nam-mkha'-bzang-po-pa, written at dGa’-ldan.

• rGyud bla ma'i tīkā (See below).

(2) Transcendence of Wisdom (Prajñāpāramitā; Phar phyin) works

• Phar phyin rnam bshad snying po'i rgyan, a commentary on Haribhadra's Śphuṭārtha, based on Tsong-kha-pa's distinctive explanations according to the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika standpoint, written at dGa’-ldan. It is also rGyal-tshab's polemic against Rong-ston Šākya-rgyal-mtshan's (1367-1449) commentary which critiques Tsong-kha-pa's early work called gSer phreng. Together with the gSer phreng, these two texts are the most important treatises on the subject studied in the dGe-lugs-pa tradition.

• mNgon par rtogs pa brgyad don bdun cu dang bcas pa'i 'grel pa nyams su len tshul, a digest of the AA, requested by mTso-ston-dka'-bzhi-pa Sang-rgyas-'phel, written at dGa’-ldan.

• mNgon par rtogs pa'i rim pa nyams su len tshul, a special exposition of the AA based on Tsong-kha-pa's Lamrim teaching, written at dGa’-ldan.

(3) Epistemological (Pramāṇa; Tshad ma) works
• 'Bre' pa brtag pa'i rnam bshad nyi ma'i snying po, a commentary on the 
  Sambandhāparīkṣa by Dharmakirti on the basis of the teachings received from 
  Red-mda’-ba and Tsong-kha-pa, written at dGa'-ldan.

• 'Gal 'bre' gyi rnam gzhag, a technical thesis on the topic "contradiction and 
  relation" ('gal 'bre') of Buddhist logic, written at dGa'-ldan.

• bStan bcos tshad ma rnam nges kyi ñikā chen dgongs pa rab gsal, an extensive 
  commentary on Dharmakirti's Pramāṇaviniścaya, based on the teachings of Kun-
  dga'-dpal, Red-mda’-ba, and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by 'Brong rtse-ba Rin-
  chen-rgya-mtsho, written at dGa'-ldan and dMu-la-sham-bar-gyi-mgul-dge'-phal.

• Tshad ma mdo'i rnam bshad rgyal tshab rjes mdzad pa, a commentary on 
  Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya on the basis of the teachings received from Red-
  mda’-ba and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by Thu'i- btsun-pa bSod-nams-rnam-rgyal, 
  dKa'-becu-pa Yon-tan-rgya-mtsho, and dKa'-becu-pa Legs-pa dpal, written at dGa'- 
  ldan.

• Tshad ma rigs thigs kyi 'grel pa legs bshad snying po'i gter, a commentary on the 
  Nyāyabindu by Dharmakirti on the basis of the teachings received from Kun-dga'- 
  dpal, Red-mda’-ba, and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by Rin-chen-rgya-mtsho, written 
  at dGa'-ldan.

• Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi bsdus don thar lam gyi de nyid gsal byed, a commentary 
  on Dharmakirti's PV according to the standpoint of Devendrabuddhi, written at 
  dGa'-ldan.

• Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi rnam bshad thar lam phyin ci ma log par gsal bar byed 
  pa, an extensive and important commentary on the PV, based on the teachings of
Kun-dga'-dpal, Red-mda’-ba, and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by Rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan, written at gNas-rnying.

- **Tshad ma'i lam khrid**, an exposition of the soteriological significance derived from the PV, based on the teachings of Red-mda’-ba and Tsong-kha-pa, written at Po-ta-ra.

(4) Abhidharma (mNgon pa) works

- **mNgon pa kun btus kyi rnam bshad**, a commentary on Asaṅga's *Abhidharma-samuccaya* on the basis of the teachings received from Don-grub-rin-chen, Red-mda’-ba, and Tsong-kha-pa, requested by his student bLo-gros-brtan-pa, written at dGa'-ldan.

(5) Esoteric (gSang sngags) works

- **Dus 'khor bskyed rdzogs ji ltar nyams su len pa**, a medium length instruction manual on the two stages of the Kālacakra Tantra, requested by Kun-bzang-pa, Zha-lu Cog-bu-pa Legs-pa-rgyal-mtshan, Yon-tan-dpal, and Gung-ru bLa-ma Ye-byang-pa, written at dGa'-ldan.

- **Dus 'khor rnal 'byor yan lag drug gi khrid bsdus**, a mnemonic note of Tsong-phapa’s teaching on the Six Branch Yoga of the perfection stage of the Kālacakra Tantra.

- **Dus 'khor sgrub le'i phyag rgya bzhi'i zin bris**, a note-commentary of Tsong-phapa’s teaching on the fourfold *mudrās* taught in the Śādhanā chapter of the Śākālacakra-tantra, recorded by rGyal-tshab and Zla-bzang.
• *gsang 'dus 'jam pa'i rdo rje'i dkyil chog dngos grub snye ma,* a Guhyasamāja
  initiation rite associated with Mañjuśrīvajra, based on Tsong-kha-pa's initiation
  rite associated with AkṣobhyaVajra as well as Mar-me-mdzad-bzang-po, sMan-
  zhabs, Sāntipa's works, written at dGa'-ldan.

(6) Miscellaneous works

• *lTung bshags kyi tīkā mdo r bsdus,* a commentary on the Mahāyāna confession rite.

2. The social-political background

The year when rGyal-tshab was born was also the year Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290-
1364) and Ta'i-si-tu Byang-chub-rgyal-tshan (1302-1364) died. Both Bu-ston and Byang-
chub-rgyal-tshan were important for the establishment of the dGe-lugs-pa school. Tsong-
khapa received much intellectual heritage, especially the esoteric teachings, from Bu-
ston's Zha-lugs tradition, whereas Byang-chub-rgyal-tshan created social-political
conditions favorable for this newcomer into the Tibetan religious scene.

A hundred-year period of Sa-skya-pa hegemony over Tibet ended in 1349 with the
military victory of Byang-chub-rgyal-tshan who founded the Phag mo gru pa religious-
political establishment that would last for the next hundred years. Byang-chub-rgyal-
tshan was well aware that widespread corruption among high-ranking officers, laxity of
monastic discipline, and political conflicts under the name of religion were the main
causes of the collapse of Sa-skya-pa rule. Correspondingly, in the *bkā' chems deb ther,*
Byang-chub-rgyal-tshan issued decrees for the new government in his will, with great
emphasis on the personal integrity of lay officials, on harmonious relationships with other
traditions including Sa-skya, Tshal-pa, sTag-lung, 'Bri-gung, bKa'-gdams, etc., and on monastic discipline and the education of priests. In fact, as a devoted monk, Byang-chub-rgyal-tshan set an example to others in terms of keeping the vows of chastity and abstinence. He was concerned that his tradition lacked exegetical education because of its strong orientation towards meditation, therefore, founded the rTsed-thang Seminary in 1351 as a complement to the gDan-sa-mthil which was a meditation center.

The Phag mo gru pa religo-political establishment reached its height of power and splendor during the reign of dBang Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1374-1432). Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan became the fifth Phag gru sde srid in 1385 and was well versed in both religious and political affairs. During his reign, a series of administrative reforms was undertaken. He endeavored to maintain the ancient traditions of Tibetan culture. The relationship between his government and the Ming court was harmonious. Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan supported all monastic institutions without sectarian bias and laid great stress on monastic education. He donated lavishly to Phag-gru centers like gDan-sa-mthil and rTsed-thang. He became a benefactor to summer retreats conducted by monastic institutions that held the precept lineage coming down from Kashmir Pan-chen Šākyaśrī. Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan greatly respected many famous masters from different backgrounds from whom he received many teachings; including Tsong-kha-pa, sPyan-snga Kun-spangs-pa, mTshungs-med Rin-chen-gzhon-nu (b.1333), Kar-ma-pa bDe-bzhin-gshegs-pa (1384-1415), and so on. Because of his outstanding political achievements in creating a period of peace and prosperity, Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan was

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44 bshad grwa.
remembered by Tibetan people with an honorific title *Gong ma Chos rgyal chen po* - namely "His Eminence the great Dharma king."\[^{46}\]

When Tsong-kha-pa instituted the grand religious festival *sMon lam chen mo* in 1409, Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan supported it with substantial resources. He was also the chief benefactor to the dGa’-ldan project launched in the same year. In a short period of forty years after dGa’-ldan Monastery was established, the three foremost important dGe-lugs-pa centers in Central Tibet and gTsang were built by Tsong-kha-pa's disciples: 'Jam-dbyang-chos-rjes bKra-shis-dpal-ldan (1379-1449) founded the 'Bras-spungs Monastery in 1416, Byams-chen-cho-rje Śākya-ye-shes (1354-1435) founded the Se-ra Monastery in 1419, and dGe-'dun-grub, the First Dalai Lama, founded the bKra-shis-lhun-po Monastery in 1447. All these projects were sponsored by local Phag-gru governors. A number of *gzhis ka* (manor estates) were donated to these monastic centers as sources for a stable income. Tsong-kha-pa's disciples came from different regions of Tibet: dBus, gTsang, mNga'-ris, Khams, and A-mdo. When they returned to their hometowns, they built many monasteries dedicated to Tsong-kha-pa and his teachings.

It seems clear that the Phag mo gru pa religio-political establishment played a significant role in the rapid expansion of the dGe-lugs-pa school and was exceptional in its influence on the history of Tibetan Buddhism. Very little detailed research has been done regarding the early history of the dGe-lugs-pa school and its close relation to the Phag-gru authorities. A thorough analysis will have to wait for another occasion. Suffice it to say here that the Phag-gru government was sympathetic to Tsong-kha-pa not only because of his personal charisma but also because he served their own interest. There are three reasons why Grags-pa-rgyan-mtshan might be sympathetic to Tsong-kha-pa. Firstly,

\[^{46}\] Dung-dkar bLo-bzang-phrin-las, *Dung dkar Tsig mchod chen mo*, 1523-1524.
Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan and his government might find the situation created by the rise of Tsong-kha-pa's itinerant group congenial to successfully enforcing Byang-chub-rgyal-tshan's policy on monastic discipline, because pure monastic life was this group's well-known trademark. Secondly, the Phag-gru authorities including sPyan-snga bSod-nams-grags-pa (1359-1408), the fourth Phag gru sde srid, and Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan himself, were attracted to Tsong-kha-pa's intellectual prowess; therefore, Tsong-kha-pa might be useful for the monastic educational system they endeavored to build. Thirdly, during that period, Tsong-kha-pa's group was purely religious in nature without political motive, thus posing no threats to the Phag-gru government.47

3. The doctrinal background

Tsong-kha-pa has often been portrayed by modern scholars as a religious reformer. This depiction is somewhat misleading because it gives the impression that monastic discipline was unique to Tsong-kha-pa and his dGe-lugs-pa tradition. As mentioned above, Byang-chub-rgyal-tshan gave the monastic institution a clear mandate to adopt a healthier religious lifestyle. This policy was carried on by his successors. Tsong-kha-pa's great emphasis on Vinaya is best seen as a successful outcome of the Phag-gru religious policy rather than the commencement of a new school. In fact, all Buddhist traditions distinguished themselves on the basis of philosophical or doctrinal tenets.48 The emphasis on keeping monastic vows pure is common to all Buddhist traditions centered upon monastic institutions.

47 Tsong-kha-pa apparently showed no interest in gaining worldly fame; for example, he refused the Ming Emperor Yong-le's invitation to go to China in 1408. On the other hand, the Karma-bka'-brgyud school was gradually increasing its influence especially after Kar-ma-pa Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje (1340-1383) established direct connections with the Yuan and Ming imperial courts in China. The head of the 'Bri-gung-bka'-brgyud also received an official title equal to the Phag-gru leader from the Ming court. The Phag-gru government must have been aware of this situation. However, it remains uncertain whether or not the Phag-gru authorities intended to support or assimilate Tsong-kha-pa and the elite around him because of a political agenda.

48 sgrub thabs.
In 1398, Tsong-kha-pa wrote the *rTen 'brel bstod pa,* a eulogy to the Buddha Śākyamuni for his distinctive doctrine on dependent origination, demonstrating his mastery of the Prāsaṅgika-Māhyamika philosophical system that was thought to have been founded by the Indian Mādhyamika scholars Buddhapālīta and Candrakīrti. The essence of the Prāsaṅgika line of Madhyamaka thought, based on the way Buddhapālīta and Candrakīrti debated with other philosophical schools including the Svātantrika-Madhyamaka, is described by Tsong-kha-pa as follows:

In general, the two (Dialecticist) masters [Buddhāpalīta and Candrakīrti] took as the ultimate in profound and subtle reasonings both those reasonings proving the perfect viability of all systems such as causality in the absence of the intrinsic reality that is negated as intrinsic identifiability even conventionally, and also (those reasonings) negating that negatee (of intrinsic identifiability) by the very reason of relativity, asserted clearly to be the relativity of (all things), transcendental and non-transcendental. Moreover, among these (ultimately subtle and profound reasonings), (they) took this negation of dogmaticist privacy as the most subtle (of all).

Tsong-kha-pa sharply differs from other Tibetan Madhyamaka scholars in the way of understanding the relation between relativity and the emptiness of intrinsic reality. In the *Lam rim chen mo,* Tsong-kha-pa pointed out certain previous Tibetan Madhyamaka scholars were mistaken about the object to be negated in the Prāsaṅgika system. According to him, these scholars identified the object to be negated in an excessively broad manner because they did not accept that things of relativity, such as production, etc., exist even conventionally. Hence, they asserted that adding the qualification "ultimate" to the object to be negated, is the method employed only in the Svātantrika-

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49 An English translation of "Praise for Relativity" can be found in the *Life & Teachings of Tsong Khapa,* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, 1982), 99-107.

50 The opinion on the founder of the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka system varies among Tibetan scholars. But most scholars including Tsong-kha-pa accept Candrakīrti as the founder.

Madhyamaka system. In a series of philosophical works, Tsong-kha-pa presented penetrating critiques of such misreadings of Buddhāpālita and Candrakirti for he believed that this kind of misunderstanding would inevitably lead to spiritual nihilism and quietism. In the other direction, Tsong-kha-pa strongly criticized the "Great Madhyamaka" or Other-emptiness theory promoted by Dol-po-pa Shes-rab-rgyal-mtshan (1292-1361) for being a variant of absolutism asserted by non-Buddhists in India. In brief, the Other-emptiness theory asserts that while the conventional world does not exist at all, the ultimate reality does truly exist as a permanent, positive entity possessed of all transcendent excellences, a claim that is, according to Tsong-kha-pa, starkly at odds with Buddhist assertion that ultimate reality is an exclusion negation.

At about the same time when the main construction of the dGa'-ldan Monastery was complete, Tsong-kha-pa wrote a riddle poem that suggests the legitimacy of Tsong-kha-pa as the spiritual heir of Atiśa Dīpaṃkara (982-1054), the founder of the bKa'-gdams tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. According to his biographers, this poem also indicates that Tsong-kha-pa was the rightful master of his generation responsible for both the Guhyasamāja Tantra and the Śrīcakrasaṃvara Tantra, the two foremost important systems of the Unexcelled Yoga Tantra in the esoteric Buddhism.

Gung-thang dKon-mchog-bstan-pa'i-sgron-me (1762-1832), the Third Gung-tang-tshang from the bLa-brang-bkra-shis-'khyil Monastery and a well-known dGe-Iugs-pa scholar, praised Tsong-kha-pa's teaching as the essence of Buddhism in such manner:

Thus, if both [elements], the view of emptiness and the distinctive techniques of esoteric teaching which cause emptiness to be realized, are established as the

52 See the Lamrim Chenmo Traslation Committee, The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, Vol.3, (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 2002), 127-129.
54 'Brug rGyal-dbang, 'Jam mgon chos kyi rgyal bo tsong kha pa chen po'i rnam thar, 374-378.
principle cutters of the root of samsāra, it would easily follow that these two [elements] are the essence of Buddhist teaching. You will also understand the reason why [Tsong-kha-pa] previously made a commitment to the Buddha dBang-po'i-tog that he would particularly propagate these two [elements] selected from all divisions of the path.\footnote{De ltar stong nyid kyi ila ba dang | de mngon du byed pa'i gsang sngags kyi thabs khyad par can gnyis ka 'khor ba'i rtsa ba good byed kyi gtsos bor grub na | de gnyis bstan pa'i snying por yang bde blag tu 'grub par 'gyar zhin | sngon rgyal ba dbang po'i tog gi sphyng sngar lam gvi dbye ba ji snyed cig yod pa'i nang nas de gnyis rhigs kyi bkar te spel ba'i dam bcar mdzad pa'i rgya mishen yang shes par 'gyur ro || Jam mgon rgyal ba gnyis pa la bstan pa'i snying bo goad bar mdzad pa'i tshul las btsams te bsdod pa don dang ldan pa, in Gung-thang bSman pa 'sgron me' guang 'bum, Vol. ka. (Beijing: Mi rigs pe skrun khang, 2003), 17.}

Hence the dGe-lugs-pa school asserts that the teaching on the integration of the philosophical view of the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika system and the yogic praxis of the Unexcelled Yoga Tantra is unique to this tradition.

However, Tsong-kha-pa also needed to answer the question regarding the doctrinal classification of the Buddha-essence doctrine promulgated in a variety of the Mahāyāna scriptures because of its doctrinal peculiarity and its great significance for other Tibetan Buddhist schools. In fact, the scriptures on Buddha-essence use the language quite differently from the Madhyamaka parlance concerning the ultimate reality. Among Tibetan Buddhist schools, the rDzogs-chen teaching of the rNying-ma-pas, the Phyag-rgya-chen-po (Mahāmudrā) teaching of the bKa'-brgyud-pas, and the Lam-bras teaching of the Sa-skya-pas are based on only slightly different interpretations of the Buddha-essence doctrine, not to mention that some of them also incorporate the Other-emptiness theory of the Jo-nang-pa school.\footnote{For example, Dol-po-pa frequently cites the scriptures on Buddha-essence in his Ri cho. See Jeffrey Hopkins, \textit{Mountain Doctrine: Tibet’s Fundamental Treatise on Other-Emptiness and the Buddha-Matrix}, trans. (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 2006).} Tsong-kha-pa only slightly touched upon the subject of Buddha-essence in his major writings and left the detailed exposition in the form of lecture notes for rGyal-tshab to work into a complete text.
4. The Structure and Contents of the rGyud bla ‑ ṭīkā

The rGyud bla ‑ ṭīkā is a commentary on Asaṅga's Ratnagotravibhāga commentary (RGVV), which is, in turn, a commentary on Maitreyanātha's Ratnagotravibhāga (RGV). The RGV is one of the five treatises of Maitreyanātha as well as the only Indian treatise, along with its commentary, on the Buddha-essence doctrine known to Tibetan Buddhism. The most popular version was translated by rNgog‑lo‑tsa‑ba bLo‑ldan‑shes‑rab (1059‑1109), known as rNgog‑lo, and received much attention in Tibet. A number of commentaries were written by important masters from different traditions including bKa'‑gdams, Sa‑skyā, bKa'‑brgyud, and Jo‑nang, before the time of rGyal‑tshab.

Like many other works of rGyal‑tshab listed above, the rGyud bla ‑ ṭīkā was written based on the teachings that rGyal‑tshab received from his two main mentors: Red‑mda'‑ba and Tsong‑kha‑pa. It was requested by Gung‑ru rGyal‑mtshan‑bzang‑po. The scribe was sTag‑tshal mKhar‑kha‑ba Don‑grub‑kun‑dga'. The work was completed at the gNas‑rnying Monastery probably during rGyal‑tshab's first visit when he already held the position of dGa' ldan khri pa.

Structurally, the rGyud bla ‑ ṭīkā is an amalgam of an interlinear commentary meticulously glossing almost every word of the RGVV with descriptive prose that further clarifies difficult points of the RGVV, and sometimes is polemic in nature. These two elements are intertwined together throughout the entire text.

The textual body of the RGV consists of what it calls the “seven vajra bases,” which are (1) Buddha, (2) Dharma, (3) Samgha, (4) Element, (5) Enlightenment, (6)

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57 According to Kazou Kano's recent research, there are six Tibetan translations of the text. Kano, rNgog Blo‑ldan‑shes‑rab's Summary of the Ratnagotravibhāga, The First Tibetan Commentary on a Crucial Source for the Buddha‑nature Doctrine, (Hamburg, 2006), 88-112.
Excellences, and (7) Deeds. This scheme of “seven vajra bases” has its scriptural source found in the DIR in which "Element" is used as a synonym for Buddha-essence. The RGVV divides these seven topics into four chapters: the first four vajra bases are subsumed under the first chapter, titled “Tathāgatagarbha,” and the remaining three vajra bases are the other three chapters, having titles corresponding to the bases. The “Tathāgatagarbha” chapter can be seen as a synthesis of various aspects of the Buddha-essence doctrine taught in popular scriptures at the time, especially the SMS and the TGS.

In reply to the question regarding the doctrinal/philosophical position of the Buddha-essence scriptures, rGyal-tshab developed in the rGyud bla skil a distinctive hermeneutical strategy for reconciling the apparent discrepancy between the Madhyamaka philosophy and the Buddha-essence theory, thus offering a distinctive approach. According to rGyal-tshab, the RGVV itself furnishes a clear rationale for understanding the doctrinal/philosophical position of the Buddha-essence scriptures in relation to the emptiness discourse of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, which he thought had been surprisingly neglected or misunderstood by other scholars.

In rGyal-tshab’s view, the Buddha-essence theory of the RGVV is not only definitive in meaning but also literally true, for its cataphatic expression of the ultimate reality does not entail an atmavāda (“self-theory”) reading that would be far-fetched in the context of Buddhist philosophy. rGyal-tshab argues that terms like “Buddha-essence,” “natural luminosity of the mind,” etc., are not referring to something else but are simply cataphatic or positive and experiential expressions of emptiness of intrinsic reality with respect to the mind. Furthermore, rGyal-tshab pointed out that, in the RGVV, Asaṅga understands emptiness in accord with the view of the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika system, and that this fact was first ascertained in Tibetan scholarly tradition by Tsong-kha-pa:
[Furthermore,] since this emptiness of reality in living beings' minds is stated in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra to be the existence of the Element, these two teaching procedures of the middle and final wheels are proved to be not only compatible but also equivalent. If explained according to the [Svātratīrīka-] Madhyamaka system that accepts the truth-habit as the cognitive obscuration, this reply would also appear to be a bit inappropriate. Thus, this treatise and its commentary should be explained according to the Savior Nāgārjuna's assertion as explicated by the Master Candrakīrti. This way of explanation has been proved by many lines of reasoning that preclude any possible objections to be perfectly fit for [the treatise's] meaning of the word. Therefore, the Omniscient Je Rinpoche (Tsong-kha-pa) bLo-bzang-grags-pa's eloquent elucidation of this treatise and its commentary should be known as a complete explanation for the intention of these treatises and to be truly outstanding. 59

Correspondingly, as a semi-polemical work, the rGyud bla šikā takes Dol-po-pa’s Other-emptiness theory as its primary target because Tsong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab found its leaning toward absolutism quite unacceptable. By doing so, rGyal-tshab obliquely criticized the understanding of the Buddha-essence as expressing ultimate reality by way of an implicative negation, which was popular among other schools, for tending in a similar vein toward the Other-emptiness theory.

However, in Tsong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab’s view, the Buddha-essence doctrine is not simply a “restatement” of the śūnyatāvāda, but also an essential extension of Mahāyāna soteriology. In Mahāyāna literature from early on, cataphatic terms, such as “noumenon,” “reality,” “intrinsic purity,” had been used as pedagogical tools to educate people who were not yet ready to embrace the deconstructive philosophy of emptiness, as seen in the case reported in the Commentary on the Great Transcendent Wisdom attributed to Nāgārjuna. 61 Not surprisingly, the Buddha-essence doctrine could serve as a marketing device by providing some teachings similar to the ātmavāda of the Upanishads.

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58 jikeyāvarama, shes bya'i sgrīymba pa.
59 rGyal-tshab, Thog pa chen po rgyud bla ma' šikā, 168b-169a.
60 paryudāsapratisedha, ma yin dgyag.
61 Da zhi du lun, 大智度論 (The Treatise on Great Wisdom) states that “答曰, 畢竟空即是畢竟清淨, 以人畏空故言清淨 (ultimate emptiness is the same as ultimate purity. It is said to be purity in lieu of emptiness because some people are afraid of it).” T.25.1509.508b05.
But, as rGyal-tshab has argued, the major significance of this doctrine lies in the claim that it was the Buddha’s “later teaching” (*uttaratantra*), complementary to the corpus of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* and the Madhyamaka philosophy by enhancing their soteriological dimension in providing antidotes to the major obstacles of the Mahāyāna path to perfect enlightenment.
Chapter 2

Doctrinal Classification of the Ratnagotrabhāga

Among the five treatises of Maitreyanātha/Asaṅga, the doctrinal classification of the RGV and the AA is not simply determined by their authorship to be founding cornerstones of the Yogācāra or Viśṇunāvāda school of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India. A variety of conflicting hermeneutical descriptions of the RGV has been given by Tibetan Buddhist scholars.

rNgo-glo explained the intent of this text as being Svātantrika-Madhyamaka. This standpoint was also held by rNgog-lo's grand-disciple Phywa-pa Chos-kyi-seng-ge (1109-1169), an influential thinker who exerted a significant impact on Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and epistemology. However, rMa-bya BYaṅ-chub-brtson-'grus (d.1185), a student of Phywa-pa, criticized his teacher’s Svātantrika view and placed the RGV in line with Candrakīrti’s MAv. Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub, on the other hand, considered the RGV a Viśṇunāvādin text.62 sGam-po-ba bSod-nams-rin-chen (1079-1153) proclaimed the RGV to be the scriptural authority for the Mahāmudrā teaching, an unique meditative system transmitted in the bKa’-brgyud-pa school.63 For Dol-po-pa, the RGV was one of the authoritative texts used to confirm the authenticity of his Other-emptiness philosophy.

Red-mda’-ba gZhon-nu-blo-gros had the same opinion as Bu-ston. Rong-ston and ‘Gos-lo-tsha-ba gZhon-nu-dpal (1392-1481), two important exegetes and contemporaries of rGyal-tshab, interpreted the RGV based on the Lam-'bras teaching and the Mahāmudrā

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62 See bDe gshegs bstan pa’i gsal byed chos kyi ‘byung gnas. (Beijing: Kṛung go bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1988).
teaching received within their respective traditions. rGyal-tshab followed Tsong-kha-pa and developed a distinctive hermeneutical style for the exposition of the RGV in accord with the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika standpoint; this came to be understood as unexcelled philosophical view in the dGe-lugs-pa school. In this chapter, we will closely examine rGyal-tshab’s doctrinal classification of the RGV in terms of its central thesis, the Buddha-essence theory presented therein, starting with his analysis of the five great treatises of Maitreya.

1. Asaṅga and the Five Treatises of Maitreya

Engaging in the most important hermeneutical practice in Tibetan Buddhism, rGyal-tshab discusses the criteria for discriminating between a scripture’s interpretable meaning and a scripture’s definitive meaning on the basis of two systems: one is described in the Akṣayamati-nirdeśa-sūtra (AMN) and SRS, the other in the Saṃdhinir- mocana-sūtra (SNS).

The former system [Akṣayamati-nirdeśa-sūtra] demonstrates that those scriptures which are the teaching of emptiness of intrinsic identifiability of all things, are definitive in meaning; and those scriptures which are the teaching of “person,” “aggregate,” etc., with various words and letters, are interpretable in meaning. The latter Saṃdhinir-mocana-sūtra teaches that, while the imagined [nature] is not established by means of any intrinsic identity, the relative and perfect natures have intrinsically identifiable status. Thus, [according to the Saṃdhinir-mocana-sūtra], a scripture that either unilaterally teaches all things to be not established with intrinsic identity, or unilaterally teaches all things to be established with intrinsic identity, is said to be interpretable in meaning. A scripture that clearly differentiate between [some things] being established with intrinsic identity and [other things] being not established with intrinsic identity is said to be definitive in meaning.

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64 rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pas stong pa.
65 kun brtags.
66 rang gi mtshan nyid.
67 gzhan dbang.
68 yongs grub.
69 rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa.
70 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ikä, 3b.
According to rGyal-tshab, the Madhyamaka school and the Vijñānavāda school are the outcomes of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga's understandings of these two systems respectively:

Following these scriptures [group of scriptures, i.e. the Aṣṭasātyamatinirdeśa-sūtra and the Samādhīrāja-sūtra], the Savior Nāgārjuna pioneered the way for Champions for differentiating the interpretable meaning and the definitive meaning; thereby proving without effort that the second scripture [the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra] is interpretable in meaning, and Asaṅga, the noble Master, mainly pioneered the way for Champions of the Vijñānavāda system, according to the criterion of distinction laid down in the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra by following the two Vibhāgaśas (Madhyāntavibhāga and Dharmadharmatāvibhāga) and the Mahāyānasutrālaṃkāra.

As a result, Asaṅga became a founder for the Vijñānavāda system by writing the five Bhūmis and the two Samgrahas. In addition, Asaṅga is responsible for explicating the intention of the corpus of the Individual Vehicle.72

In rGyal-tshab's view, among the five great treatises of Maitreyā/Asaṅga, the Madhyāntavibhāga (MAV), the Dharmadharmatāvibhāga (DhDhV), and the Mahāyānasutrālaṃkāra (MSA) accord with the Vijñānavāda system, teaching the truth-status of the emptiness of dualistic perception as well as the corresponding stages of the path of such realization, whereas the AA and the RGV are Madhyamaka treatises, detailing the unique philosophical positions and soteriological procedures presented in this school.

More specifically, according to rGyal-tshab, the DhDhV is a Vijñānavāda treatise that differentiates between dharma (things) and dharmatā (noumenon), demonstrating that dharma are the basis of the creation of samsāra, i.e. the relative nature with truth-status where the subject-object duality appears; and dharmatā is the emptiness of

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71 Ibid., 3b-4a.  
72 Ibid., 4a.
substantial subject-object duality,\textsuperscript{73} and is the support for the attainment of liberation by means of being the object of meditation. The MAV is a Vījñānavādin treatise that differentiates the two extremes, which are those of either reification or disparagement, from the middle way free of the extremes. It discriminates between the three natures, based on the presupposition that the subject-object duality has truth-status. Without refuting the truth-status of dualistic perception, the MSA as a Vījñānavādin treatise ascertains in detail what methods are used to refine a bodhisattva's realization; determining the means of awakening his or her spiritual genetic potential\textsuperscript{74} for the Mahāyāna, as well as the means of tutoring other types of disciples. As rGyal-tshab points out, these three treatises do not clearly explain the ultimate reality as the emptiness of identifiably intrinsic status, but instead teach merely in accordance with the inclination of disciples unprepared for that depth of emptiness.\textsuperscript{75} In short, the two Vibhāgas are basically the Vījñānavādin presentation of philosophical presuppositions, whereas the Sūtrālambkāra details the Vījñānavādin soteriology.

Although the AA explains the soteriological procedures for persons with three different types of spiritual genetic potential, the hidden meaning of the Prajñāparamitā-sūtra literature, this treatise is deemed a Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika treatise by Tsong-kha-pa/rGyal-tshab, for it teaches the ultimate view of emptiness.\textsuperscript{76} The Uttaratantra, on the other hand, seems to be a treatise, according to rGyal-tshab, exclusively advocating the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika viewpoint and corresponding soteriology:

As to the Mahāyānottara-tantra-treatise, it should be taught to the Vījñānavādins at a later time when they have become spiritually mature by getting used to the way

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{73} gzung 'dzin rdzas tha dad kyis stong s pa.
  \item \textsuperscript{74} gatra, rigs, which is also translated as "spiritual gene" in this present work.
  \item \textsuperscript{75} rGyal-tshab, rGyud blaibli 4a.
  \item \textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 4b.
\end{itemize}
of the Vijñānavāda first. It can be taught at first, however, to superbly intelligent ones who have the genetic potential for the Mahāyāna. This treatise clearly shows that there is no divergence between the [Prajñāpāramitā-] sūtra in three lengths: extensive, middling, and brief, and the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra in terms of the truthlessness of all things, i.e. the ultimate reality without any reifications, which, as the object of the paths, has to be realized in order to attain even the enlightenment of the Śrāvakayāna or the enlightenment of the Pratyekabuddhayāna. It is the main doctrine of this treatise.

Accordingly, Asaṅga is regarded by rGyal-tshab as "truly an adherent of Nāgārjuna," as opposed to the commonly accepted status of being the co-founder of the Vijñānavāda school. In rGyal-tshab's view, the difference between Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga's ways of explanation is intentional. Although Asaṅga founded the Vijñānavāda system that teaches the ultimate three vehicles, this system is not Asaṅga's personal understanding; he did so merely for the sake of helping those who have the spiritual genetic potential for the Vijñānavāda. If not, as rGyal-tshab has argued, it would be in contradiction to the fact that, in the RGVV, Asaṅga establishes the "unique vehicle" and determines the subtle emptiness in great detail.

2. The subtle emptiness according to the RGV

The truth-habit as the cause of saṃsāra

According to Tsong-kha-pa/rGyal-tshab, the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka school asserts that a Buddhist follower must realize emptiness of objective self in order to attain any of the three kinds of enlightenment in connection with the three vehicles. They assert that the truth-habit is the chief cause of saṃsāra. The truth-habit is the misknowledge of

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77 bden pas stongs pa.
78 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma'i, Ab-5a.
79 Ibid., 5a.
80 mthar thug theg pa gcig.
81 dharmāmaśānyata, chos bdag gi stong pa nyid.
reality, and hence creates samsāra; the realization of truthlessness is necessary for the 
liberation from samsāra inasmuch as this realization understands there to be no 
conceptual object\textsuperscript{82} of the truth-habit, and thus stands in direct opposition to the delusive 
third-truth-habit and its habit-pattern.\textsuperscript{83} Other liberative techniques, such as love and 
compassion, on the other hand, do not have the same power to sever the root of the truth-
habit.

With respect to the truth-habit as the cause of samsāra, in rGyal-tshab's view, literary 
evidence is abundant. For example, rGyal-tshab cites Asanga's gloss on RGV I.12 that 
"all karma, addictions, and defilements of birth of the naive are involved with the 
iccorrect misknowledge of the unique Element."	extsuperscript{84} As one of the most crucial technical 
terms used in the RGV(V), the word dhātu (Element) and rGyal-tshab's understanding of 
it will be closely examined along with the other terms in Chapter 7. Suffice it to say here 
that the dhātu is reality itself, i.e. the emptiness of the intrinsically identifiable reality of 
persons and things, including body-mind aggregates, in a tainted context. As elucidated 
by Asanga, it is the foundation of samsāra and liberation; the tainting misknowledge of it 
causes samsāra and, by implication, the correct understanding of it leads to liberation. 
Hence, according to rGyal-tshab, the RGVV establishes the necessity of realizing the 
emptiness of true existence for liberation from samsāra, as well as the necessity that 
śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have direct realization of the two kinds of selflessness.

Furthermore, as rGyal-tshab points out, Asanga also asserts that the subjective self-
habit does not refer merely to the habit of holding to the existence of an independent,

\textsuperscript{82} zhen yul.
\textsuperscript{83} 'dzin stangs.
\textsuperscript{84} RGVV 13. 11-12: sa punar eṣa sarvākara-kleṣa-karma-jānma-saṃkleso būlāṇām ekasya dhātur yathā-bhūtam 
ajjīvāḥ adarśānāc ca pravartate ||.
substantial individual, but rather to the truth-habit of persons, which is the subtle form of the self-habit according to the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka school, since he clearly states that "existence as it should be is the limit of selflessness of all beings including things and individuals; it should be known through proper realization."

*The truth-habit as the addictive obscuration*

The discussions mentioned above have been adduced by rGyal-tshab to explain that the RGVV accepts the truth-habit as an addictive obscuration because Asaṅga accepts the truth-habit as addictive misknowledge and asserts that liberation depends on the elimination of such obscurations. According to the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka school, addictive misknowledge is an improper mentation and can only be eliminated by the power of intuitive meditation on proper mentation that directly realizes the truthlessness and neutralizes all addictive minds that are tied up with the reifications of dualistic perception. Likewise, the JñāŚ cited in the RGVV states as follows:

Mañjuśrī, mind, intellect, and consciousness do not engage in that which is free of production and cessation. That which is not engaged with mind, intellect, and consciousness has not the slightest irrational mentation, bound up in conceptual constructs. One who applies himself with rationalmentation never makes

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85 gang zag rang rkyu thub pa'i rdzas yod du 'dzin pa.
86 gang zag gi bdog 'dzin du bzhed. By this he means the habit of holding to the existence of intrinsic identifiable truth-status in persons.
87 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skad, 44a-b.
89 nyon sgrih.
misknowledge arise. The non-arising of misknowledge means the non-arising of the Twelve Components of Existence. It is called non-production and so forth.90

In rGyal-tshab's gloss, "that which is free of production and cessation" refers to the ultimate reality that is free of real production and cessation, and is not engaged with mind, intellect, and consciousness with their dualistic perceptions. In the ultimate reality, there is not the slightest irrational mentation, which is the conceptual construct of the truth-obsession. One who applies himself with rational mentation, which directly realizes the emptiness of intrinsically identifiable reality, never allows the addictive misknowledge of the truth-habit to arise. Non-arising of misknowledge means non-arising of the Twelve Components of Existence ending with ageing and death. It is called non-production in terms of non-connection with the existence of future life and so forth.91 By this analysis, rGyal-tshab clearly demonstrates that Asaṅga is a Mādhyamika who accepts the truth-habit as an addictive obscuration.

Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas' realization of objective selflessness

In RGVV 28.5, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are called by Asaṅga upāyapatita (those who have engaged with liberative technique), in contrast to three types of anupāyapatita (those who have engaged lacking liberative technique): (1) various heterodox groups, (2) Buddhists who lack faith about the ultimate truth and believe in a personal self, and (3) Buddhists who feel overly proud and hold a wrong view of emptiness. When understood in that context, rGyal-tshab states that Asaṅga clearly

90 RGVV 21.7-10: anupādānirodhena manjuśrī citta-mano-vijnānanāi na pravartante | yatra citta-mano-vijnānanāi na pravartante tatra na kaś-cit parikalpo yena parikalpo yoniśo manasi-kurydā | sa yoniśo manasi-kāra-prayuktam vidyām na samutthāpayati ||
91 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma'i, 41a.
indicates that "liberative technique" concerns a philosophic viewpoint, rather than the Mahāyāna praxis for obtaining buddhahood and the basis for such praxis, i.e. cultivation of the spirit with respect to the Mahāyāna. Otherwise, it would be more accurate to include śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas among the type of person who have engaged lacking liberative technique. It is also clear that, in rGyal-tshab's view, the second and third types of anupāyapatiita are those Buddhists who do not realize the meaning of reality, but accept both things and emptiness as having truth-status. On the other hand, the elite śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas  do understand the two subtle selflessnesses, inasmuch as they are upāyapatiita. In light of these statements, rGyal-tshab asserts that Asaṅga accepts the understanding of subtle emptiness as the ultimate liberative technique for obtaining buddhahood, or liberation, in terms of philosophic viewpoint.

However, some scriptural references seem to suggest that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not have such realization. As cited in the RGVV, the SMS states that "even all the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas have a delusion about the Truth Body of the Tathāgata which is the object of the omniscient gnosis and has never been seen before by their wisdom of emptiness."92 rGyal-tshab explicates this statement as follows:

Noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who have perceptual realization of the subtle emptiness, still have a delusion about the Truth Body, because of their inability to realize emptiness by their own power, as people who have a genetic potential for the Mahāyāna and have sharp intelligence do, and also because of the manifestation of their unconscious truth-habit regarding impermanence, etc. Even in the cases of arhats of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna, they lack the antidote required for obtaining the fruitional transcendence of a supreme self because they do not meditate on the transcendence of wisdom.93

Similarly, the AAN states:

93 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma, 90a-b.
Śāriputra, this import, for a while, can neither be known nor be seen, nor be discerned correctly through the personal wisdom of all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Needless to say, this applies to the case of ordinary individuals. That can be realized only by having faith in the Tathāgata. Śāriputra, the ultimate is realized through faith.  

rGyal-tshab argues for śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas' perceptual realization of the ultimate reality in his explication. He explains that "they do not master it thoroughly by means of infinite lines of reasoning, as taught in the Mulamadhyamakakārikā, to cut off the proliferations (distracting) from the ultimate reality." "Unlike sharp intelligent bodhisattvas," he further explains, "they are unable to realize ultimate reality by way of increasing their own wisdom. This is the meaning of their inability indicated in the statements such as 'this import cannot be seen through their own wisdom,' etc."  

As to the issue of "realization by faith," rGyal-tshab interprets it as the unusual situation of elite śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who are able to realize objective selflessness but are said to be dull in intelligence compared to Mahāyāna practitioners. To the assertion that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not realize objective selflessness, and that they realize the Tathāgata to be the personification of validating reason through faith alone, he argues "if ultimate reality were not realized by validating reason, this would be in contradiction with the statement 'the ultimate reality is realized through faith;' If ultimate reality is realized by validating reason, in general, we shall not explain emptiness as the object of mere faith."

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94 RGVV 2.8-10: sarva-śrāvaka-pratyekabuddhair api tāvac chātiprāyam atiho na śakyah sanyāk svaprajaññāḥ...dṛṣṭaṁ vā pratyavekṣitum vā prājeva bāla-prihag-janar anyatra tāthāgata-śraddhā-ghanamataḥ | śraddhā-ghanamaiḥ hi śāriputa paramārthāḥ ||
95 rGyal-tshab, Rgyud bla ma, 11b.
96 Ibid., 11b-12a.
rGyal-tshab points out that the majority of followers of the Sravakayana or the Pratyekabuddhayana do not understand subtle emptiness because of their truth-habits regarding the realization of impermanence, of coarse selflessness, etc. The SMS states that "for those who have fallen into the futile view, for those who attach to misconceptions, for those whose mind has deviated from emptiness, the Buddha-essence is not their object of experience." Asanga explicates "those who are attached to misconceptions" as sravakas and pratyekabuddhas who "indulge in the path which is in direct contradiction to the attainment of the Truth Body." Correspondingly, rGyal-tshab explains that these are the average sort of sravakas and pratyekabuddhas who merely understand coarse emptiness in the form of the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths, such as impermanence, etc., but not in terms of subtle selflessness.  

Refuting the Vijñānavādin standpoint concerning emptiness

Aside from the analysis above, rGyal-tshab also found other conclusive evidence in the RGVV to support his assertion that the Vijñānavāda is not Asaṅga's personal understanding of ultimate reality. As aforementioned, there is a third type of person in anupāya-patita category, i.e. Buddhists who feel overly proud and hold a wrong view of emptiness. The Mahārattakāṭa-sūtra (MRS) is cited by Asaṅga in order to show his strong disapproval of holding such view:

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97 rGyal-tshab, rGyud blaṅka, 157b.
Kāśyapa, the wrong view of a personal self as much as Mt. Sumeru is considered superior to the wrong view of emptiness by those who have excessive pride. 98

It seems clear that this view involves accepting emptiness as having a truth-status, and hence is identical to what is asserted by "those whose minds have deviated from emptiness;" that is to say, it is the "apprehension of emptiness as being an entity that is different from the material, etc." 99 In rGyal-tshab’s opinion, this refers to the Vijñānavāda tenet that accepts the emptiness of subject-object duality as the ultimate reality, and that such ultimate reality has truth-status by virtue of its intrinsic identifiability. rGyal-tshab warns against holding such a view by declaring that "although the wisdom which realizes emptiness is the door or means of liberation, if the truth-habit with respect to emptiness has been formed, it is said to be a temporarily untreatable view." As to how to identify the negatee according to the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka school, rGyal-tshab explains it as follows:

Knowing how to posit the arrangement that the truth-habit is negated by validating cognition, keeping in mind that intrinsic identifiability is involved, we will make no mistake of seeing the negatee as something having truth-status. As mentioned in the BCA: "when the negatee is negated, no basis for analysis is left." 100 For someone who understands subtle emptiness, there is no basis for any truth-conviction about intrinsic identifiability of the negatee when under the sway of the wisdom which realizes emptiness. Thus, when accepting emptiness which merely negates a coarse negatee, one is doomed to make the mistake of forming a tenet with respect to the truth-status. As long as there is a strong truth-habit with respect to a coarse emptiness, it is untreatable. 101

98 RGVV 28.11-12: varaṁ khaśyapa sumeru-mātrā puśgyāla-deśīr na tvevābhimānikasya śānyatā-deśīr iti).
99 RGVV 75.15-17: ye vā punah śānyapalambhaṁ śānyatāṁ pratissaranī śānyatāṁ nāma rūpādi-satyarojanān kāś-cid bhāvo 'sti yam adhyātāmnāno bhāvayātma iti).
101 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ‟jikā, 85b.
rGyal-tshab explicates the statement of the MRS as a critique of the Vijñānavādin theory. In rGyal-tshab’s view, the Vijñānavādins, while having an unconscious personal self-habit, does not accept a personal self-habit as the fundamental wrong view and does not consider emptiness of a personal self-habit as ultimate, but asserts instead that the emptiness of subject-object duality is the ultimate reality. Thus, as warned by the author of this sūtra, it makes the obscurations even more difficult to expel because the Vijñānavādins are confounded in their intellectual self-habit in addition to an unconscious one.

This leads rGyal-tshab to the conclusion that Asaṅga pioneered the way for Champions of the Vijñānavādin system and gave extensive teachings on it out of his concern for a certain type of person who have the genetic potential for the Vijñānavāda. This system would then be the means of maturing them for the realization of the subtle emptiness propounded by the Mādhyamikas. According to rGyal-tshab, this also explains some apparent contradictions in Asaṅga’s exegetical undertaking, e.g., in the YBh, Asaṅga takes the same scriptural reference from the MRS to refute the Madhyamaka’s realitylessness philosophy that asserts there is no such thing, even small as an atom, as having intrinsic identifiability. But in the RGVV he explicates the same statement as the refutation of the kind of Vijñānavādin system that accepts emptiness as having truth-status.102

3. The Three Stages of Teaching according to the DIR

Establishing the unique vehicle

102 Ibid, 86a.
In the RGVV, Asanga cites the DIR to show the process of purifying the Element or Buddha-essence. This process is described in the sūtra as being analogous to the procedure of cleansing vaiḍūrya mixed with impurities:

Fortunate Child, take for example, a skillful jeweler who knows well how to cleanse a gem. Having picked out an unpurified precious jewel from the mine, he washes it with strong sal-ammoniac, and then polishes it by rubbing with ox hair-knitted cloth. With this much work, he does not cease to make efforts. After that, having washed the jewel with pungent food juice, he polishes it by rubbing with a fine woolen blanket. Even with this much work, he does not cease to make efforts. After that, having washed it with great medical liquid [mercury], he polishes it with fine cotton cloth. When completely purified from all impurities, it is called precious vaiḍūrya.\(^\text{103}\)

Corresponding to the three steps of this purification procedure, the entire teaching of the Buddha can be divided into three stages with respect to its temporal dimension:

Fortunate Child, so the Tathāgata, knowing the scope of the impure living beings, makes those inflamed with the world tired at heart and causes them to engage in the religious discipline by means of the teaching of renunciation, such as "impermanence," "suffering," "selflessness," and "impurity." With many such deeds as these, the Tathāgata does not cease to make efforts. After that, he causes them to realize the deep process of the Tathāgata's Dharma by means of teaching of emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. Even with many such deeds as these, the Tathāgata does not cease to make efforts. Next, he installs those living beings in the Buddha-realm by means of teaching of irreversibility and the teaching on the purification of the three focal points [of acts]. And he causes those living beings, having various dispositions, to engage with the object of the Tathāgata. They are dubbed "the unexcelled worthies for offerings" when they have entered and have realized the nature of the Tathāgata.\(^\text{104}\)

\(^{103}\) RGVV 5.9-6.1: tud-yathā kula-putra kuśalo maṇi-kāro maṇi-śuddhi-svādhi-jñātāḥ | sa maṇi-gotrād aparīyavatāpiṇī maṇi-rajñāṇi gṛhitā tākṣṇena kāṅkṣadakṣaṇakālaṁ kṛṣṇena keśa-kambala-parīyavatāpānaṁ parīyavatāpayati | na ca tāvam māreṇaḥ vṛryam praśrāmbhayaḥ | satatā paścāt tākṣṇena-nilam-rasenokṣaṇyaṁ khaṇḍākāṁ parīyavatāpānaṁ parīyavatāpayati | na ca tāvam māreṇaḥ vṛryam praśrāmbhayaḥ | satatā sa paścāt maṇi-haṅkāra-raśrosenokṣaṇyaṁ sākṣaṇa-vēsra-parīyavatāpānaṁ parīyavatāpayati | parīyavatāpānaṁ cāpiṣaya-kāścam abhijñāḥ vaiḍūryam ity upayate.\(^\text{104}\) RGVV 6.1-7: evam eva kula-puṭra tathāgato 'py aparāśuddham satva-dhātuṁ vidvītnītya-dulleḥāṁ sūbhodya-kathayā samsārābhīrakṛtāṁ satvāṁ udvajayaḥ | ārya ca dharma-vinaye 'vatārayati | na ca tāvam māreṇaḥ tathāgato vṛryam praśrāmbhayaḥ | satatā paścāt kriyāni-nītītāpyaśūṣṭḥ kathayā tathāgato-netrīm avabodhayaḥ | na ca tāvam māreṇaḥ tathāgato vṛryam praśrāmbhayaḥ | satatā paścāt aśvārya-dharma-sukra-kathayā tri-māṇḍala-parīśuddhi-kathayā ca tathāgata-viśaye tāṁ satvāṁ udvajayaṁ nāma-prakṛti-hetukāṁ | avatārṇāś ca somaṁ daśa tathāgato-dharmāṁ adhānāyaṁ ādhyāmyaṁ tārādā ārya tiṣṭhitāḥ ity upayate.\]
According to rGyal-tshab's explication, this scheme of the three stages reflects the Buddha's pedagogical methods, demonstrating that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have the realization of two types of emptiness in accord with the RGVV's standpoint in general:

In the first stage, the Buddha makes those infatuated with samsāra tired at heart and causes them to engage in religious discipline by means of the doctrine of renunciation, such as "impermanence," "misery," "selflessness," and "ugliness." The prescribed practice of the three precious educations is the common path required for the person who either has or has not understood the subtle selflessness of person and object. At this level, the "selflessness" taught herein is the coarse selflessness and mastery of this teaching is the maturing path for both the Hinayāna practitioners and the Mahāyāna practitioners to progress to the path of the noble ones. The subtle selflessness of person and object, as the objective object of the path that directly cuts off the root of samsāra, will be taught in the latter two stages. Furthermore, in the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika system, the differentiation between emptiness being coarse and subtle is made in connection to the negation-ground, i.e. as person and aggregates, which is either a substantial existence or a designative existence; instead of being made in connection to the negatee, i.e. intrinsic identifiability of the object, which cannot be logically differentiated between being coarse and subtle. It is impossible for a person who has realized the emptiness of intrinsic identifiability of persons not to realize the realitylessness of aggregates.

In the second stage, the Buddha causes his disciples to realize the deep meaning of the "Tathāgata's doctrine," which is the reality of the Tathāgata or the ultimate reality, by

\[105 \text{ smin byed pa' lam.} \]
\[106 \text{ 'phags pa' lam.} \]
\[107 \text{ dgyag gshi.} \]
\[108 \text{ rdzas yod.} \]
\[109 \text{ btags yod.} \]
\[110 \text{ dgyag bya.} \]
means of the teaching of śīnyatā (emptiness), anīmitatā (signlessness), and apranihitatā (wishlessness) for all three kinds of Buddhist practitioners. This teaching refers to the emptiness of intrinsic reality status with regard to view, conduct, and aim to be attained respectively; or to the emptiness of intrinsic reality status of reality, cause and fruition respectively. This stage is the teaching of the two types of subtle emptiness: emptiness of intrinsic reality status of person and emptiness of intrinsic reality status of things, for the reason that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, if lacking this realization, will not attain the fruition of liberation, the arhatship.

In the last stage, the Buddha installs his disciples in the "Buddha-realm," which is the emptiness realized under the sway of liberative technique. He does this by the teaching of "irreversibility," defusing the situation controlled by the selfish thought that indifferently abandons other beings and aspires for private liberation alone, and by the teaching on the purification of the intrinsic reality-status of the three focal points of an action conjoined with liberative techniques. At this stage, all students, despite having various dispositions such as different psychological makeups, genealogies, and different aspirations for three types of enlightenment with respect to the Śrāvakayāna, the Pratyekabuddhayāna and the Mahāyāna, are encouraged to engage with the "object of the Tathāgata" that is the realization of emptiness associated with complete liberative techniques.

In sum, in rGyal-tshab' view, use of a scriptural reference from the DIR validates the RGVV's establishment of the unique vehicle in accord with the DIR, for Asaṅga accepted the first two stages as guidance on how to attain the realization of Hinayāna arhatship and accepted the third stage as a distinctively Mahāyāna path.

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111 Agent, action, and recipient.
This pedagogical system, however, does not conform with the general assertion that it is inappropriate to teach the profound meaning of reality before the complete teaching of liberative technique: renunciation, conceiving the spirit of enlightenment, etc. rGyal-tshab argues in response that, just as taught in Sāntarakṣita's MA, there are two types of soteriological stages: the stages of engaging in the path for the intelligent ones, and the stages of engaging in the path for the dull ones. The intelligent ones, who also possess spiritual genetic potential for the Mahāyāna, try first to convince themselves by validating cognition of the necessity and possibility of attaining perfect buddhahood for the benefit of all living beings. Then they make commitment to produce the actual spirit of enlightenment. In contrast, the dull ones make such commitment without valid reasons. Furthermore, while the recognition of the necessity of attaining buddhahood for the benefit of living beings comes from the mastery of the method for producing genuine great compassion and high resolve, the recognition of the possibility of attaining buddhahood comes from the realization of emptiness and related ideas.

According to rGyal-tshab, it is necessary for the intelligent ones to realize emptiness before producing the desire for liberation; whereas for the dull ones, they must try to produce the spirit of enlightenment first, and then go on to master emptiness later. The teaching on emptiness, which is the discourse on the purification of the three focal points, is once again given in the third stage of the three stage scheme according to the DIR. But it is clearly distinguished by its connection with liberative technique, thus having secondary importance in this stage.

This leads rGyal-tshab to assert that the RGV(V) directly demonstrates the soteriological stages of engaging in the path for the intelligent Mahāyāna followers who

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112 *thag bsam.*
are the chief intended disciples. It indirectly causes the other type of stages for the dull ones to be understood. More specifically, the RGV can be taught at first to superb intelligent Mahāyāna practitioners, but it should be taught at a later time for the Vijñānavādins, when they have become spiritually mature through becoming accustomed to the way of the Vijñānavāda first.

As the distinctive presentation of the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika viewpoint

In rGyal-tshab's view, the three stages as taught in the DIR are evidently not identical to the three wheels discussed in the SNS. As noted, the SNS is the scriptural authority for the criterion used by the Vijñānavādins to distinguish between the scriptures of definitive meaning and the scriptures of interpretable meaning. In this sūtra, Bodhisattva Paramārthaśamudgata asks the Buddha which scriptures are interpretable in meaning, and which scriptures are definitive in meaning. He makes this inquiry because in some scriptures the Buddha proclaims without distinction the intrinsic identifiability of all things that are included in the three realities; however, in other scriptures he proclaims that all things without distinction are not established by intrinsic identity. The Buddha replies, with particular discrimination, that the constructed reality is not established by intrinsic identity, whereas the relative and perfect realities are established by intrinsic identity. Paramārthaśamudgata then reports to the Buddha his understanding that the two types of scripture mentioned in his own question are interpretable in meaning, whereas the discriminating scriptures mentioned in the Buddha's answer are definitive in meaning. Paramārthaśamudgata continues to report to the Buddha his understanding of how this

113 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ḳēl, 4b.
result should be applied to determine the interpretable and the definitive among the three wheels of Dharma, with respect to their temporal sequentiality, as follows:

(1) The first wheel shows the aspects of the four noble truths for the sake of those involved in the Śrāvakayāna. It is provisory, interpretable in meaning, and disputable.

(2) The second wheel proclaims emptiness, starting from the fact of the unreality, productionlessness, ceaselessness, primordial peace, and natural liberation of all things for the sake of those involved in the Mahāyāna. It is also provisory, interpretable, and disputable.

(3) The third wheel uses the finest discrimination, starting from the fact of the unreality, productionlessness, ceaselessness, primordial peace, and natural liberation of all things. And this turning of the wheel of Dharma is unsurpassed, not provisory, definitive in meaning, and leaves no grounds for dispute.\(^{114}\)

According to this scheme, an exemplification\(^{115}\) of the first wheel is any scripture in the Hinayāna canon, an exemplification of the second wheel is the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, and an exemplification of the third wheel is the SNS.

In Tibet before Tṣong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab the doctrinal classification of the TGS was normally that it is an exemplification of the third wheel of this three wheel scheme. In rGyal-tshab's view, however, the TGS is not included as an exemplification of the definitive scriptures according to the SNS; rather, the SNS and the TGS are not compatible philosophically. The SNS states that constructed reality is devoid of reality, and the


\(^{115}\) mtshan gshi.
relative and perfect realities are really established. The TGS teaches that all things are
devoid of reality, thus naturally pure, and defilements are coincidental. Furthermore,
according to rGyal-tshab, the teaching of the three stages here is also a demonstration
providing guidance to an individual progressing in stages when established in the
ultimate unique vehicle. The teaching of the three stages is in accord to the TGS
proclamation that all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence without exception.
It stands in contrast to the statement of the SNS that the teaching of the three wheels in
stages is meant for different persons.\footnote{\textit{rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla šêkê}, 25b.}

4. The Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra and the TGS

As part of the commentary on the TGS, the RGV describes the relation between the
\textit{Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra} and the TGS with respect to the doctrine, as well as temporal
sequentiality, by presenting a summary of the teaching of the Buddha-essence. This
summary consists of two questions and their respective answers:

Question One: If, as demonstrated in RGVV 77.9-10, this Buddha-essence is difficult
to cognize inasmuch as it is not always the object even for supreme noble ones who
are abiding on the stage characterized as being ultimately free of attachment, then
what is the use of this teaching for the naïve?
Reply: It has been taught for the purpose of dispelling five faults: being disheartened, contempt for inferior beings, apprehending the unreal, repudiating reality, and excessive attachment to oneself.\(^{117}\)

Question Two: It has been taught in this and that \([Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra]\) that all knowables are ever empty - like clouds, dreams, and illusions. Why has the Buddha declared here [in the TGS] again the existence of the Buddha-essence in living beings?\(^{118}\)

Reply: It has been said that the reality-limit is ever empty of compounded things, and hence, addictions, karma, and retributions, are like clouds and so forth. Addictions are likened to the clouds, Karma is like the experience in dreams and the aggregates, the retributions of addictions and karma, are likened to illusions made by magic. So it has been set forth previously; and now again, in this *Uttaratantra*, the existence of the Buddha-essence has been taught in order to dispel these five faults.\(^{119}\)

Based on this discussion, it is claimed seems clear that the teaching on the Buddha-essence represented by the TGS was given after the teaching on emptiness of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. RGV I.160 states, "So has it been arranged previously, and again, in this *Uttaratantra*..." (pūrvam evam vyavasthāpya tantre punar ihottare). In rGyal-tshab's view, both *Prajñāpāramitā* and *Tathāgatagarbha* teach the same subject, which is

\(^{117}\) RGV 1.157: *īnam cittam hūna-sattvev avajñābhau-grūho bhūta-dharmāpavādaḥ | ātma-snehas eśādhipatāḥ paścādoṣa yasmin teṣām upprahādārtham utkām|

\(^{118}\) RGV 1.156: *sanyoḿ sarvaḿ sarvaḿ tatra tatra jātīyam megha-svapna-māyā-kṛtāḥ | ity ukvāvam buddha-dhiitvā punah kim satte śātī buddhaha ihottaram|

\(^{119}\) RGV 1.158-160: *vivitaḿ sāṃskṛtam sarva-prākāram bhūta-kotiśu | kleśa-karma-vipākārtham meghādīvad utdāhīram | kleśa meghopamaḥ kṛtya-kriyā śvapnapaśantāvate | māyā-nirmitaśa skandhāḥ vipākāḥ kleśa-karmastām | pūrvam evam vyavasthāpya tantre punar ihottare | paścā-doṣa-prāhānāya dihitv-astitvam prakāśītām |
emptiness of intrinsic reality of the mind: "so has it been arranged previously" means "so has [the teaching on emptiness] been arranged previously in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, and again, in this Uttaratantra..." The Buddha-essence teaching is collectively called uttaratantra or the further continuum in comparison with the teaching of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra. Hence rGyal-tshab considers the first question to be the one concerning the necessity of the Buddha-essence teaching and the second question to be the one concerning the contradiction between these two teachings.

As to the contradiction indicated in the second question, rGyal-tshab explains in his gloss that in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra all things are said to be coincidental, empty of reality, while in this last wheel the reality that penetrates into the nature of the mind has been taught. In reply, rGyal-tshab argues that Maitreya/Asaṅga claims that these two statements are not mutually contradictory, because the teaching of the last wheel is also the import of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra. Asaṅga argues that the reality-limit, i.e. the Buddha-essence as the natural purity of living beings' mind, is ever empty of compounded things, including suffering and its origin, and these coincidental things cannot penetrate into the nature of the mind. rGyal-tshab convincingly argues his point that the mere emptiness of suffering and its origin as stated in the last wheel is taught within the context of the teaching of the emptiness of intrinsic reality of all things:

The foremost addiction is the truth-habit that is the conviction of truth of things. This [truth-habit] is coincidental, unable to penetrate into the nature of the mind. This refers to the fact that nothing can be established on the mind which is apprehended by this [truth-habit], since no other techniques except negation of the supposed object of

120 See Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion about the notion of "uttaratantra."
the truth-habit can be used to establish the emptiness of the reality of all things. If the addictions are proved to be coincidental, then karma and retribution, which are produced by the addictions, are coincidental as well.¹²¹

This leads rGyal-tshab to assert that the emptiness of the intrinsic reality of all things should be established as the standpoint of the TGS. This is because the addictions, karma and retribution, which are produced by the addictions, are said in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra to be coincidental. He thus concludes that these teaching procedures of the middle wheel and the last wheel are not only compatible but also equivalent. rGyal-tshab argues that the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra's teaching on the emptiness of the intrinsic reality of living beings' mind is thus analogous to what the TGS explicates as the Element or Buddha-essence:

[The Buddha] explicated extensively with emphasis in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra which has three lengths, extensive, middling and brief, that all things, from the material up to omniscience, are void of intrinsic reality status and are therefore free from all the extremes of reification. Similarly, in this TGS, which belongs to the last wheel, [the Buddha] explicated with emphasis that the minds of living beings are naturally pure as they are void of intrinsic reality status and the obscuring defilements are coincidental in this regard. In this treatise, which is an accurate commentary on the intention of the TGS, the way of proving that defilements are coincidental is explicated with reference to the fact that addictions and conceptuality are isolated from intrinsic reality status, as Asanga states that "addictions are terminated primordially." Just as this establishment of defilements as coincidental is declared in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, the reason for proving that the mind is void of truth is also similar in meaning to what is taught in that sūtra. Hence, we can know that the TGS as an ultimate definitive meaning scripture is equal to the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra.¹²²

Furthermore, in rGyal-tshab's understanding, this interpretation would appear to be a bit inappropriate if explained according to the Svātantrika-Madhyamaka system that accepts the

¹²¹ rGyal-tshab, rgyal blaṅ gka' , 168b.
¹²² Ibid, 75b-76a.
truth-habit as the cognitive obscuration for the reason aforementioned. Hence, rGyal-tshab asserts that the RGV should be explained according to the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika system, i.e. Nāgārjuna's philosophy as explicated by Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti.

Consequently, the question on necessity can be rephrased as the question on repetition if the TGS is proved to be the same as the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* in terms of its philosophy, for that would render the third wheel useless. In contrast to the apophatic language of the *Prajñāpāramitā*’s emptiness philosophy, the cataphatic expression in the last wheel of the same reality, according to the RGV, is of great value to Mahāyāna soteriology. In the TGS and similar scriptures, the Buddha proclaims that there exists within all living beings the naturally pure Element which is the foundation for the possible production of all transcendent qualities. rGyal-tshab argues that such cataphatic discourse is given for the purpose of dispelling five faults concerning the Mahāyāna path as follows:

(1) the fault of being disheartened, which is, in rGyal-tshab’s gloss, an obscuration to cultivation of the spirit of supreme enlightenment, thinking "I will not be able to attain unexcelled enlightenment because I do not have the Buddha-gene;" hence, dispelling this leads to cultivating the spirit;

(2) the fault of contempt for inferior beings when one has cultivated the spirit but has not realized that all beings have the Buddha-gene, which is, according to rGyal-tshab, an obscuration to the performance of the bodhisattva deeds, thinking "I can attain enlightenment but not the others;" hence dispelling it leads to performing the deeds with a wish to direct all living beings onto the perfect enlightenment;
(3) the fault of reification, apprehending things established in unreality as established in reality, which is an obscuration to the realization of the meaning of the ultimate reality;

(4) the fault of repudiation, denying reality, the naturally pure Element which makes all buddha qualities possible; hence dispelling it leads to unerring understanding of the two realities; and

(5) the fault of the excessive attachment to oneself which is self-cherishing, in rGyal-tshab's view an obscuration to the realization of equal exchange between self and other that is the cause of producing the spirit of supreme enlightenment; hence dispelling it leads to producing the spirit on the basis of equal exchange.

According to rGyal-tshab, these five faults apparently include all major resistant obstacles to the entire Mahāyāna path, and the teaching of the last wheel on the existence of the Buddha-essence is taught for the purpose of dispelling these faults. In other words, the third wheel teaches the entire Mahāyāna path by its unique cataphatic discourse on the ultimate reality in the way. rGyal-tshab describes this as first cultivating the spirit of supreme enlightenment, and then learning the deeds in general, and finally last two transcendences,\(^{123}\) in particular realizing the Element:

\[\text{On the contrary, through learning this teaching on the existence of the Buddha-gene within all living beings, there arises in the mind of these disciples enthusiasm for that attainment of buddhahood, respect for other living beings as for the Teacher, wisdom which realizes that the faults are not established by means of any intrinsic}\]

\[^{123}\text{Meditation and wisdom.}\]
reality, intuition which realizes that all buddha qualities are possible to bring about, and great love, as explicated above.\textsuperscript{124}

In sum, the teaching of the Buddha-essence represented by the TGS is accepted by rGyal-tshab as the third stage of the three stage scheme of the DIR as well as the last wheel in terms of the temporal sequentiality, but not in terms of the philosophical/doctrinal distinction; thus it is not identical to the third wheel of the three wheel scheme of the SNS. Moreover, in rGyal-tshab's view, the naturally pure Element taught in the last wheel is equivalent to the emptiness explicated in the middle wheel; hence, these two teachings are not mutually contradictory. As a result, the arrangement of the three wheels according to the DIR is deemed to be the distinctive definitive teaching system of the Prāsaṅgika- Madhyamaka school as understood by Tsong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab.

5. The TGS as Being Definitive

As a common hermeneutical practice, the RGV is scrutinized by Tibetan exegetes along with the TGS; it is treated, in a sense, as a commentary on one of the most important scriptures on the subject. The Buddha-essence is a central motif in the TGS and is explicated in detail by the nine similes. In the RGV, the Essence is determined thoroughly by the nine similes of the obscured factor and their corresponding imports as well as the nine similes of the obscuring factors and their corresponding imports. This will be closely examined in Chapter 7. The RGV also explains the arrangement of the ten

\textsuperscript{124} rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma, 170b.
points, which is not found literally as elucidated in the TGS, but, according to rGyal-tshab, in the SMS.

Among Tibetan exegetes, Bu-ston accepts the TGS as a scripture which fits into the category of the last wheel of the three wheel scheme according to SNS, and hence interpretable in meaning. In Bu-ston's view, this sūtra teaches that the Buddha-essence is identical to the Truth Body, similar to the presupposition of a permanent entity as found in the LAS.

Before continuing our discussion, it is necessary to take a close look at a section of the LAS. Owing to its importance, it deserves a full citation as follows:

[Mahâmati questions:]
The Lord promulgates the Buddha-essence in the discourses, saying it is naturally luminous, primordially pure, endowed with the thirty-two marks, and existing within the bodies of all living beings. You say it is like a precious gem, wrapped in a filthy rag, being permanent, stable, and eternal, but wrapped by the [rag] of the aggregates, elements, and sense-media, [overpowered by attachment, hatred and misknowledge, and defiled with constructive thoughts.] How is this Buddha-essence-theory different from the soul-theory of the heterodox? For the heterodox also espouse a soul as permanent, inactive, qualityless, all-pervading, and indestructible.125

[In answer, the Buddha states:]
Mahâmati, my teaching of the Buddha-essence is not the same as the heterodox soul-theories. Mahâmati, the Tathâgatas, Ārhas, perfect Buddhas teach the Essence for the meaning of the words such as "emptiness," "correct extreme," "nirvâna," "non-production," "signlessness," and "wishlessness," in order to avoid the fear of selflessness on the part of the naïve. Their discourse with reference to the Buddha-essence teaches the state of non-conceptuality, the non-apparent object.

Mahâmati, present and future bodhisattvas should not become attached to it as a self. Mahâmati, for example, potters manufacture a variety of vessels out of one mass of clay particles with their hands, manual skill, a rod, water, thread, and efforts. Mahâmati, similarly the Tathâgatas also teach the objective selflessness which is a dearth of all constructive thoughts. Endowed with the wisdom of that

125 Thurman, *The Central Philosophy of Tibet*, 347, with slight modifications (in brackets) according to the edition used in the *rGyud bla gikā*. 
[selflessness] and with liberative technique, they, like a potter, teach it with various expressions in words and letters either as the Buddha-essence or as selflessness.

Thus, Mahāmati, the teaching of the Buddha-essence is not the same as the heterodox soul-theories. Mahāmati, in order to educate the heterodox who are attached to soul-theories, the Tathāgatas teach Buddha-essence through the teaching of the Buddha-essence. Thinking that those beings whose thoughts have been dominated by soul-ideologies will more quickly come to unexcelled perfect enlightenment, if their thoughts dwell in the sphere of the three doors of liberation...¹²⁶

According to rGyal-tshab, this "Buddha-essence in the discourses" clearly refers to a type of Buddha-essence taught in interpretable scriptures which cannot be taken literally.

rGyal-tshab explicates this section by first rephrasing Mañjuśrī's question: if the statement could be taken literally that within the bodies of all living beings there exists a permanent and substantial Buddha-essence which is decorated with the thirty-two marks, but wrapped by the rags of contaminated aggregates, elements, and sense-media, then like a precious gem wrapped in a filthy rag, overpowered by three poisons, and mixed with defilement of constructive thoughts, it would be no different from some non-Buddhists' advocacy of a personal self. If, on the other hand, it has a deeper intention, this statement must contain (1) the intended basis, (2) its purpose, and (3) the refutation of the literalness of this teaching. And then, in rGyal-tshab's gloss, the Buddha proves the interpretability of this statement by the following answers: (1) the intended basis is "emptiness" and so on; (2) this kind of scripture was taught for the purpose of educating in stages the naïve disciples of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna who are afraid of the teaching of objective selflessness, and the non-Buddhists who are attached and previously habituated to soul-theories on the ultimate reality; and (3) if taken literally this teaching would be no different from soul-theories advocated by the non-Buddhists.

¹²⁶ As cited in the rGyud bla ’bya, 77b-78a.
Furthermore, according to rGyal-tshab, the refutation of the literalness of this teaching consists of the reasoning that refutes a personal self as well.

According to rGyal-tshab, the teaching on Buddha-essence in the TGS is literally intended because this sūtra does not show that a buddha endowed with the twofold purity ever exists within the continua of living beings. Instead, it teaches that Buddha-essence is a treasure from which the powers, etc., will come about. The TGS states:

This poor householder thinks of himself as poor and wanders above [the treasure] without hearing, knowing, and perceiving it. Worthy son, likewise, underneath all living beings' insistently reifying mind there exists the Buddha-essence, a great treasure of all qualities of the Buddha such as the ten powers, fearlessnesses, and unique qualities. However, these beings have grown attached to form, sound, smell, taste, and contact, hence transmigrating within saṃsāra. Not hearing of this great Dharma treasure, they will not obtain it and will not make effort to cleanse it [from defilements].

Moreover, in rGyal-tshab's view, the TGS does not advocate even literally that a buddha exists within a living being. It clearly states the intention of the statement cited above:

Within deluded beings who all have addictions, there exists the noumenon of the Tathāgata that is immovable and is not affected by any state of existence.

Perceiving this, the Buddha proclaims: "They are all like me!"
rGyal-tshab explains that the Buddha, referring to living beings' possession of emptiness as the mind's nature which is not different from the noumenon of the Tathāgata and is never penetrated by the defilements, proclaims: "They are all like me!" rGyal-tshab argues that this sūtra clearly proclaims the existence of the noumenon in order to avoid the possible misunderstanding that there exists within the continuum of a living being a buddha's Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity. Also, if this explication were unacceptable, since in the TGS the Buddha states "perceiving all living beings, the Buddha-essence," then living beings themselves would be accepted as the Buddha-essence. On the other hand, if the TGS had to be considered interpretable because it cannot to be taken literally, then the statement from the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra that "there is no form, no sound..." must be also accepted as intentional, unsuitable to be taken literally, because they are both under the same situation. Furthermore, as rGyal-tshab points out, if the TGS is not literally intended but interpretable in meaning, there would not be the slightest need for the RGV to show the aforementioned necessity of the teaching on Buddha-essence.

According to rGyal-tshab, some Tibetan scholars assert that the Buddha-essence, as taught in the RGV(V), is identical to the fundamental consciousness determined in the Vijñānavāda school. It seems that they base this assertion on the statement in the Ghanavyūha-sūtra:

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129 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ḅka', 166a.
The various grounds are the fundamental consciousness, and the Buddha-essences are virtuous. Tathagatas teach that very nature by means of the expression "fundamental consciousness." Although the "Essence" is expressed as the "fundamental consciousness," the feeble-minded are unaware of it.\footnote{Thurman, The Central Philosophy of Tibet, 350.}

\(\text{rGyal-tshab refutes this assertion by arguing that there is not even the smallest fragment of the RGV(V) that explicates the fundamental consciousness. According to rGyal-tshab, neither the fundamental consciousness nor the ultimate three vehicles are accepted in Asanga's personal understanding, because the RGVV accepts the existence of external things and establishes the ultimate unique vehicle as discussed above. In rGyal-tshab's view, the "[Buddha-] essence" mentioned in the statement just cited is the first type that is interpretable in meaning. He argues that this statement does not indicate that the Essence is a permanent entity. It also does not indicate that the fundamental consciousness is an entity different from the collection of the six consciousnesses in spite of the fact that this scripture seems to show that the Essence is the intended meaning for the fundamental consciousness.}

\(\text{rGyal-tshab further explains that the LAS teaches that such an Essence cannot be taken literally but has a deeper intention; that intention being the emptiness that is free from any reifications as its intended basis. Likewise, having emptiness as the same basis of intention, the Buddha teaches the fundamental consciousness as being an entity different from the collection of the six consciousnesses. Hence, according to rGyal-tshab,}\)
Buddha-essence and fundamental consciousness are synonyms in terms of intended meaning instead of designation, and therefore are not literally equivalent.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{131} rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla bka, 76b-77a. cf. José Ignacio Cabezon, \textit{A Dose of Emptiness: An Annotated Translation of the sTong thun chen mo of mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang}, trans. (Albany: State University of New York, 1992), 331-332.
Chapter 3

Critiques of Absolutism, Skepticism, and Quietism

As José Ignacio Cabezon aptly points out, the great luminaries of a tradition are often its polemists.\textsuperscript{132} It is reasonable to think that the dGe-lugs-pa school was to a great extent established on the basis of its founders' dynamic responses to their rivals' philosophical/doctrinal positions. For example, the \textit{Drang nges legs bshad snying po}, one of the most important philosophical works of Tsong-kha-pa is deemed to be a critique of Dol-po-pa's "Other-emptiness" (gzhan stong) theory in an indirect manner, without Dol-po-pa's name being mentioned.\textsuperscript{133}

As one of Tsong-kha-pa's chief disciples, rGyal-tshab defended his mentor's view by criticizing the dGe-lug-pa opponents. But unlike mKhas-grub, who is famous or infamous for being an active apologist of the tradition founded by Tsong-kha-pa, rGyal-tshab defended the tradition in a relatively mild manner. rGyal-tshab's \textit{rGyud bla rikā}, akin to the mainstream of Tibetan commentarial literature, is not only an exegetical work simply glossing words and elucidating concepts but also serves as a polemical treatise. It establishes its interpretations by critiquing rival standpoints concerning the central issues. In the \textit{rGyud bla rikā}, Dol-po-pa's theory is mainly targeted for its "non-Buddhist way" of thinking about the Buddha-essence doctrine. A kind of quietism associated with a quasi-Other-emptiness theory as held by 'Gos-lo from the bKa'-brgyud-pa school is also

\textsuperscript{132} Freedom from Extremes: Gorampa's "Distinguishing the Views" and the Polemics of Emptiness, (Boston: Wisdom, 2007), 4
obliquely criticized. On some occasions, rGyal-tshab attacks assertions made by rNgog-lo and Rong-ston, Rong-ston being one of the most influential Sa-skya-pa scholars at that time.\textsuperscript{134} In this chapter, we will focus on rGyal-tshab's evaluation of Dol-po-pa's philosophical perspective and 'Gos-lo's meditation method. This will provide a comparative context for better understanding of rGyal-tshab's own positions on the Buddha-essence doctrine, which will be discussed in later chapters.

1. Critique of Dol-po-pa's "Great Madhyamaka"

Dol-po-pa labeled his Other-emptiness theory as "Great Madhyamaka" in order to distinguish it from Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka which, in his view, is based on the second Dharma-wheel teaching of a mere "self-emptiness" (rang stong). According to Tāranātha (1575-1634), the Other-emptiness theory is also called "Cognition Madhyamaka,"\textsuperscript{135} since it was illuminated by the texts of the founders of the Yogācāra school as well as by Nāgārjuna.\textsuperscript{136} This designation makes sense and was well-summarized by Cyrus Stearns who said, "Dolpopa considered one of the essential characteristics of this Great Madhyamaka to be the use of the paradigm of the three-nature theory (trisvabhāva), which was almost always considered a hallmark of the Yogācāra or Cittamātra tradition."

\textsuperscript{134} Besides the Sa-skya tradition, Rong-ston also maintained the exegetical tradition starting from rNgog-lo and established the Phun po Nālendra Monastery in 1435. He was a prolific author with over 300 commentarial works on 41 treatises.
\textsuperscript{135} rnam rig dbu ma.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 88.
understanding of the three-nature theory, although he did not launch a direct critique of the Other-emptiness theory in a systematic way, never mentioning Dol-po-pa by name.

Refuting Dol-po-pa’s classification of the TGS

According to Dol-po-pa, the three stages taught in the DIR are identical to the three Dharma-wheels taught in the SNS. Taranātha explains that the final wheel of doctrine consists of two types of scripture: (1) the sūtras "composed with common, coarse tenets teaching that the noumenon is truly established,"¹³Ạ such as the SNS; and (2) the sūtras "composed -as secret discourse- with the detailed, uncommon tenet that just that basic element of reality, the matrix of One-Gone-Thus, the body of attributes, the permanent-stable-eternal, and all ultimate Buddha-qualities primordially indwell intrinsically,"¹³９ such as the TGS. Hence, Other-emptiness thinkers maintain that the TGS is an example of the third wheel taught in the SNS, and that there is no difference other than coarse and subtle between the SNS and the TGS in their being definitive-meaning scriptures.

rGyal-tshab dismissed this assertion by Dol-po-pa as an "audacious claim which does not understand the subject even a little." As discussed in Chapter 3, rGyal-tshab argues that these two sūtras are not the same in philosophical perspectives because the SNS asserts that the imagined (parikalpita) reality is devoid of reality, and the relative (paratantra) and perfect (parinishpanna) realities are really established; whereas the TGS teaches that all things are devoid of reality, thus naturally pure, and defilements are coincidental. Moreover, in rGyal-tshab’s view, the SNS and the TGS (along with the RGV[V]) are not in mutual agreement because the former sūtra teaches the three ultimate vehicles to buddhahood, whereas the latter advocates the ultimate unique vehicle. As

¹³Ạ Jeffrey Hopkins, The Essence a/Other-Emptiness, (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 2007), 73.
¹³９ Ibid, 75-76.
mentioned above, rGyal-tshab maintains that the teaching of the three stages of the DIR is a guide for an individual on how to make progress in stages, in order to establish the ultimate unique vehicle, whereas the SNS holds that the three Dharma-wheels in stages are meant for different types of persons.

Refuting Buddha-essence as a permanent entity

Dol-po-pa asserts that "since the ultimate's own entity is even very established, it is not non-existent, and imputational things, which are other than that, do not arise or do not exist." According to Dol-po-pa, in the second turning of the wheel, all conventional things are said to be similar to clouds, dreams, and illusions because of being empty of self-nature; and in the last wheel, the existence of the Buddha-essence is the final definitive statement on ultimate reality, which is only empty of other conventional things (gzhan stong). rGyal-tshab points out that "self-emptiness" in Dol-po-pa's view means emptiness of own essence, inert emptiness, nihilistic emptiness, and partial emptiness, and only refers to conventional things. In short, conventional things are empty of conventional things themselves; for example, a vase is empty of the vase itself. And Dol-po-pa's "Other-emptiness" refers to the Buddha-essence as the ultimate reality, which is devoid of all conventional things but is endowed with all excellences such as the buddha-powers, etc., which thus exist within the continua of living beings even from the very beginning. rGyal-tshab names this "absolute absolute" as a "permanent entity (rtag dngos)," a term usually reserved for describing the concept of the ultimate reality asserted

140 Jeffery Hopkins, Mountain Doctrine, 331.
141 rang gi ngo bos stong pa.
142 bem stong.
143 chad stong.
144 nyi tshe' stong pa.
by non-Buddhists in India. Dol-po-pa, however, would not accept such a disparaging
term as anything to do with his theory. As defended by Tārānātha, the permanent entity
asserted by non-Buddhists does not exist among knowable objects but the uncompounded
ultimate reality, as understood by Dol-po-pa, does exist as a knowable object.¹⁴⁵

rGyal-tshab argues that if the ultimate reality is a permanent entity, such as the non-
dual gnosis asserted by Other-emptiness thinkers, then it would be a spatial or temporary
thing with limited characteristics such as any material or mental entity would have.¹⁴⁶ If it
is a spatial, temporary thing with limited characteristics, then according to Buddhist
epistemology, it is impermanent. If it is not a spatial, temporary thing with limited
characteristics, one then must admit that what exists in the continuum of a particular
person would also exist in the continua of all living beings. Furthermore, rGyal-tshab
continues to argue, the past things would still exist in the future and the future things
would already exist in the past. Likewise, the one who has fallen asleep would be also
awake and the one who stays awake would be also asleep, thus, no difference could be
drawn between sleeping time and non-sleeping time. rGyal-tshab further argues that, if
the ultimate reality is a permanent entity and is absolutely identical at different times, then
a person would always perceive it without the difference between meditative equipoise and
aftermath. If the ultimate reality is not permanent, then this would contradict the Other-
emptiness thinkers' own assertion that the ultimate reality is not suitable to be a spatial,
temporary thing with limited characteristics.¹⁴⁷

In addition to this, rGyal-tshab argues from the perspective of the relationship

¹⁴⁶ For Tārānātha's description of characters of the perfect reality (*yongs grub*), see Hopkins, *The Essence of Other-
Emptiness*, 92.
¹⁴⁷ rGyal-tshab, *rGyud bla bika*, 69b-70b.
between the two realities: conventional and ultimate. There are two possibilities for this relationship. One possibility is that Other-emptiness means that the ultimate reality is empty of being conventional reality. The other is that Other-emptiness means that the ultimate reality is empty of the existence of conventional things. If the former were taken to be the case, rGyal-tshab would deride proponents of the Other-emptiness as being the "uttermost intelligent," for the reason that they are the ones who first have the unreasonable doubt as to whether the ultimate reality is the conventional reality, and then are in need of dispelling this doubt. If the latter were the case, as rGyal-tshab argues, it would contradict Dol-po-pa's own assertion that "the thoroughly established character is without production...Because it is the noumenon of all phenomena, it is omnipresent and all-pervasive."\footnote{Hopkins, \textit{The Essence of Other-Emptiness}, 92.} Dol-po-pa defends his position by maintaining that the ultimate reality is "the basis primordially empty and void of all adventitious phenomena and is the pure basis."\footnote{Hopkins, \textit{Mountain Doctrine}, 316.} In rGyal-tshab's rephrased words, this means that ultimate reality's own objective condition has never been infiltrated by the relative. To counter this idea rGyal-tshab argues from the perspective of the relative itself in three possible ways. Firstly, if this assertion means that conventional things such as vase, woolen cloth, etc. are not permanent entities, then it follows that śrāvakas such as Sautrāntikas would also master thoroughly the import of Other-emptiness because they have fully realized by validating cognition that vase, woolen cloth, and so on are impermanent. If accepted, the disciples of the Śrāvaka vehicle would be "Great Mādhyamikas." Secondly, if it means that the conventional things do not have truth-status, then it would have nothing to do with the Other-emptiness theory since proponents of Other-emptiness accept that self-emptiness
means that conventional things are empty of conventional things themselves, instead of
being empty of truth-status. Thirdly, if it means that conventional things are not the
ultimate reality, it follows that Yogācāra proponents would be "Great Mādhyamikas" too
because they also assert that conventional things such as vase and woolen cloth are not
the ultimate reality. At this point, rGyal-tshab critiques Dol-po-pa's view as the "ultimate
nihilism that deprecates all the conventional things" because the latter claims that
"imputational natures are natureless in that they do not exist by way of their own
character; aside from being established as mere conventionalities, or as unreal
conventionalities, they are not established even as conventional truths, or real
conventionalities. Other-powered natures are natureless in that although they exist as
entities conventionally produced from others, they do not exist as entities produced from
themselves, and in reality they are not established at all."\textsuperscript{150}

Most importantly, according to rGyal-tshab, the view of the ultimate reality as a
permanent entity not depending on the negation\textsuperscript{151} of a negatee amounts to the notion of
permanence asserted by non-Buddhist philosophers, for none of the Indian Buddhist scholars
would accept permanence as independently established.\textsuperscript{152} According to Dharmakīrti's
Buddhist epistemology, a permanent thing (nityatva) is something uncompounded,
unchangeable by cause and condition, and is necessary as a negation in opposition to an
entity (vastu), which is compounded and is necessary a positive establishment.\textsuperscript{153} To
accept something as a permanent thing and an entity at the same time is deemed to be

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., 401.
\textsuperscript{151} dgags pa.
\textsuperscript{152} bsgrub pa rang dbang pa.
\textsuperscript{153} sgrub pa. This is the position held by dGe-'dun-grub-pa, the first Dalai Lama. 'Jam-dbyangs-bzhad-pa asserted that
an entity is not necessarily a positive establishment, but can also be an implicative negation. See bLo-bzang-chos-grags,
Tsad ma rig pa'i spyi don rigs gelhung rgya mtsos'i 'jug ngogs, (Xining: mTso sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1998),
374-375.
directly self-contradictory. In short, according to Buddhists, a positive, independent self as a permanent entity does not exist in any object of knowledge. Among Buddhist philosophical traditions, only the Vaibhāṣīka school accepts permanence as something having functionality, but even they agree that it depends on the negation of negatee. According to Dol-po-pa, the space-like emptiness of truth-status asserted by "proponents of self-emptiness" is not the ultimate reality since it is a mere non-entity. In this regard, rGyal-tshab warns against only accepting a positive establishment as meaningful without realizing the importance of a negation:

Someone asserts that impermanence is concomitant with anything which exists and takes this as the intention of the seven treatises on valid cognition. Having an instinct for such perverse views causes severe damage. That is, the one who talks like this would not properly understand and believe the arrangement proved by validating cognition that the permanence which is addressed by scholars is the negation of disintegration. Consequently, he or she would repudiate the arrangement proved by validating cognition that the import of selflessness is an absolute negation, i.e. the mere exclusion of a personal or objective self, understood by the wisdom which has recognized selflessness. Thus, it should be known that [this kind of assertion] would indicate the presence of a strong instinct for an intellectual personal self-habit.

On this basis, rGyal-tshab accuses Dol-po-pa of misunderstanding the RGV's notion of the "supreme self," which actually refers to one of the transcendences associated with the Truth Body, and chides him for holding it to be something similar to what non-Buddhists believe:

[T]he exemplification of the supreme self is clearly explicated as the selflessness which is perceived by the Buddha's noumenally omniscient intuition. Thus, the assertion that the exemplification of the supreme self is not the mere negation of
personal self and objective self but a positive, independent self, a permanent entity, should be known as coming from a great habitual affinity for the heterodox view. And this assertion which accepts such an obsession with an erroneous self as the realization of the meaning of reality should be known as the chief negatee of this treatise and its commentary...Think whether "self" means a positive, independent, permanent entity and you will come to the understanding that only selflessness is justifiable.\(^{160}\)

Tāranātha defended Dol-po-pa against such a severe charge arguing that real permanence is a unique permanence, devoid of reifications of impermanent positive entities and negative permanent non-entities, which are mere conceptual constructs.\(^{161}\) rGyal-tshab's possible response will be discussed below.

*Refuting Buddha-essence as being endowed with twofold purities*

Based on his distinctive theory of the ultimate reality, Dol-po-pa proclaims that the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity always exists within the continuum of any living being:

This matrix-of-One-Gone-Thus itself, the naturally luminous and uncompounded noumenon, is endowed undifferentiably with the inseparable qualities of Buddhahood passed beyond the count of the grains of sands of the banks of the Ganges.\(^{162}\)

In the *rGyud blaḥikā*, rGyal-tshab responds to this argument that the reasoning is flawed. According to rGyal-tshab, although it is true that the mind's objective condition has never been infiltrated by addictions such as attachment, etc., and is not in accord with the


\(^{161}\) Hopkins, *The Essence of Other-Emptiness*, 135.

\(^{162}\) *Ibid.*, 95.
perceptual habit\textsuperscript{163} of the truth-addicted conviction, it is incorrect to assert that the nature of a living being's mind is free from all coincidental defilements. In his view, the twofold purity, i.e. the intrinsic purity and the purity free of defilements, is the character of the Truth Body alone. It is not possessed by a living being whose mind is a naturally pure noumenon but mingled with defilements. He argues from different perspectives as follows:

1. If the intrinsic purity of a living being's mind were already isolated from all coincidental defilements, then any living being inevitably would be a buddha; yet he or she never recognizes that he or she is a buddha. If Dol-po-pa insisted that there is no fault in such an assertion, then he would be forced to make a speech repudiating the Buddha as a foolish person, not even knowing whether he himself was a buddha or a living being.

2. If the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity were to exist within the continuum of a living being, and is of the same nature as his or her mind, then one is taking that Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity existing within the continuum of a living being as the basis of differentiation.\textsuperscript{164} rGyal-tshab then puts a question to Dol-po-pa: does this Truth Body obscured by the coincidental defilements exist in the continuum of a living being or not? If the former were the case, then it would contradict the notion that the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity exists there. If the latter were the case, then the continuum of a living being and the twofold purity would be the same in nature, beyond the continuum of an ordinary being. This would refute Dol-po-pa's own position that the continuum of a living being is thoroughly tainted by defilements. Furthermore, if the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity existed

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{163} 'dzin stangs.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{164} khyad par gyi gshi.}
within the continuum of a living being as the mind's noumenon, it would be incorrect to assert that a living being's mind is simultaneously both mingled with defilements and free of coincidental defilements in its objective condition.

(3) If the Truth Body existed in an entirely different way from a living being's mind, then it would be totally incorrect to assert that a living being and a buddha are mingled together, because two opposite simultaneous things are not suitable to have a relation of relativity.

(4) If the Truth Body existed inseparably from a living being's mind, then the assertion that the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity primordially and intrinsically dwells both within the continuum of a living being and in an inseparable manner would contradict all reasonings.  

Again, rGyal-tshab criticizes the Other-emptiness theory that the ultimate reality adorned with all transcendent excellences always exists within the continua of all beings, for that makes it no different from the position of the Śaivites that accepts an eternal, self-originated omniscience. In rGyal-tshab's view, this kind of presupposition also implies a position that the ultimate reality is an eternal entity and conventional reality is its transformation akin to the Sāṃkhya philosophy that accepts primal nature (prakṛti), an eternal entity, as both the ultimate reality and as the nature of its transformations such as form, sound, etc.  

Tāranātha defends Dol-po-pa's position by proclaiming "although just that thusness of a buddha abides in sentient beings, sentient beings do not perceive it from their own side, and hence it is a matrix that has the meaning of being hidden from sentient

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165 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla lbsd, 69b-70a.
166 Ibid., 133b-134a.
beings." A simile is used by Tāranātha to illustrate his point that "we do not assert that whatever is [in] the continuum of sentient beings is a buddha; if it follows due to the fact that the buddha and the buddha-qualities dwell in the continuum of sentient beings, then would it necessarily follow that, when a Buddha resides on the throne, even the throne would know all objects of knowledge?" rGyal-tshab responds by asking: if a buddha endowed with twofold purity existed within the continuum of any living being, which continuum would be free from those defilements? rGyal-tshab argues that it is incorrect to say it is the self-continuum because it follows that separation has already existed in the self-continuum since beginningless samsāra when no slightest defilement has been eliminated. It is also incorrect to assert that defilements of the other-continuum do not exist in the self-continuum because it then follows that the attainment of the Truth of Cessation would not depend on the direct realization of the meaning of reality. Instead, it would be more like ascertaining the non-existence of a vase on a ground which is devoid of any vases.

Furthermore, rGyal-tshab rejects any sort of understanding of a "permanent entity" endowed with twofold purity as existing within a living being's continuum, on the basis that it has no soteriological value. This is because it is not conducive to the cultivation of the spirit of enlightenment, the doorway of Mahāyāna Buddhism. He argues that according to the Other-emptiness theory, an "ultimate" living being is a permanent entity, therefore he or she would not have the aspiration of becoming a buddha. In addition, there is no need for this being to become a buddha again because he or she has been a buddha from the beginning. As for a "conventional" living being, rGyal-tshab argues, the

167 Hopkins, The Essence of Other-Emptiness, 94.
168 ibid., 110.
169 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skad, 26a.
living being is empty of himself or herself just as child of a barren woman is not existent among knowable things. Hence, no living beings would be inspired by such a teaching on the existence of the Buddha-essence as a permanent entity simply because none of them would even exist. In conclusion, rGyal-tshab declares that the Other-emptiness theory is an "erroneous view" which falls into both extremes of eternalism and nihilism, and therefore the Buddhist view is diametrically opposed to this theory. 170

2. Critique of the Mainstream Positions

‘Gos-lo was a contemporary rGyal-tshab. Despite his close relationship with the bKa'-brgyud tradition, his non-sectarian approach made it possible for him to receive teachings from the most important teachers outside the tradition. As reported by Zhva-dmar-Choskyi-grags-pa, 'Gos-lo also studied with Tsong-kha-pa and "became particularly fond of his analytical approach, and also for the distinction he made between the provisional and definitive meanings on the basis of the RGV." 171 Zhva-dmar does not further inform us how this distinction was made. However, based on the discussion in Chapter 2, we can reasonably speculate that this distinction might refer to the difference between the provisional teaching on Buddha-essence as a permanent entity mentioned in the LAS and the definitive teaching on Buddha-essence as a cataphatic expression of the sūnyatā theory of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra.

Be that as it may, I find it problematic to assert that 'Gos-lo's extensive commentary on the RGVV accords with Tsong-kha-pa's RGV-based hermeneutics just because 'Gos-

170 ibid, 164b-165a.
171 Klaus-Dieter Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsi ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary on the Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā, (Theg pa chen rgyud bla ma' bstan bcos kyi 'grel bshad de kho na nyid rd tu gsal ba'i me long), ed. (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2003), ix.
lo claims that the commentarial tradition of rNgog-lo is integrated with sGam-po-pa's (1079-1153) Mahāmudrā interpretation of the RGV, as Mathes has suggested.\footnote{Ibid., xi.}

Firstly, although 'Gos-lo claims that the commentarial tradition of rNgog-lo is integrated with sGam-po-pa's Mahāmudrā interpretation of the RGV, the extent remains questionable, because sGam-po-pa apparently does not follow the theory of the "two wheels," a hermeneutic measure developed by rNgog-lo to explain the entire RGV.\footnote{See Chapter 4 of this present work.} In addition to this, rGya1-tshab actually critiques rNgog-lo's philosophical perspective on the ultimate reality, as will be examined shortly. Secondly, as asserted by Kong-sprul bLo-gros-mtha'-yas (1813-1899), the bKa'-brgyud interpretation of the RGV which came down to 'Gos-lo through Phag-mo-gru-pa's (1110-1170) disciple, 'Bri-gung 'Jig-rteng-gsum-mgon (1143-1217), had a deep affinity for Dol-po-pa's Other-emptiness theory.\footnote{S. K. Hookham, \textit{The Buddha Within: Tathagatagarbha Doctrine According to the Shentong Interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga}, (Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1992), 280.} This is anathema to Tsong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab, as discussed earlier. Thirdly, 'Gos-lo argues in favor of the "path of direct experience," the meditation system of Buddha-essence stemming from the lineage of the translators gZung and bTsan, but not of the "path of inference," the explanation system of Buddha-essence coming down from rNgog-lo and his students.\footnote{Ibid., 276-277.} 'Gos-lo's commentary not only remains in many ways sharply different from Tsong-kha-pa/rGyal-tshab's exegetical expositions, but also became a target of criticism for rGyal-tshab, in regard to its doctrinal and soteriological positions.

In a sense, 'Gos-lo's view on the ultimate reality represents the mainstream perspectives on Buddhist ontology and on the Buddha-essence doctrine at his time.
According to him, the ultimate reality is neither reified as having a truth-status, as Dol-po-pa asserts, nor a mere exclusion negation as asserted by rNgog-lo and, by extension, by Tsong-kha-pa. Variant forms of such a view had dominated most Tibetan Buddhist thinkers' way of postulating the ultimate reality before the establishment of the dGe-lugs-pa school. Thereafter, it has been strongly defended by the most important non-dGe-lugs-pa scholars, such as: sTag-tshang lo-tsa-ba Shes-rab-rin-chen (b. 1405), Śākya-mchog-laden (1428-1507), Go-rams-pa bSod-nams-seng-ge (1429-89), and Mi-pham-rgya-mtsho (1846-1912). Earlier forms of these dominant views are described collectively as "other systems that negate an overly broad identification of the object to be negated" in Tsong-kha-pa's famous Lam-rim-chen-mo. As Cabezon points out, these views can be grouped into three major sets of belief that Tsong-kha-pa, rGyal-tshab, and the later dGe-lugs-pas consider to be forms of skepticism or nihilism. To briefly summarize here, the first is considered by dGe-lugs-pas to be a form of quietism called "a view where nothing is to be thought of," ascribed to Hva-shang Mo-he-yen, the influential Chinese Chan master in the eighth century in Tibet and a central figure in the bSam-yas debate. The second is a form of epistemological skepticism criticized by Tsong-kha-pa and his followers, a view that challenges the validity of conceptual and linguistic knowledge. And the third is a form of radical ontological skepticism known as "the view that things are neither existent nor non-existent." Cabezon also aptly points out 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," or in Ruegg's opinion, "they are

177 José Ignacio Cabezón, A Dose of Emptiness, 7.
178 Ibid, 8.
nonetheless intelligible from other viewpoints that involve structural or 'family resemblance' criteria.\(^{179}\)

Now we shall take a close look at 'Gos-lo's positions based on his exegesis of the RGVV and dGe-lugs-pa scholars' responses to them.

'Gos-lo's position on Buddha-essence

According to 'Gos-lo, the Buddha-essence is referred to in the scriptures as one of the following four factors: (1) emptiness defined as exclusion-negation, (2) the natural luminosity of the mind, (3) the fundamental consciousness, and (4) bodhisattvas or all living beings.\(^{180}\) As mentioned above, 'Gos-lo maintains that there were two exegetical systems for interpreting the RGV in Tibet, and that rNgog-lo's system is based on the acceptance of the first factor as Buddha-essence:

The Great Lo-tsa-ba and his followers accepted that ultimate emptiness, defined as an exclusion negation, is explained in [Nāgārjuna's] *Reasoning Corpus*\(^{181}\) as Buddha-essence. Hence, the meaning of the expression "natural possession of the excellences" is that all excellences are naturally collected there because of the apprehension of emptiness. [Likewise,] the reason for being purified is [emptiness that serves as] the object of the purifying gnosis and is not to be newly added. As to the reason for being defiled: they are the subjective self and objective self fabricated by addictions, which are the objects of addictions; and they are not something that existed previously, [needing] to be removed. They also explicate the meaning of "diffusion of the Truth Body" as the possibility that living beings will obtain the Truth Body.\(^{182}\)

Following after Kamalaśīla, 'Gos-lo explains "exclusion negation" as the mere negation of the nature of an entity\(^{183}\) without any establishment of another entity. He further

\(^{180}\) Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsa ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 5.
\(^{181}\) *rigs pa'i tshogs*.
\(^{182}\) Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsa ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 5.
\(^{183}\) *dngos po'i ngo bo*. 

explains that it is "the object of worldly wisdom inclined to proliferation," and that the emptiness taught in the middle wheel is an exclusion negation, empty of intrinsic reality which is something's own nature not mixed with others. In 'Gos-lo's view, "intrinsic reality" means uncreated, e.g., the heat of fire, in contrast to heated water, not produced by the combination with other entities. The perceiver of this object is necessarily an inferential validating cognition. In terms of the soteriological import of an exclusion negation, 'Gos-lo asserts that inferential understanding eliminates the mistake of conceptual adherence but not the mistake of perception, for the inference is a conceptual construct and conceptuality is a mistaken entity-habit by its very nature. Since this "path of inference" looks towards the outside, 'Gos-lo concludes that "the understanding of exclusion negation stops the coarse form of misknowledge but not the subtle one, because during meditation it searches for other objects instead of recognizing [the mind] itself; thus being unable to uproot dualistic perceptions. Hence, this cannot help much to stop the ground of instincts for misknowledge." In brief, this approach is deemed inferior to the "path of direct experience" in the way that Kong-sprul maintains:

Nevertheless, it is taught that the Bodhisattva's great sickness is emptiness that is the non-implicative negation found through valid cognition through inference (rjes dpag tshad ma), because this very thing becomes a great bondage of concepts (rnam rtog pa). Therefore, due to the fact that the last Wheel [i.e. the third Dharmachakra] is

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184 spros bcos dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes. Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsal ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 6.
185 rjes su dpag pa'i tshad ma.
186 zhen pa 'khrul ba.
187 snang ba 'khrul ba.
188 Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsal ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 58.
189 Ibid., 426.
for entering into the non-conceptual (*rnam par mi rtog pa ’jug pa’i don*), it is also especially supreme.\(^{190}\)

On the other hand, 'Gos-lo's Mahāmudrā interpretation maintains that Buddha-essence is the noetic element by name "natural luminosity of the mind," which is explained as the mind's noumenon.\(^{191}\) This is emptiness as an implicative negation ascertained in the late wheel\(^{192}\) akin to the "essence" when compared with the emptiness as an exclusion negation that is like "outside skin." According to 'Gos-lo, this noetic emptiness cannot be the object of inference but only of perception. It is not produced by cause and condition but is somehow still produced like the natural origination of space and will never be changed by mixing with other things. Unlike in the middle wheel, the negatee of this emptiness refers to the artificial, coincidental things in contrast to the mind's nature that is undefiled and unchanged by any other conditions. As to the coincidental things, 'Gos-lo lists almost all kinds of mental activity as factors not in accord with the natural state of the mind, hence being empty. This list includes perceptions, conceptualities, inferential perspectives discussed in the Madhyamaka texts, sense hallucinations, dreams, meditative experiences, contaminated clairvoyance, the subjective selflessness realized by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and so forth. However, these mental activities cannot be produced outside the nature of the mind, just as clouds, etc., cannot stay anywhere but in sky. Furthermore, 'Gos-lo asserts that living beings' environments and physical bodies are the coincidental negatees of the noetic emptiness

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\(^{190}\) Hookham, *The Buddha Within*, 274.
\(^{191}\) *sems kyi chos nyid rig pa'i khams*.
\(^{192}\) *khor lo phyi ma*, this term refers to the scriptures on Buddha-essence. See a discussion about the term in Chapter 3.
since these are also produced from misknowledge. In terms of the noetic element itself, it is free of any signs\textsuperscript{193} which are, according to 'Gos-lo, the forms of different entities.\textsuperscript{194}

As to the mode of realizing this noetic emptiness, 'Gos-la asserts that, unlike the inferential approach, it is achieved by a method called "perceptual search."\textsuperscript{195} A student is instructed to produce single-pointed meditation characterized as direct experience of the immovable meditative equipoise that abandons any mental activities directed towards past, present, and future. If successful, he or she will be instructed to exclusively look\textsuperscript{196} at that direct experience itself, i.e. the mind which meditates inwards, in just the way that someone with eyes wide open discerns if there are any creatures in the water.\textsuperscript{197}

According to 'Gos-lo, this meditation will result in the perceptual insight into the selflessness of all things; it is called "proliferation-free yoga" for the natural luminosity of mind perceives the unreality\textsuperscript{198} of addictions. Again, 'Gos-lo clarifies that the term proliferation-free is not a mere exclusion negation, but rather a noetic phenomenon upon which no dualism whatsoever can be established. This instantaneous gnosis (\textit{rig pa}) which does not fall into any sides of perception and emptiness\textsuperscript{199} is the "pointed locus of Mahāmudrā."\textsuperscript{200} 'Gos-lo proclaims that the genuine path to liberation is the Mahāmudrā yoga meditating on noetic emptiness and not on analytical meditation.

'Gos-lo maintains that from the true mind,\textsuperscript{201} which is self-arisen intuition, emerges the dualistic misknowledge where the fundamental consciousness mistakes the

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\textsuperscript{193}\textit{mtshan ma}.
\textsuperscript{194}\textit{dngos po gang gong gi mam pa}. Mathes, 'Gos Lo tshā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 236.
\textsuperscript{195}\textit{mngon sum gyis 'tshol ba'i lshul}.
\textsuperscript{196}\textit{ita ba tsam 'ba' zig dyed}.
\textsuperscript{197}Mathes, 'Gos Lo tshā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 16.
\textsuperscript{198}\textit{ngo bo med pa}.
\textsuperscript{199}\textit{snang stong}.
\textsuperscript{200}\textit{phyag rgya chen pa'i mdzug gu 'dzugs so}.
\textsuperscript{201}\textit{sems gnyag ma}.
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recognition of the real face [of the mind]. That part of the noetic element becomes a phenomenon of samsāra, for the fundamental consciousness, which is akin to the reflected image of the noetic element, causes all samsāric perceptions. According to 'Gos-lo, such consciousness is called the "ground of instincts for misknowledge" in the SMS and is a subtle addicted intellect, perceiving self, etc. 'Gos-lo also explains that there is not the slightest misknowledge or addiction which can be found, outside the Element or the Essence of living beings; these two are not different in terms of kind. Hence, for a skilled meditator, the search for the Element starts from the addictions themselves because the Element is the very nature of the addictions. In brief, the luminous Element is defined by 'Gos-lo as the opposite of the murky minds bound up in the dualistic perception of subject and object; when separated from the conceptual convictions, the omniscient intuition will emerge naturally. As to the nature of this noetic element, which in reality is definitive, 'Gos-lo explains it as apperception that is free of all fabricated signs. He argues that apperception is not a conventional thing since it does not obscure reality (it is reality) and it is impossible for addictions to be produced by apprehending it. He also explains that this noetic element is possessed of compassion and the spiritual powers, since compassion will emerge spontaneously when reality, i.e. the noetic element, is realized. Therefore, since the noetic element as the spiritual gene is primordially possessed of all kinds of excellence (such as the powers), it is similar to the Truth Body.
Hence, it seems that for 'Gos-lo, the Mahāyāna soteriology is not involved in the
cultivation of compassion and wisdom but focuses on a meditation which "rests the mind
in its natural repose to stop dualistic perceptions."\(^{209}\)

dGe-lugs-pa scholars' responses

In his delineation of the mainstream view of meditation on emptiness at the time,
mKhas-grub observes some common features shared by scholars from different schools,
including rNying-ma, Jo-nang, bKa'-brgyud, and Sa-skya, as follows:

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 (gzhan stong), and on
whether reality truly exists, 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 Tripiṭaka, or that they are practicing the completion stage (rdzogs rim)
of the anuttorayoga, 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.\(^{210}\)

Gung-tang further points out the rationale behind the position that "no mental object
should be established" or that "the mind should apprehend nothing." According to Gung-
tang, this position is probably based upon the misconception that what is ascertained by
rational cognition needs to be sustained under rational cognition's analysis, as well as the
misconception that what is not ascertained by rational cognition is necessarily the negatee
of rational cognition.\(^{211}\) The former misconception repudiates the conventional existence
of the ultimate reality since it holds that anything ascertained by rational cognition is

\(^{209}\) Ibid., 234.
\(^{210}\) Cabezón, A Dose of Emptiness, 112-113.
\(^{211}\) Jam ngon rgya ba gnyis pa la bstan pa'i snying bo gzal bar mdzad pa'i tshul las brtsans te bstd pa don dang Idan
pa, 31.
necessarily established with truth-status, including emptiness. For instance, in 'Gos-lo's Mahāmudrā interpretation, the noetic element is often portrayed as "non-observable." The latter repudiates the conventional existence of conventional reality because it misunderstands all conventional things as the negatees of rational cognition; in 'Gos-lo's case, all dualistic perceptions are regarded as the negatees. However, Tsong-kha-pa argues that if the ultimate reality is the objective condition of all relativities and does not exist conventionally, it would absurdly follow that all other things would also not exist and that religious praxis is senseless. That would mean it is impossible to attain nirvāṇa, and the repudiation of relativity, karmic causality, and so forth would render Buddhist ethics useless. Overall, in Tsong-kha-pa's view, this position implies spiritual nihilism which is likely to damage intellectual development and Buddhist soteriology.

In the rGyud bla śīkā, rGyal-tshab critiques the "direct experience" approach to the ultimate reality in general stating that it leads to agnosticism or epistemological skepticism, and repudiates the validity of conceptual and linguistic knowledge. He argues that despite the fact that the ultimate reality can only be directly realized through meditation, it does not mean that the ultimate reality cannot be examined and investigated by intellectual study and contemplation; for a transcendent reality absolutely beyond language and concept would make any instructions to meditate on it impossible. For rGyal-tshab, careful study and deep contemplation of the ultimate reality are essential prerequisites to the final realization of it.

Also, Tsong-kha-pa, rGyal-tshab, and their tradition also assert that the ultimate reality, i.e. emptiness, is necessarily an exclusion negation of intrinsic reality; therefore

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212 dmigs pa med.
214 rGyal-tshab, Thog pa chen po rgyud bla ma śīkā, 21b.
there is a great difference in understanding the nature of the ultimate reality between rGyal-tshab and rNgog-lo. For rNgog-lo, the ultimate reality is not a conceptual object of language and conception. rNgog-lo maintains that "the ultimate reality is neither a knowable object nor an experienced object, [because] the intellect is accepted as being conventional." For rGyal-tshab, the ultimate reality is accessible by terms and concepts because it is an object of knowledge:

Despite the fact that the nature of a thing's identity cannot be penetrated by verbal expression, the ultimate reality can be fully realized in a dualistic way. On the other hand, a noumenon can neither be realized by language and constructive thought in the way of noble beings' meditative equipoise, nor by mentation. This does not suggest that the ultimate reality cannot at all be the object of language and constructive thought. If you assert that the ultimate reality is not an object of knowledge, it would follow that this would be a repudiation of the objective condition and would make the undertaking of monastic discipline worthless. This inferior way of thinking should be discarded.

In this regard, rGyal-tshab points out that rNgog-lo might err through the confusion of thinking that a thing's identity is not an object of language and concept; this fact entails that the ultimate reality cannot be reached by language and concept. According to Kamalaśīla's Bhāvanākrama, emptiness is first ascertained by inference, and then through familiarization with this inference, conceptuality will cease. A perception of emptiness can be produced, just in the way that the fire comes from the friction of wood rubbed together, causing the fire to consume the wood. This theory is embraced by Tsong-kha-pa and his tradition. Despite being well aware of it, 'Gos-lo remains indifferent to this inferential approach in general because, in his view, the assertion that

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215 sgra and rtag gi zhen yul ma yin pa.
216 Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dpal's Commentary, 562.
217 rang mtshan.
218 chos nyid.
219 rGyal-tshab, Theg pa chen po rgyud bla ma' tīka, 9a-b.
220 sGom pa'i rim pa, Toh.3915-17.
emptiness is an exclusion negation as discussed in Candrakīrti's MAśa held to be a mediocre system of Madhyamaka (dbu ma 'bring po), whereas the noetic emptiness that is taught in the Mahāmudrā lineage belongs to the supreme system of Madhyamaka (dbu ma mchog).

In addition, it seems that 'Gos-lo's theory of noetic emptiness also matches the ontological skepticism criticized by dGe-lugs-pa scholars. The position that "no mental object should be established" or that "the mind should apprehend nothing" is at best reflected in the popular literal interpretation of the fourfold negation of catuṣkoti with respect to existence as often found in Madhyamaka treatises - existence, non-existence, both, and neither - without any specific qualification as to what precisely is the negatee. In 'Gos-lo's Mahāmudrā interpretation, noetic emptiness is regarded as both gnosis and emptiness, thus devoid of the extremes of existence and non-existence.

For rGyal-tshab, 'Gos-lo's Mahāmudrā interpretation is an illogical argument for conceiving a factor that is permanent (emptiness) and impermanent (gnosis) simultaneously. Furthermore, he would argue that emptiness of intrinsic identifiability is the ultimate objective condition of all things, thus being permanent; if the ultimate reality had a noetic aspect, it would follow that cognition is also permanent. In his commentary on the PV, rGyal-tshab critiques the non-Buddhists' assertion that validating cognition is a permanent entity as follows:

Those vying with the Buddha's sacred words claim that [Dharmakīrti's statements can only] refute the idea that conventional validating cognition is permanent but not [their own assertion] that ultimate validating cognition is permanent. This talk does not understand a bit about the arrangement of reasoning.

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221 rig pa'i stong pa nyid.
222 Pramāṇavārttika II.9: tshad ma rtag pa nyid yod min | dngos yod rtogs pa tshad phyir dang | shes bya mi rtag pa nyid kyi | de mi mi brtan nyid phyir ro |.
refuting the permanence [of validating cognition]. If there were a kind of permanence in regard to conventional validating cognition, this cognition would be a permanent entity. If so, how can you make a difference between conventional and ultimate in terms of the negatee negated here and the ultimate validating cognition accepted by you? Think about it!223

According to rGyal-tshab, to assert a "self-arisen intuition" that is permanent, not newly produced by cause and condition, would amount to the non-Buddhists' concept of self-arisen omniscience as maintained by Śaivism, etc, an idea found unacceptable in all philosophical schools of Indian Buddhism.

Finally, 'Gos-lo's direct experience approach is critiqued by mKhas-grub as a form of quietism; for this "proliferation-free yoga" eliminates all dualistic perceptions and "rests the mind in its natural repose" of no thought. According to mKhas-grub, this kind of soteriological nihilism misunderstands non-mentation within the mind as a meditation on reality and therefore is not valuable to freedom from samsāra. For mKhas-grub, an ascertaining cognition of selflessness is required to put an end to wandering in samsāra; a mere prohibition of the mind from engaging in mental activity in regard to both the existence and non-existence of a self will not undermine the self-habit in the slightest; just as in the case of eliminating the fear of thieves on the road, it is necessary to ascertain there are no thieves anywhere; non-mentation of either the existence of the thieves or the non-existence of the thieves will not help in eliminating the fear even a little.224

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223 sangs rgyas kyi gsung rab la mtho 'sham pa gung dag | 'di dag gis tha snyad pa,tshad ma riag pa bkag pa yin gys | don dam pa,tshad ma riag pa bkag pa m yin no shes zer ba ni | riag pa 'jong pa,rigs pa,rnam gehag cung zad kyang ma chags pa,sgam ste | tha snyad pa,tshad ma yin pa,riag pa yod na | riag dangs kyi shad mar 'gyur la | de yin na skabs 'di,t dag hya dang | khyed kyi, 'dod pa,tshad ma gnis la don dam pa,dang | tha snyad kyi khyad par ci 'dag soms shig | Kho-tshe tshul-khrims, Tshad ma rnam 'grel gvi thig le'ur gyas pa,rnam bshad thar lam phyin ci ma log par gsol bar byed ba, in the Gang ljongs rig bcu,snying bcud chen mo, Vol. 4, ed. (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2003), 334.

224 Cabez6n, A Dose of Emptiness, 114.
In sum, Tsong-kha-pa, rGyal-tshab, and mKhas-grub critiqued mainstream Buddhist thought during their time for its misunderstanding of misknowledge, the idea that the root of samsāra is the discursive conceptual mind itself and not the conceptual mind's reification of intrinsic identifiability onto things. Also they critiqued the corresponding misunderstanding of the soteriological method as being the elimination of all dualistic thinking instead of being the precise negation of intrinsic identifiability in both analytical and single-pointed meditations.

3. A Comparison with Critiques of "Original-enlightenment" theory in Modern Chinese Buddhism

Chinese Buddhism is usually represented by three indigenous schools, Tiantai, Huayan, and Chan, founded in the Sui-Tang period. Despite distinct differences in the system of doctrinal classification (判教) and the style of meditation, the concept of "Original-enlightenment," based on the QXL, an influential treatise on Buddha-essence attributed to Aśvaghoṣa, is widely shared in these schools. Zongmi (宗密, 781-841), the fifth patriarch of Huayan school and an ardent advocate of the Southern line of Chan, classifies all popular traditions of Buddhist thought at his time in a doctrinal classification scheme called "three types of Chan" and "three teachings of Doctrine.\footnote{Chanyuan zhuquan ji daxu (禅源諸詮集都序), T.48.402b15-19.} According to this scheme, the Northern line is the type of Chan that "cultivates mind by eliminating delusion (息妄修心宗)," the Ox-head line is the type of Chan that is "utterly without support (泯絕無寄宗)," and the Southern line is the type of Chan that "directly reveals mind as nature (直顯心性宗)." The Vījñānavāda school belongs to the teaching "of
hidden intent that demonstrates phenomenal appearances on the basis of the nature (密意依性說相教)," the Madhyamaka school is the teaching "of hidden intent that negates phenomenal appearances in order to reveal the nature (密意破相顯性教)," and the Huayan and Tian-tai are the teachings that "directly reveal that the mind is the nature (顯示真心即性教)." It seems clear that, in Zongmi's view, Tiantai, Huayan, and the Southern Chan represent the Buddha's ultimate intention, i.e. the teaching on Buddha-essence that emphasizes "Original-enlightenment" as the final nature or the ultimate reality.

This way of understanding Buddha-essence or fo xing (佛性) remains the mainstream in Chinese Buddhist though ever since the QXL arrived, and appears to be unchallenged until the first half of the twentieth century in China. Ouyang Jingwu (歐陽竟無, 1871-1943), the founder of the Chinese Buddhist Institute (支那內學院), which is the first of its kind in the history of modern Chinese Buddhism, vehemently criticized the "Original-enlightenment" theory of the QXL, stating that it drastically deviated from Indian roots. Lucheng (呂澂, 1896-1989), a student of Ouyang, took a step further in his critique of the QXL as well as Chinese Buddhism represented by Tiantai, Huayan, and Chan to be "apocryphal." Nevertheless, Ouyang and his students were apologists and appealed for "rejecting the forged and keeping the real." In response to Ouyang's

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226 According to Yinshun, the Sanskrit equivalent of fo xing is possibly buddhadhi.如來藏之研究(Rulaizhang zhi yanju). (Taipei: zhengwen chuban she, 1992), 262.

227 Early in 1919-1920 a heated debate surrounding the QXL's authenticity among Japanese academics gave rise to the same crisis in China, starting with Liang Qichao's (梁啓超, 1873-1929) introduction to the controversy. Japanese Buddhism faced a similar challenge almost half century later posted by scholars of "Critical Buddhism," such as Matsumoto Shirō and Hakamaya Noriaki. Although a thorough comparative study between "Critical Buddhism" and Chinese scholars' critiques has to wait for another occasion, it is sufficient to mention here that for "Critical Buddhism" scholars, the Buddha-essence doctrine along with the Vījñānavāda of Indian Buddhism are criticized to be "not-Buddhist," whereas for those Chinese scholars, the Buddha-essence doctrine in general is authentic but its theory speculated upon the basis of the QXL, etc., in Chinese Buddhism is problematic. For the positions of "Critical Buddhism" scholars, see J. Hubbard & P.L. Swanson, eds. Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Ström over Critical Buddhism (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997).
disapproval of mainstream Chinese Buddhism, Taixu (太虚, 1890-1947), the most important and controversial reformer calling for the modernity of the monastic institution at the time, made alternative interpretations of Buddha-essence doctrine based on the QXL. Among many others, Ouyang and Lucheng are normally regarded as laymen compared to the clerics, such as Taixu, who advocated the revitalization of Chinese Buddhism in the twentieth Century. Since there are some striking similarities in regard to the understanding of the Buddha-essence between 'Gos-lo's Mahāmudrā interpretation and the assertions of Zongmi's "teaching that directly reveals that the mind is the nature," it seems worthwhile to present a brief discussion here to compare these two traditions, as well as an analysis of Ouyang, Lucheng, and Taixu's critiques of the Chinese interpretation of Buddha-essence from a comparative perspective.

A comparison of interpretations between 'Gos-lo and Zongmi

Zongmi describes in full detail the so-called teaching that "directly reveals that mind is nature" as follows:

The teaching of the one vehicle that reveals the nature holds that all sentient beings without exception have the intrinsically enlightened true mind. From [time] without beginning it is permanently abiding and immaculate. It is shining, unobscured, clear and bright ever-present awareness. It is also called Buddha-nature and it is also called tathāgatagarbha. From time without beginning deluded thoughts cover it, and [sentient beings] by themselves are not aware of it. Because they only recognize their inferior qualities, they become indulgently attached, enmeshed in karma, and experience the suffering of birth-and-death. The great Enlightened One took pity upon them and taught that everything without exception is empty. He further revealed that the purity of the numinous enlightened true mind is wholly identical with that of all Buddhas.²²⁸

In this passage, Zongmi clearly identifies "nature" (性) as the "intrinsically enlightened true mind" which is virtually identical to 'Gos-lo's idea of *sems gnyug ma* (true mind) or

noetic element. Based on the QXL, Zongmi explains that this numinous enlightened true mind is covered by a living being's delusions and becomes the fundamental consciousness when the true mind is mingled with deluded perceptions. Hence, the fundamental consciousness has two aspects: one is the enlightened aspect and the other is unenlightened. Thoughts (念) come from the unenlightened aspect and mistakenly make differentiation between dualistic things such as self and other, mind and object, etc., thus creating karma that produces samsāra. This cosmogony appears to bear a close resemblance to 'Gos-lo's theory on the relation between the genuine mind and the fundamental consciousness, etc. As to the true mind itself, Zongmi makes it clear that it is not kind of mind which apprehends objects:

But in terms of mind-only, there is a difference in the depths [of teaching between the school that teaches phenomenal appearances and the school that teaches the nature of all things.] For the latter school, which teaches mind-only, there only exist minds that are characterized as consciousnesses apprehending, collecting, recognizing, and differentiating objects. That is the meaning of mind-only mentioned above. But for the school that teaches the nature of all things, the mind-only refers to the mind of reality, uncompounded and without aspects, devoid of apprehending conceptual thoughts; there is only one mind. Hence, the Awaking of Faith in the Mahāyāna states that "the mind reality is the one true ultimate element..."

According to Zongmi, the true mind is the mind without any thoughts (無念) and thinking (無想), but is not something not-noetic. Centered upon the word "awareness" (知), which is called by Zongmi, the "gateway to all excellences," a set of terms is used for the description of the final nature for the true mind, such as "numinous awareness," "numinous awareness unobscured," "ever-present awareness", and "empty tranquil

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229 "然唯心之言，淺深有異。若法相宗，言唯心者，心但是有為心識緣慮積集，別別為相。即是此上來云一切唯識。是心，若法性宗云。唯心者，直是真實之心。無為無相，離諸緣慮分別，緣慮分別亦唯一心，故起信論云。心真如者，即是一法界大總相體云云。" *Yuanjue Jing Dashu Shiyi Chao* (圓覺經大疏釋義抄), *Xin zuan Xu Zang Jing* (新纂續藏經), no. 245.

awareness. Furthermore, this true mind is called "absolute numinous awareness" inasmuch as it goes beyond both extremes of existence and non-existence as well as the middle way; its very nature is the Truth Body. It is reasonable to think that this position is not different from 'Gos-lo's assertion of an implicative empleness discussed above.

Similar to the distinction between "ordinary" Madhyamaka and "supreme" Madhyamaka made by 'Gos-lo, Zongmi distinguishes the teaching that directly reveals that mind is nature from the teaching of hidden intent that negates phenomenal appearances in order to reveal the nature in terms of ten aspects. The former is also called the school teaching nature (性宗) on the basis of scriptures and treatises on the Buddha-essence doctrine, and the latter is the school teaching emptiness (空宗) that is identified as the Madhyamaka. According to Zongmi, the school teaching emptiness calls the original source (本源) of all things "nature," whereas the school teaching nature calls it "mind." In terms of nature, the former takes it as the naturelessness of all things, while the latter takes it as non-empty numinous gnosis; the nature taught in the latter school is not simply empty and tranquil (空寂) but also ever naturally numinous. Furthermore, awareness is accepted by the school teaching emptiness as conceptual mind and as being inferior to non-conceptual intuition, whereas it is accepted by the school teaching nature as the gnosis that also includes intuition of noble beings. The former asserts that the notion of self is faulty but the notion of selflessness is correct, while the latter asserts the opposite. Moreover, the school teaching emptiness is inclined to use apophatic language, such as non-existent, non-empty, non-production, non-cessation, etc., while the school teaching nature speaks in both apophatic and cataphatic terms, such as numinous

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231 聲知, 音知不昧, 智知, 空寂知. For a discussion of Zongmi's notion of zhi, see Gregory, Tsung-mi and the Signification of Buddhism, 216-218.
232 Yuanjue jing dashu shiyi chao.
reflection, luminosity, awakening, etc. In brief, for Zongmi and Chinese Buddhism in general, the true mind is not a cataphatic expression of emptiness but is the perfect enlightenment intrinsic to all living beings whether enlightened or not. This is in the same vein as Dol-po-pa's theory of Other-emptiness.

Finally, Zongmi states that the only proper way to meditate on the true mind is to let conceptual thoughts naturally disappear from the mind, while identifying this gnosis unflaggingly. This principle is built on the basis of the true mind's twofold aspect: void of conceptuality and tranquilly numinous, which echoes 'Gos-lo's idea of noetic emptiness. Starting from the "guarding one" meditation of Chan, the object to be negated in the meditation is neither the intrinsic identifiability for the Madhyamaka school nor the imagined nature for the Yogācāra school. Instead, conceptual thoughts are held responsible for creating all kinds of problems in samsāra. Accordingly, analytical mediation that deconstructs false reality is useless in Chan's "recognition of the original face of the true mind," thus being absent from Chan. As the most important form of meditation in East Asian Buddhism, Chan is the praxis of the true mind discourse per se.

Modern Chinese critiques of "Original-enlightenment"

The revitalization of Buddhism in twentieth century China started with a series of debates that first took place between Lucheng and Xiong Shili (熊十力, 1885-1968), a conservative Buddhist scholar who was also an advocate of the Confucian tradition, and centered upon the notion of "Original-enlightenment." This core concept of the QXL severs one of the doctrinal foundations for Chinese Buddhism since the Sui-Tang period. To sum up the important differences between the two sides: for Xiong Shili, the final

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233 Chanyuan zhuquan ji duoxu, T.48.406a07.
nature of mind is enlightened, simultaneously numinous and empty, and "going back to the original source" is the only appropriate methodology for spiritual development; for Lucheng, the final nature of mind is intrinsic nirvāṇa (自性涅槃), not including the noetic aspect, and the spiritual revolution is based on "cleansing defilements and approaching purity." Zongmi often uses the terms "Original-enlightenment" and "true mind" (zhen xin) in a single phrase such as "originally enlightened true mind" in order to demonstrate that these two terms are synonymous. From a literal reading, this Original-enlightenment, or Buddha-essence, is identical to the Truth Body and is "possessed of innumerable excellences;" it is the essence of the mind, free from thought, thus being akin to the empty space. In this regard, Zongmi's innovative nomenclatures, such as "numinous awareness," "ever-present awareness", and "empty tranquil awareness," unquestionably catch the essence of the notion of Original-enlightenment, which in a sense is close to

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234 能十力全集(Xiong shili quanji), (Shijiazhuang: Hubei liaoyu Chuban She: 2001), Vol.8 422-467.
235 "心離念，離念相者等虛空界無所不遍，法界一相即是如來平等法身。依此法身說名本覺。" T.32.1666.0576a24. This passage is translated by Gregory in Tsung-mi and the Signification of Buddhism, 182.
'Gos-lo's idea of noetic element as mentioned above. Lucheng critiques Zongmi's notion as a misunderstanding of the Indic expression *cittapraṇātiprabhāsvarā* (natural luminosity of the mind):

Indian Buddhology understands natural luminosity of the mind as having an emphasis on the incompatibility between the nature of the mind and its addictions. It considers the addictions as disturbing and uneasy by nature, being coincidental and not in accord with the nature of mind, in contrast to the nature of mind being portrayed as cessation and peace. This theory can be designated as "natural peace." But Chinese Buddhology understands natural luminosity of the mind as Original-enlightenment and this theory can be designated as "natural enlightenment." From the perspective of "natural peace," natural luminosity of the human mind is taught in terms of "possibility" and "certainty," while from the perspective of "natural enlightenment," it is almost identical to an "imminent" or "accomplished" enlightenment.  

This difference between "natural peace" and "natural enlightenment" is probably made on the basis of the distinction that Zongmi makes in his “ten aspects” between the teaching that directly reveals mind as the nature and the teaching of hidden intent that negates phenomenal appearances. It is clear that Lucheng is fully aware of this. Lucheng also accepts intrinsic peace or nirvāṇa, i.e. the emptiness doctrine of the Madhyamaka and Viśīnānavāda, as authentic "Indian Buddhology," but not the idea of Original-enlightenment which he believes to have been "actually fabricated" by the Chinese. In his thorough analysis of the text, Lucheng convincingly argues that the QXL is a work based on some misunderstandings of the Wei version of the LAS.  

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238 入佛涅槃密因修证了义诸菩萨行首楞严经, T.19, 0945.  
239 大方广佛顶多罗密经, T.17, 0842.
Jingang Sanmei-sūtra,²⁴⁰ are apocryphal outgrowths from the QXL. He concludes that Chinese Buddhist schools which base themselves on the theory of Original-enlightenment are "heretical."²⁴¹

Ouyang criticized the QXL's apparent assertion that reality is the "permanent, immutable true mind, complete with pure qualities" on the basis of his understanding of reality as explained in Indian Buddhist literature. According to Ouyang, "reality" is a cataphatic term for an exclusion negation:

Zhenru (reality) itself goes beyond the realm of language and conceptuality. It is imputed under the name "reality" on the basis of mere exclusion. "Zhen' excludes contaminated falsities as well as the imagined [nature]. "Ru" excludes uncontaminated changes, as well as the production and cessation of the relative [nature]. Here exclusion means negation. The meanings of "zhen" and "ru" are mentioned to exclude the possible improper mentation about the twofold emptiness: the experienced object of noble intuition, including various thoughts of contaminated falsities; and the imagined [nature], uncontaminated changes, and the relative [nature]. Hence, the verbal "reality" does not indicate other connotations ("ru" is a cataphatic expression for negation, referring to the essence alone. Our school uses it for indicating the essence, while "correct wisdom" is used for the function of reality. In any case, the meaning of reality is deemed to be negation.) Nevertheless, the term "reality" is misinterpreted by most people both now and in the past as a genuine cataphatic expression. In addition, it is misinterpreted according to the theory of "conditioned origination of reality" which maintains that reality can be influenced and subsequently produce all kinds of phenomenon. Therefore, the real meaning [of reality] cannot be grasped but is misunderstood and shattered. It is profoundly sad!²⁴²

Apparently Ouyang's critique bears a considerable similarity to the aforementioned dGe-lugs-pa scholars' analysis of both Dol-po-pa and 'Gos-jo's assertions on the ultimate reality. Both Ouyang and rGyal-tshab accept the ultimate reality as an exclusion negation, and as an uncompounded permanence which excludes any established entities including noetic or numinious factors.

²⁴⁰ Jingang Sanmei-sūtra, T.9, 0273.
²⁴¹ Lucheng foxue lunzhu xuanji, Vol.1, 408-409.
Furthermore, according to Ouyang's understanding of the Vijñānavādin theory, Buddha-essence has two aspects: one as being an uncompounded noumenon and the other as comprising the uncontaminated seeds contained within the fundamental consciousness. Based on this understanding, Ouyang also criticizes the assertion that living beings are already possessed of all sorts of buddha qualities, only unrealized; for him, the uncontaminated seeds in a living being's mind have never been activated and remain as the causes or potentials for the attainment of buddhahood:

Uncontaminated seeds exist primordially within Buddha-essence. Then, if activated, one will be born in the family of the Tathāgata by the Insight of Path. And then, through actual cultivation, one will partially realize the Truth Body by cleansing the defilements from Buddha-essence. Finally, when cultivation is complete after the path of vajra [-like concentration], one whose Buddha-essence is absolutely empty of retribution but is filled with purities will sit on the [vajra-] seat with. How can living beings who are wandering in samsāra have such [qualities]?243

In rGyal-tshab's view, the name "Buddha-essence" does not exist at final fruition but is replaced by the name, "Truth Body." However, both rGyal-tshab and Ouyang agree that Buddha-essence is the cause of buddhahood under the cover of defilements within living beings' minds, and that all buddha qualities can only be possessed by a buddha who has purified all defilements. For Lucheng, only the mind consisting of uncontaminated seeds is accepted as Buddha-essence, and thus represents the potential for ultimate enlightenment, based upon his interpretation of the LAS. According to Tsong-kha-pa, the Vijñānavādin treatises never refer to the Buddha-essence as a container of uncontaminated seeds, but only refer to it in contrast with the fundamental consciousness as a container of contaminated seeds. Rather, the Buddha-essence is often referred to as reality which universally exists within all things not limited to the category of a living being. The Vijñānavāda school, in fact, does not accept the Buddha-essence as the

243 Ibid., 349.
potential for buddhahood or even nirvāṇa. The Vijñānavādin treatises refer to the uncontaminated seeds as the spiritual genes which make buddhahood or nirvāṇa possible.²⁴⁴

In addition to their criticism of the ontological presuppositions of the QXL, Ouyang and Lucheng found its cosmogony in connection with reality problematic. According to the QXL, all things of the phenomenal world and the transcendental world are subsumed in the "mind of living beings" and that connotes the Mahāyāna itself. Moreover, the reality aspect of this mind demonstrates the essence (體) of Mahāyāna, while the phenomenal aspect of this mind indicates the attributes (相) and functions (用) of the Mahāyāna.²⁴⁵ The connection between the essence and the attributes/functions is explained in the text by the fact that reality is the essence, and is a dynamic force in the center of the origination of phenomena both impure and impure, through an analogy between water and wave:

The mind not subject to birth-and-death is stirred by the wind of ignorance that gives rise to birth-and-death. Therefore [the text] says that the mind subject to birth-and-death is based on the mind not subject to birth-and-death. Still, even though there are these two [aspects of one] mind, there are not two [separate] essences. It is only in terms of these two aspects [of mind] that [the text] is able to explain the dependence of phenomenal appearances. It is just like [the case of] unmoving water that is blown by the wind and becomes moving water. Even though stillness and motion are different, the essence of the water is one...The intrinsically pure mind is called the tathāgatagarbha. It is stirred by the wind of ignorance to give rise to birth-and-death.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ See Chapter 8 of this present work.
²⁴⁵ "摩訶衍者。經說有二種。云何為二。一者法。二者義。所言法者。謂眾生心。是心則攝一切世間法。出世間法。依於此心顯摩訶衍義。何以故。是心真如相。即示摩訶衍體故。是心生滅因緣相。能示摩訶衍自體相故。所言義者。則有三種。云何為三。一者體。謂一切法真如平等不增減故。二者相。謂如來藏具足無量性功德故。三者用。能生一切世間出世間善因果故。一切諸佛所演故。一切菩薩皆乘此法到如來地故。" QXL, T.32.1666.0575c20.
²⁴⁶ "謂不生滅心。因無明法動作生滅。故說生滅心依不生滅心。然此二心竟無二體。但約二義以說相依也。如不動之水。風所吹而作動水。動靜雖殊。而水體是一。...準可思之。謂自性清淨心名如來藏。因無明風動作生滅。" Faṣang (法藏), Daocheng xixinlun yiji (大乘起信論義記), T. 44, 1846, 254b25-c3. This passage is translated by Gregory in Tsung-mi and the Signification of Buddhism, 180-181.
Wang Enyang (王恩洋, 1867-1964), another chief disciple of Ouyang, argues that reality as an uncompounded permanence cannot be the cause of all phenomena because otherwise it would be an unequal cause for the production of compounded things:

All producing factors must be the productions of others. The producing factors and the produced factors both are conditioned origination. Either can be produced by others or produce others. The producing factors are impermanent because of the impermanence of their productions; they are not singular since the productions are not singular. You assert that reality can give rise to all things; all things are produced by reality, and that reality is not produced by other factors. [In other words, you assert that] reality can only be the producing factor but not the production; the nature of reality is permanent and singular but not the nature of phenomena. [Reality] is an unequal cause because of such inequalities.247

Ouyang adopted the classical theory of essence and function in Chinese Buddhism but interpreted it as an exposition on the relation between reality and apprehending wisdom instead of causality based on reality. For him, reality is the essence in terms of being the object [of correct wisdom] and correct wisdom is the function in terms of being the apprehending subject. The essence must be uncompounded and the functions are necessary compounded. He critiques the QXL's theory of conditioned origination based on reality for its confusion between essence and function:

The essence cannot be expressed but for the functions it must resort to [language]. Arguments erupt when the essence and function are mistaken for each other. Only relativities can be expressed. The differentiation between the apprehended and the apprehending [wisdom] avoids the error of recurrence. If you assert that the essence and the function are non-dual and that the apprehended and the apprehending

247 Zhongguo fojiao yu weishi xue (中国佛教与唯识学), (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chuban she: 2003), 88.
[wisdom] are the same, there is no need for words on emptiness which is the ultimate
reality.\(^{248}\)

Furthermore, in Ouyang’s view, the assertion that correct wisdom and reality are the same,
and that reality automatically purifies defilements, not only negates the existence of the
essence but also the function, for the function exists as the apprehending wisdom of
reality.\(^{249}\)

By comparison, Taixu’s approach to the "Original-enlightenment" theory of the QXL
is eclectic. Taixu was committed to a "Buddhist revolution" in order to revitalize all
Buddhist traditions in East Asia and around the world. Like Ouyang and his fellow
students at the Chinese Buddhist Institute, Taixu had a strong appreciation of the
problems Chinese Buddhism faced at the time. But he resorted to reinterpreting the
established traditions in a creative way instead of discarding them completely by going
back to the Indian roots. Taixu accepted the QXL as the ultimate scriptural authority
along with other sûtras which were condemned as being apocryphal. However, his
interpretation of the "Original-enlightenment" theory is quite different from Zongmi’s
understanding.

Closely modeled upon Zongmi’s three schools of teaching, Taixu classifies Mahāyāna
teachings into three schools: the Boruo (般若, \(prajñāpāramitā\)), the Weishi (唯識,
vijñaptimātra), and the Zhenru (真如, \(tathatā\)). The Zhenru school includes Chan,
Huayan, Tiantai as well as esoteric Buddhism.\(^{250}\) However, Taixu explains these three
schools on the basis of the Vijñānavādin principle of the three natures:

\(^{248}\) 法相諸論序合刊:佛地經論序(Fodiijing lun xue), cited in 唯識,心性與如來藏(Weishi xinxing yu ruleizang),
(Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chuban she: 2006), 245.
\(^{249}\) Ouyang jian wenxuan, 43.
\(^{250}\) 法相唯識學(Faxiang weishi xue), (Beijing: Shangwu yinshu guan: 2003), Vol.2, 387-389.
The Boruo school emphasizes the imagined [nature] but diminishes the other two [natures]. All things that can be thought of by names and concepts are included in the imagined [nature]; all ineffable, unattainable things are either the relative [nature] or the perfect [nature]. Hence, among the three natures taught in this school, the imagined [nature] is the imagined [nature which is] itself the relative and perfect [natures].

The Weishi school emphasizes the relative [nature] but diminishes the other two [natures]. The compounded, uncontaminated [factors] of buddha-hood as well as the grasping [mind] of the imagined [nature] are included in the relative [nature]. The grasped [object] of the grasping [mind] alone is accepted as the imagined [nature] and the mode of uncompounded things as the perfect nature. Hence, among the three natures taught in this school, the relative [nature] is the relative [nature itself but also includes the relative and perfect [natures].

The Zhenru school emphasizes the perfect [nature] but diminishes the other two [natures]. The compounded, uncontaminated [factors] as well as the depletion of imagination are included in the perfect [nature] and serve as the essence, attributes, and functions of reality. The deluded defilement only is either the relative [nature] or the imagined nature. Hence, among the three natures taught in this school, the perfect [nature] is the perfect [nature] itself but also includes the imagined and relative [natures].

As for Taixu's comprehensive approach, these three schools can be regarded as equal in soteriological values with their emphasized goals; for they all say that the teaching on Buddha-essence or Original-enlightenment is not necessarily superior to the others. According to Taixu, the latter schools are exclusively Mahāyāna, in contrast to the Boruo school that mainly critiques the objective self-habits of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Hence, the key doctrines of the Zhenru school can be interpreted by resorting to theories peculiar to the Vijñānavāda or Weishi. Based on this understanding, Taixu maintains that Buddha-essence and Original-enlightenment are synonymous in terms of being the uncontaminated seeds which are not separable and indestructible from

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251 "般若宗最勝大遍計執性而縮小餘二性，凡名想之所及皆攝入遍計執；唯以絕言無得為依他起，謂成實故：故此宗說三性，遍計同遍計，依他，謂成實亦織在遍計也。唯識宗最勝大依他起性而縮小餘二性，以佛果無漏事用及遍計執之能涂點者，皆攝入依他起；唯以無漏事用為依他起，及謂無漏理為真如故：故此宗說三性，依他因依他，遍計，謂成實亦織在依他起。真如宗最勝大調和實而縮小餘二性，以有無漏及離執遍計，皆織入於調和實為真如體，相，用大：唯以無漏種子法為依他，遍計故；故此宗說三性，謂成實調和，遍計，依他亦織在調和也。“Ibid, 116-117.

252 Ibid, 10.
reality. More specifically, he believes that Original-enlightenment refers to the uncontaminated seeds, while Buddha-essence refers to both uncompounded reality and the uncontaminated seeds. When directly commenting on the QXL, Taixu presents an amended version in which Original-enlightenment is said to be the "true mind," referring to a noble bodhisattva's meditative intuition that directly realizes reality, while Buddha-essence refers to meditative intuition and aftermath wisdom as well as innumerable pure objects associated with two kinds of mind. By doing so, similar to Ouyang's arguments, Taixu obliquely criticizes Zongmi's idea of an "intrinsic enlightened true mind" that is "numinous awareness" as well as the literal reading of the QXL's statement that "reality is the permanent, immutable true mind, complete with pure qualities." Consequently, Taixu's interpretation of the "true mind" differs from Zongmi's.

For Taixu, the "true mind" refers to a noble bodhisattva's meditative intuition that directly realizes reality. This means the concept of "Original-enlightenment" of the QXL has nothing to do with the idea of an immanent enlightenment which has already been achieved with all the excellences within living being's mind; rather it is the cause of the Truth Body. He also criticizes Zongmi's notion of reality on the basis that reality itself cannot be simultaneously uncompounded (the perfect nature) and compounded (intuition), despite the fact that all purities can be subsumed under the category of reality. Correspondingly, Taixu does not agree that reality is a dynamic cause for the production of samsāra and nirvāṇa:

Thus all birth-and-death phenomena are mutually conditioned among phenomena themselves; reality does not make birth-and-death for phenomena. But the realization of reality makes things associated with pure wisdom increase, and controls and

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253 ibid, 391.
254 ibid, 200.
255 ibid, 198.
eliminates things associated with defiled consciousness. On the other hand, the misknowledge of reality causes things associated with defiled consciousness to grow and covers things associated with pure wisdom. Things associated with pure wisdom reveal and accord with reality; when covered by things associated with defiled consciousness they still cannot be destroyed. Hence sometimes they are said to be the things of reality that are of primordially non-birth-and-death. Things associated with defiled consciousness, however, cover and are inconsistent with reality; therefore, they will be harmed or destroyed when pure wisdom is present. Thus only these things can be said to be things of birth-and-death.\textsuperscript{56}

It seems clear that Taixu endeavored to defuse the danger of producing an absolutistic reading out of the QXL yet kept its authenticity as one of the Mahāyāna texts important to Chinese Buddhism. From the historical perspective, however, the earliest commentaries on the QXL, such as those written by Jinyin Huiyuan (浄影慧遠, 523-587) and Fazhang (法藏, 643-712), invariably explicate true mind or Original-enlightenment as gnosis in nature, and to a great extent Zongmi’s exposition is based on minor changes in previous commentaries. Hence Taixu’s reinterpretation is best seen as exploratory.

\textsuperscript{56} "故諸生滅法自為因緣以互相生滅，非由自即能生滅；不過心悟真如則淨智法生長而染識法伏斷，心悟真如則染識法生長而淨智法隱覆。然淨智法顯現真如，顯真如相，染識起時可隱覆而不可斷滅，有時亦可說為本不生故、永不滅故之真如法。而染識法隱覆真如，達真如性，淨智起時既未損伏或未斷滅，故謂可說為生滅法．" \textit{Ibid.}, 204.
Chapter 4

Analysis of the Title and Textural Structure

1. The Title "Mahāyānottaratantra" and Its Implication

Based on two manuscripts of the Sanskrit text of the Uttaratantra discovered in Tibet, E.H. Johnson has given the full title of the text "Ratnagotravibhāga-mahāyānottaratantra-treatise."\(^\text{257}\) This is authenticated by the alternative name\(^\text{258}\) for the extant Chinese translation by Ratnamati\(^\text{259}\) of the same text recorded in the Kai Yuan Buddhist Catalogue.\(^\text{260}\) For unknown reasons, rNgog-lo's Tibetan translation only uses mahāyānottaratantra as its formal title, while retaining the full name as part of the chapter names. Since then, "mahāyānottaratantra"\(^\text{261}\) or even abbreviated "uttaratantra"\(^\text{262}\) was commonly accepted as a standard name for this primary Indic Mahāyāna treatise on the Buddha-essence doctrine. Both Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist exegetes regard the exposition of the title of a sūtra or a treatise as a special hermeneutical device used to promptly grasp the significance of the whole text,\(^\text{263}\) sometime foremost in an exegetical undertaking.

\(^{258}\) Baoxing fenbie qi cheng zengshang lun (寶性分別七乘增上論); 聲性(=Ratnagotra); 分別(=vibhāga); Chinese misprint "七乗" should be revised in light of Sanskrit original "Mahāyāna," thus 大乗(=Mahāyāna); 增上(=uttaratantra); 論(=sūtra). It is not clear whether this alternative name was adopted as the title of the lost Chinese translation of RGV, by Bodhiruci.
\(^{259}\) "Jiujing yicheng baoxing lun", T.31,1611. His translation includes Asaṅga's vyākyā but part of its title,究竟一乘(="ultimate unique vehicle"), is not in line with the Sanskrit and Tibetan editions.
\(^{260}\) "Kaiyuan shijiaoj Lu", T.55,2154.
\(^{261}\) rgyud bla ma.
\(^{262}\) rgyud bla ma.
\(^{263}\) According to 'Gos-lo, this method of exposition is meant for "those with sharp faculties (dbang po rnon po)." Mathes, Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 8.
"Tantra (Tib. rgyud)," a term relevant to esoteric Buddhism, is treated by Rong-ston, 'Gos-lo, and rGyaI-tshab in its basic meaning as "continuation" without any esoteric implication. They all accept this term as being exclusively exoteric in opposition to the current popular view held by scholars who are in favor of an Other-emptiness interpretation of the RGV.\textsuperscript{264} However, under the enormous influence of the esoteric Buddhism in Tibet, it has been a common practice for scholars to interpret a term such as tantra by resorting to the esoteric theory. For example, Rong-ston explains tantra as the Buddha-essence, or the Element which is a continuation through all stages of basis, path, and fruition. In esoteric terms, tantra is analogous to the "cause continuum,"\textsuperscript{265} while the conditions conducive to the purification of defilements from the Element, i.e. Enlightenment and so forth, and the fruitional Triple Jewel,\textsuperscript{266} resembles the "path continuum"\textsuperscript{267} and the "fruition continuum"\textsuperscript{268} respectively.\textsuperscript{269} 'Gos-lo translates this word from both standpoints regarding the text and the content, another standard exegetical procedure in the esoteric literature; the text "continuum" is the "verbal continuation of the three Dharma wheels" and, based on his reading of the Vajraśekhara-tantra,\textsuperscript{270} the content "continuum" refers to saṃsāra for saṃsāra and its later (uttara) purification\textsuperscript{271} are within the same continuation. Therefore, the Element of a living being will last forever

\textsuperscript{264} For example, S.K. Hookham seems to support the idea that the RGV is "a bridge between the Mahayana Sutras and the Vajrayana Tantras." Hookham, The Buddha Within, 4.
\textsuperscript{265} rgyu rgyud.
\textsuperscript{266} The Three Jewels, the Element, the Enlightenment and so forth are called "Seven vajra bases" in the RGV. See a detailed discussion below in this chapter.
\textsuperscript{267} thabs rgyud.
\textsuperscript{268} bras ba' rgyud.
\textsuperscript{269} Rong-ston sMra-ba'-seng-ge, Thog pa chen po rgyud bla ma' bstan bcos legs par bshad pa in Thog pa chen po rgyud bla ma' bstan bcos rtsa 'grel. (Chen-du: Si khor mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1997), 53.
\textsuperscript{270} It should be noted that the Tibetan Vajraśekhara-tantra is not the Chinese translation under the same name; the former is an explanatory tantra of the Tattvasa1!lgraha, while the latter is the Tattvasa1!lgraha itself. See Gareth Sparham, Tantric Ethics: An Explanation of the Precepts for Buddhist Vajrayāna Practice, (Boston: Wisdom, 2005), 154, fn. 9.
\textsuperscript{271} rnam par byang ba.
like space even after the attainment of enlightenment.\textsuperscript{272} In comparison to the explanations given by Rong-ston and 'Gos-lo, rGyal-tshab seems to simply interpret this word as an alternative for \textit{sūtra}, and refers to the Buddhist scriptures that "teach how to purify defiled consciousness."\textsuperscript{273} There is some reason to think that rGyal-tshab's resistance to incorporate any esoteric elements is in accord with his critical stance towards Dol-po-pa's position that there is a distinctive "Great Madhyamaka" tradition within which the esoteric Buddhism is incorporated.

The word "\textit{uttara (bla ma)}" has a variety of connotations in Sanskrit: upper, excellent, later, etc.\textsuperscript{274} Rong-ston and 'Gos-lo define it as being "unexcelled,"\textsuperscript{275} "extraordinary,"\textsuperscript{276} (Rong-ston), or "primary"\textsuperscript{277} ('Gos-lo), since they both regard the Buddha-essence doctrine advocated in this treatise as the definitive or foremost teaching of the Mahāyāna Buddhism. As for 'Gos-lo, he asserts that the emptiness taught in the late wheel, an implicative negation referring to the noetic element (\textit{rig kham}), is more essential when compared with to the emptiness taught in the middle wheel, an exclusion negation, like the kernel as opposed to the outer skin.\textsuperscript{278}

Rong-ston, however, does not accept this text as a treatise explaining the intention of the final wheel but the intention of the middle wheel in connection with the scriptures such as the \textit{Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra} and the SPS, which, according to him, are definitive in

\textsuperscript{272} Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 11-12. Later, the Element of living beings is said to be the "continuation," in terms of being the substantial cause of a buddha, 209.

\textsuperscript{273} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rgyud bla ma'}, 5b. Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa further explains the scriptures as "teaching how to purify the defiled mind" and the "continuum" in terms of being the three wheels of Dharma, by which disciples are led in stages to ultimate purification. \textit{rgyud bla ma'} in the \textit{Collected Works of Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa}, Vol.5, 3a.


\textsuperscript{275} gong na med pa.

\textsuperscript{276} \textit{khyad par du 'phags pa}. Rong-ston, 53.

\textsuperscript{277} gtso bo.

\textsuperscript{278} Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 15.
meaning. Apparently, Rong-ston seems to be unaware of the other schema regarding the three wheels presented in the DIR, or finds it unacceptable.

In contrast to Rong-ston and 'Gos-lo's laudatory explanations, rGyal-tshab interprets this word, "uttara," in the temporal sense as "later," denoting the later classics of the Mahāyāna, because the final wheel represented by the TGS is not superior in terms of its philosophical argument to the middle wheel represented by the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra but is a sequel to it.

Gung-thang bStan-pa'i-sgron-me refines rGyal-tshab's interpretation by resorting to the esoteric theory of the "threefold tantra." Unlike Rong-ston, Gung-thang limits himself in the utilization of the "cause continuum" alone because both exoteric and esoteric Buddhism accept the concept of "noumenon of the mind" represented by the words "continuum" and "cause continuum" respectively. Thus, in the place of "defiled consciousness," Gung-thang takes "continuum" to be the "noumenon of the mind." He specifically refers to the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras of the middle wheel, which give a detailed elaboration of this concept, as the "Prior Continuum," and he refers to scriptures such as the TGS, which teach the same subject-matter, as the "Later Continuum," interpreting the term as reflecting the temporal difference between these two groups of scriptures. The interpretations of rGyal-tshab and Gung-thang seem valid in light of similar Indian designations for a philosophical school and its later development, where both share the same fundamental presuppositions, as in the case of the Pūrva ("prior") Mīmāṃsā school and the Uttara ("later") Mīmāṃsā school. Even more

279 Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 53.
280 phyi ma.
281 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skad, 5b.
282 sems kyi chos nyid.
283 rgyud snga ma.
284 Gung-thang bStan pa'i sgron me'i gyung 'bum, Vol. Kha. (Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2003), 560.
convincing evidence comes from the treatise itself. RGV I.156-160 clearly states that the "uttaratantra" was subsequent to the scripture teaching that "all knowables are ever empty," i.e. the Prajnāpāramitā of the middle wheel, as mentioned in Chapter 3.

Since the term "ratnagotravibhāga" is not part of the formal title of the Tibetan translation, we shall examine its Tibetan interpretation in connection with RGV I.23-1.36 in the next section.

2. The Seven Vajra-Like Bases

Two aspects

Like most Indian treatise (treatise) literature, the opening verses of the RGV and their expositions in Asaṅga's commentary (commentary) introduce the subject-matter as the "sevenfold vajra-like base (1.1)" and the relationship between these bases (1.3), thus providing an overview of the significance and structure of the treatise. Prior to his careful analysis of this crucial dimension of the text, rGyal-tshab describes the seven vajra bases as having both ultimate and conventional aspects:

Each base should be understood as having two aspects: ultimate and conventional relative. (1) The ultimate buddha is the Truth Body of which perfect elimination and perfect intuition are the defining characteristics; the conventional buddha is the form bodies of a buddha. (2) The ultimate Dharma is both the truth of cessation and the truth of path in the mental continuum of a Mahāyāna [bodhisattva]; the conventional one is the scriptural corpus. (3) The ultimate Samgha is the knowledge and liberation in the mental continuum of a noble bodhisattva of the Mahāyāna; the conventional one is the congregation of noble Mahāyāna bodhisattvas. (4) The ultimate Element is the reality mingled

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285 RGV I.1: buddhas ca dharmas ca gatna ca dhītar bodhir gatnaḥ karma ca buddhānam anyam | krisnasya sāstrasya sātim ete samāsato ||
286 RGV I.3: buddhād dharmanāś cārya-samghaḥ samgha garbhā jīvāna-dhvānā āpī-nisthaḥ | taj-jiññāptiś cārya-bodhir bhuddayuv dhammar yuktā sarva-saṁśāra-krdpāḥ ||
287 spang ba and ye shes.
288 rig pa and nam par geə ba.
289 phag pa
with defilements, which is emptiness of the intrinsic reality-status of the mental continuum of a living being; the conventional one is the ability possessed by a living being's mind to produce transcendent excellences. (5) The ultimate enlightenment is the Truth Body; the conventional one is the form bodies. (6) The ultimate excellences are the thirty-two excellences of freedom including the ten powers and so forth; the conventional ones are the thirty-two excellences of retribution. (7) The ultimate deeds are the all-accomplishing intuition; the conventional ones are the scriptural corpus.

This important set of data can be tabulated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vajra bases</th>
<th>In ultimate aspect:</th>
<th>In conventional aspect:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buddha</td>
<td>truth body</td>
<td>form bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dharma</td>
<td>cessation and path</td>
<td>scriptural corpus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samgha</td>
<td>knowledge and liberation</td>
<td>noble congregations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>element</td>
<td>reality mingled with defilements</td>
<td>ability to produce excellences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enlightenment</td>
<td>truth body</td>
<td>form bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excellences</td>
<td>thirty-two excellences of freedom</td>
<td>thirty-two excellences of retribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deeds</td>
<td>all accomplishing intuition</td>
<td>scriptural corpus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These two aspects are obviously not understood in normal two realities theory; they are rather, except the fourth base, the inner realizations in the mind of a buddha or a noble bodhisattva. They are the dynamic at the heart of altruistic activities as they manifest on the surface. The Buddha's all-accomplishing intuition plays an essential role in giving teachings (recorded in the scriptural corpus). In contrast, Gos-lo gives a description of the seven vajra bases in the same framework but explains it in accord with

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291 rang bzhin gyis grub pas stong pa
292 bral ba' yon tan. These refer to the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha.
293 The remaining excellences are the four fearlessnesses and the eighteen unique qualities.
294 rnam smin yon tan. These refer to the thirty-two characters of the physical body of Buddha.
295 bya ba sgrub pa' ye shes.
296 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skā, 6.
the two realities. According to 'Gos-lo, the Element base is said to be emptiness or reality. Therefore it is the ultimate aspect for all seven vajra bases despite some differences between these bases and the degree of purification of the defilements.297

As already mentioned in Chapter 3, there is a great disparity in the understanding of emptiness between 'Gos-lo and rGyal-tshab. For 'Gos-lo, emptiness taught in the middle wheel is an exclusion negation that is perceived by inferential valid cognition, thus artificial and superficial; and emptiness taught in the later wheel is an implicative negation, i.e. an uncompounded, primordial noetic element which is free of all created coincidental things. rGyal-tshab's understanding follows.

rGyal-tshab's revision of rNgog-lo's "two wheels" theory

rNgog-lo's Summary gives two modes of exposition for the seven vajra bases: the first regarding the "wheel of non-abiding nirvāṇa,"298 and the second regarding the "wheel of Jewels."299 The rationale behind the first mode of exposition focuses on the concept of the Triple Jewel as the "causal refuges," which have been accomplished by others:

When the non-abiding nirvāṇa is actualized, the Triple Jewel will appear in the world. Conditioned by the Triple Jewel, others will obtain enlightenment as well, after their spiritual genes are awakened. Having accomplished excellences, they will

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297 Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 14.
298 mi gnas pa' mya ngam las 'das pa' 'khor lo' dbang du byas pa.
299 dkon mchog ga' 'khor lo' dbang du byas pa. An introduction of rNgog-lo's "two circle (wheel)" system and its influence on late Tibetan exegetes can be found in Kano's recent doctoral thesis. Kano, rNgog Blo-ldan-shes-rab's Summary, 141-147.
in turn engage in altruistic deeds to help others. It is like a wheel of wheels pushing one another, and is called the wheel of non-abiding nirvāṇa.\textsuperscript{300}

The second mode of exposition, when compared with the first one, is centered on the concept of the Triple Jewel as the "fruitional refuges," the ultimate objective for a Buddhist to actualize in his or her own continuum. The remaining four bases are regarded as the two kinds of cause indispensable for attaining this objective; therefore, the Element is the substantial cause, and Enlightenment, etc., are the contributive causes (or conditions.)\textsuperscript{301}

\textbf{rGyal-tshab} chose to repudiate the first mode of \textbf{rNgog-lo}'s exposition because he found it a rather literal paraphrase of RGV I.3. He showed the sequence of the seven vajra bases and regarded the second mode as "more reasonable to explain the general gist of the treatise."\textsuperscript{302} His reason will be examined along with his gloss on RGV I.26 below. This second mode also cannot be accepted without its problems. According to Asanga, the author of the RGV, the seven vajra bases have their sources in a variety of Mahāyāna sūtras, especially the DIR, which in a sense is the "prototype" of the RGV, teaching all seven vajra bases in one focus. Asanga, based on his reading of this treatise, clearly shows that the first three bases, i.e. Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha are the bodhisattvas on the Eighth Stage, the Ninth Stage, and the Tenth Stage of the Mahāyāna

\textsuperscript{300} \textbf{rNgog Lo-tsha-ba} \textbf{Blo Idan Sheb Rab}, \textit{Theg chen rgyud bla ma' don bsdus pa}, (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1993), 3a. cf. \textbf{Kano}, \textbf{rNgog Blo-Idan-shes-rab's Summary}, 371-373.

\textsuperscript{301} \textit{Ibid.}, 3a-6a. See \textbf{Kano}, \textbf{rNgog Blo-Idan-shes-rab's Summary} for details, 373-381.

\textsuperscript{302} r\textbf{Gyal-tshab}, \textit{rGyud bla ma' don bsdus pa}, 6b. \textbf{Kano} has rightly pointed out that there is an apparent inconsistency between RGV I.3, which defines the four bases as causes and the last three bases as fruitions and RGV I.23-26 which explains the Element as a cause and the last three bases as conditions for producing the fruitional Three Jewels. Ngog-lo's "two circles(revolutions)" system reflects this inconsistency. (\textbf{Kano}, \textbf{rNgog Blo-Idan-shes-rab's Summary}, 142-143.) According to \textbf{rGyal-tshab}, however, this inconsistency only occurs when RGV I.3 is taken literally.
path respectively.\textsuperscript{303}\textsuperscript{303} rGyal-tshab explains that the statements of the treatise show both the Triple Jewel as the fruition and the Triple Jewel as the immediate causes of that fruition, i.e. the Eighth Stage, the Ninth Stage, and the Tenth Stage. According to rGyal-tshab, to explain that the treatise teaches the Three Jewels as the immediate causes alone is unacceptable for it is in contradiction to the demonstration of the distinctive natures of the Triple Jewel in the \textit{sūtra}; it would absurd to teach the Buddha Jewel as the causal state alone.\textsuperscript{304}

\textit{The first three bases as ultimate fruition}

rNgog-lo explains the meaning of the fruitional refuges of Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha here with reference to the primary goals of becoming Buddha; extinguishing sufferings by the realization of dependent origination (Dharma), and putting sufferings to an end by actualization of paths through other's verbal teaching (Samgha) for a bodhisattva, a pratyekabuddha, and a śrāvaka respectively.\textsuperscript{305} Thus, two questions arise as found in the \textit{rGyud bla \textit{tikā}:} the first being, what is the necessity to teach on all these fruitional Three Jewels for a Mahāyāna practitioner if the Buddha Jewel alone is the fruition to be attained? rGyal-tshab made the general response that there is a pedagogical reason for introducing the Mahāyāna to people who are fond of the other vehicles.

\textsuperscript{303} The rationale behind such peculiar designations is given in the RGVV 3.18-4.9 as follows: "on the Eighth Stage of the bodhisattva, the sovereignty of the Dharma has been obtained, [he is thus designated as the Buddha] ... On the Ninth Stage of the bodhisattva, he is the exponent of the unexcelled dharma, knows well patterns of thinking of all living beings, has the supreme power transcendence and becomes an expert in the destruction of the chain of addictive instinct in all living beings, [he is thus designated as the Dharma] ... On the Tenth Stage of the bodhisattva, after obtaining the anointment of being the unexcelled Dharma regent of Tathāgata, he will immediately obtain Buddha’s effortless and uninterrupted deeds, [he is thus designated as the Sangha]..." (brackets are mine).

\textsuperscript{304} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rGyud bla \textit{tikā}}, 14b-15n.

\textsuperscript{305} No direct reference to this correlation can be found in the RGV and RGVV. However, RGV 1.20-21 which establishes the Buddha as the ultimate refuge might have been adduced to explain the rationale behind Ngog-lo's theory.
The second question that follows is: if this treatise is meant for the establishment of the "unique vehicle" as we have examined above, then why does it teach about the enlightenments of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna? rGyal-tshab responded in detail that these enlightenments are never regarded in the treatise as the Jewels in terms of being the fruitional refuges, instead they are mere designations, similar to Dharma and Saṅgha included for pedagogical purpose, and that Asaṅga explicitly shows that the Three Jewels taught here are the immediate causes of the ultimate Triple Jewel. This is the final objective for a Mahāyāna person. In brief, as all Tibetan exegetes would agree, this treatise is a text unique to the Mahāyāna. Thus, according to rGyal-tshab, the first three bases represent the provisional and ultimate fruitions to be attained (see table below). 306

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triple Jewel</th>
<th>As fruitional refuges</th>
<th>As immediate causes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>buddha (three bodies)</td>
<td>for the mahāyāna (ultimate)</td>
<td>the 8th stage (provisional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dharma (cession and path)</td>
<td>for the pratyekabuddhayāna (provisional)</td>
<td>the 9th stage (provisional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saṃgha (congregation of noble mahāyāna bodhisattvas)</td>
<td>for the śrāvakayāna (provisional)</td>
<td>the 10th stage (provisional)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last four bases as cause and conditions

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306 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ḡka, 8a.
rNgog-lo's arrangement of the remaining four bases into four "direct" types and four "indirect" types of substantial cause and contributive condition\textsuperscript{307} seems to be perplexing and awkward. For example, the Element is listed as an indirect cause which belongs to another's continuum.\textsuperscript{308} However, it serves to emphasize the central role the "correct view" of emptiness played in Mahāyāna soteriology since, according to rNgog-lo, "the advent of the Triple Jewel in the world comes from meditating on this view."\textsuperscript{309} Such emphasis on the cultivation of the correct view within the framework of direct/indirect cause theory made a profound impact on later Tibetan exegetes, especially rGyal-tshab. For rGyal-tshab, rNgog-lo established one of the fundamental principles behind his analysis of the RGVV. Based on rNgog-lo's theory, rGyal-tshab presents a simplified arrangement of Enlightenment, etc., into cause and conditions concerning the cultivation of the correct view (see table below).\textsuperscript{310}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vajra bases</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>element</td>
<td></td>
<td>previous tathāgatas' enlightenment, excellences, and deeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rational mentation\textsuperscript{311} (included in &quot;element&quot;)</td>
<td>verbal teachings (included in &quot;deeds&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{307} rNgog-lo, \textit{Don bsdus}, 4a-5b, and Kano, \textit{rNgog Blo-idan-shes-rab's Summary}, 374-380. It seems to me that rNgog-lo lists only two "direct" types instead four.
\textsuperscript{308} \textit{rgyud tha dad}.
\textsuperscript{309} rNgog-lo, \textit{Don bsdus}, 4b.
\textsuperscript{310} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rgyud bla gkā}, 6b.
\textsuperscript{311} \textit{tshul bzhin yid la byed pa}. 
Within this perspective, as explained by rNgo-glo, the Element is the emptiness of
the mental continuum, and is the "focus (gnas)" of rational mentation resulting from the
verbal teachings of previous buddhas.  

This arrangement of the seven vajra bases into the "fruition/cause/condition"
exegetical schema (see table 4) is obviously an encapsulation of Buddhist soteriology.
The focal point is invariably the purification of our mind from defilements: "fruition" is
the result of purification, "cause" is the object to be purified, and "condition" is the
environment conducive to purification. More importantly, under this arrangement, as well
as under rNgo-glo's first mode of the "two wheels" theory, the Element is under
consideration at the causal stage alone. This standpoint has been retained in the
hermeneutical lineage of the RGV starting from rNgo-glo as its distinctive feature, in
contrast to Dol-po-pa's theoretical position on the Element as the perfect enlightenment
that preexists within all living beings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruition:</th>
<th>(1) buddha (2) dharma (3) sangha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substantial cause:</td>
<td>(4) element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributive conditions:</td>
<td>(5) enlightenment (6) excellences (7) deeds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The Term "Ratnagotra" and the Textual Structure of RGV

This important "fruition/cause/condition" schema needs to be further examined by
juxtaposing it with RGV I.23-26 in order to discover how it is supported by the treatise
itself.

312 rNgo-glo, Don bsdus, 4a.
Subsequent to the discourse of the Triple Jewel of Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha as the first three vajra bases, RGV I.23-26 establishes a basic framework of category divisions for discussion about the remaining four bases. In I.23-25, the Element, Enlightenment, the Excellences, and the Deeds are explained as the "fourfold inconceivability" under the names of the "reality mingled with defilements," "reality free of defilements," "immaculate excellences of a buddha," and "a victor's deeds" respectively; whereas the Element is labeled in I.26 as the "object to be realized," "realization," "components of realization," and "[factors] which cause the realization" respectively.

Despite being part of the title, the term "ratnagotra" only appears once in RGV I.24 as a tatpurusa compound (gotraṃ ratnatrayasya), roughly translated in context as the "matrix of the Triple Jewel." Here gotra (matrix) means the soteriological situation from which the fruitional Triple Jewel can be produced, referring not only to the Element but also to Enlightenment and so forth (the last three bases) since gotraṃ ratnatrayasya in I.24 equates to sudharatnatrayasargaka ("origination of the three virtuous Jewels").

In I.23, enlightenment is said to consist of samala tathā, nirmla tathā, vimala-buddhaguna, and jina-kriya, as Ruegg has rightly pointed out. Thus, by implication, the RGV takes the first three bases, ratna, as the fruition to be attained. This "matrix" is further divided in I.26 into two categories: the "object to be realized" as "cause of purification," and the other three, as conditions (see table 5). It should be noted that the term gotra used here differs from the gotra in I.27 in terms of connotation. The former

313 Skt. samala tathā, nirmla tathā, vimala-buddha-guna, and jina-kriya.
314 Skt. bodhi, bodhi, bodhi, bodhi, and bodhi.
316 Ibid, 356.
refers to the conditions provided by other enlightened beings in addition to the inner cause, the Element (or spiritual gene); whereas the latter refers to the twofold spiritual gene alone.\textsuperscript{317}

\textit{rgyal-tshab}, by the same token, comments that "the last three bases as the conditions for attaining the fruitional Triple Jewel are designated as 'spiritual genetic potential.' In no sense can those conditions be the twofold spiritual genetic potential as expounded below."\textsuperscript{318}

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Vajra bases & 1.23-25 & 1.26 \\
\hline
\text{element} & reality mingled with defilements & object to be realized (as cause of fruition) \\
\hline
\text{enlightenment} & reality free of defilements & realization (as condition) \\
\hline
\text{excellence} & immaculate excellences of buddha & components of realization (as condition) \\
\hline
\text{deeds} & victor's deeds & [factors] which cause the realization (as condition) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Correlation of last four vajra bases, "fourfold inconceivability," and cause/conditions of fruition.}
\end{table}

This analysis of the term \textit{ratnagotra} in connection with the "fruition/cause/condition" exegetical schema of \textit{rgyal-tshab} sheds new light on the textual structure of the RGV. The term \textit{vibhāga (rnam par dbye ba)} used in the titles of the MAV and the DhDhV of Maitreya means "distinction" or "division," i.e. the distinction between \textit{madhya} and \textit{anta}, between \textit{dharma} and \textit{dharmatā} respectively.

\textsuperscript{317} See Chapter 8 of this present work for a detailed exposition and discussion.
\textsuperscript{318} \textit{rgyal-tshab, rGyud bla 11kii}, 73a.
Takasaki translates vibhāga in *ratnagotravibhāga* as "analysis" in virtue of *ratnagotra* as a *tatpuruṣa* compound instead of a *dvandva* construction.\textsuperscript{319} I think, however, that it might retain its more direct meaning as "distinction/division" in *ratnagotravibhāga* since the entire RGV is divided into four main chapters (except Chapter V) in accord with the divisions of the cause and conditions of the Triple Jewel.\textsuperscript{320}

While it is not possible to be sure, one thing is clear from the Sanskrit title: this treatise emphasizes the last four vajra bases but not the first three. The first four are included in the first chapter of *Tathāgatagarbhaḥikāra*, thereby making it a treatise on the Buddha-essence doctrine. The data concerning the textual structure (divisions) thus can be tabulated as follows:

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4. *rGyal-tshab* on the Fourfold Ratnagotra as Cause and Conditions

*The Element as a cause according to RGV I.16*

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\textsuperscript{320} Cf. Mathes, 'Gos Lo tshab ba gZhon nu dPal’s Commentary, 262; Padma rGyal-mtshan, *Blo gsal dgo’ skyed snying gi nor bu* (*The Heart Jewel Caus ing Delights in the Intelligent*). (Mundgod: Drepung Loseling Library Society, 2004), 322: *skabs so so’ mchams su dkon mchog gi rigs rnam par dbye ba zhes skabs lnga kas rgyas par gsungs so.*
It is evident that RGV I.23-26 and the explanations in RGVV serve as key canonical sources for rNgog-lo's theory of the "wheel of Jewels," while I.3 is for the "wheel of non-abiding nirvāṇa." rGyal-tshab's preference for the former mode over the latter is based on his recognition of the importance of RGV I.23-26 for a proper understanding of the substance and structure of the RGV.

rGyal-tshab's exposition of this fourfold ratanagotra as the causes and conditions conforms with his gloss on the last four vajra bases in RGV I.1 introduced above; the emphasis is on the Element not being an actual cause that produces the fruitional Triple Jewel:

In regard to that, we should understand that the first one of these four bases is the cause for the origination of the Triple Jewel, the ultimate objective, depending on the purification of that tainted ultimate reality; because the ultimate reality is designated as the seed of the transcendent things. All of these originate from the meditation which objectifies it, and it is the basis of the real seed which is the wisdom of bodhisattvas in the form of individual's rational mentation on the import of reality before and after attaining the first stage. Thus, one base [the fourth base] is the cause. This indicates that the tainted ultimate reality is the designated cause instead of being the producing cause.321

According to rGyal-tshab, the Element is designated as cause for two reasons: firstly, despite the fact that the Element is nothing else but emptiness, it serves as the object of the equipoised wisdom of noble bodhisattvas and is the chief cause for producing the intuition of a buddha; secondly, there would be no origination of enlightenment if this crucial factor were missing.322 These two reasons were already discussed in the Summary. Kano points out that rNgog-lo discusses why the Element, an uncompounded exclusion negation, has a function as a cause on two grounds: scriptural authority and reasoning. As

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321 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma'i, 73a.
322 Ibid., 72a-b.
for scriptural authority, emptiness is a cause because one of the doctrinal tenets presented in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra is that emptiness makes it possible for all superficial things to exist. As for reasoning, emptiness is a cause since it is the object of the meditation which produces the fruition. \(^{323}\) This emphasis can be seen as a statement in direct opposition to Gos-Lo's standpoint that the "essence-like" emptiness is the "noetic element," \(^{324}\) which, according to rGyal-tshab, has to be compounded.

However, there is a discrepancy with rGyal-tshab's description of "cause" between his explanation here on the RGVV 25.5-15 and the one on RGV I.1 in which he articulates that the developmental gene is the cause:

It is also determined that there are two factors in the accomplishment of the fruitional Triple Jewel: substantial cause and contributive conditions. The first factor is the Element, which is the reality mingled with defilements. It is not something that can produce but is [merely] a designated "cause;" because if the Element were not naturally pure, it would be impossible for coincidental defilements to be removed, therefore, there would be no enlightenment. Nevertheless, the developmental gene \(^{325}\) is a productive cause. \(^{326}\)

Thus, in the more general setting, rGyal-tshab takes in the developmental gene that produces two kinds of a Buddha's form bodies, as will be discussed in Chapter 7 and 8. This developmental gene will be paired with the Element, i.e. the naturally existing gene, this twofold spiritual potential serves as the cause of the fruitional Triple Jewel.

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\(^{323}\) Kano, rNgog Blo-ldan-shes-rab's Summary, 148-151.

\(^{324}\) viditam dhiitam, rig khams. This term appears in RGV I.103a: sarva-jña-cakṣur viditum mahā-rjiśi madhūpamam dhiitum imam vilokyur || Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsa ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 15.

\(^{325}\) bsgrub ba las gyur pa' rigs.

\(^{326}\) rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla gik, 6b.
The developmental gene as the cause of two kinds of Form Bodies is not taken into consideration in I.26. Here, Asaṅga makes the point that the Element, being reality mingled with defilements, is the "object to be realized because all objects of knowledge are included in it." From this perspective, rGyal-tshab emphasizes "the individual's rational mentation" in the RGVV, for it has the Element as its "focus" and is the "real seed" of transcendental excellences. In a later development, the seed, which is considered to be the wisdom of bodhisattvas on the stages of learning (the rational mentation), is finally incorporated into the developmental gene by dGe-lugs-pa scholars, such as Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa.

The last three bases as conditions

rGyal-tshab discusses how the other three bases turn out to be conditions as follows:

These should be understood as the conditions for the production of the Three Jewels as the objective to be attained in the way that the production of the Three Jewels depends on the purification of that tainted ultimate reality, and this purification is done by the rational mentation based upon the messages from others, i.e. the Mahāyāna instructions taught by the Buddha who is formerly enlightened since the Tathāgata, having realized the unexcelled perfect enlightenment, performs the thirty-two deeds of the Tathāgata with those qualities of the Buddha such as the ten powers and so on. Thus, these three bases, the Enlightenment, etc., are the conditions.

Here rGyal-tshab clearly presents a line of reasoning based on the RGVV: the attainment of the fruitional Triple Jewel (the first three vajra bases) depends on the purification of the tainted ultimate reality or the Element (the fourth vajra base), which is the mind's emptiness of intrinsic identification; this purification is done by the

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327 RGVV 25.5: sarva-jiśa-saṃgrhaḥ upādāya prathaman boddhavya-padam draṣṭavyam.
328 Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa, Yum don ba' sgron me (The Lamp Illuminating the Meaning of the Mother Prajñāpāramitā), (Lhasa: Se ra dgon dpe mdzod khang), 205-206.
329 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skā, 29a.
individual's rational mentation that takes the mind's emptiness as its object; and this rational mentation is cultivated based on the instructions. The instructions are the embodiment of the thirty-two deeds (the seventh vajra base) based on the thirty-two qualities (the sixth vajra base) of a formerly enlightened buddha (the fifth vajra base).

More specifically, as Padma rGyal-mtshan points out, Enlightenment in terms of the two kinds of Form Bodies is the "causal refuge" for a Mahāyāna person; the bodily excellences of thirty-two signs cause the clarity [of faith] in the mind of a disciple; and the thirty-two mental excellences which consist of ten powers, four fearlessness, and eighteen special qualities of the Buddha serve as dominant conditions for the thirty-two deeds by which the revolution of the wheel of Dharma takes place for a certain student's needs, thereby causing a student's Element to be purified in stages.

Moreover, two things should be noted: firstly, despite the importance of rational mentation and messages from others, these two indispensable factors in rGyal-tshab's "fruition/cause/condition" exegetical schema are not counted as the components of the seven vajra bases, but as the "extended meaning" incorporated into the fourth base, the Element, with the seventh base, the Deeds, respectively. Secondly, as to the likely question that the arrangement of the seven vajra bases seems to be redundant because Enlightenment can be actually incorporated into and included in the Buddha Jewel, rGyal-tshab responded that though being the same in nature, the Buddha Jewel is the

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331 bala, stobs. Ibid., 154.
332 vaiśradya, mi 'jigs pa. Ibid., 149.
333 avyaktabuddhādharma, ma 'dres pa'i chos. Ibid., 155.
334 Padma rGyal-mtshan, bLo gsal dga' skyed snying gi nor bu, (Mundgod: Drepung Loseling Library Society, 2004), 321.
335 don gyis 'phangs pa.
336 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skā, 73b. However, the "messages from others (/scriptures)," are also said to be the superficial aspect of the Deeds. See Table 3 above.
fruition to be attained in self-continuum in the future, whereas Enlightenment has already been accomplished in other continua.337

5. On RGV 1.3

RGV I.3 shows the conjunction (sambandha) of the seven vajra bases as the textual structure for the RGV as follows:

From the Buddha comes the Dharma; the noble Congregation comes in turn from the Dharma; because of the noble Congregation there occurs the Essence, which persists until its obtainment of the element of gnosis; its obtainment of the gnosis is the Supreme Enlightenment, which is endowed with the Excellences, benefiting all living beings.338

As mentioned above, this verse serves as the canonical source for rNgog-lo's explanation mode of the "wheel of non-abiding nirvāṇa." As stated before, the Triple Jewel is already accomplished by others, and the purification of the Element is conditioned by its appearance in the world; the last three vajra bases are the fruition of the purification. In this mode, both the "causal refuge" Triple Jewel and the Element are regarded as causes of the purification. In order to show the consistency of the entire treatise, rGyal-tshab glosses this verse not completely based on its literal meaning, but in accord with his exegetical schema of "fruition/cause/condition."

337 Ibid, 6a.
Here, rGyal-tshab explains the Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha respectively as the object\textsuperscript{339} and objective\textsuperscript{340} of the conception of the Mahāyāna spirit of enlightenment on the basis of the definition of this spirit; that is, one seeks ultimate enlightenment for the sake of all beings' welfare.\textsuperscript{341}

From the perfect Buddha [enlightened] in all things comes the revolution of the wheel of Dharma for noble beings. The gathering of numerous noble congregations of disciples, the supreme Samgha Jewel, comes in turn from the revolution of the wheel of Dharma. The revolution of the wheel of Dharma after attaining perfect buddhahood is the object of the spirit of enlightenment in the Mahāyāna produced in the continua of the intended disciples of the Uttaratantra, while the occurrence of numerous noble congregations dependent on that wheel is the objective of the conception of the spirit of enlightenment.\textsuperscript{342}

'Gos-lo also explains the seven vajra bases in accord with the conception of the spirit of enlightenment in a different vein. He says that taking refuge to the Triple Jewel lays the foundation for its conception, and the apprehension of the spirit has two aspects: other's welfare, i.e. the Element, and Enlightenment, i.e. Enlightenment, the Excellences, and the Deeds.\textsuperscript{343}

After the conception of the spirit of enlightenment, there is a need for a Mahāyāna practitioner to purify the reality of his or her mind from the defilements. According to the sequence described in RGV I.3, the "Essence" (= the Element) occurs between the Samgha and the Enlightenment and thus seems to be something that has temporal dimension. In rGyal-tshab's gloss, however, it refers to the mere designation of the [Buddha-] essence since reality itself is not a compounded thing that is created by a cause/condition:

\textsuperscript{339} dmigs pa.
\textsuperscript{340} ched du.
\textsuperscript{341} AA I.18a: cittotpādaḥ parārthāya samnyaksambodhikāmaṭṭaḥ.\textsuperscript{342} rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skā, 28a.
\textsuperscript{343} Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPai's Commentary, 13-14.
Because of the noble congregation, there occurs the Buddha-essence. It means that, in order to attain the ultimate Three Jewels, and the Three Jewels as being the immediate causes, and then, to gather the noble congregations as the fruition of revolution of the wheel of Dharma, we wish to purify the Buddha-essence from defilements. Thus, there comes the Buddha-essence which is purified from defilements to a certain degree. For how long will this Buddha essence last? It will last until its attainment of the "element of the Buddha's intuition," depleted of all defilements. Throughout this duration, the reality mingled with defilements, the susceptibility to Buddha's deeds entering in the continua of living beings, and genetic potential are called the "Buddha-essence." After the attainment of Buddha's intuition, this designation no longer exists.

Tainted reality is designated as the Buddha-essence when the purification process starts; this is because only at that time reality serves as the focus of the rational mentation which will bring forth Enlightenment despite the fact that it exists from beginningless time. After the attainment of Enlightenment, this designation ceases to exist because this reality has transformed into a buddha's Truth Body, and is no longer in the form of an embryonic essence. rGyal-tshab's explanation finds its support in the statement of the AAN quoted in RGVV 3.5 as the scriptural source regarding the Element; as well as in RGV I.47-50 along with the glosses in the RGVV. This will be examined in the next chapters. In quick preview, reality is designated as the "Element of living beings" when completely defiled; as the "Buddha-essence" when partially defiled, and as the "Truth Body" when completely isolated from defilements.

Then rGyal-tshab comments on rNgog-lo's explanation mode of the "wheel of non-abiding nirvāṇa" by stating "although this way of exposition is slightly suitable for this

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344 ci rigs pa.
345 jñāta-dhāt-vāpi-nigethā. Owing to the ambiguity in rNgog-lo's translation ("sning po ye shes khams bthob mtha"'), Rong-ston takes garbhā jñāna as a compound, in referring to Buddha's intuition. See Legs bshad, 59. This seems to not be the correct rendition, as suggested by Sanskrit edition.
346 jug rung.
347 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla skā, 28b.
verse, as indicating sequentiality, the substance of this treatise is very clear in taking Enlightenment and so on as conducive conditions for purifying the Element from defilements.\textsuperscript{348} Thus, there is an overlap in rGyal-tshab's gloss on the last three bases as both the fruitions of, and as the conditions for the purification, while retaining the original sequence:

The attainment of the Buddha's intuition, which is free of all defilements after the purification of the Element, is called "Supreme Enlightenment." The Excellences dependent on that Enlightenment, including the powers, fearlessnesses and special qualities of the Buddha, are indicated as the distinctive features of Enlightenment. And the Deeds dependent on the Excellences, which benefit all living beings in both simultaneous and incessant ways, are indicated as the distinctive features of the Excellences.\textsuperscript{349}

Here rGyal-tshab stresses the fact that Enlightenment, etc., are no more than external conditions provided by other enlightened beings that make inner Element purification possible. This is in direct opposition to the standpoint of Dol-po-pa's Other-emptiness theory that there is an identity between the Element functioning inside, awakening living beings to its original nature, and the deeds of the enlightened ones with transcendent excellences; for they are all Buddha's intuition from the very beginning.\textsuperscript{350}

\textit{6. Conclusion}

\textsuperscript{348} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rGyud bla} \textit{bka}, 29a.
\textsuperscript{349} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{350} Hookham, \textit{The Buddha Within}, 193.
To summarize, rGyal-tshab in his *rgyud bla ma'ikā* thoroughly discusses the RGV, and its gloss RGVV, as treatises that focus on the Mahāyāna soteriology, as opposed to the unfounded assertion by some modern scholars, such as Brian Brown, that the RGV focuses its exposition from predominantly one angle of ontology.\(^{351}\)

Furthermore, the seven vajra bases, the main topics of the RGV and RGVV, are presented in rGyal-tshab's exegetical schema of "fruition/cause/condition" in such a way that definitely leaves no room for interpretations according to the Other-emptiness theory which has found favor through merely literal readings of the RGV and the like.

Most importantly, although a basic scheme of "fruition/cause/condition" for the RGV is widely accepted by all Tibetan exegetes, such as rNgog-lo, Dol-po-pa, Rong-ston, and 'Gos-lo, rGyal-tshab's exegetical schema is truly unique for the understanding of the sometimes nebulous concept of "Buddha-essence" as not only a philosophical argument but also a soteriological principle, which will come under close examination in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Reality, Element, and Natural Luminosity of the Mind

1. The Buddha-essence and Its Various Names

After discussing the last four bases by the names of "reality mingled with defilements," etc., as the ratnagotra, the RGV teaches the cause of the fruitional Triple Jewel: reality mingled with defilements is identified as the tathāgatagarbha (Buddha-essence), the central theme of the treatise.

The TGS and the SMS, the two all-time classics on the Buddha-essence, serve as the primary scriptural sources for the RGV's exposition of the fourth vajra base, the Element, despite the fact that the RGVV 2.10 takes the AAN as the representative scripture.

According to rGyal-tshab's rGyud bla ma ūkā, the entire exposition of the RGV on the Element is divided into three headings: (1) "A Brief Statement on the Element, the Buddha-essence, by indicating the threefold import;" (2) "A Detailed Exposition of Proofs;" (3) "A Demonstration of the Need to Proclaim That Living Beings Are Possessed of the Buddha-essence."

Under the second heading, (2) "A Detailed Exposition of Proofs;" there are four subheadings: (a) "Proofs of the Element Being Naturally Pure by Ten Arrangements;" (b) "Proofs of the Element Being Obscured by Coincidental Defilements with Nine Similes;" (c) "The Subjects That Realize the Element;" and (d) "Recognizing the Nature of the Element." Among the subheadings: (a), (c), and (d) teach the Buddha-essence mainly on the basis of the SMS, whereas subheading (b) teaches exclusively on the basis of the TGS.
Heading (3), A demonstration of the need to proclaim that living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence, has been discussed in the section that examines the relation between the middle wheel and the last wheel in Chapter 3.

RGV I.27 and I.28, consists of heading (1) “A Brief Statement on the Element, the Buddha-essence, by indicating the threefold import,” which encapsulates central concepts of subheadings (a) and (b), especially the latter, thereby being two key verses of the *tathāgatagarbhā* chapter.

Owing to the cardinal importance of the Buddha-essence doctrine in the RGV(V), rGyal-tshab carried out a detailed and in-depth analysis. It is a significant articulation of rGyal-tshab's theory of the Buddha-essence and his analysis of absolutism as represented by Dol-po-pa's Other-emptiness philosophy; thus, it deserves close examination. The next two chapters will concentrate on rGyal-tshab's exposition of the Buddha-essence notion in connection with headings (1), (a), and (b). In this chapter, we shall first examine this notion in connection with headings (c) and (d), from a broader perspective. But before reaching that point, we need to be aware of a rich and yet perplexing vocabulary for the Buddha-essence adopted in the RGV(V).

This vocabulary reveals the exact nature of the Buddha-essence doctrine as found in a variety of the Mahāyāna scriptures at Asaṅga's time. For example, while the terms: ultimate, the Element of living beings, Buddha-essence, and Truth Body are listed as synonyms (*adhivacana*) in the AAN, the Buddha-essence is designated as the essence of the ultimate element, essence of transcendent qualities, and essence of the perfectly pure qualities in the SMS. *Tathāgatadhatu*, or *buddhadhātu* (Element of the Tathāgata or Buddha), refers to the famous MMPS as its main canonical source. *Tathāgatadhātu* is

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352 dharmadhītu-garbha, dharmakīyadhatukottaradharma-garbha, and prakṛtiśuddhadharma-garbha.
frequently used in the RGV(V), synonymous with *tathāgatagarbha* (Buddha-essence). Sometimes it refers to *tathatā* (reality), *gotra* (genetic potential); when used in the sense of *gotra*, the RGVV explains it as *hetu* (cause). Another common name used throughout the RGV(V) for the Buddha-essence is *prakṛtiprabhāsvaracitta* (natural luminosity of the mind); it is found in the RGVV's references to the SMS, the GGS, and the SMP. The notion of the Buddha-essence is also closely connected to *gotra* (genetic potential) such as *visuddhigotra, ratnagotra, buddhayogotra, prakṛtisthagotra, and samudānīyatagotra*. There are, in addition, terms designed by the RGV(V) to denote the Buddha-essence such as *ratnagotra*, reality mingled with defilements, noetic element, and so on.

Chiefly as a soteriological principle, the "natural luminosity of the mind" is the most ancient concept in the history of Buddhist thought when compared to other terms used in the treatise. Most of these different names, including the "natural luminosity of the mind", however, signify a more fundamental meaning that is *tathatā* (reality). In order to understand rGyal-tshab's analysis of the RGV(V)'s notion of the Buddha-essence better, it is necessary for us to examine his explanations of these key words first.

2. Reality

*As immutable ultimate reality*

As the essential referent common to the various determinants, *tathatā* is equated with *buddhayogotra* (Buddha-essence) in RGV 1.45. However, 1.28 takes *tathatā* as one of the three meanings of the Buddha-essence. In the RGVV Asaṅga explicates that "the 'reality mingled with defilements (*samalā tathatā*)' is the Element (*dhātu*), which is termed the
'Buddha-essence' when unreleased from the sheath of addictions. Tibetan exegetes such as rGyal-tshab take tathatā further, as the foundation for understanding the three meanings of the Buddha-essence. Therefore, it is a word of crucial importance for understanding the Buddha-essence notion as presented in the RGV(V). Owing to their differences in understanding tathatā, other Tibetan exegetes gave diverse interpretations of the doctrine.

The term tathatā used in the RGV(V) is apparently a direct borrowing from the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, since Asanga clearly states as follows:

It should be understood that [engagements with] the Buddha-element have been taught to bodhisattvas in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, etc., with reference to the non-conceptual intuition. There are three different kinds of engagement with the general characteristic of the pure reality of all things as taught [in the Sūtra] of naïve people who do not perceive reality, of noble ones who do perceive reality, and of tathāgatas who have obtained the ultimate purity in perceiving reality.

Despite there not being a reference in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra to the term Buddha-essence, a crucial link is provided between the idea of "natural luminosity of the mind" and the theory of Buddha-essence, especially regarding their ontological status in the new era of the Mahāyāna Buddhism, as discussed later in this chapter. Tathatā literally means "thusness;" this is a word used in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra to indicate that śunyatā (emptiness) as the noumenon of all things is an eternal reality without any temporal

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353 RGVV 24.15: tatra samadā tathatā yo dhūtra avinirmulata-kleśa-kosās tathāgata-garbha ity ucyate I.
354 See Chapter 6 of this present work.
changes, independent of the advent of the Buddha.\footnote{138} On the basis of this explicit reference, rGyal-tshab glosses \textit{tathatā (de bzhin nyid)} as "emptiness by intrinsic reality" and \textit{nirvikalpa-jñāna} (non-conceptual intuition) as the "direct realization of reality" throughout his exegesis of the RGV(V). It should be noted, however, that the word \textit{tathatā} is clearly defined in the RGV(V) in terms of reality of the mind, as opposed to the Tian-tai Master Zhan-ran\'s (湛然, 711-782) presumption that all the non-sentient have the Buddha-essence.\footnote{139} According to the RGV(V) and its scriptural references, the TGS, etc., only living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence or the Truth Body, the Buddha-essence after transformation. Therefore, \textit{samalā tathatā} ("reality mingled with defilements") is explained by rGyal-tshab as: the emptiness of the intrinsic reality of living beings' minds. Rong-ston holds a similar view,\footnote{140} whereas 'Gos-lo interprets the "general characteristic" as the negations of subjective self and objective self, as well as the unchangeable natural luminosity of the mind, and according to 'Gos-lo, is a noetic entity.\footnote{141} Furthermore, rGyal-tshab explains the ultimate reality as the emptiness of intrinsic reality or the emptiness of intrinsic identity,\footnote{142} the latter exclusively accepted by the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamikas.

The TGS and RGV I.108-111 both use the simile of pure gold for \textit{tathatā} to express its characteristic of being timeless as the ultimate reality.

\textit{The tainted reality}

\footnote{138} "若菩薩摩訶薩，欲達一切法，真如、法界、法性，不虛妄性、不變異性、平等性、離生性、法定，法住，實際，虛空性，不思議性，應行般若波羅蜜多。" 大般若波羅蜜多經 (Da bo ruo bo tuo mi do jing), T.5.220.13b22.\footnote{139} "無情有性," See Zhan-ran, 金刚锋 (Jin-gang-pi), T.46.1932.\footnote{140} Rong-ston, \textit{Legs lshad}, 75.\footnote{141} Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPal\'s Commentary, 330.\footnote{142} rang bzhin gyis grub pas stong pa, rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pas stong pa. rGyal-tshab, \textit{rGyud bla gti}, 114a.
rGyal-tshab defines *dhamu* (Element) as the "intrinsically pure ultimate reality" since *dhātu* is equated by Asaṅga with *tathatā*. Though it is intrinsically pure, as long as this ultimate reality is unreleased from the sheath of addictions, it is called *tathāgatagarbha* (Buddha-essence) as aforementioned. Therefore, it is important for rGyal-tshab to clarify that this fact does not entail asserting that the mind itself is also free of any coincidental defilements. The natural purity of the mind, according to rGyal-tshab, means that "the mind's objective condition has never been infiltrated by addictions such as attachment, etc., and is not in accord with the perceptual habit" of the truth-habitual conviction; simply put, the reality of the mind is never the construct held in our delusions. rGyal-tshab has argued that if our minds are not deluded by the addictions, it would be reasonable that anyone would perceive reality directly. He says, "The intellect having the aspect of aspiring for the apprehension of reality is in the nature of virtuous beings, whereas the addictions, such as attachment, are inappropriate and unable to apprehend reality." According to Buddhist epistemology, when the mind is defiled by the addictions, such as attachment, etc., the mind-consciousness and the mental functions of the addictions become the same entity. Because our minds are obscured by the fault of these defilements and unable to perceive reality, the RGV(V) calls the reality of the mind of a living being "tainted thusness" (*samalā-tathatā*). However, as rGyal-tshab points out, the addictions cannot always cause contamination of the mind since (1) they are incapable of remaining concurrently with the wisdom that realizes emptiness, and (2) they are incapable of perceiving reality in the slightest.

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361 *dzin stangs.*  
362 rGyal-tshab, *Gyud bla ma,* 20b.  
363 Ibid., 66b.  
364 Ibid., 115b.
rGyal-tshab discusses the relationship between the reality of a buddha's mind and an ordinary being's addictions as follows:

If you claim that reality would also not be obscured by addictions, [you should know that] addictions cause obstacles for the mind of a person's own continuum to perceive and realize his or her own continuum's reality; hence, [reality] is mingled with defilements. Although [defilements] also obscure the perception of reality of a buddha's continuum, because the buddha's continuum has the same characteristic of reality as ours, a buddha's reality does not become mingled with defilements, for obscuring addictions do not belong to a buddha's continuum in the way the reality to be obscured abides within our own continua. Suppose there is a person with bad vision who cannot perceive a thing that is far away. This problem exclusively belongs to this person but not to that thing. Otherwise, another person who has clear vision [and is] in front of the thing would also not perceive it; [but the person with clear vision can.]365

rGyal-tshab criticizes Dol-po-pa's position that a living being possesses a Truth Body having two kinds of purities in the midst of the defilements as contradictory. rGyal-tshab argues that, on the one hand, Dol-po-pa accepts that living beings are free of coincidental defilements because they are possessed of the two kinds of purity; on the other hand, he agrees that they are completely defiled.

In the prelude to RGV I.27 and I.28, Asanga asserts that "in terms of a reality mingled with defilements, [the Buddha] states that all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence."366 In rGyal-tshab's view, it is clear enough to conclude that the Buddha-essence, which is said to be possessed by all living beings, is explicated in the RGV(V) as being a casual factor alone.

3. Dharmatā

365 Ibid.
366 RGVV 25.15: tatra samādāḥ tathādāṁ adhiśeṣya yad uktam sarva-sattvāṁ tathāgata-garbhaḥ iti iva kenāthena ||.
Dharmatā (noumenon) is another word often used together with tathātā in the Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra (Aṣṭa), the SPS, etc., to indicate the ultimate reality of things. In the Commentary on the Great Transcendent Wisdom, Dharmatā is clearly designated as the naturally existing gene (本分種), which is further explained as the nature of nirvāṇa (涅槃性). In the RGV(V), there is no need to argue that dharmatā in its common usage refers to śunyaṭā or the ultimate reality. For example, RGV I. 51 discusses tathāgatadhiṭṭhā as dharmatā with an emphasis on its unchangeable nature. And I.69 clearly shows that bodhisattvas who have realized this unchangeable noumenon still take rebirth out of their compassion and vows because, as indicated in I.67, noble bodhisattvas who have directly realized emptiness would no longer take rebirth, etc., by the force of karma and addictions.

The RGVV cites the TGS as the proof for taking dharmatā as valid evidence, because all living beings are always possessed of the Buddha-essence, independent of the Buddha's advent in the world. The reasoning of dharmatā is listed as one of the four reasonings (yukti) in Asaṅga's Śrāvaka-bhumi. In general, it refers to the natural law, such as "flowing down" as the characteristic of the water element, "flaming up" as the characteristic of the fire element, etc. According to rGyal-tshab's interpretation, however, the reasoning of dharmatā here refers to śunyaṭā because this reasoning is the "proving reasoning (yukti), syllogism (yoga), or the means (upāya) which realizes that the nature of a living being’s mind would reasonably only be empty by intrinsic reality, and not

367 dharmatāṁ dharmatāṁ. See also fn. 7 above.
368 "法性名義本分種，如黃石中有金性白石中有銀性，如是一切世界法中皆有涅槃性，諸佛賢聖以智慧方便持或證定。教化引導者得是涅槃法性，利根者即知是諸法皆是法性。譬如神通人能變瓦石皆為金。鈍根者方便分別求之乃得法性，譬如大冶煉石然後得金。"大智度論 (Da zhi du lun), T.25.1509.297b24.
369 dharmatāṁ pratiprātyeyam avikāryam jñātāṁ-yah | dhīreṇe Yad avidyāndhair jñātā-yāśu tad adhiṣṭaram ||
370 mṛtyu-vyādhi-jarā-duḥkha-mūlaṁ āryair apoddhṛtam | karma-kleśa-vaśāḥ jātis tad-abhāvān na teṣu tathā ||
otherwise. Gyal-tshab intends to prove that the Buddha-essence itself is nothing more than dharmatā, the ultimate reality of our minds; it remains as a fundamental truth no matter how the mind is deluded. In Gyal-tshab's view, the meaning of dharmatā in the RGV(V) is basically the same as that of tathātā; both denote the mind's emptiness. In the same vein, as above-mentioned, Gyal-tshab regards the TGS as a scripture definitive in meaning which can be even taken literally for the reason that the sūtra explicitly speaks of the tathāgatadharmatā (noumenon of the buddhas) as being wrapped in the addictions, rather than the buddhas themselves. Similarly, Rong-ston explains dharmatā as emptiness of objective reality.

4. Natural Luminosity of the Mind

Origin in Canonical sources

The "natural luminosity of the mind" as an old soteriological concept played a significant role in the evolution of the Buddha-essence doctrine. The earliest canonical reference to this concept can be found in some terse Pāli sūtra passages of the Ekottarika Āgama. The mind is said to be "luminous" (pabhassara), and mental addictions (upakkilesa) are just incidental to it. The "natural luminosity of the mind" was apparently one of the often-debated topics among the Nikaya schools in Vasumitra's Samayabhedoparacana-cakra. The standpoints of every other school diverged greatly on this issue.

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371 Gyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma, 157a.
372 'rang gi ngo bo nyid kyi stong pa. Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 78.
374 Yi-bu-zhong-lun (Yi-bu-zhong-lun), T.49.2031.
The Sarvastivādins opposed this idea vehemently, arguing that defilements and non-defilements have different prakṛti (nature) which are not compatible and cannot co-exist. Thus, according to them, this teaching of the Buddha is interpretable in meaning, intending to encourage spiritually lethargic people to meditate by means of this easy assurance that the nature of the mind is fundamental luminous or pure. Although both of the Mahāsaṃghikas and the Vibhajyavādins accepted the idea without question, there seems to be a nuanced difference between their opinions. For the Mahāsaṃghikas, the mind is said to be naturally pure in the sense that "three virtuous roots could only cease temporarily from the mind, but the three non-virtuous ones cease forever;" meaning that virtuous thoughts are apposite to the mind when they have been properly cultivated. The Vibhajyavādins held that "there is no difference in terms of the nature between the mind faulted by defilements and the mind without defilements;" the mind is deemed to be the basic stratum which makes defilement/purity and bondage/liberation possible. It should be noted, however, that this concept is essentially related to the soteriological principle underlying the letting-go of the self, rather than being concerned with any philosophical presupposition.

This "letting-go" principle was uniformly applied across all Nikaya schools as well as the ensuing Mahāyāna Buddhism. The same phrase "the natural radiance of the mind" appeared in the earliest Mahāyāna literature; however, since then it was no longer simply a soteriological principle. Taking the context into account, we can see that the Aṣṭa

375 Later Mahāyāna logicians, notably Dignāga and Dharmakirti, closely followed this position, as Roger R. Jackson points out that Dharmakirti's analysis of this concept is done "in terms of the conventional nature of mind as the correct apprehension of objects, and the adventitiousness of stains in terms of the incapacity of error to persist in a correctly cognizing mind because, relative to a correct cognition, it lacks a foundation in the way things actually exist." Paul Griffiths & John Keman eds. "Luminous Mind Among the Logicians." Buddha Nature: A Festschrift in Honor of Minoru Kiyota. (Tokyo: Buddhist Books International, 1990), 123.
376 Yin-shun (如來藏之研究) (Ru lai zhang zhi yan ju), (Taipei: zheng wen chu ban she, 1992), 72-75.
unarguably discusses the \textit{prakṛtiprabhāsvara} as \textit{śunyatā} (emptiness), the ultimate reality of all things.\textsuperscript{377} It is not unusual in the Mahāyāna literature that terms such as \textit{prakṛtipariśuddha} (natural purity), \textit{dharmatā}, and \textit{tathatā} are synonymous with \textit{śunyatā} and can be often used alternatively to denote the import of realitylessness.\textsuperscript{378} Both the Madhyamaka school and the Vījñānavāda school in India espoused this important notion of "the natural radiance of the mind" and equated it with the ultimate reality in spite of the discrepancy in their understandings of it; e.g., in Haribhadra's commentary on the \textit{Aṣṭa}, \textit{prakṛtiprabhāsvara} is glossed as "mere purity of innate or intrinsic nature."\textsuperscript{379} Maitreya proclaims in the MSA that "there is no other mind apart from the mind of reality which is naturally luminous." Vasubandhu further elucidates that "apart from the reality-mind there is no other mind of a relative nature which has natural luminosity. Therefore, the 'mind' is to be understood here as the 'suchness of mind.'\textsuperscript{380}

In the RGVV, the scriptural references for this term come from the SMS, the DIR, the GGS, the SMP, and the Jāfā. While the "natural luminosity of the mind" in the GGS is equated by Asaṅga with \textit{avikāradharmatā} (unchangeable noumenon), the same term as found in the other three sūtras is cited in relation to \textit{tathatā} (reality).

\textit{rGyal-tshab's exegesis on the passages from the SMS and the DIR}


In order to show that the reality mingled with defilements, i.e. something simultaneously having purity and addiction, is difficult to conceive, Asaṅga cites a passage from the SMS as follows:

Goddess, these two things are quite difficult to understand. It is difficult to understand that the mind is intrinsically pure. It is also difficult to understand that this very mind exists with addictions.\(^{381}\)

Asaṅga's reference to the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra for the term tathātā gives rGyal-tshab a measure of control over the definitions of prakṛtiparabhāśvara, dhātu, tathāgatagarbha, etc. As a result, in rGyal-tshab's view, this seemingly unfathomable scriptural statement is simply a philosophical argument about the compatibility between the ultimate reality and the conventional reality. Two things difficult to understand by our validating cognitions are (1) natural luminosity (prakṛtiparabhāśvara), which is, according to rGyal-tshab, the mind being devoid of intrinsic identifiability even small as single atom, and (2) this very mind also having addictions. rGyal-tshab points out that "the difficulty of understanding the former, knowing how to represent it as proved by validating cognition, is similar to the difficulty of understanding the compatibility of a dichotomy." This standpoint is in line with Tsong-kha-pa's arrangement that a true understanding of emptiness comes from a deep appreciation of the harmony between dependent-origination and emptiness.\(^{382}\) According to the Prāsaṅgīka-Mādhyamika view understood by Tsong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab, both the emptiness of intrinsic reality and the functional relative are accepted and verified by validating cognition. Prior to having this

\(^{381}\) RGVV 22.1: dvav imau devi dharmau dusprativedhyau | prakṛti-pariśuddha-cittam dusprativedhyam | tasyāiva cittasyopakṣīṣṭāṁ dusprativedhyām ||

true understanding of emptiness, any negation of the truth status of things is a "mere presumption." Thus, rGyal-tshab concludes:

If the mind is contaminated by the addictions, we then must accept the relativity of contaminated and contaminating. Such being the case, it would be extremely difficult to establish emptiness by intrinsic reality. But we must accept the following two things sharing a common ground: all things as devoid of intrinsic identifiability even small as single atom and all functionality as valid. This is similar to the difficulty of understanding the emptiness by intrinsic reality of the minds of living beings and also to the difficulty of understanding the reality mingled with defilements.383

Later, Asaṅga cites the DIR to show another point of inconceivability, that the reality free of defilements originally does not consist of addictions with defilements, and yet later does get purified from coincidental defilements afterwards:

The mind is naturally luminous. This is directly known by noble beings. Hence, after having a habitual affinity with that, the Buddha achieved unexcelled perfect enlightenment by the intuition endowed with one moment.384

In a short catechism concerning this passage, rGyal-tshab stresses the difference between the mind and its reality. In rGyal-tshab's words, the reality of the mind is naturally luminous, "there is no slightest habit-pattern of defilements infiltrated into it;" however, the minds of living beings are in fact obscured by defilements. Therefore, the reality of living beings' continua is said to be mingled with defilements on the basis that

383 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma.67a.
the defiled minds of living beings and their reality are the same entity. rGyal-tshab warns us that "although there is no slightest habit-pattern of defilements infiltrated into reality of a living being's mind, we shall not interpret 'originally not defiled by erroneous engagement' as reality existing in the minds of living beings [already] free of defilements," because the co-existing addictions such as deluded passion are inappropriate and unable to apprehend the reality; and because if the addictions were not the obscurcation for seeing the reality, it would be reasonable that everyone could perceive the reality directly.

This position of rGyal-tshab is a critique of 'Gos-lo's transcendental mysticism that the tainted reality as an inconceivable amalgam cannot be established by the validating cognition of material force by implication: reality is the "primordial mind," not an exclusion negation, and correspondingly, reality and addictions are two opposite things combined on the same basis. According to 'Gos-lo, the "primordial mind" as the Element or Buddha-essence is the real nature of misknowledge, that being the addictions, deluded passion, and so forth. And this mind is said to be "naturally luminous" inasmuch as it is free of the "darkness" of the perception of subject-object dichotomy.

On the passage from the GGS

The famous statement that "the mind is naturally luminous, but is defiled by coincidental addictions" is reiterated in the GGS. However, it principally substantiates

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385 ngo bo gcig pa.
386 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla bk 67b.
387 dngos po stobs zhungs kyi tshad ma.
388 Mathes, 'Gos Lo stō ba gZhon nu dpal's Commentary, 215.
389 Ibid., 217.
390 RGVV 45.2: prakṛti-prabhāsvaram cittatāñjantakaṁ upakāsāṁ upakāśyata ān.
the doctrine of *tathāgatadhātu/tathāgatagarbha* as unchangeable *dharmatā* in the RGVV.

The *sūtra* uses the simile of "space" for *prakṛti*, the natural purity of the mind:

> For instance, Great seer, this great earth is supported by water. Water is supported by air, and air is supported by space. But space, in turn, is not supported by anything. Thus, among these four elements, space is more powerful than any of the other three elements of earth, water and air. It is also firm and immovable. It has no decrease and no increase. It is not produced and does not cease. It is supported by its own essence. [On the contrary], the other three elements, being unstable, are possessed of arising and disintegration. These are perceived as changeable, but space is not in the slightest. Likewise, the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties have their support in *karma* and addiction. *Karma* and addiction have their support in irrational thought and the latter, in turn, has its support in the natural purity. 391

According to Buddhist cosmology, space makes the physical world able to exist: the wind-circle is formed in empty space, then the water-circle, the four continents, Mount *Sumeru*, etc. At the end, all things will be destroyed by fire, etc., except space which retains its empty nature. In the same way, this *sūtra* teaches that the space-like natural purity of the mind is the basis for the creations of air-like irrational thought, water-like *karma* and addictions, and the retribution that consists of the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties; that retribution would be consumed by the group of *fires*, of death, sickness and aging but the nature purity of the mind remains unchanged.

The unchangeability of *prakṛti* as being permanent and uncompounded is not of major concern to rGyal-tshab. Instead, he emphasizes how to understand the mode of unchangeability. According to rGyal-tshab, this "natural luminosity" must be permanent since in the *sūtra* it is described as space-like, uncreated by causes and conditions. If it is permanent, then it must be the mere exclusion392 of the intrinsic identifiability of the

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391 As cited in RGVV 44.10-45.5.
392 *rnam par bcat.*
mind because only an exclusion negation like uncompounded space fits in the category of permanence, not having any compounded physical or mental entities:

Realism is unchangeable by cause and condition. Just as uncompounded space cannot be posited as something other than the mere exclusion of resistant tangible objects, reality is not something else besides the mere exclusion of truth-reification.  

Thus, rGyal-tshab asserts that "natural luminosity" means the ultimate reality, the ultimate objective condition of all things which "does not go beyond [the meaning of] emptiness of intrinsic reality." This ultimate reality is called "unchangeable" because it cannot be changed into something other than the mere exclusion of the intrinsic identifiability of the mind and would not arise as different forms when it is perceived by any noble bodhisattva's concentration. By doing so, rGyal-tshab obliquely critiqued Dol-po-pa's viewpoint of the ultimate reality as being a positive, independent, permanent entity. For rGyal-tshab, that is a type of "permanence" unknown to Buddhist scholars. rGyal-tshab's in-depth discussion about the Buddhist notion of permanence and his critique of Dol-po-pa's theory and, by extension, 'Gos-lo's theory of the ultimate reality, can be found in Chapter 3 of this work.

It seems clear, provided that rGyal-tshab's arguments are sustainable, that the phrase "natural luminosity of the mind" bears much metaphysical overtone in the RGV(V) and in Mahāyāna literature in general. However, its original meaning as a soteriological principle is still kept intact. Correspondingly, rGyal-tshab describes these two

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393 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla gkhā.82b.
394 ibid.,114a.
connotations, metaphysical truth and soteriological principle, as the two aspects of the Element:

The ultimate Element is the reality mingled with defilements, which is [ultimately] the emptiness of the intrinsic reality-status of the mental continuum of a living being; the relative one is the ability possessed by a living being's mind to produce transcendent excellences. 395

Combined together, the notion of the "natural luminosity of the mind" is the cornerstone of the whole Buddha-essence doctrine, as we shall see.

To sum up, in broad perspective, all distinct terms denoting the ultimate reality, such as tathatā, dharmatā, prakṛtiprabhāsvāra, refer to its characteristic of being immutable. rGyal-tshab found his support for this through the "space" simile, like the one used in the GGS. This simile proves that the ultimate reality can only be the mere exclusion of truth-reification, i.e. emptiness as taught in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra and elaborated in Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka philosophy. This critical understanding of the natural purity/luminosity, or the ultimate reality of the mind, serves as the foundation for rGyal-tshab's exposition of the RGV(V)'s notion of the Buddha-essence.

5. The Element

According to the AAN

We have just examined how rGyal-tshab interprets some key words used in the RGV(V) in relation to the notion of the Buddha-essence. While the terms such as

395 Ibid., 6a.
"reality" and "noumenon" to denote emptiness, or the ultimate reality, in general, the words including "natural luminosity of the mind," "Element," "naturally existing gene," and "Buddha-essence" have the unequivocal meaning of reality in connection to a living being' mind.

Based on rGyal-tshab's exegesis of the passage from the GGS, we can see that the "natural luminosity of the mind" is the basis for samsāra in the sense that irrational thought, which causes all activities and results in samsāra, abides within emptiness of intrinsic reality, or the ultimate reality, of the mind. Nevertheless, as rGyal-tshab pointed out, this noumenon is also the foundation for nirvāṇa because "if the Element were not naturally pure, it would be impossible for coincident defilements to be removed; thereby, there would be no enlightenment."\textsuperscript{396} With respect to the ultimate reality of the mind, the AAN gives three names as follows:

Śāriputra, the so-called "ultimate" is a denomination of the Element of living beings. Śāriputra, the so-called "Element of living beings" is a denomination of the Buddha-essence. Śāriputra, the so-called "the Buddha-essence" is a denomination of the "the Truth Body."\textsuperscript{397}

In rGyal-tshab's gloss, this single reality is designated as the "Element of living beings" when it is completely defiled; as the "Buddha-essence" when defilements have been abandoned to certain degree but still remain a little; and as the "Truth Body" when the reality is completely isolated from defilements. rGyal-tshab maintains that the

\textsuperscript{396} Ibid., 6b-7a.
\textsuperscript{397} As cited in RGVV 2.10: paramārtha iti śāriputra sattva-dhātor etad adhivacanam | sattva-dhātor iti śāriputra tathāgata-garbhasyaśītad adhivacanam | tathāgata-garbha iti śāriputra dharma-kāyasyātad adhivacanam |.
Buddha-essence is the reality which has been partly free from defilements; this aligns with his expositions on RGV I.3. According to his gloss on I.3, the designation of the mind's reality as "Buddha-essence" depends on the process of purification; it begins at the time when one has decided to purify the mind and succeeded to a certain degree, and it ceases when one has obtained enlightenment. RGVV 40.15 cites the same sūtra to show that the Element has three different names in accordance with its three states: (1) it is called the "Element of living being" in the impure state; (2) called "bodhisattva" in the both pure and impure state; and (3) called "tathāgata" in the perfectly pure state. The "bodhisattva" here refers to a noble one according to RGV I.45.\textsuperscript{398} It seems clear that the AAN equates the Buddha-essence with noble bodhisattvas in terms of the reality of their minds which have been purified to a certain degree.

Now the question arises: why does rGyal-tshab gloss in this way to indicate that the Buddha-essence has a "temporal" dimension, as opposed to a more common belief that it is universal and beginningless? A possible answer would be that, by doing so, rGyal-tshab does not simply report what has been mentioned as a fact in the texts, that the Buddha-essence is an inherent potential within everyone for achieving transcendent enlightenment; but rather he analyzes the reason behind such an assurance. His obvious intent is to stress that liberation and enlightenment will not come without a dynamic effort to recognize our own inner reality, despite the fact that it has been dormant within us all the time. He means to say that this reality is the potential for buddhahood only when serving as the object of the transcendental wisdom that is "manifest" in us. Thus, the Buddha-essence is not merely a comforting concept but, most importantly, a liberative means of achieving the ultimate goal of buddhahood for Mahāyāna Buddhists. rGyal-tshab says:

\textsuperscript{398} \textit{prthag-jañāya-sambuddha-tathā vyatirekatah ||}.
The Element, that is the natural purity of the minds of living beings, serves as the foundation for living beings to obtain buddhahood because it produces the buddha's qualities by meditating on it; this is the source of qualities. The reality mingled with defilements is called the "Buddha-essence" because it includes essential techniques for the attainment of perfect buddhahood.399

Since noble bodhisattvas directly perceive emptiness, it seems reasonable to designate the reality of their minds, partly free from defilements, as an exemplification of the Buddha-essence. In the same vein, this tainted reality is designated in RGVV 72.10 as the "cause" of the ultimate enlightenment and the "seed" of transcendent qualities by virtue of being the focus of the wisdom of bodhisattvas. It should be noted that, according to rGyal-tshab, adhivacana or tshig bla tvags (denomination) means a verbal synonym, and is not a literal equivalence. He gives an example of the term "hand-possessor" to illustrate his point: "hand-possessor" is a synonym for "elephant," but it does not necessarily contain the notion of elephant. Thus, rGyal-tshab only accepts the "Element of living beings" and "Buddha-essence" as mutually concomitant in meaning, but rejects the idea that "Element of living beings" or "Buddha-Essence" is identical to the notion of the "Truth Body" as Dol-po-pa would assert. According to rGyal-tshab, this argument is based on the textual evidences of the RGV and RGVV themselves that: (1) no single word can be found in the RGV(V) demonstrating the enlightenment which is completely isolated from defilements as the "Buddha-essence;" (2) the third sentence of the AAN teaches that the reality is designated as "Truth Body" when it is completely purified from

399 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ñiṅ, 108a-b.
defilements; and (3) ordinary beings, bodhisattvas, and the Tathāgata are referred in RGV I.47 as being "impure," "both impure and pure," and "pure" respectively.\(^{400}\)

**According to the MAS**

In the YBh, Asaṅga defines dhātu as having six meanings: (1) cause, (2) seed, (3) nature, (4) genetic potential, (5) subtlety, and (6) basis.\(^{401}\) Originally, dhātu is only used in connection with compounded entities. But in the RGV(V), emptiness of intrinsic reality, an uncompounded noumenon, also bears this name for the reason just discussed.

It seems to me that, apart from the meanings of "cause" and "seed" as found in the RGVV 72.10, Asaṅga also uses the term "Element" in the other four meanings in an interesting way. For the meaning of "subtlety," RGV I.52 uses a simile of space to illustrate that the Element is completely unaffected by karma and addictions because of being subtle. rGyal-tshab explains the meaning of "subtle" in an example that space is uncompounded because it is the mere exclusion of resistant tangible objects and it is not a directly apprehended object of the sense-faculties.\(^{402}\) The same notion applies to the Element.

As to the meaning of "basis," Asaṅga cites the MAS to prove that the Element is the foundation of samsāra and nirvāṇa. For the meaning of "nature," it appears in both expressions, the "Element of a living being" and the "Element of a Tathāgata," where the emptiness of intrinsic reality is the nature of an ordinary being's mind as well as the

\(^{400}\) asuddho 'Suddha-suddho 'tha suvisuddho yathā-kramam||
\(^{401}\) "問何等是界義？答因義，種子義，本性義，種性義，說細義，任持義。是界義。" 瑜伽師地論 (Yu qie shi di lun), T.30,1579.610a01, "kham kyi don gang zhe na, smra pa, kham kyi don ni rgyu' don dang sa bon gyi don dang rang bzhin gyi don dang rigs kyi don dang cha phra ba' don dang gezi don to." rNal 'byor spyod pa'i sa rnam par gnam la dbyab pa bya ba, bStan 'gyur, Vol. 74. (Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang), 188.
\(^{402}\) rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma' 108a.
nature of an enlightened one's mind. In RGVV 6.9, viśuddhigotra and tathāgatadhatu are stated in an equivalent manner. rGyal-tshab explains them as "the naturally pure [potential] possessed by living beings for the origination of the buddha's intuition."\(^{403}\)

Be that as it may, it is clear that the "cause" is the primary import of the term "Element" for even Asaṅga himself defines dhātu as hetu. He discusses the Element as the gotra (genetic potential), garbha (essence), hetu (cause), and samāśraya (basis) in one place connected with his explanation of RGV I.152. The Element, which is understood to be the twofold genetic potential in context, is said to the cause of the attainment of the three bodies of a buddha. The MAS is then cited to prove this as follows:

The Element that exists without beginning is the foundation of all things of sāṁsāra and nirvāṇa. Because of its existence, there are sāṁsāra and the attainment of nirvāṇa.\(^{404}\)

According to rGyal-tshab, this is a scriptural reference that Asaṅga uses to prove the existence of the twofold genetic potential, not a fundamental consciousness different in nature from the collection of six consciousnesses, since it is obvious that the Element in this context does not refer to the latter as it does in Asaṅga's Yogācāra system. As to the question of how the twofold genetic potential and especially the naturally existing gene, becomes the "basis" of sāṁsāra and nirvāṇa, rGyal-tshab explications the passage as follows:

If the nature of the mind were impure, it would be impossible for the defilements to be purified; if the production of excellences were unfeasible, the production [of the

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\(^{403}\) Ibid. 25b.

\(^{404}\) RGVV 72.13: antādi-kāliko dhīdūh sarva-dharma-samāśrayah | tasmin sati gatiḥ sarvā nirvāṇādhīgamo 'pi ca |.
purified nature of the mind] would be unacceptable; if the spiritual genetic potential did not exist, samsāra and the attainment of nirvāṇa would be absurd because all is established on the basis of the naturally pure genetic potential.  

Furthermore, Asaṅga cites the SMS to explicate the "Element" or the "Buddha-essence" as the "essence of transcendent qualities," and the "essence of naturally pure qualities." rGyal-tshab points out that the rationale of these beliefs is that all transcendent qualities arise through the meditation that has the Buddha-essence as the object, and that it is the ultimate objective condition of these qualities, respectively.

Thus, according to rGyal-tshab, we can see that the key terms with regard to the Buddha-essence: such as the tainted reality, natural luminosity of the mind, and Element, are in large measure identical to the notion of the naturally existing gene. We will examine this in Chapter 8. rGyal-tshab further discusses the emptiness which is the ultimate reality of the mind, as being the emptiness asserted by the Madhyamaka school, in his exposition of the RGV(V)'s sections on the "subjects that realize the Element" and "recognizing the nature of the Element."

### 6. The Buddha-essence and the Madhyamaka Philosophy

#### The Equation of the Buddha-essence with emptiness

Asaṅga names four kinds of people who are "blind to the Buddha-essence: 
(1) naïve people; (2) śrāvakas; (3) pratyekabuddhas; and (4) bodhisattvas who have just entered the Mahāyāna. By implication, the notion of the Element or the Buddha-essence must be the opposite of the misbeliefs and presumptions held by these people.

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405 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ’byak, 155b.
In the SMS, "naïve people" are defined as "those who have fallen into the futile view." Asanga explains the futile view as a "habitual adherence to egoism and possessiveness by accepting a personal self and property in connection with contaminated things such as the aggregates, etc." Consequently, naïve people cannot believe in an "uncontaminated element." rGyal-tshab thus glosses this "uncontaminated element" as the "ultimate reality which naturally stops the futile view" since the realization of selflessness is the only cure for the futile view.

Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas in the SMS are called "those who attach to misconceptions." Asanga cites the MMPS to explain some misconceptions held by people who follow the Śrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna. In brief, non-Mahāyāna Buddhists meditate on the sixteen aspects of the Four Noble Truths including impermanence, etc., as their main praxis. According to rGyal-tshab, when compared to the Mādhyamika standpoint, these meditations are involved with the "habit holding to truth-status in impermanence, etc.,” and thereby are an obstacle to the attainment of the Truth Body. In the Madhyamaka philosophy, holding to truth-status in things is a subtle form of self-habit which not only prevents one from obtaining buddhahood but also from attaining liberation, the ultimate goal of the non-Mahāyāna Buddhists. Thus, the Element or the Buddha-essence must have a finer notion than the sixteen aspects of the Four Noble Truths held by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas as the ultimate reality.

The SMS discusses bodhisattvas who have just entered the Mahāyāna as "those whose minds have deviated from emptiness," indicating the flaws in their understanding.
of the meaning of the Buddha-essence with respect to emptiness. Asaṅga further names two kinds of bodhisattvas in this category: (1) those "who accept emptiness as the door to liberation because it destroys phenomena, thinking that nirvāṇa means annihilation and destruction of any current existence,"⁴¹⁰ and (2) those "who have the apprehension of emptiness as being an entity that is different from the material, etc.; that being the one which we should realize, upon which we should meditate."⁴¹¹ According to rGyal-tshab, the former Mahāyānists philosophically make themselves no different from Vaibhāṣikas or Sautrāntikas since they both accept the emptiness of the subjective self in its coarse form, which seems to destroy prior phenomena, and so equate nirvāṇa with annihilation and destruction of the real existence of things by the force of meditation. Regarding the latter Mahāyānists, as mentioned in Chapter 2, rGyal-tshab identifies them as Vijaṇānavādins who have the apprehension of an emptiness with truth-status that is simply devoid of a substantial subject-object dichotomy. They negate external things since the Vijaṇānavāda school accepts the perfect and relative realities as established with intrinsic identifiability. Therefore, rGyal-tshab concludes that these two positions fall into the extremes of nihilism and eternalism respectively.

Kano points out to us that rNgog-lo's understanding of the Buddha-essence is in line with Madhyamaka philosophy, and that "although rNgog's position (emptiness = Buddha-essence) has been accepted by dGe-lugs-pa scholars, the RGV itself does not teach such a Madhyamaka-type emptiness at all. Rather, it teaches emptiness in the sense that the Buddha nature is void of adventitious defilements but is not empty of qualities."⁴¹² As

⁴¹⁰ RGVV 75.14: ye bhāva-vināśayā sūnyatā-vimokṣa-nukham icchanti sata eva dharmasyātra-kālam ucccheda vināśaḥ parinirvāṇam iti.
⁴¹¹ RGVV 75.15: ye vā punah sūnyatopalambhaṁ sūnyatāṁ praitarravatāṁ sūnyatāṁ nāma rūpāt-vyattirekhaṁ kṣat-cid bhāvo 'sai yam adhiṣṭhamāno bhāvasyāyāṁ iti.
⁴¹² Kano, rNgog Blo-Ishan-shes-rab's Summary, 170-171.
mentioned earlier, Paul Williams holds a similar opinion that the question of the actual ontological status of the Buddha-essence cannot be settled simply by the use of "emptiness" in the texts on the subject in question. It seems unlikely to rGyal-tshab, however, that having such a notion of emptiness as the personal understanding of Maitreya/Asaṅga would render Asaṅga's critique of misbeliefs and presumptions of emptiness as pointless. Based on rGyal-tshab's analysis, it is evident that this kind of understanding is neither a rectification of the futile view nor a refinement of the standpoints held by non-Mahāyānists and Viññānavādins. On the contrary, it is in fact both a repudiation of the relative and a reification of the ultimate, having fallen into two extremes at the same time. Furthermore, rGyal-tshab would probably argue that, in the RGV(V), apart from the four types of view just mentioned, Maitreya/Asaṅga never criticizes sunyatāvāda of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra as being inferior to the Buddha-essence doctrine. Instead, the emptiness as taught in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra is accepted as the "general characteristic of the pure reality of all things." In rGyal-tshab's view, the emptiness, which is advocated in the RGV(V) with respect to the Buddha-essence, is reasonably not different from the one as understood in the Madhyamaka philosophy. But before reaching his conclusion, let us observe what Maitreya/Asaṅga has to say about how the Buddha-essence is expressed in terms of being emptiness.

Realizing the Buddha-essence as the Middle Way

The first two lines of RGV 1.154 show that there is nothing whatever to be removed from the Element and absolutely nothing to be added onto it.\textsuperscript{413} And 1.155 explicates these lines by stating that "the Element is empty of the coincidental defilements but is not

\textsuperscript{413} nāpanteṇa apiḥ kim-cid utpanteṇa na kim-cana ||.
empty of the unexcelled qualities of character indivisible from it.\textsuperscript{414} Correspondingly, Asaṅga defines "emptiness" as the fact that something does not exist, and "existence" as the fact that something remains. Thus, the real meaning of emtpiness has to be free of the two extremes of reification and repudiation.\textsuperscript{415} It seems to me that this definition, when understood in context, is a refutation of previously held views. While Vaibhāśikas or Sautrāntikas' presumption of emptiness is associated with a reification of addictions as having truth-status, the other three views are considered as a repudiation of the ultimate reality for being a misbelief or misapprehension of the notion of emptiness. Correspondingly, rGyal-tshab's maintaining that the statement "there is no defilement to be removed; no antidote to be produced" cannot be explained in a literal sense without the qualification that no defilement/antidote has truth-status. Otherwise, it would become a different kind of repudiation, a repudiation of the conventional reality, i.e. addictions and antidotes.

On the basis of rNgog-lo's exposition of I.154-155 according to the Mādhyamika position,\textsuperscript{416} rGyal-tshab explains the Element as being empty of the defilements and not empty of qualities, in two modes: one with respect to emptiness itself; the other according to emptiness as an exemplification.\textsuperscript{417}

In the first mode, regarding the first line of I. 154: "from this there is nothing whatever to be removed and absolutely nothing to be added," rGyal-tshab glosses that there are neither conceptual objects for the two types of self-habit nor intrinsic reality-status of the addictions to be newly removed from this Element, since these never came

\textsuperscript{414} सङ्ग्या द्वार्तकार द्वितीय वास्तविकता लक्षणाति।\textsuperscript{415} र्ग्लो यदि भवन्ति तत्र तत्त्वात्मकता कथानुसार वास्तविकता लक्षणाति।\textsuperscript{416} दिल्लिन्दुर्गीयं द्वार्तकार वास्तविकता लक्षणाति।\textsuperscript{417} प्रतिपद्यति।

\textsuperscript{414} Sānyā āgatukair dhātuh sa-vinirbhāga-lakṣaṇaḥ | āśīyoy uṣṭhār dharmāv evinirbhāga-lakṣaṇaḥ ||
\textsuperscript{415} RGVV 76.9: evam yad yatoc māśi tat tatt śārayam iṣi samamupāyati yat punar arthaviṣṇuḥ bhavevat tat-saḍ daitiḥ yathā-hāśam prajāntatii.||
\textsuperscript{416} See Kano, rNgog Blo-Ikpen-shes-rab's Summary, 159-162.
\textsuperscript{417} mtshan gshis.
into existence from the beginning. This statement shows that the Element is free of the extreme of reification. rGyal-tshab further points out that the habit of the intrinsic reality-status of the addictions is explained separately from the objective self-habit on purpose. If the addictions had intrinsic reality-status, then the two types of self-habit and the primary addictions would have it as well. Consequently, the perceptual habits of the two types of self-habit would become the ultimate condition of things. Furthermore, the defilements such as self-habits would be part of the nature of our minds, instead of being coincidental. If so, it would be impossible for the defilements to be removed and for the twofold selflessness to be established.

The second line of I.154 states: "reality should be perceived correctly and correct perception comes into liberation." rGyal-tshab glosses it to mean that the twofold selflessness is absolutely nothing original to be newly added to the Element since emptiness is the nature of the Element. This statement shows that the Element is free of the extreme of repudiation. These two lines, when explained in a positive way, show that "if the addictions with truth-status can be established as not being previously existent but newly to be removed, then the emptiness of truly existent addictions will be established as not being previously non-existent but newly to be presented."\textsuperscript{418}

In the second mode, he glosses the first line as meaning that "the ultimate reality is established on the basis of the fact that there is no recent removal in the slightest of any previous truth-status of person and aggregates," and the second line as meaning that "the conventional reality, in which all deeds and agents are possible by virtue of the emptiness of intrinsic identifiability, is also established on the basis of the fact that there is no recent

\textsuperscript{418} rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla fıkâ, 160b.
establishment in the slightest of previous non-existent magic-like relativity that is empty of truth [-status]. \(^{419}\)

rgyal-tshab then concludes:

In summary, this verse teaches the integration between the ultimate reality which is emptiness of true existence, \(^{420}\) devoid of anything involved in the object of the truth-habit, and the conventional reality of which all arrangements of deed and agent are accepted by the same [philosophical] system [that accepts emptiness], and thus, are possible. \(^{421}\)

In the same vein, his view on the SMS passage with regard to śūnya/āśūnya of the Buddha-essence is convincingly argued. He states that, on the one hand, from the beginning, the Buddha-essence/ Element is empty of the intrinsic reality-status of defilements, which have a character of being separable from the Element through habitual affinity for antidotes; on the other hand, it is not empty of ultimate reality, the object of wisdom of emptiness, which makes possible the production of the transcendent qualities, thus having a character of being indivisible from the Element. His view is held in opposition to Dol-po-pa's assertion that the Buddha-essence texts teach the relative as self-emptiness and the ultimate as Other-emptiness. \(^{422}\) The Other-emptiness philosophy is vehemently rejected by rgyal-tshab for being the "ultimate reification and repudiation," thereby not being in line with Asaṅga's explanation of the Buddha-essence as śūnyatā, which is free of the two extremes.

\(^{419}\) ibid.
\(^{420}\) bden stong.
\(^{421}\) ibid, 161a.
\(^{422}\) Interpretations made by Dol-po-pa and Gos-lo of the same SMS passage can be found in Chapter 3.
In brief, according to rGyal-tshab, the Buddha-essence doctrine is neither a criticism of the śūnyatāvāda of the previous Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra and the scriptures alike, nor is it a correction to it. Rather, its philosophy and soteriology are compatible with the śūnyatāvāda, for it teaches the two realities as the basis, the wisdom of selflessness as the path, and the buddhahood resulted from the perfection of this transcendent wisdom as the fruition.423

7. Conclusion

Although the terms discussed in this chapter have a general significance, commonly denoting a soteriological basis within deluded living beings' consciousnesses for potential cultivation of good qualities and for removal of coincidental defilements, some distinctions can still be made based on rGyal-tshab's expositions. The "reality" or "noumenon" signifies the unchangeability and eternality of this basis, independent from the advent of the Buddha; and the "Element" or "genetic potential" puts emphasis on the "cause" aspect in terms of being the origin of all transcendent excellences of the buddhahood. In brief, the RGV(V)'s usage of the "Buddha-essence" attaches great importance to the "liberative technique" side for its being the essence of the means of cultivating these excellences when it serves as the object of transcendent wisdom.

423 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla gki. 161b.
Chapter 6

Buddha-essence and Its Ten Aspects

1. The Tripartite Buddha-essence

The RGV is commonly regarded by Tibetan exegetes as a commentary on the TGS. RGV I.27-28, the two key verses of the *tathāgatagarbha* chapter, base their exposition on the notion of Buddha-essence from the eighteen similes used in this *sūtra*. In a sense, I.27-28 can be seen as the synopsis of this one of the most important scriptures on the subject. However, rGyal-tshab did not gloss I.27 for the possible reason that I.28 is basically a reiteration of I.27.\(^{424}\) Be that as it may, Maitreya proclaims that the notion of the Buddha-essence, which is possessed by all living beings, as stated in the TGS, consists of the following three factors:

All living beings are ever possessed
Of the Buddha-essence,
In virtue of the diffusion of the buddhas' bodies,
The indivisible reality, and
The existence of the spiritual gene.\(^{425}\)

rGyal-tshab lists the three factors as follows:

(1) The Truth Body of the Tathāgata diffuses in all living beings (*tathāgata-dharmakāyaparīṣṭharaṇa*); that is, all beings are receptive to the Tathāgata's liberative activities;

\(^{424}\) See Part III, A translation of Chapter One of the *Ratnagotravibhāgavatākha*, fn.5.
\(^{425}\) RGV I.28: *sambuddha-kāya-parīṣṭhāta tathā vyavhitvedatāḥ | goitraś ca sadā sarve buddha-garbhaḥ sātītītāḥ ||.*
(2) Reality, the nature of both the Tathāgata and a living being, is undifferentiated
(tathāgatatathatāvvyatireka); that is, reality mingled with defilements exists within all
living beings; and

(3) The naturally existing gene, which is fit for transforming into the Truth Body, and
the developmental gene, which is fit for transforming into the Form Body, exist
within all living beings (tathāgatatotrasambhava).426

It is palpably clear that the ideas discussed in previous chapters form the core of
Buddha-essence thought as presented in RGV I.27-28. Moreover, reality (tathatā) is
singled out by rGyal-tshab as the focal point for the exposition: (1) it is the Truth Body's
diffusion from the viewpoint of being the fruition; (2) it is reality from the viewpoint of
being pervasiveness and nature; and (3) it is the spiritual genetic potential from the
viewpoint of being the object of meditation which purifies obscurations in the casual
state.427 This mode of exposition, with respect to three different perspectives, is a
searching critique of the popular "actuality/designation" mode of explanation by rNgog-
lo. This mode is a scholastic inheritance received by Rong-ston, 'Gos-lo, and many others
at that time. rNgog-lo explains Buddha-essence as having three distinctive features: the
fruitional, the natural, and the causal in connection with the three respective lines of
1.28.428 As reported by Rong-ston, rNgog-lo asserted that the Truth Body is in actuality
the Tathāgata but is designated as the essence of living beings because it is possible for
all beings to achieve; reality is in actuality the essence of both the Tathāgata and living
beings; and the genetic potential is in actuality the essence of living beings but is named

426 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla fêl. 74b.
427 Ibid., 156a.
428 See Kano, rNgog Blo-ldan-shes-rab's Summary, 154-158.
after the Tathāgata, because of being the cause of the attainment of buddhahood.429 ‘Gos-lo further interprets each factor in the conventional/ultimate aspects.430 In rGyal-tshab's view, however, the Truth Body of a buddha cannot serve as the exemplification (mtshan gzhi) of Buddha-essence. It is expounded as a causal factor alone, in light of textual evidence from the RGV(V) itself. RGVV 14.8 states that "the 'reality mingled with defilements' is the Element, which is termed the "Buddha-essence" when unreleased from the sheath of addictions." In RGV I.3 the designation of "Essence" is valid as long as the Buddha's intuition is not obtained, and the "Element" is equated with "cause" in RGVV 72.10.

The diffusion of the Truth Body

Specifically, rGyal-tshab explains the first factor in two points: (1) the diffusion in all living beings of the liberative deeds conditioned by the Truth Body of a buddha, resulting in the attained fruition through meditation on the path of purifying the Element; and (2) the living beings' innate susceptibility to the Tathāgata's liberative deeds, for the continuum of a living being alone is qualified as receptive to the deeds of the Truth Body.

According to rGyal-tshab, the word *parispbarapa* (Tib.‘phro ba, diffusion) is crucial to the coherence of the exposition on the tripartite Buddha-essence notion and, by extension, of the entire treatise. Firstly, it becomes another textual basis for rGyal-tshab to assert that the Buddha-essence is a causal factor alone, because the RGV's mention of the word "diffusion" shows that the Element/Buddha-essence logically cannot be the Truth Body itself. Secondly, this word indicates the liberative deeds of a buddha and by

implication, living beings' susceptibility to these deeds that are the verbal teachings of the Dharma, and thereby explains living beings' innate susceptibility to the Dharma teaching as the Buddha-essence. Thirdly, it explains the reason why the last three vajra bases, i.e. Enlightenment, Excellences, and Deeds, are said to be part of the *ratnagotra*, as discussed in Chapter 4. Although these three factors are not the Buddha-essence *per se*, all are subsumed under the rubric "Buddha-essence" because of living beings' receptiveness to the liberative deeds in connection with transcendent excellences of perfect enlightenment.

The TGS statement shows that living beings' possession of the Buddha-essence is timeless. In this case, as rGyal-tshab points out, it refers to the fact that the deeds that cause higher rebirths have already entered into all living beings, in light of the fact that everyone has experienced the status of a god or a human in their beginningless past lives. As to the deed that causes the ultimate good, all living beings must have the susceptibility to it as well.433

rGyal-tshab claims that his position is further supported by the AA statement that, "the Buddha is said to be pervasive because of his vast deeds; he is also said to be eternal because his deeds are inexhaustible."434

Rong-ston interprets the "diffusion of the Truth Body" as the pervasiveness of the natural purity in all living beings, which is the cause of the attainment of the Truth Body in terms of realization and teaching, by citing a verse similar in meaning from the

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431 *mgon mho.*
432 *nges par legs pa.*
433 rGyal-tshab, *rGyud bla ikā*, 75a-b.
434 AA 8.11: *iti kāritra vāpyāt buddho vyātī nirūcyate | akṣaya vācca tasyaiva nitya iyapi kathaye ||.
This interpretation is based on 1.27 which presents the first factor as the penetration of the Buddha' gnosis into the multitudes of living beings and is comparable to rGyal-tshab's gloss on the passage of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (AAS) proclaiming that "the immeasurable gnosis of the Tathāgata, the gnosis of caring for all living beings, thoroughly penetrates into the continua of living beings." However, this explanation seems to be unsatisfactory through its lack of careful attention to the word "diffusion." In 1.28, it is used with a meaning of the dynamics of activities, instead of referring to a static state. In addition, Rong-ston apparently pays no heed to the statements as such in the AA but stays the course on explaining the Truth Body as the pervasive reality, by closely following rNgog-lo's theory.

The indivisible reality and genetic potentials

The second and third factors of the tripartite Buddha-essence are fairly straightforward. All living beings are said in the TGS to be possessed of the Buddha-essence because living beings and the Buddha are not differentiated in terms of the nature of their minds that is the reality naturally isolated from defilements. Although it is true that the nature of their minds is the same reality, in view of being the nature of the Buddha, it is called the Buddha-essence while yet mingled with defilements in the continua of living beings. For Rong-ston, the second factor is just a repetition of the first

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435 Rong-ston, *Legs bshad*, 82. MSA X. 15: "ji la 'nam mkha' riag tu kun song 'dod | de bzhin 'di ni riag tu kun song 'dod | ji la 'nam mkha' 'gang nuuns kun tu song | de bzhin 'di yang sens can tshogs kun song I. "As space is considered always omnipresent, so this (transmutation) is considered always omnipresent: as space is omnipresent in the multitude of forms, so this (transmutation) is omnipresent in the multitude of beings." L. Jamspal, etc., *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature*, 79.

436 rGyal-tshab, *rGyud bla bka'*, 69a.

437 Cf. Vasubandhu's *Bhātye* on MSA X. 15: "It should be understood that buddhahood's omnipresence in the multitude of beings is due to the perfection of (a buddha's) acceptance of all living beings as himself." L. Jamspal, etc., *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature*, 80.
one. In order to avoid it, he explains that the natural purity is addressed in terms of living beings alone, whereas the reality pervades all things both inside and outside.\footnote{Rong-ston, \textit{Legs bshad}, 82.}

There is, in addition, a further reason for the Buddha to declare that all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence. It is because all living beings have the genetic potential in their continua and that can be transformed into the nature of the Three Bodies of a buddha. This potential is called \textit{buddhagotra} (Buddha-gene), and in I.27 it is named after its fruition, i.e. buddhahood, which consists of the naturally existing gene and the developmental gene. It is accepted by both rGyal-tshab and Rong-ston as a causal factor, for the treatise clearly states that it is the \textit{hetu} (cause) of the attainment of the Three Bodies. 'Gos-lo, however, inclines to the view that all buddha-qualities such as the powers are pre-existing within the gene in a subtle form, similar to the Truth Body.\footnote{Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 272.}

The naturally existing gene is one of the twofold genetic potentials and is virtually the same as reality. In order to avoid this seeming repetition, rGyal-tshab explains that "in view of possession of the genetic potential, it is said to be the Essence with regard to the causal aspect of the Tathāgata. In view of possession of the ultimate reality, it is said to be the Essence with regard to the nature of the Tathāgata." Thus, for Rong-ston and rGyal-tshab, all three factors are indispensable for forming a complete notion of the Buddha-essence. As for 'Gos-lo, the establishment of one factor entails proving the other two, so it is not necessary to use all three as the reasons for convincing others.\footnote{Ibid. 263.}

To summarize, according to rGyal-tshab, the three factors of the so called "Buddha-essence" are: the receptive ability of living beings to the deeds of the Truth Body - which precludes the Truth Body itself from being an exemplification of the Buddha-essence; the
ultimate reality mingled with defilements in the continua of living beings - which 
excludes the reality in general as an exemplification; and living beings' Buddha-genes 
that can be transformed into the Three Bodies.

2. The Ten Points

After 1.28, the RGV presents a detailed exposition proving the tripartite Buddha-

essence. As aforementioned, the three factors can be regarded as the single tainted reality 
presented in three different perspectives. Thus, the Element/Buddha-essence needs to be 
established as being both naturally pure and yet obscured by coincidental defilements. 
The RGV presents the arrangement of ten points with respect to the establishment of the 
former, and the nine similes with respect to the establishment of the latter.

RGV 1.29 lists an arrangement of ten points for the Element of the Tathāgata: (1) 
svabhāva (nature) [of the Element]; (2) hetu (causes) [of its purification]; (3) phala 
(fruition) [of its purification]; (4) karman (actions) [of the Element]; (5) yoga (possession) 
[of the Element]; (6) vr̥tti (engagement) [with the Element in general]; (7) avasthā (states) 
[of engagement]; (8) sarvatraga (all-pervadingness); (9) avikāra (unchangeability) [of 
the Element through states]; and (10) asaṃbheda (indivisible excellences). 1.48 mentions 
that the teaching on the immaculate Element in many discourses of the Dharma is 
subsumed under six points, which are the first six of the previous arrangement. It is clear 
that the points (6)-(10) are the ramifications of the point of vr̥tti. In Maitreya/Asāṅga's 
system, this six-point arrangement seems to be a normal exegetical method for it is also
used in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MS), the MSA, and the YBh. According to 'Gos-lo's explanation, the point of nature is the primary point to be realized and the other five points are the means of realizing it.

\[\text{Nature}\]

RGV I.30-31 use three similes of jewel, space and pure water for the Buddha-essence’s nature, i.e. the three factors just discussed. Specifically, the Truth Body of the Tathāgata is analogous to a wish-fulfilling jewel, the reality is analogous to space, and the spiritual genetic potential is analogous to pure water.

In accordance with his explication of I.28, rGyal-tshab glosses the "Truth Body" here as the dominant condition for the liberative activities based on his argument that "if the Truth Body itself were taught as the Element, there would be no point mentioning the word 'diffusion' unnecessarily in the verse (I.28) which states 'in virtue of the diffusion of the Buddha's Body." According to rGyal-tshab, the RGV uses the simile of a wish-fulfilling jewel in order to make it easy to understand that living beings are susceptible of the deeds of the Truth Body. Just because the Truth Body is endowed with the power to spontaneously fulfill all wishes for all good things worldly or transcendent, all living beings that are susceptible to its liberative activities also have the power to attain the perfect enlightenment.

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441 "何等義決議？謂依六義而起決議。何等六義？謂自性義、因義、果義、業義、相應義、轉義。" *Da cheng a pi da mo ji lun*, T.31.1605.693a12.
442 "六波羅蜜不同各有六義：一者自性，二者因，三者果，四者業，五者相應，六者分類。" *Da cheng zhuang yan jing lun*, T.31.1604.629b07.
443 "又復略說有六種義：一自性義，二因義，三果義，四作用義，五差別相應義，六轉義。瑜伽師地論，T.30.1579.361a17.
444 Mathes, *Gos Lo tsa ba gZhon nu dpal’s Commentary*, 330.
445 bdag rkyen.
446 rGyal-tshab, *rGyud bla pīka*, 81b.
As to the unchangeability of reality mingled with defilements, rGyal-tshab is not satisfied with the explanation that the reality is unchanged by cause and condition. Rather, as rGyal-tshab points out in light of the simile of space, it should be known as the mere exclusion of truth reification, i.e. emptiness of intrinsic reality, which is immutable in nature, analogous to uncompounded space, which cannot be posited as something other than the mere exclusion of resistant tangible objects. On the contrary, 'Gos-lo had rejected such an argument and insisted that the reality is a noetic thing, thereby being possessed of power and compassion as well.447 Moreover, 'Gos-lo asserted that compassion will naturally occur when the reality is realized.448

The genetic potential of the Tathāgata here exclusively refers to the developmental gene, which is by nature moist with compassion towards living beings, analogous to water.

rGyal-tshab has clarified that the developmental gene is the "uncontaminated seed" produced by hearing Buddhist teaching, not just the partial and conditioned compassion which everyone possesses now. He points out that this is because the developmental gene will be easily destroyed through lack of favorable conditions and by adverse conditions.

These three factors are said to be analogous to the qualities of a wish-fulfilling jewel, and to space and water with reference to their particular characteristics respectively. In regard of their common characteristic, the RGV declares that they are always naturally pure and undefiled by addictions, which rGyal-tshab glosses as referring to the facts that the addictions' habit-pattern is incompatible with the objective condition of the tripartite Buddha-essence and that the addictions are devoid of real status, respectively.

447 Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsül ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 271.
448 Ibid. 272.
Causes

RGV I.32-34 teach four principle causes of the Element purification, which are, in rGyal-tshab's view, essentially identical to the entire Mahāyāna path, consisting of wisdom and liberative techniques. These causes are referred as the antidotes to the four types of obscuration for the realization of the Buddha-essence, which is the tainted reality, in connection with perfect liberative techniques.

According to the RGV(V), the multitude of living beings (sattva-rāsi) can be divided into three groups:

(1) bhavabhilāsin (those who desire worldly existence), which can be further divided into two sub-groups:

(a) icchantikas who feel animosity towards the path to liberation, repudiating liberation, remaining indifferent to it even if they accept its existence. Those people have only desire for samsāra and do not aspire for nirvāṇa. Therefore, they do not have the genetic potential for nirvāṇa, and are called "gene-deprived" (aparinirvāṇa-gotra). However, as rGyal-tshab points out, this designation of "gene-deprived" is considered to be merely intentional, used for a pedagogical purpose;

(b) some Hinayāna Buddhists who are hostile to the Mahāyāna teaching, repudiating it as not being the word of the Buddha. rGyal-tshab declares that these are only suitably receptive to the education of monastic discipline but are
temporarily not suitable even for the teaching on "coarse (rags pa)" emptiness of a personal self.\textsuperscript{449}

(2) vibhavābhilāsin (those who aspire for liberation from worldly existence), which can be further divided into two sub-groups:

(a) amupāyapatita (those who have engaged, but lack liberative technique), under which there are three sub-groups:

(i) various non-Buddhist groups in terms of both philosophic view and religious praxis, such as the Carvakas, the Parivrājaka, and the Jains, etc.; whose theories are, in Maitreya/Asanga’s view, either eternalism or nihilism;

(ii) Buddhists who lack faith in the ultimate reality and believe in a substantial personal self (pudgaladrśti), which is not designated upon the spatial assembly and temporal stream of the five aggregates. Their position is opposed to the normal standpoint of Buddhist philosophy and is akin to what non-Buddhists have asserted. rGyal-tshab points out that this is the tenet held by the Vātsiputīya school.\textsuperscript{450} As to the difference between (1-b) and this type of Buddhist, rGyal-tshab explains that they are similar in accepting a personal self, but the former do not aspire for liberation and are hostile to the Mahāyāna, while the latter aspires for liberation alone, and some of them are not hostile to Mahāyāna;

\textsuperscript{449} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rgyud bla ma śālā}, 83b-84a.

\textsuperscript{450} While not visible in the Sanskrit original and Tibetan version available to us, this school’s name is spelled out in the Chinese translation: "二者於佛法中同外道行，雖信佛法而顛倒取。彼何者是？謂穢子等。見身中有我等，不信第一義諦。不信真實法空，佛說彼人無異外道。" 究竟一乘善性論, T.31.1611.828c07.
(iii) Buddhists who feel overly proud to think "I have comprehended the ultimate meaning of reality" but actually have not and believe in an [erroneous] emptiness (śūnyatādṛṣṭi). Asaṅga cites the MRS to show that, although the wisdom which realizes emptiness is the door or means of liberation, if the truth-habit with respect to emptiness had been formed, it is a temporarily untreatable view. According to rGyal-tshab, this view apparently refers to the Yogācāra tenet that accepts the emptiness of subject-object duality as the ultimate reality which has the truth-status by intrinsic identifiability as discussed in the third chapter. Nevertheless, this viewpoint of the Yogācāra can be used for a pedagogical purpose as a means of maturing someone for the realization of the subtle emptiness propounded by the Mādhyamikas.

(b) upāyapati (those who have engaged with liberative technique), under which there are two sub-groups:

(i) those conforming to the Śrāvakayāna who have reached an authentic certainty (samyaktvaniyāma), which, in rGyal-tshab's view, refers to the understanding of the subtle emptiness with respect to personal selflessness and objective selflessness and the perceptual realization after have obtained the Path of Insight;
(ii) Those conforming to the Pratyekabuddhayāna which is in accord with the Śrāvakayāna with respect to the mode of realizing emptiness.
(3) *taḍ-ubhayānabhilāśin* (those who wish neither of them), which, according to rGyal-tshab, can be further divided into two sub-groups: (a) chief, and (b) mediocre. The former is the people "who are of extremely sharp intelligence," incorporating a full range of view and praxis of the Mahāyāna into their experience, and the latter refers to the Yogācārins since their view of emptiness is not yet perfect. They are free of any faults related to the icchantikas, non-Buddhists, and śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, but having entered the path to obtain the "sameness of saṃsāra with nirvāṇa." They are, as rGyal-tshab points out, intent with pure thought upon the non-located nirvāṇa and act with pure praxis in an addiction-free saṃsāra where they take rebirths out of compassion and prayer. In short, this is the great Madhyamaka way of incorporating the complete path of the Mahāyāna, which eliminates both extremes of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, into experience.\(^{451}\)

To summarize, I.33 lists four kinds of obstructions for obtaining omniscience:

1. Enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching by icchantikas;
2. Belief in a personal self by non-Buddhists;
3. Inclination to desert living beings resulting from the fear of sufferings in saṃsāra by śrāvakas; and
4. Indifference to the welfare of living beings, not thinking "I'm going to free living beings from sufferings," by pratyekabuddhas.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, rGyal-tshab has convincingly argued that the term "liberative technique" used by Asaṅga does not denote the Mahayana praxis of

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\(^{451}\) rGyal-tshab, *rGyud bla maṅkū*, 84a-86b.
transcendences and its basis for such praxis, i.e. conception of the spirit of the enlightenment; rather, it means the understanding of the subtle emptiness. Aśaṅga calls those who do not realize the meaning of reality, who accept both things and emptiness as having truth-status, as being people who lack liberative technique. Consequently, the Madhyamaka way of those "who are of extremely sharp intelligence" consists of the causes of the purification of the Element. These are referred to as the respective antidotes for the four types of obscuration just mentioned:

(1) Meditation on faith in both causal and fruitional aspects of the Mahāyāna teachings;

(2) Meditation on the wisdom transcendence which realizes emptiness;

(3) The space-treasure concentration, etc.; and

(4) Meditation on the great compassion.

Alternatively, the process of the Element purification is deemed in I.34 as analogous to the "birth of a child of the Dharma king in the Tathāgata's family." In this regard, the four types of antidotes, i.e. faith, wisdom, concentration, and great compassion are akin to the seed, mother, womb, and nanny respectively. rGyal-tshab thus concludes that these four causes are the essential factors of the path to enlightenment in stages:

The faith in both causal aspect and fruitional aspect of [the Dharma] in the Mahāyāna mentioned here is a believing faith and it is articulated in order to recognize it as the root of all Dharma. The function of faith is to induce aspirations. Thus, we shall know that faith [in the Dharma of the Mahāyāna] will induce aspiration for the perfect enlightenment of which the great compassion is the cause. It will, in turn, induce aspiration for causes of Buddhahood. Then those four obscurations aforementioned will be destroyed in stages by incorporating into

452 RGVV 28.5-13.
experience the Mahāyāna concentration which integrates mental quiescence with transcendental analysis.\textsuperscript{453}

\textit{Fruition}

Relying upon the four causes, the reality mingled with coincidental defilements will be purified in stages. The fruition of the Element purification is characterized by the four transcendences, which are taught in RGV I. 35a, as purity, self, bliss and eternity.\textsuperscript{454} 1.36 shows that this fruition with the fourfold transcendence is distinguished by the antidotes opposite to the four kinds of delusion with respect to the Truth Body.\textsuperscript{455}

Asaṅga further explains there are two sets of the four delusions: one regarding the five compulsive aggregates such as matter and so forth; one with respect to the Truth Body. rGyal-tshab glosses the former set as being "mistaken about the conventional reality of the holy truth of suffering" because there are notions of eternality, bliss, self, and purity regarding impermanence, sufferings, selflessness, and impurity of the five compulsive aggregates such as matter, etc., respectively among common people who are not under the influence of any philosophical speculations. rGyal-tshab explains that these are the delusions which can be realized even by the conventional validating cognition, though it is erroneous with respect to their conceptual objects.\textsuperscript{456} Independent of the understanding of the ultimate reality, the cognition that realizes the aggregates' impermanence, etc. is opposite to the mind asserting those same aggregates as permanent,

\textsuperscript{453} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rGyud bla \textit{ikka}}, 88a-b.
\textsuperscript{454} \textit{sabhīta-sukha-niyatva-gana-pāramitā phalam} \|.
\textsuperscript{455} \textit{phalam ezem samāṣema dharma-kāye viparyāyat ī catur-vidha-viparyāsa-pratipakṣa-prabhāvitam} \|.
\textsuperscript{456} zhen yul.
etc., in regard to their habit-patterns, and thus is in accordance with the conventional reality.\footnote{rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ikh, 89b.}

This conventional validating cognition is, however, regarded as erroneous with respect to the Truth Body as long as the truth-habit regarding the aggregates' impermanence, suffering, selflessness, and impurity is involved - the latter set of the four delusions defined by rGyal-tshab. In this regard, rGyal-tshab has a reason to warn us against a nihilism which repudiates relativity by accepting the mind which realizes the aggregates as impermanence, etc., as being erroneous because "if this were valid, then we would not be able to differentiate the error and non-error in any way."\footnote{Ibid.} The assertion that it is not even tenable to accept the aggregates as impermanent is usually attributed by Tibetan scholars to Hva-shang, a monk from the Northern school of Chan, for a good reason that Hva-shang apparently asserted that all conceptual minds are mistaken in terms of their objects. As to the selflessness that is considered "erroneous," rGyal-tshab explains it as a coarse one because "subtle selflessness, when realized by validating cognition, cannot be forgotten and would never give way to the tenet of the truth-habit regarding the negation which negates such a self.\footnote{de 'dra'i bka' bka' pa'i bka' bka' rden grub la grub mi bka' bas mi srid pa'i phyir.} This second set of delusions is held by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas as reported in the SMS. But, in Tsong-kha-pa/ rGyal-tshab's system, this sūtra does not exclude the possibility that some of them can understand the subtle form of selflessness. Thus, there are two types of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas: while common ones have delusions about the Truth Body because of their truth-habits regarding the realization of impermanence, coarse selfless, and so on, noble ones who have perceptual realization of the subtle emptiness still have a delusion
about the Truth Body because of their inability to realize emptiness by their own power like Mahāyāna bodhisattvas with sharp intelligence do as well as the manifestation of their unconscious truth-habit regarding impermanence, etc. According to rGyal-tshab, even arhats of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna lack the antidote required for obtaining fruitional transcendence of "the supreme self," because they do not meditate on the transcendence of wisdom. 460

The SMS then prescribes the respective antidotes for bodhisattvas to the four delusions and rGyal-tshab's glosses on them as follows:

(1) The antidote to the notion of eternity - the realization of the sameness between samsāra and nirvāṇa;
(2) The antidote to the notion of bliss - the meditation on the antidotes to the twelve links of dependent origination which are subsumed under the category of cognitive obscuration;
(3) The antidote to the notion of self - the understanding of the mere exclusion of the reifications of personal self and objective self as the objective condition and the ultimate reality of persons and things, and
(4) The antidote to the notion of purity - cognition of the mind being naturally pure and the evil instincts in connection with the three doors being the factors to be eliminated.

Furthermore, the four transcendences and the four causes are connected in a relationship of causality or obscurations/antidotes in a reversed order. The correlation of

460 rGyal-tshab, Ṣgyud blaṅka, 89b.
the obscurations, the types of person who have them, the antidotes, with the fruitions which are obtained by the meditation on the antidote can be tabulated as follows:

Table 7. Correlation of the obscurations, types of person, antidotes with the fruitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Obscurations</th>
<th>Antidotes</th>
<th>Fruitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>icchantikas</td>
<td>feeling enmity towards the mahāyāna teaching because of taking delight in impure saṃsāra</td>
<td>meditation on faith in the mahāyāna teaching</td>
<td>śubha-pāramitā (transcendence of purity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-Buddhists</td>
<td>taking delight in self-habit regarding the five compulsive aggregates</td>
<td>meditation on transcendence of wisdom</td>
<td>paramātma-pāramitā (transcendence of supreme self)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>śrāvakas</td>
<td>taking delight in cessation of the sufferings of saṃsāra</td>
<td>meditation on space-treasure concentration, etc.</td>
<td>sukha-pāramitā (transcendence of bliss)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratyekabuddhas</td>
<td>taking delight in the tranquil abode</td>
<td>meditation on the great compassion</td>
<td>nitya-pāramitā (transcendence of eternity)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The term paramātma (supreme self) apparently sounds troublesome to some Buddhist thinkers. But Asaṅga clearly explains it as selflessness by the virtue of being non-deceptive. This non-deceptiveness is with respect to its characteristic of being selflessness in contrast to being a deceptive "self" asserted by non-Buddhists, which does not exist as an object of knowledge.\(^{461}\) rGyal-tshab takes this position and uses this as authoritative leverage against Dol-po-pa's view of reality as a positive, permanent entity:

Here, the exemplification of the supreme self is clearly explicated as selflessness which is perceived by the Buddha's noumenally omniscient intuition. Thus, the

assertion that the exemplification of the supreme self is not the mere exclusion of a personal self and objective self; but is a positive, independent self, a permanent entity, should be known as coming from a great habitual affinity for heterodox views. And this assertion which accepts such an obsession with an erroneous self as the realization of the meaning of reality should be known as the chief negatee of this treatise and the commentary. If you do not believe this when you read them, then open your eyes and read them carefully! Think whether "self" means a positive, independent, permanent entity and you will come to the understanding that only selflessness is explicable.462

Because of these four causes, the Tathāgata is acclaimed as dharmadhātuparama (ultimate Element), ākāśadhātuparyavasāna (infinite space), and uparāntakoṭiniṣṭha (reaching to the end of time) in the RGVV. These are three distinctive features of the Truth Body with reference to nature, pervasiveness, and time and can be divided into the four transcendences (see table 8).

Table 8. The Truth Body's three features and the four transcendences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Truth body's features</th>
<th>Transcendences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ultimate element (natural truth body)</td>
<td>purity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infinite space (intuitive truth body)</td>
<td>supreme self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infinite (liberative deeds)</td>
<td>Bliss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reaching to the end of time (constant compassion)</td>
<td>Eternity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In particular, Asaṅga lists four impediments with respect to the attainment of the four transcendences associated with arhats and pratyekabuddhas. For those who are staying in the uncontaminated element (anāsravadhātu) and have eased saṃsāric sufferings by the power of perceptual realization of noumenon, as well as bodhisattvas who are staying in

462 gyal-tshab, gyud bla 92a.
the pure stages according to rGyal-tshab's gloss - have completely eliminated the addictive obscurations and obtained the ten powers. The four impediments are avidyāvāsabhūmi (ground of the instinct for misknowledge), anāsravakarma ( uncontaminated karma), manomayātmabhāva (mind-made body), and acintyā- pāriṇāmikīcyuti (death of inconceivable transformation), having four lakṣaṇas (defining characteristics) of pratyaya (condition), hetu (cause), saṁbhava (origination), and vibhava (destruction) respectively. These are identical to the four aspects of the Noble Truth of Origin except for the last one; they are the links of dependent origination with regard to the category of cognitive obscuration (see table 9 below).

Table 9. Four impediments as links of dependent origination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Impediments</th>
<th>Corresponding links of dependent origination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>condition</td>
<td>ground of the instinct for misknowledge vs. transcendence of purity</td>
<td>avidyā (misknowledge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause</td>
<td>uncontaminated karma vs. transcendence of supreme self</td>
<td>saṃskārā (synthetic activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origination</td>
<td>mind-made body vs. transcendence of bliss</td>
<td>nāmarūpa (name-matter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destruction</td>
<td>death of inconceivable transformation vs. transcendence of eternity</td>
<td>jaramaṇa (old age and death)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas in the pure stages have to take mind-made bodies which are subject to origination and destruction. According to rGyal-tshab's explanation, a mind-made body is much like the body of the "in-between" period

463 The Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Stages.
464 The four aspects of the noble truth of origin are normally listed as (1) cause, (2) origin, (3) origination, and (4) condition.
465 bar do.
which travels everywhere without any impediment and cannot be perceived by those
whose realization is inferior to that of the three types of people. The co-operative
condition for the origination of a mind-made body is called "ground of the instinct for
misknowledge," which is explicated by rGyal-tshab as in the nature of uninterrupted
homogenous non-addictive misknowledge included in the category of cognitive
obscurations and makes it possible for homogenous addictions to be continually
produced. Gos-lo, however, interprets it according to the Vijñānavāda system as the seed of
producing the mind-made body in the form of instincts contained in the fundamental
consciousness, despite the fact that the RGV(V) is not a Vijñānavāda text, as rGyal-tshab has convincingly argued. The substantial cause of the mind-made body's
origination is uncontaminated karma, which is the motivation with subtle effort
producing cognitions of body and speech, included in the category of thought.
Correspondingly, these three types of people will not obtain transcendence of supreme
ultimate purity, depleted of addictive and cognitive obscurations, insofar as they have not
extirpated the ground of the instinct for misknowledge which is the foundation of all
addictions. They will not obtain the transcendence of the supreme self, the opposite of all
appearances of truth-status, insofar as they are possessed of uncontaminated karma which

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466 According to the Lankāvatāra-sūtra, there are three types of the mind-made body: called (1) the one obtained in the enjoyment of Saṃādhi; (2) the one obtained by recognising the self-nature of the Dharma; and (3) the one obtained which is assumed [by a Bodhisattva according to] the class of beings [to be saved], and which perfects and achieves [without a thought of its own achievement], respectively. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, The Lankavatara Sutra: A Mahayana Text, trans. (Taipei: Southern Materials Center, 1977), 118. It seems that the type mentioned in the RGVV exclusively refers to the second type - the one obtained by recognising the self-nature of the Dharma - since it is the one associated with the Eighth Stage.

467 For a brief Prāsangika presentation of cognitive obscuration (jñeyavāpa, shes sgrīb) according to Tsong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab, see Chapter 7 of this present work, and Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins, Cutting through Appearances, (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1989), 315-316.

468 Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsa ba gZhen nu dpal's Commentary, 309.

469 sems pas bsdu pa gang zag gsum gyi las ngag gi rnam rig bskyped pa'i kun slong gi rtsol ba phra mo nyid. rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla bka', 93b.
is motivated by a subtle habitual pattern\(^{470}\) in connection with the appearance of intrinsic identifiability, despite the fact that they no longer have habitual convictions about it. They will not obtain the transcendence of bliss as the extinction of the mind-made bodies insofar as they take these bodies as conditioned by the ground of the instinct for misknowledge and uncontaminated karma. And they will not obtain the transcendence of eternity unchanged by birth and death insofar as they have not overcome the death of inconceivable transformation, as long as they are unable to meditate on the reality in constant equipoise. Again, Asanga's explanation of eternity is viewed by rGyal-tshab as a teaching intending to prevent one from forming a notion of reality as being a permanent entity that has been accepted by non-Buddhists and by extension, Other-emptiness thinkers.

Asanga concludes that, when explained in connection with the causes, each of the transcendences should be known for two respective reasons, as will be listed below:

The transcendence of purity of the Truth Body of the Tathāgata should be understood by two reasons:

1. Being naturally pure as the common characteristic;
2. Being pure by the removal of the instincts of addictions as the special characteristic.

Here, Rong-ston agrees with rGyal-tshab that the elimination of coincidental defilements is the special characteristic of the uncontaminated mind.\(^{471}\)

\(^{470}\) kun spyyod.
\(^{471}\) Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 91.
The transcendence of the supreme self should be understood by two reasons:

(1) Being free from self-reification by rejecting the speculations of non-Buddhists;
(2) Being free from selflessness reification by rejecting the assumptions of śrāvakas.

The transcendence of bliss should be known by two reasons:

(1) The destruction of taking rebirth by the instincts on account of the elimination of all kinds of origins of suffering;
(2) The actualized termination of the mind-made bodies on account of the actualization of all kinds of cessation of suffering.

The transcendence of eternity is should be known by two reasons:

(1) Not falling into the nihilistic extreme through not diminishing saṃsāra to the extent of being impermanent;
(2) Not falling into the eternalistic extreme through not exaggerating nirvāṇa to the extent of being permanent.\(^{472}\)

At this point, rGyal-tshab explains, by implication, the nihilistic and eternalistic views as the self-emptiness/other-emptiness distinction held by Dol-po-pa:

\(^{472}\) rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla mūs, 96a-b.
Viewing created samsāra as previously having intrinsic reality status and then having vanished later is a nihilistic view. Viewing mere rebirth in samsāra as the negatee is also a nihilistic view which is taught in this text. In light of this, we should know that it would be a mistake to repudiate the relative [reality] by accepting the view that the created is impermanent, for that is a nihilistic view. Likewise, viewing nirvāṇa as having intrinsic reality status is an eternalistic view. Viewing nirvāṇa as attainment dependent on the discontinuance of mere rebirth in samsāra as an ultimate objective is also an eternalistic view which is taught in this text. Thus, we should know that it would be an erroneous view to repudiate nirvāṇa by accepting the view that nirvāṇa is permanent and eternalistic, for it is inappropriate to hold that nirvāṇa is either permanent or impermanent.\footnote{Ibid, 96b-97a.}

Rong-ston explains the four transcendences as the fruitions of the three factors of the Buddha-essence. Specifically, the teaching coming from the Truth Body of a previous buddha, faith in the teaching, and the transcendence of purity are included in the causation of the Truth Body. The transcendence of supreme self coming from the wisdom which apprehends reality is posited as the fruition of reality. The transcendences of bliss and eternity are the fruitions of the genetic potentials which produce concentration and compassion.\footnote{Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 88.} At this point, it seems that Rong-ston has contradicted himself\footnote{‘dir chos sku ’phro bai don phrin las khyab pa la ’dod pa mi ’thad. Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 82.} and agrees with rGyal-tshab on glossing the first factor of the Buddha-essence, the diffusion of the Truth Body, as the liberative deeds, instead of the natural purity of the Truth Body.

\textit{Actions}

RGV I.40 demonstrates the actions or functions of the genetic potentials. Here, \textit{buddhadhātu} (Buddha-element) is equated with \textit{viśuddhigotra} (pure spiritual gene) and has a dual action:
(1) Aversion to saṃsāra on the basis of perceiving the faults of suffering;
(2) Desire, wish, aspiration and prayer for nirvāṇa on the basis of perceiving the virtues of its bliss.

In its strict sense, buddhadhatu or viśuddhigotra refers to prakṛti viśuddhigotra (the pure spiritual gene) as indicated in RGVV 36.2; and this is the reality of the mind. The RGVV proclaims that even those people who are definite in mistakes have this pure spiritual gene. However, Asaṅga later clarifies that the thoughts of perceiving saṃsāra as having the faults of suffering, and nirvāṇa as having the excellences of bliss will not arise without a cause and its conditions. The cause is āgantukamalaviśuddhigotra (the gene free from coincidental defilements), i.e. the naturally existing gene, as well as the uncontaminated seeds. According to rGyal-tshab, the uncontaminated seeds are the developmental gene, and the conditions of the awakening of the genetic potentials are said to be catuḥcakra (‘khor lo bzhi, the four wheels) which are the awakening conditions of the genetic potentials:

(1) Reliance upon sages;
(2) Previous merit collection;
(3) Staying in conducive locations; and
(4) Proper prayer and mentation.476

476 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ’dkā, 99b.
"Uncontaminated seeds" refers to the genetic potential for liberation, or the virtuous roots associated with liberation, i.e. the developmental gene. It seems that this developmental gene is very important. rGyal-tshab explains:

It would be difficult to produce genuine vows for individual liberation without these thoughts; we shall therefore make an effort to deposit instincts for an aversion to samsāra by perceiving its faults. It should be known that we are endowed with the virtuous roots associated with liberation when we have developed such thoughts by just hearing once the teaching properly given by a virtuous friend.

Asanga then explains the designation of "icchantikas" as being for pedagogical purposes only, in order to avert someone's enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching for the reason that "no one could be impure forever because of the existence of the naturally pure gene."

At this point, the general arguments for the Buddha-essence are developed further by rGyal-tshab. Firstly, it is essential to understand the reality of the mind being naturally pure. rGyal-tshab points out:

If all beings' mind were not naturally pure, then we must accept that there would be things having truth-status among things knowable, that it would be impossible to posit the ultimate reality since all things' voidness of truth cannot be established by validating cognition. [On the other hand,] if it is provable that the mind is naturally pure by validating cognition, then it can be established by the same reasoning that defilements along with the instincts of the truth-habit are coincidental and possible to

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477 tha pa cha mthun gi dge rtsho.
478 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla mskhla, 100a.
479 RGVV 37.3-4: na kha lha kaś-cūr prakṛti-viśuddha-gotra-sambhavād ātyantāviśuddhi-dharmaḥ bhavitum arhati ||.
480 bden stong.
be removed. Otherwise, we must accept that defilement enters into the nature of the mind as the heterodox Mīmāṃsā tradition asserts.  

Secondly, it is feasible to develop the antidotes for eliminating the defilements in the continuum. rGyal-tshab then poses a series of questions as presented in Dharmakirti's PV, as follows:

1. Is it because of lacking the technique that eliminates defilements in the continua of all beings that an antidote is not developed?
2. Is it because no one knows, despite the existence of the technique?
3. Is it because no one would possibly seek that technique despite the existence of such people who know it?
4. Is it because the people who know the technique could not possibly teach it out of compassionate motivation?
5. Is it because it is impossible to meditate on that technique and implement it despite the fact that the teaching is available?

rGyal-tshab then put forward his arguments respectively:

1. The first position is not correct since defilements will come to an end by meditating on the wisdom which realizes selflessness.
2. The second is not correct since it is established by reasoning there are teachers who have perfected their meditation on the wisdom which realizes selflessness, the technique used for the benefit of living beings.

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481 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla bka', 103b-104a.
482 Pramāṇavārttika Chapter II.
(3) The third is not correct since there is no living being who would not seek higher rebirths when exhorted by the buddhas, since all beings are possessed of the twofold Buddha-gene. Despite the fact that [some people] do not temporarily seek the ultimate good, since [those people] would have the renunciation of saṃsāra and seek nirvāṇa, and owing to the unwavering compassion [of the Buddha] in the form of taking responsibility to place all beings on Buddhahood, these people would eventually seek the ultimate good. This can be also established on the basis of correct reasoning of the authentic scriptures proved by the three kinds of analysis.

(4) The fourth is not correct since the Buddha Lord would never stop the deed of teaching the Dharma, because of his unwavering compassion towards all beings that is like caring for his only child when they voluntarily seek [liberation].

(5) The fifth is not correct since this treatise and the commentary thereon, etc., prove that the spiritual genetic potential would awaken in the right conditions at a certain time.\(^{483}\)

Therefore, rGyal-tshab concluded that all living beings will become enlightened.

In addition to accepting the developmental gene as the actual cause which will be awakened by conditions, Rong-ston asserts that the so-called "inseparable ultimate element and awareness" must be accepted because the naturally existing gene as the uncompounded noumenon alone cannot be awakened. This is to say that the mind which is distinguished by the emptiness of intrinsic reality is the substantial cause of the intuition of a buddha.\(^{484}\) This idea leans toward 'Gos-lo's notion of emptiness as an implicative negation, with which rGyal-tshab would not agree. 'Gos-lo's explanation of the cause and condition here are quite different from rGyal-tshab and Rong-ston's.

\(^{483}\) rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma'i, 103b-104b.
\(^{484}\) Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 93.
According to 'Gos-lo, the cause is the Element within which the Buddha qualities in the subtle form exist, whereas the condition is the developmental gene that causes aversion to samsāra, etc.

Possession

The Element of the Tathāgata is said to be possessed of the causes and fruitions. The causes refer to the four causal excellences as mentioned in the second point:

(1) faith in the Mahāyāna, which is the cause for purifying the Truth Body;
(2-3) unique mental quiescence (concentration) and transcendental analysis according to the Mahāyāna, the cause for obtaining a buddha's intuition; and
(4) compassion, the cause for receiving the Tathāgata's great compassion.

Again, the RGV's explanation of this point is impregnated with similes. Just as a great ocean is the container of jewels and so on, the Element is demonstrated in RGV 1.42-43 to be similar to an ocean; whereas faith is like the container, wisdom and concentration are like jewels, and compassion is like the water. Specifically, according to rGyal-tshab's glosses, meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna is analogous to the ocean bed since it holds immeasurable and exhaustible jewels of wisdom and concentration as well as the water of compassion, causing all qualities of the Buddha to be accomplished. Meditation on wisdom and concentration is analogous to jewels since jewels are naturally capable of granting wishes and are free of constructive thought, so that "this result should be a given." Meditation on the great compassion of the bodhisattvas is analogous to the
water because it is of one taste with the supreme moist nature permeating all beings, and
because bodhisattvas wish for living beings to be free from suffering.485

This conjunction (sambaddha) of the Element with the fourfold causal excellence in
terms of three causes is called "possession." In this regard, the Element is glossed by
rGyal-tshab as the genetic potential existing within living beings inasmuch as it is like a
great ocean, an inexhaustible storage of immeasurable jewels of excellence.486 Rong-ston
holds the same position.487

The fruitions refer to the three points, which are analogous to the three aspects of a
lamp:

(1) five superknowledges - divine vision, divine hearing, telepathy, knowledge of
former lives, and knowledge of magical operations:488 by which the whereabouts of
teachers, friends and disciples, the presence or absence of attachment, etc., in the
minds of others, and the karmic connections between disciple and teacher are
perceived directly. These superknowledges are analogous to the light because they
have a characteristic of engaging in the elimination of darkness which is discordant to
the experiential knowledge of respective object;

(2) intuition of the termination of contaminations: which is analogous to heat because
of its characteristic of engaging in consuming the fuel of karma and addictions
without the remains; and

485 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma fled. 106b-107a.
486 Ibid.105b-106a.
487 Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 96.
488 divyacaksu, divyasrotra, paracittajñāna, pūrvanivāśināmyajñāna, and rddhidhīṣṭajñāna.
(3) termination of contamination or so-called "liberation:" which is analogous to color because of its characteristic of being immaculate, pure, and radiant; more specifically, it is immaculate because it has eliminated addictive obscuration. It is pure because it has eliminated cognitive obscuration. It is radiant because it is not in its nature to be these two coincidental obscurations.

Asaṅga clearly states that "these seven things, which consist of five superknowledges, intuition, and the termination, in the continua of those people who have nothing further to learn, are inseparable from each other in the immaculate ultimate element, not being differentiated but identical to the ultimate element." rGyal-tshab glosses the immaculate ultimate element as the object of eternal meditative equipoise on the reality free of all defilements. Furthermore, rGyal-tshab found the cited passage from the AAN, a canonical source in support of his argument that these seven excellences do not exist within the continua of ordinary individuals; rather, they are possessed at the time of the ultimate fruition. Rong-ston, however, simply explains the possession of the fruition as the possession of the truth or reality of the Truth Body.

Engagement

RGV I.45-46 demonstrate the point of "engagement." rGyal-tshab explains there are two kinds of engagement: (1) engagement with respect to person, and (2) engagement

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489 RGVV 39.2-4: ity esam samāsatah saptanā. abhijñā-jiñāna-prahāṇa-sanyogānām asaikṣa-sānānānānām dharmānām anāśrava-dhīṣav anyonyam avinirbhāgavam aprthaghaṁva dharma-dhīṣu-saṁvāgamo yoga ity ucyate
490 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla bla, 108a.
491 rten gyi 'jug pa.
with respect to category,\footnote{rab tu dbyer ba'i 'jug pa.} according to the bases and the differentiated time periods in which reality is present, respectively. While the former is the sixth point itself, the latter is actually the seventh point, \textit{avasthā} (states), despite the fact that these two kinds of engagement are closely connected.

Engagement with respect to person refers to the presence of reality in the continua of three kinds of person:

(1) naïve people, whose reality is subject to error; their reality is mingled with the defilements and the seeds of obscuration of reality that have not been eliminated in the slightest. More specifically, according to rGyal-tshab, their reality is defiled by erroneous notions of permanence, etc. and addictive thoughts of attachment, etc.; hence, it is erroneously perceived because of their habitual adherence with tolerance and acceptance of what is held by erroneous minds and notions;\footnote{rGyal-tshab, \textit{rGyud bla m̥gāṅ,} 109a.}

(2) noble ones, direct perceivers of the truth, whose reality is correct in the sense that the seeds of defilements have been eliminated to various degrees, although have not been totally terminated; and

(3) perfect buddhas, of which the reality is absolutely correct and without reification because they have destroyed addictive obscurations and instincts as well as cognitive obscurations.

And, as Rong-ston points out, engagement here refers to reality alone, for the Truth Body is irrelevant to the first two kinds of person and the spiritual gene is irrelevant to
As discussed above, Asanga clearly speaks of engagement with the Element of the Tathāgata with respect to *nirvikalpa-jñāna* (non-conceptual intuition), that is, direct realization of reality as taught in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. This statement is used by rGyal-tshab as the evidence to level against Dol-po-pa's assertion that the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* of the middle wheel teaches self-emptiness of the relative only, but not the other-emptiness of the ultimate reality. On the contrary, as mentioned repeatedly before, according to rGyal-tshab, this *sūtra* does teach the ultimate, i.e. the Element, which is the general characteristic of the pure reality of all things.\(^{495}\)

**States**

According to Rong-ston, each of the last four points is the extension of the point prior to it, whereas rGyal-tshab treats the last four as the ramifications on the point of engagement: (7) *avasthā*, categories different in state but not in terms of nature; (8) *sarvatraga* establishing the same nature pervading all states; (9) *avikāra*, establishing the nature as unchangeable; and (10) *asambheda*, establishing possession of the indivisible excellences of liberation at the time of being absolutely pure.\(^{496}\)

The notion of the Element, the reality mingled with defilements, is subsumed under the six points of the nature, etc., as explained above. The meaning determined by those six is further summarized and is demonstrated by the designations of three names in accordance with three states:

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\(^{494}\) Rong-ston, *Legs bshad*, 98.

\(^{495}\) rGyal-tshab, *rGyud bla bla*, 108b.

(1) it is called the "Element of living being" in the impure state. Although anyone who has not yet become a buddha is generally called "living being," this name is for an ordinary being alone since it is distinguished by the state when the seeds of defilements or obscurations have not been eliminated in the slightest;

(2) it is called "bodhisattva" in both the pure and impure state. Although anyone in the Mahāyāna Buddhism is generally called such, this refers to noble ones as clarified in the cited AAN since it is distinguished by the state when the seeds of mental constructions have been eliminated to various degrees but the obscurations have not been completely eliminated. Moreover, according to rGyal-tshab, a bodhisattva is the chief type in this state which also includes noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas because they are not accepted as naïve people; and

(3) it is called "the Tathāgata" in the absolute pure state.

In this regard, rGyal-tshab explains that "element of living being" and "bodhisattva" are the designations for the reality of living being and the reality of bodhisattva, because in his view the position of the ultimate reality as a person is a non-Buddhist way, despite the fact that the RGV(V) calls the reality in the absolute pure state "Buddha" in the ultimate sense. Furthermore, rGyal-tshab points out that the word *ucyate* (called) used in the AAN indicates that the reality of the three kinds of people is the basis of their designations. This is similar to the designation of a person: although a person is designated as dependent on the collection and continua of the aggregates, none of the

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497 Ibid., 109b.
498 *gdags pa'i gshi.*
collection, continuum, its component, etc., can be accepted as an exemplification\textsuperscript{499} of "person." Then, rGyal-tshab cites the famous statement "matter is emptiness; emptiness is matter" from the \textit{Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra} to elucidate the meaning of the Buddha-essence as exactly the notion of emptiness:

When investigating the mode of existence with regard to the nature of matter, we will know there is no intrinsic reality-status of any matter, even small as an atom; and when investigating under the sway of previous understanding of the basis on which matter is designated, we will know that something void of intrinsically identifiable reality is designated as matter. Likewise, something void of intrinsically identifiable reality is designated as the three kinds of people. The meaning of the Buddha-essence will be understood in the light of this.\textsuperscript{500}

\textit{All-pervadingness}

RGV 1.49-50 further demonstrates the point of "all-pervadingness" in three states of the Element. Again, the general characteristic of the Element is likened to space but with an emphasis on its pervasiveness: it is all-pervading, all-engaging, equal, of no difference in the three states of having faults; it consists of the excellences and the ultimate pure excellences, just as space pervades all the vessels of clay, copper and gold. At this point, \textit{vaimalyadātū} (the immaculate Element) is equated by Maitreya with \textit{cittapraṇṛti} (nature of the mind).\textsuperscript{501}

Again, the simile of space used by Maitreya/Asaṅga for the Buddha-essence is deeply significant to rGyal-tshab. To repeat, according to Buddhist philosophy, uncompounded space can not be a positive, independent entity such as blue or yellow because it is the mere exclusion of resistant tangible objects. Thus, in rGyal-tshab's view,

\textsuperscript{499} \textit{mtshan gzhi}.  
\textsuperscript{500} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rGyud bla skā}, 109b.  
\textsuperscript{501} RGV 1.49: \textit{citta-praṇṛti-vaimalya-dhātū sarvatragas tathā}. 
space-like *cittapraṇāti* cannot be something other than the mere exclusion of intrinsic identifiability. Just as space pervades all different vessels and will not arise in different forms in nature, but space is held by vessels labeled with different names; the nature of the mind is all-pervading in the three states and its distinctions are made merely by the states. ⁵⁰² Similarly, Rong-ston rejected the idea that noumenon is a part-less entity pervading all things as identical to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika notion of *sāmānyya* (universal). ⁵⁰³ Furthermore, rGyal-tshab has clarified that the term "immaculate element" does not exclusively refer to the nature of the mind as being free of coincidental defilements in buddhahood; rather, it means that the nature of the mind is never penetrated by defilements in impure states. ⁵⁰⁴ Consequently, as to the statement of the AAN that the Element of living beings and the Truth Body are non-dual by meaning but different merely by letters, ⁵⁰⁵ rGyal-tshab points out that these two terms are not synonyms. According to him, this *sūtra* teaches that the same emptiness of intrinsic identifiability is called the "Element of living beings" when mingled with defilements, and is called the "Truth Body" when free of them; these two do not arise as dual forms in terms of nature. If we maintained Dol-po-pa’s standpoint that the Element of living beings is a synonym of the Truth Body, rGyal-tshab would argue that this position would make the entire Mahāyāna soteriology dispensable, since living beings are already possessed of the Truth Body, and that being mingled with defilements and being free of them are a direct contradiction in determination as discussed in Chapter 4.

⁵⁰⁴ rGyal-tshab, *rgyud bla gik* 111a.
⁵⁰⁵ As cited in RGVV 41.16-17: *dharma-kāya eva sattva-dhātuḥ | advayaṃ etad arthena | vyāhita-mātra-bhedā iti ||.*
Unchangeability

The all-pervading Element in the three states is further demonstrated to be unchangeable either by addictions or through purification. Maitreya devotes thirty-three verses on this important point and Asaṅga mentions fourteen verses with reference to this subject in the RGVV. According to rGyal-tshab, these fourteen verses are root-like, consisting of twelve verses which demonstrate the unchangeability in the impure state, then one verse on the unchangeability in both impure and pure state, and one verse on the unchangeability in the absolute pure state. Furthermore, if verses of explanation are included, as rGyal-tshab has explained, there would be thirty-three verses in total: one verse of summary; twelve root-like verses with reference to the first state; one root-like verse and twelve verses of explanation with reference to the second state; one root-like verse and four verses of explanation with reference to the third state (see table 10 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Verses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>root-like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.51 (summary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impure</td>
<td>1.52-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both impure and pure</td>
<td>1.66 (-68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absolute pure state</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.80-83</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Here, the Element is described by Maitreya/Asaṅga as avikāritvadharmaṇa (unchanging noumenon). In rGyal-tshab's view, the Element, the mind's emptiness of intrinsic

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506 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ṭīkā, 112a.
identifiability, is a mere exclusion-negation. He continues to discuss the point of
unchangeability in a similar vein. In brief, the mere exclusion of intrinsic identifiability in
the absolute pure state after purification is the same as it was in the impure state of an
ordinary being; it is the same as well in both the pure and impure state of a noble being,
because exclusion is necessarily a permanent thing.\textsuperscript{507} In this regard, Maitreya proclaims
that the Element is eternally unchangeable like space throughout different times because
it has the excellences of the perfectly pure state by nature even in the latter two states
possessing coincidental faults.\textsuperscript{508} rGyal-tshab glosses prakṛtiyogatāḥ (naturally possessed)
as "the mind that naturally has the object which produces excellences;" in other words,
when served as the ultimate object of the path, the mind's reality causes all coincidental
defilements to be separated and all buddha's excellences to be obtained as above-
discussed. But in any case, either by the faults or by the excellences, the mere exclusion
of intrinsic identifiability cannot be changed into something else and will not arise as
different forms when it is perceived by a noble one's concentration. This is the meaning
of "unchangeability."

However, if it is accepted that the reality is a positive, independent, permanent entity,
rGyal-tshab would argue that this position is utterly non-Buddhist, as he has consistently
repeated in the rGyud blaṅka.\textsuperscript{509} 'Gos-lo takes the self-consciousness that is free of all
dualistic thoughts of reification as the definitive reality.\textsuperscript{510} In contrast to rGyal-tshab's
position, he asserts that the non-conceptuality of a living being is virtually the same as the
non-conceptuality of a buddha, though he does not accept that the momentary continuum

\textsuperscript{507} Ibid. 112b.
\textsuperscript{508} RGV 1.51: dosāgantukā-yaṇa-prakṛti-yogatāḥ | yathā pārvam tathā paścād avikārīva-dharmatā |.
\textsuperscript{509} rGyal-tshab, rGyud blaṅka, 112b.
\textsuperscript{510} Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsaṅ ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 340.
of a living being's Element, which is noetic, would not become the momentary continuum of a buddha's intuition.\textsuperscript{511}

(1) unchangeability in the impure state. An outline of rGyal-tshab's explication of I.52-65 can be tabulated as follows:

Table 11, Outline of rGyal-tshab's explication of RGV I.52-65.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verses</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Being unaffected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(I.52-64)</td>
<td></td>
<td>by karma and addictions which cause the aggregate, etc., to arise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.52</td>
<td>sauksamya (subtlety)</td>
<td>by defiled things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.53</td>
<td>asamksktadhādu (uncompounded)</td>
<td>by their arising and disintegrating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.54</td>
<td></td>
<td>by things disintegrating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.55-59</td>
<td>cittasuddhi/prakṛti (nature/purity of the mind)</td>
<td>by things arising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.60</td>
<td>cittapraṇḍti</td>
<td>(distinctive feature of irrational thought)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.61</td>
<td></td>
<td>(distinctive feature of karma and addictions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.62</td>
<td>cittapraṇḍti</td>
<td>(distinctive feature of their basis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.63</td>
<td></td>
<td>by karma and addictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.64</td>
<td></td>
<td>by arising and disintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.65</td>
<td>cittapraṇḍti-prabhāśvara (natural radiance of the mind)</td>
<td>by aging, etc., akin to fires, etc., which cause the aggregates, etc., to disintegrate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here Maitreya uses a verity of names for the Element; it is called subtlety, uncompounded, purity of the mind, nature of the mind, and natural radiance of the mind, all connected with the simile of the uncompounded space. rGyal-tshab thus explains the unchangeability in the impure state as follows:

When investigating whether or not karma and addictions, etc., are established by intrinsic reality, only emptiness of intrinsic reality will be realized since things even small as an atom are not established by intrinsic reality. When investigating how this

\textsuperscript{511} sems can gyi khams rig pa'i chos can rgyun gyis 'jug pa de'i skad cig de ni sangs rgyas kyi ye shes kyi skad cig tu ni mi 'gyur ro || Ibid., 339.
objective condition of being empty of intrinsic identity exists, it is known as nothing other than emptiness of intrinsic reality. That is what is meant by the statement "being unchanged by karma and addictions, etc." Therefore this statement means that emptiness of intrinsic reality cannot be changed even in the impure state into something else by karma and addictions, etc., and does not mean that it cannot become free of defilements caused by antidotes.\(^{512}\)

In a similar vein, rGyal-tshab glosses the statement concerning the root of samsāra from the GGS as follows:

Therefore, it is said that all things are completely devoid of any root of intrinsic reality-status. They have an essence-free root; there is not the slightest essence which is sustained when under investigation by reason which analyzes the ultimate. They have a root of non-abiding by intrinsic reality when they still exist. They have a root of purity of intrinsic reality in either past, present or future. And for this reason they have a root which is free of the root of intrinsic reality-status. The first statement indicates that [all things] do not have a root which is established in ultimate terms, and the last four indicate that they do have roots in relative terms.\(^{513}\)

Thus, in rGyal-tshab's view, samsāra does not have a positive entity, such as a "primordial mind" as proposed by 'Gos-lo, that is a substratum; but rather, samsāra has the root-less emptiness of intrinsic reality as its basis in terms of the conventional reality.

(2) unchangeability in both the pure and impure state. According to RGV(V), the name "pure and impure" does not refer to a demarcation between pure and impure which can be clearly drawn in this state; rather, it indicates the pure and impure aspects of the stages of noble bodhisattvas in comparison to the absolute defilement below the pramuditā-bhūmi (Joyous Stage) and the supreme purity above the dharmameghā-bhumi (Cloud of Dharma Stage). rGyal-tshab further explains that this state is pure because the noble bodhisattvas are free of birth, etc., by the force of karma and addiction through direct realization of the Element under the sway of distinctive techniques; it is impure.

\(^{512}\) rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla bla, 113b-114a.

\(^{513}\) Ibid. 117a.
because of the manifestations of birth, etc., by the force of compassion mixed with the
ground of instincts for misknowledge and uncontaminated karma; or in terms of the
extinction of birth under the influence of karma and addiction, it is pure when compared
with naive people and it is impure with the Buddha.514

Noble bodhisattvas no longer take rebirth by the force of karma and addictions,
instead they are born in samsāra by great compassion and prayers. Asaṅga divided I.69-78
into five groups that describe the excellences of bodhisattvas in different stages. He
named the first four groups, and rGyal-tshab called the last one "bodhisattvas who are in
the last worldly existence (see table 12)."

Table 12, Five groups of noble bodhisattvas as indicated in RGV I.69-78.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noble Bodhisattvas</th>
<th>Verses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. prathamacittotpādika (bodhisattvas who have cultivated the spirit for the first time - the 1st stage)</td>
<td>I.69-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. caryāpratipanna (bodhisattvas who have engaged with deeds - the 2nd stage through the 7th stage)</td>
<td>I.71-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. avaivartika (bodhisattvas who have reached the stage of non-regression - the 8th stage)</td>
<td>I.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ekajātipratibaddha (bodhisattvas who are separated from enlightenment by one birth - the 10th stage)</td>
<td>I.74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. srīd-pa-tha-ma-pa (bodhisattvas who are in the last worldly existence)</td>
<td>I.77-78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) unchangeability in the absolute pure state. The Buddha-essence becomes the
Truth Body of a buddha in the state absolutely purified from coincidental defilements. In
this regard, Maitreya lists four characteristics of the Truth Body: nītya (eternal), dhruva
(enduring), śīva (peace), and śāsvata (unchanging), which are the negations of distinctive
birth, death, sickness, and aging of noble bodhisattvas. Each characteristic is said to be

514 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ṅkā, 118a-b.
understood by a pair of terms showing *uddeśa* (statement) and *nirdeśa* (exposition) in accordance with the AAN (see table 13).

Table 13, The four characteristics of the Truth Body according to the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa-sūtra*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Corresponding negations</th>
<th>Terms of statement</th>
<th>Terms of exposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eternal</td>
<td>of birth of mind-made body</td>
<td>unchangeable</td>
<td>endowed with inexhaustible qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enduring</td>
<td>of inconceivable death</td>
<td>refuge of beings</td>
<td>no limit in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peace</td>
<td>of sickness of the subtle instincts</td>
<td>always non-dual</td>
<td>non-conceptual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unchanging</td>
<td>of aging conditioned by uncontaminated karma</td>
<td>indestructible</td>
<td>unaltered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indivisible excellences*

RGV I.84-94 demonstrates the point of "indivisible [excellences]" in connection with the absolute pure state of the Buddha-essence, as discussed above. "Indivisible excellences" refer to, according to rGyal-tshab, all kinds of excellences possessed by the Buddha, including the wisdom, intuition, and liberation of Śrāvakayāna, Pratyekabuddhayāna, and Mahāyāna, in an indivisible manner. 515

Maitreya lists four synonyms of the Buddha-essence as the immaculate element in accordance with these four meanings:

(1) Truth Body, which means "indivisible from the Buddha qualities." In rGyal-tshab's view, the ultimate purity of the Buddha-essence is called "Truth Body"

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inasmuch as the Element, which is distinguished by its natural purity within the continuum of living being, makes it possible that all the Buddha qualities can be developed, thereby being indivisible from them;

(2) Tathāgata, which means the "attainment of the gene as it is." rGyal-tshab glosses the "gene" here as the reality;

(3) holy truth, which means the "reality neither false nor deceptive," which is, according to the cited SMS, the Truth of Cessation purified from all defilements;

(4) nirvāṇa, which means the "natural peace from time primordial," in the form of the ultimate elimination obtained by antidotes, i.e. non-abiding nirvāṇa.

Therefore, in rGyal-tshab's view, these four excellences possessed by the Truth Body in an indivisible manner are all connected with the notion of natural purity: being natural purity itself, the intuition that is the direct realization of that purity, the elimination of all coincidental defilements, and the attainment through antidotes to those defilements respectively.516

The RGV(V) then concludes that these four synonyms converge into the single meaning of the Element, therefore, the Buddha and nirvāṇa should be viewed as being "non-dual" in the ultimate sense. rGyal-tshab explains the "Buddha" as perfect enlightenment regarding all kinds of things, and "nirvāṇa" as the elimination of defilements along with instincts, which takes place simultaneously with the perfect enlightenment in the immaculate element.517 Indivisible excellences of a buddha, in short, consist of intuition and elimination.518

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516 Ibid, 130b.
517 Ibid, 131b.
518 ye shes dang spangs pa.
Asaṅga has mentioned in RGVV 125.6-7 that the buddhas are possessed of all excellences because of *sarvākāravaropetāsūnyatā* (emptiness endowed with every supreme form), which has been established within the immaculate element. A simile of painters is cited from the RCS to illustrate this. The accomplishment of the buddhas' four kinds of excellence depends on the wisdom that realizes emptiness with complete excellences such as generosity, etc., just as a full-length portrait would remain unfinished if one of the components is missing. Thus, as Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa points out, there are two kinds of *sarvākāravaropetāsūnyatā*; one is connected with the path and the other with fruition. The former is the noble bodhisattvas' intuition that directly realizes emptiness under the sway of distinctive liberative techniques, whereas the latter is the buddhas' intuition which is in the ever-lasting meditation on the reality adorned by all kinds of liberative techniques.  

This statement demonstrates that emptiness endowed with every supreme form is the noumenon, free from all defilements, of the wisdom which directly realizes the emptiness of all kinds of elimination and realization without exception. It does not indicate that the ultimate reality is empty of everything relative because, if it were true, there would be no excellence at all.

Furthermore, in rGyal-tshab's view, the term *sarvākāravaropetāsūnyatā* does not reflect that Asaṅga espoused the notion of Other-emptiness in regard to the ultimate reality adorned with all excellences of the Buddha, which exists from time beginningless.

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519 Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa, *Yum don gsal ba' sgron me*, 418.
520 Ibid., 132b.
within the defiled continua of living beings.\textsuperscript{521} This is, according to rGyal-tshab, simply unacceptable for a leading Buddhist philosopher like Asaṅga to take a position not different from Śaivism, as aforementioned in Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{521} \textit{Ibid.}, 133b-134a.
Chapter 7

The Eighteen Similes in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra

1. rGyal-tshab's General Discussion

RGV I.95-152 is a running commentary on the eighteen similes in the TGS, having a shift of emphasis from discussing the naturally purity of mind to proving the coincidence of addictions. Maitreya explains the meaning of āgantuka (coincidence) as asambhaddha (unconnected), denoting that the nature of mind is primordially immaculate. This statement is explicated by Asanga as meaning that the defiling factors in living beings' minds are coincidental, whereas the pure qualities are simultaneous with and inseparable from the mind without beginning. In rGyal-tshab's gloss, these two things are true only because the mind is empty of intrinsic reality-status or intrinsic realitylessness. Thus, rGyal-tshab explains "unconnected/connected" as being unable/able to penetrate into the nature of the mind, i.e. addictions are the former, and noumenon is the latter. The eighteen similes consist of two sets of nine similes, representing the category of addiction and the category of purity respectively. According to rGyal-tshab, the number of nine for each category is certain inasmuch as there are nine types of obscuration, such as attachment in its latent form, etc., and there are nine obscured things, such as reality, etc.

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522 RGV I.129: sattva-dhiitor asambaddham kleśa-kośey anādīsya | citta-prakṛti-vāmalyam anādīmīlād utāhṛtām ||
524 nyon mongs kyi phyogs, rin 'byung gyi phyogs.
525 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ḫiṅ, 137a.
The TGS uses eighteen nine similes to demonstrate that the Element/Buddha-essence exists within the covering of living beings' addictions; the defilements are analogous to a lotus, bees, husks, filth, the floor, fruit, tattered rags, a woman severely afflicted by burning misery, and clay, and the Element is akin to the Buddha, honey, grain, gold, treasure, a nyagrodha tree, a precious image, a supreme ruler of the world and a precious statue respectively. Maitreya explains in RGV 1.130-131 the nine obscuring addictions that are represented by the nine similes of lotus and so on: (1) rāgāunuṣayalakṣanakleśa (the addiction characterized as the latent state of attachment); (2) dveṣāunuṣayalakṣanakleśa (the addiction characterized as the latent state of hatred); (3) mohāunuṣayalakṣanakleśa (the addiction characterized as the latent state of misknowledge); (4) tivrarāgadveṣamohaparyavasthānalakṣana-kleśa (the addiction characterized as the intense outburst of attachment, hatred, and misknowledge); (5) avidyāvāsabhūmi-sangrhitakleśa (the addiction included in the ground of instincts for misknowledge); (6) darśanaprahatvyakleśa (the addiction to be eliminated by the Path of Insight); (7) bhāvanaprahatvyakleśa (the addiction to be eliminated by the Path of Meditation); (8) asuddhabhumīgatakleśa (the addiction related to the Impure Stages); and (9) suddhabhumīgatakleśa (the addiction related to the Pure Stages). Maitreya further explains in 1.133 that these addictions can be divided into four groups in connection with four types of living being: (1) naïve people; (2) arhats; (3) persons being educated on the path; and (4) bodhisattvas. Furthermore, as rGyal-tshab points out, the nine obscurations possessed by these four groups of people are distinguished by different definitions, not by different substances. 526

526 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ikht, 139a.
Table 14, Correlation of obscurations, types of people with nine similes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similes</th>
<th>Represented obscurations</th>
<th>Four types of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. lotus</td>
<td>latent state of attachment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. bees</td>
<td>latent state of hatred</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. husks</td>
<td>latent state of misknowledge</td>
<td>naïve people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. filth</td>
<td>intense outburst of attachment, hatred, and misknowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. floor</td>
<td>ground of instincts for misknowledge</td>
<td>Arhats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. fruit</td>
<td>eliminated by the path of insight</td>
<td>educated on the path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. tattered rags</td>
<td>eliminated by the path of meditation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. woman</td>
<td>related to the impure stages</td>
<td>Bodhisattvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. clay</td>
<td>related to the pure stages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As to the obscured factor, Maitreya clearly explains it as the Element having the threefold nature.\(^{527}\) The threefold nature apparently refers to the three aspects of the Buddha-essence, i.e. the diffusion of the Truth Body, reality, and the spiritual gene, mentioned in I.27-28, which we discussed in the beginning of Chapter 6. Dharmakāya-svabhāva (the nature of Truth Body) is divided in I.145 into two parts: (1) suviṣuddhādharma-dharmadhatū (perfect immaculate ultimate element), which is, in rGyal-tshab's gloss, the Dharma in the form of realization, and (2) suviṣuddha-dharmadhatūniṣvanda (natural outflow of perfect immaculate ultimate element), which is Dharma in the form of expounding teaching according to rGyal-tshab. This latter form of Dharma is further divided in I.146-147 into two kinds: (a) gambhiranayadeśanā (the teaching expounding the subtle mode, i.e. ultimate reality); and (b) vicīranayadeśanā (the teaching expounding the various aspects, i.e. conventional reality). There are no divisions to tathatāsvabhāva (the nature of reality). Gotrasvabhāva (the nature of spiritual gene) is further divided in I.149 into two: (5) prakṛtistha (naturally existing); and (6) samudānīta

\(^{527}\) RGV I.143 c-d: dhūtor buddhāti-sādharmyayā svabhāva-traya-samgrahāt ||
Maitreya explains in 1.150 that the former type of gotra has the ability to be transformed into (7) the Truth Body; the second has the ability to be transformed into the two kinds of physical body, i.e. (8) the Beatific Body, and (9) the Incarnational Body (see table 15 below).

It is important to point out that the RGVV at this point names the first factor of the Buddha-essence as dharmakāyasvabhāva and that Asaṅga explains the similes of the Buddha, honey, and grain as illustrating the pervasion of the Truth Body. In order to ward off a possible Other-emptiness sort of interpretation, rGyal-tshab stresses the pervasion in terms of the deeds of the Truth Body in accord with his explication of the tripartite Buddha-essence as found in 1.27-28:

This explanation of the two types of scripture, definitive in meaning and interpretable in meaning, and the corresponding similes, is an elaborated explanation of the meaning of "diffusion" as mentioned in [verse 1.28 stating that] "all living beings are always possessed Buddha-essence, by virtue of the diffusion of the buddhas' bodies." The diffusion of the Truth Body means the pervasion of the buddhas' deeds. The buddhas' deeds enter into all living beings by means of teaching the Dharma to a variety of disciples with speech. Since [living beings] are always susceptible to the buddhas' deeds, it is said that "the Truth Body is all-pervading in them."528

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similes</th>
<th>Represented obscured Element</th>
<th>Tripartite Buddha-essence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. buddha's image</td>
<td>dharma in the form of realization</td>
<td>diffusion of the truth body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. honey</td>
<td>teaching expounding the ultimate reality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. grain</td>
<td>teaching expounding the conventional reality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. gold</td>
<td>reality</td>
<td>reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. treasure</td>
<td>naturally existing gene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. nyagrodha</td>
<td>developmental gene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. precious image</td>
<td>Truth Body</td>
<td>spiritual gene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. ruler</td>
<td>Beatific Body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

528 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla 呸礿,152b.
Moreover, rGyal-tshab points out that the imports of these two sets are not definitive in having a connection between what is obscuring and what is obscured, e.g., attachment in its latent form and Dharma in the form of realization; unlike similes which are definitive in having a connection as such, i.e. honey being covered by bees, and so forth. But conformities do exist respectively between the nine obscurations and the nine similes representing them as well as between the nine obscured objects and the nine similes representing them. rGyal-tshab thus summarizes the similarity between the eighteen similes and their corresponding imports. In the first set:

(1) attachment and a lotus have resembling features because they make people happy temporarily when they become active but later on can cause unhappiness;
(2) hatred is comparable to bees that make people uneasy;
(3) misknowledge is comparable to the husk that acts to obscure from perception the essence within;
(4) these three in their active states are similar to filth, since living in filth is unbearable. These three in their active forms are established as one group of obscurations because they are no different in their ability to produce negativities;
(5) instincts for misknowledge are comparable to earth because misknowledge is an obscuration to the attainment of self-arising [intuition] just as earth obscures a treasure;
(6) those obscurations which are eliminated by the Path of Insight are comparable to a fruit for they are destroyed immediately after the Path of Insight has originated, just like a seed is destroyed immediately after a sprout has originated;

(7) those which are eliminated by the Path of Meditation are similar to tattered rags because their essence has been worn out;

(8) the obscurations based upon the Impure Stages are similar to the unawareness of a [pregnant] woman in that they both are obscurations to self-realization;\(^{529}\)

(9) the obscurations based upon the Pure Stages and being smeared slightly with mud are similar in that they both are slightly obscured with something subtle.

In the second set:

(1) the Truth Body and the Buddha are similar in that there is nothing in the world comparable with them;

(2) the scriptures which expound the ultimate reality are similar to honey in that they grant the one taste of bliss when experienced;

(3) the scriptures which expound the conventional reality are similar to the essential grain within a husk for they are specifically designed to suit individual needs;

(4) reality is likened to gold because its nature would never turn bad;

(5) the naturally existing gene is likened to a treasure because it exists of itself, not established with effort;

(6) the developmental gene is likened to a cultivated tree because it is established with effort;

\(^{529}\) rang gis khong du chud par bya pa.
(7) the Truth Body is likened to a self-arisen image made of precious jewels because it is not a new acquisition bestowed by others, and because it is the basis for perfect excellences;

(8) the Beatific Body is likened to a cakravartin because it enjoys sovereignty over the great Dharma;

(9) the Incarnational Body is likened to an image fashioned in gold because it is no more than a mere reflection.  

Here, some important comments made by rGyal-tshab with respect to the eighteen similes from the TGS are summarized and presented below.

2. The Nine Similes for the Obscuring Defilements

At this point, it seems clear that the Element explained in connection with the obscuring addictions exclusively refers to the noumenon or reality of mind as suggested by RGVV 59.1. According to rGyal-tshab, each simile for the obscuring addiction includes three components: (1) simile, (2) import, and (3) means of purifying the Element from the defilements.

The lotus simile for latent state of attachment

Simile: Suppose the body of a Buddha, shining and adorned with a thousand excellent marks, were abiding within a fetid and faded lotus with petals closed. When perceived by a man with the pure divine eye, it would be extracted from the petal-sheath of lotus.

\[530\] rGyal-tshab, *rGyud bla māṇikā*, 138a-b.
Import: Similarly, the Tathāgata perceives with his Buddha-eye his own noumenon, the nature of Buddha-essence, even in those who are in the avicii hell, covered with the sheath of defilements, attachment, hatred, etc.

Means of purification: The Tathāgata destroys such obscurations through compassion. 531

The bees simile for a latent state of hatred

Simile: Suppose a clever person, having seen honey surrounded by a swarm of bees, and endeavoring to get it, separates the swarm of bees completely from the honey using skillful technique.

Import: Similarly, the Great Sage, with his omniscient eye, perceives honey-like essence of the mind, 532 the noumenon of living beings' mind, which is all of a single taste of sweetness.

Means of purification: The Tathāgata brings about the complete and perfect elimination of the bee-like obscurations to the naturally pure Element of living beings, turning them into something productionless, through the revolutions of the wheel of Dharma. 533

The husks simile for latent state of misknowledge

532 viditam dhātum, rig khasm. It is called amāsram jñānam (uncontaminated wisdom) in I.104 and rGyal-tshab glosses it as the noumenon of the uncontaminated wisdom. rGyud bla ṭhū, 140a-b.
533 RGV I.102-104.
Simile: The kernel of grain is covered by an outer husk, and if it is not removed, cannot be consumed by any person - it would never be delicious food for them; those people seeking food and so on must take it out from the husk.

Import: Similarly, the naturally pure Buddha-essence, the Element in living beings is mixed with the defilements of addictions. Alternatively, according to Maitreya's explanation in I.107, the king of Dharma, which is reality mingled with defilements, the potential present in living beings for becoming so, having his body or nature unreleased from the husk of addictions, will not grant the taste of Dharma joy to beings afflicted by the hunger of addictions.

Means of purification: The Tathāgata cleanses living beings of their defilements in order to help them obtain buddhahood. 534

rGyal-tshab defines attachment, hatred and misknowledge in their latent states as the addictions existing within the continua of those who are free of attachment to desires of naïve ordinary people. He states that the addictions which are the motivation behind so called "immovable karma" of which the place of retribution 535 is definite, causes beings to be reborn in the two higher worlds: the material and immaterial worlds. The addictions are to be destroyed by transcendent intuition because the addictions included in the ground of the "pinnacle of samsāra" 536 cannot be eliminated by the worldly path. Only the subtle and coarse active addictions in the realms below the "nothing whatever" 537 can be eliminated by such a path. However, rGyal-tshab points out, the latent states of the three poisons should not be taken as the seeds alone, because the active addictions that

534 ibid, I.105-107.
535 rnam smin sa.
536 srid rtse' sa.
537 ci yang med pa.
cause the two higher worlds to be established are also included herein. However, hatred that causes the two higher worlds is not the active one since it is not the addiction in any way that would cause beings to be reborn in one of the two higher worlds.

*The filth simile for intense outburst of attachment, hatred, and misknowledge*

**Simile:** Suppose, while walking along the road in a hurry, a person's gold fell into a place rotting with filth. This gold, being of indestructible nature without deterioration, would remain there in the filth for many centuries. Then a god with a pure divine eye, seeing it there, would tell a man: "Here is a piece of gold. Cleanse this supreme precious thing, and fashion it into something valuable such as an image of the Tathāgata."

**Import:** Similarly, the Muni perceives the excellences of living beings, the naturally pure Element, drowned in filth-like addictions. The "excellences of living beings" is replaced by Maitreya in RGV I.111 with "victor", which is glossed by rGyal-tshab as the "Buddha-essence designated as such, the Essence of the precious perfect buddhahood within all beings."

**Means of purification:** The Tathāgata pours the rain of Holy Dharma over all beings according to their psychological makeups and thoughts, in order to purify that mire of addictions, to cleanse their obscurations.

rGyal-tshab defines the intense outburst of attachment, hatred, and misknowledge as the addictions which exist in the continua of those living beings who indulge in attachment and so on: the addictions which, because of synthetic activity that

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538 rGyal-tshab, *rgyud bla mthuk,* 145b.
539 Ibid., 145a.
540 jina/.
541 rGyal-tshab, *rgyud bla mthuk,* 141b.
accumulates merit karma, causes one to be reborn as a celestial being or a human; and because of demerit karma, causes one to be reborn in one of the miserable realms, and give rise to the desire world alone. These are the addictions to be destroyed by the wisdom of the meditation on impurity, etc., which are the yoga of the pure conduct; this means that the active attachment is overpowered by the concentration of the meditation on impurity, and the active hatred by the meditation on love, etc. They are called the addictions characterized as the intense outburst of attachment, hatred and misknowledge. 542

The floor simile for ground of instincts for misknowledge

Simile: Suppose there was an inexhaustible treasure beneath the floor in a poor man's house. This man does not know of it. Also the treasure cannot say to him, "Here I am!"

Import: Similarly, in the minds of living beings, there is a treasure of jewels capable of producing all excellences, the naturally immaculate noumenon that is the two kinds of selflessness, neither newly established nor negated. Without recognizing this noumenon mingled with defilements in their continua, these living beings constantly experience sufferings of poverty of liberation's happiness in various ways. The Buddha would appear in the world in order to eliminate these sufferings.

rGyal-tshab defines the addictions included in the ground of instincts for misknowledge as the addictions which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas possessed of powers, in śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats; the addictions which, as the cause that produces the uncontaminated karma, i.e. the subtle efforts of the motivation behind karma of three doors, give rise to the three kinds of mind-made body free of the

542 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma, 145b-146a.
defilements of addictions; the addictions to be destroyed by the Tathāgata's intuition of enlightenment. As to the last character, rGyal-tshab explains that, although these saints work for living beings' welfare by taking the mind-made bodies that are established through the ground of the instincts for misknowledge and the uncontaminated karma, the ability to spontaneously, effortlessly accomplish living beings' welfare without need for the reliance [on motivation] is one of the distinguishing features of the perfect buddhahood alone. Furthermore, as rGyal-tshab points out, it does not indicate that the first moment of omniscience as the uninterrupted path is a direct eliminator of the ground of instincts for misknowledge; if so, one would not obtain the ultimate elimination because [the Buddha's omniscience] is still working on the elimination of that which is to be eliminated on one's continuum, not to mention that the first moment of omniscience would not be the uninterrupted path if there were not the slightest defilement during the time of uninterrupted path of the last continuum in the Tenth Stage.

The fruit simile for addictions eliminated by the Path of Insight

Simile: The imperishable quality capable of producing a sprout is contained within a seed of the fruit of a mango tree or an orange tree and the like. When in the presence of cooperative conditions, such as ploughed soil, water, manure and so on, the sprout will gradually grow into the nature of a kingly tree.

Import: Likewise, enclosed within the skin or sheath of a fruit, likened to the misknowledge, etc. of living beings, is the virtuous ultimate element, pure by nature.

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543 bar chad med lam.
544 rgyan gyi tha ma.
545 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla gūṭ, 146a-b.
546 subha-dharma-dhātu.
And so, by depending on this and that virtue leading to the path of Mahāyāna in conditions of awakening spiritual genetic potential, it gradually transforms into the nature of a King of Munis. According to Maitreya's exposition in I.117, "the virtuous ultimate element" is the "seed of perfect buddhahood," in rGyaltshab's gloss, the natural purity from which the sprout of buddhahood is produced. And this and that virtue refers to study, contemplation and meditation.547

According to RGVV 67.19, there are two kinds of person who enters higher education [on the path]: ordinary people who have entered the path and noble ones.548 rGyaltshab defines the addictions to be eliminated by the Path of Insight as the addictions which exist in the continua of the former kind of person, i.e. ordinary people in being educated on the path. These are the addictions to be destroyed by the wisdom obtained through the first insight into transcendent reality.549

The tattered rags simile for addictions eliminated by the Path of Meditation

Simile: Suppose a Buddha image made of precious jewels, such as gold, wrapped in tattered smelly rags, fallen on a desolate road and trampled by travelers, were seen by a god. In order to retrieve it from the trampled heap of rags, he would have to point it out to travelers.

Import: Likewise, the Buddha who has an unobstructed eye perceives, even in animals, sugatātma (nature of the Tathāgata) wrapped in the various forms of addiction, which is reality mingled with defilements. Sugatātma is explicated by Maitreya in I.120 as dhatu wrapped in addictions. Accordingly, rGyaltshab has glossed it as the "naturally

547 rGyaltshab, rGyud blaṅkū, 142b.
548 dvi-videhaḥ saikṣuḥ prabhag jana āryaś ca ī.
549 Ibid., 146a.
Means of Purification: The Tathāgata demonstrates the techniques included in the paths of three kinds of spiritual genetic potential for the purpose of liberating living beings.

rGyal-tshab defines the addictions to be eliminated by the Path of Meditation as the addictions which exist in the continua of noble ones in being educated on the path; the addictions to be destroyed by the wisdom of the meditation on transcendent reality, perceiving it as it is.

The woman simile for addictions related to the Impure Stages

Simile: Suppose an ugly and poor woman, staying in a shelter for the homeless, bore a glorious king of cakravartin inside her womb, yet did not realize that a ruler existed within her abdomen.

Import: Similarly, birth in saṃsāra of the three worlds is like a shelter for the homeless, and impure living beings with coincidental defilements are like the pregnant woman, bearing a cakravartin. And the naturally immaculate Element is like that within the womb; owing to having it, one is ultimately protected in stages. But for now, as explained in I.123, even though the protector resides within, living beings believe themselves unprotected, and never find peace of mind by the power of addictions, so remaining in the basis of saṃsāra's suffering. The Buddha expounds on Dharma to living beings in order to eliminate their addictions.

rGyal-tshab defines the addictions related to the Impure Stages as the addictions which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas who have not reached the ultimate perfection.
of the stages above the seventh. These are the addictions which are, in contrast to the wisdom obtained on the [first] seven stages, to be destroyed by the wisdom of meditation of the [last] three stages beginning with the Eighth Stage.\textsuperscript{551}

\textit{The clay simile for addictions related to the Pure Stages}

\textit{Simile:} Suppose that inside the clay mould there were a buddha-statue of melted gold, complete in all parts and free of any defect of gold. But the outside is covered with the clay in the nature of earth. By seeing and knowing of it, a person would remove the outer covering to expose the gold inside.

\textit{Import:} Likewise, the one who has attained the supreme enlightenment, thoroughly sees the nature [of the mind] as luminosity, and that the obscuring defilements are coincidental.

\textit{Means of Purification:} The Tathāgata purifies living beings, resembling jewel-mines capable of producing limitless the Buddha's qualities, from obscurations, thereby obtaining the supreme enlightenment possessed of two kinds of purity. Alternatively, as explained by Maitreya in I.126, the omniscient knows of the peaceful mind, which is pure by nature like pure gold, and removes obscurations by means of expounding Dharma that demonstrates the paths and fruition of three vehicles cleansing coincidental defilements, like chipping away the clay covering the precious statue.

rGyal-tshab defines the addictions related to the Pure Stages as the addictions which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas who have reached the ultimate extinction of addictions. These are the addictions which, in contrast to the wisdom obtained through

\textsuperscript{551} Ibid., 149a.
the meditation of the last three stages beginning with the eighth, is to be destroyed by the wisdom of the "vajra-like" concentration.\footnote{Ibid.}

As to the RGVV's description of these defilements above, rGyal-tshab explains that each description of an addiction's respective possessor (rten), nature, and antidote; e.g., the description "addictions which are in disagreement to the first seven stages" indicates that these addictions exist within the continua of bodhisattvas below the Eighth Stage (respective possessor); that these are the obscurations to the attainment of the stages above the Seventh (nature), and that their homogenous continua are eliminated by the wisdom of the Pure Stages (antidote). Thus, according to rGyal-tshab, these similes not only demonstrate that defilements are coincidental and can be cleansed, but also describe the means of purification and the mode how to remove obscurations, and so forth. Although the means of cleansing is not mentioned directly in the fifth, the sixth, and the eighth simile, as rGyal-tshab points out, it should be known within the textual context as the Buddha's expounding on Dharma.\footnote{Ibid, 143b.}

**Discussion of the twofold obscuration**

In Mahāyāna Buddhist soteriology, all different obscurations to buddhahood can be subsumed under two broad categories: addictive obscurations and cognitive obscurations. rGyal-tshab's discussion of the twofold obscurations here, which follows his mentor Tsong-kha-pa's theory, is unique to the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika system.

According to rGyal-tshab, the addictive obscuration, by definition, is the kind of obscuration to the attainment of liberation that is paired with omniscience. The addictive
obscuration is explained as mental turbulence. Mental peacefulness, the opposite of the addictive obscuration, is the mere liberation of nirvāṇa that eases the suffering of saṃsāra. Mental turbulence is the suffering of saṃsāra and the addictions or the addictive obscuration, is the producer of suffering. The Truth of Path causes nirvāṇa to be obtained. The exemplification\textsuperscript{554} of the addictive obscuration is the addictive misknowledge, the intellect of the truth-habit regarding person and aggregates, as well as active attachment, etc., which are produced by the addictive misknowledge, along with its seeds. The liberation which is the complete elimination of addictive obscurations is obtained by śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats as well as bodhisattvas in the Eighth Stage and above.

The cognitive obscuration, by definition, is the kind of obscuration to the attainment of omniscience that is paired with liberation. Furthermore, it is so called because it is the obscuration to the attainment of eternal absorption in all knowable objects just as they are, until the end of saṃsāra, and it is also the obscuration to the attainment of direct perception of all knowable objects in their multiplicity. As to its exemplification, the cognitive obscuration is the erroneous truth perception in objects as well as the addictive latency that produces that perception. The liberation which is the complete elimination of cognitive obscurations has been obtained by the buddhas alone.\textsuperscript{555}

In addition, rGyal-tshab also discusses at this point the distinction between what is to be eliminated by the Path of Insight and what is to be eliminated by the Path of Meditation, according to his understanding of the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika system:

The conscious theoretical variety of addictive obscuration which is to be destroyed by the Path of Insight, includes the thought that the "truth-status of persons or aggregates is acceptable," along with its seeds; as well as the assertion of truth-

\textsuperscript{554} mtshan gzhi.
\textsuperscript{555} rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ikh, 147a-b.
status which is derived from an analysis of truth-status along with its seeds. It should be understood that attachment, etc., are derived from such an imagined addictive obscuration.

The unconscious instinctual type of addictive obscuration which is to be destroyed by the Path of Meditation includes the innate truth-habit independent of any analysis, such as attachment and other obscurations along with their seeds. The unconscious instinctual type of cognitive obscuration is understood to be obscuration itself. Its conscious theoretical variety is the thought that "this truth perception is not erroneous," accompanying perceptual consciousnesses apprehending visual objects, etc., which have a truth-perception in objects along with its seeds.\textsuperscript{556}

3. The Nine Similes for the Obscured Element

The corresponding nine similes for the obscured Element refer to the Buddha-essence which consists of three factors, as aforementioned. Its connotation is apparently broad in comparison with that associated with the first set, which exclusively denotes the reality of mind. Nevertheless, there are nine topics listed in the RGV as the obscured Buddha-essence: (1) the perfect immaculate ultimate element, (2) the teaching expounding the subtle mode, (3) the teaching expounding the various aspects, (4) reality, (5) the naturally existing gene, (6) the developmental gene, (7) the Truth Body, (8) the Beatific Body, and (9) the Incarnational Body. Apparently, the first three topics have been accomplished by others, while the last three are the final goals to be attained; these can not be obscured by the addictions of living beings. In order to solve this problem, rGyal-tshab has explained as follows:

The single reality can be divided into three, in terms of the means of explanation; that is, it is the spiritual genetic potential from the viewpoint of being the pure object

\textsuperscript{556} Ibid., 147b.
in the causal state, it is reality from the viewpoint of being pervasive and the nature, and it is the Truth Body’s diffusion from the viewpoint of being the fruition.557

Rong-ston, on the other hand, explains that, though literally explicating the fruitions, these statements demonstrate their potential at the causal stage when remaining in the covering of addictions.558 And the "potential at the causal stage" can only be understood in that context as the emptiness of the Truth Body. Likewise, 'Gos-lo explains that there is no difference between the Truth Body and a living being’s mind in terms of nature for this first factor.559 As to possible Other-emptiness readings based on the RGV (V)'s literal meaning, rGyal-tshab would argue that they are rejected by the treatises themselves, because the first factor of the Buddha-essence discussed in 1.27-28 clearly refers to the diffusion of the Truth Body's deeds, though not the Truth Body per se, because Asaṅga names Buddha-essence as the "cause for purifying the mind,"560 and so forth.

As discussed above, according to the RGV(V), the "Buddha-essence" mentioned in the TGS statement that "all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence" has three meanings, which are respectively known by three, one, and five similes of the second set. Buddha-essence as being the nature of living beings' susceptibility to the deeds of the Truth Body is understood by the first three similes: the Buddha’s image, honey, and the kernel of grains. The Buddha-essence as being the nature of reality, which is identical to the natural purity of the Truth Body without distinction, is understood by one simile: gold. The Buddha-essence as being the nature of the spiritual genes from which Buddha's

557 Ibid., 153b.
558 Rong-ston, Legs bshad, 140.
559 Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 423.
560 cittavyavādāhūtuc. rNgog-lo’s translation reads sens kyi rnam par byang ba’ kham (“the pure Element of the mind”).
Three Bodies are produced is understood by the remaining five similes: the treasure, the tree, the precious image, the world-emperor (*cakravartin*), and the golden statue.

Now, let us take a close look at rGyal-tshab's exposition of this second set of the nine similes.

*The three similes for the Truth Body*

Based on 1.145 and the commentary thereon, rGyal-tshab explains the Truth Body as having two aspects:

1. The direct realization of the ultimate element, which is naturally pure and free from all coincidental defilements, thus being perfectly immaculate, is the Truth Body with respect to realization. Moreover, the perfect immaculate ultimate element is the object experienced directly by the Tathāgatas' non-conceptual intuition, his individual introspective wisdom, in eternal meditative equipoise. This is known as the Dharma to be realized;

2. The fruition of the natural outflow from this direct realization of the noumenon of the Buddha's mental continuum is the cause for the attainment of the Truth Body, because it comes from the objectification of scriptural references and the meditation on their meanings. Moreover, this is known as the Dharma to be taught.

The teaching is further divided into two, according to the means of arranging either subtle or extensive Dharma: (a) the teaching expounding the ultimate reality, the way of profound Dharma, in the scriptural collection for bodhisattvas; and (b) the aphorisms, the discourses in prose and verse mingled, prophecy, verses, the special utterances, the
narration, etc., expounding the conventional reality, and a variety of things - the Truth Body with respect to teaching.\textsuperscript{561}

rGyal-tshab further explains the similarity between the three similes and the Truth Body in detail as follows:

Because of being ultimately transcendent, there is no conceivable analogy with the intuitive Truth Body with respect to realization in the world. Thus the Tathāgata's image and the Element, which is in the nature of the Truth Body that is naturally pure, free from all coincidental defilements and all-pervading in living beings, are demonstrated as similar. When the meaning of scriptures that are definitive in meaning, teaching the subtle, profound ultimate reality, is experienced, one experiences the nature of all things in one taste that grants unlimited joy like the one sweet taste of honey; while scriptures that are interpretable in meaning teaching various aspects of the conventional reality are known as like the kernel within the covering of various grains.\textsuperscript{562}

Then, rGyal-tshab asserts that the explanation of two types of scripture, definitive in meaning and interpretable in meaning, corresponds to the similes as an elaborated explanation of the meaning of "diffusion" mentioned in I. 28, stating that "all living beings are always possessed of the Buddha-essence, in virtue of the diffusion of the buddhas' bodies..." As discussed above, according to rGyal-tshab, the diffusion of the Truth Body means the universal pervasion of the Buddha's deeds; more specifically, it means that the Buddha's deeds enter into all living beings by means of teaching the Dharma to a variety of disciples with speech. Intending that all living beings are always susceptible to the buddhas' deeds, it is said in the TGS that "the Truth Body is all-pervading in them."\textsuperscript{563}

\textsuperscript{561} rGyal-tshab, \textit{rgyud bla bkā}, 151b-152a.
\textsuperscript{562} \textit{Ibid.}, 152a-b.
\textsuperscript{563} \textit{Ibid.}, 152b.
The gold simile for reality

The similarity between the simile of gold in filth and reality, which is the mind's emptiness of intrinsic reality, is explained by rGyal-tshab as having four points:

(1) being unchangeable by nature from excellent to inferior;
(2) perfectly granting desired fruitions;
(3) being virtuous and excellent owing to being free from sins; and
(4) not penetrated by defilements, thus being naturally pure or naturally luminous.

Thus, according to rGyal-tshab, the nature of the Tathāgata, which is the ultimate reality, i.e. emptiness of intrinsic reality, penetrates the nature of the mind of all living beings without the slightest difference in its appearance mode; intending this, it is said in the TGS that "all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence."564

Asaṅga declares that, without difference in nature, all living beings will join the ranks of Tathāgatas whenever they have purified all coincidental addictive and cognitive obscurations, even those who have the causes of definite wrong-doing and are the so-called "ones who will not obtain nirvāṇa." rGyal-tshab explains that this statement should be thought of as a demonstration that the reality of all living beings is the Tathāgata, or that the reality purified from all defilements is the Tathāgata. Furthermore, as rGyal-tshab points out, this simile and the commentary thereon are the explanation of the second factor of the tripartite Buddha-essence. rGyal-tshab then critiques the Other-emptiness way of reading the TGS by stating:

564 Ibid., 153a.
Furthermore, it would reveal a great deficiency in analysis if you accepted [the statement that] "all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence" as meaning to demonstrate that the natural purity of the mental continuum of an authentic Tathāgata and that of a living being are indivisible, unlike blue and yellow being two things.\textsuperscript{565}

According to rGyal-tshab, there is an enormous difference between the buddhas and living beings in subtlety and coarseness, in terms of natural purity.

\emph{The five similes for the spiritual gene}

The spiritual gene theory of the RGV(V) is nothing like what is asserted in the Vijnānavāda school but is identical to the AA as discussed above. rGyal-tshab explains the twofold spiritual gene in accord with the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika school as follows:

(1) like a treasure remaining from the very outset, the naturally existing gene remains as the nature of the mind without beginning;
(2) like a fruit tree grown through effort, the developmental gene has been newly produced from study and contemplation. It is called "supreme" in I.149 for it has more important functions.

There are three representing similes with regard to the functions of the spiritual genes, i.e. the production of the Three Bodies:

\textsuperscript{565} \textit{Ibid.}, 153b.
(1) like a precious statue, the beautiful Natural Body is by nature not created through other causes and conditions and is the precious treasure of excellences such as powers, fearlessnesses, etc.;

(2) like the cakravartin, the perfect Beatific Body is possessed of the kingdom of the great Dharma of the Mahāyāna;

(3) like a golden statue, the Incarnational Body is in the nature of an image when compared to the marks and signs of the Beatific Body.

As to the connection between the two spiritual genes and the Three Bodies, rGyal-tshab explains that: (1) the Truth Body is attained by the naturally existing gene because the accomplishment on meditating the store of wisdom brings about the Truth Body possessed of two kinds of purity, including the purification of defilements and the intuition of knowing things just as they are; and (2) the other two physical bodies are attained by the developmental gene since the accomplishment of meditating on the stores of merit brings about two physical bodies, and the intuition of knowing things in their multiplicity. In general, by this twofold genetic potential, the naturally existing gene and the developmental gene, a buddha's Three Bodies are considered to be obtained through, the awakening of the genetic potential under appropriate conditions, and then through the cultivation of the spirit of supreme enlightenment and the deeds.

Furthermore, rGyal-tshab critiques two misconceptions about the Buddha's physical body and the intuition of knowing things in their multiplicity:

If you assert that the Buddha's physical body is the mere perceptions his disciples would have, and that there is absolutely nothing included within the Buddha's continuum, it will make your position not different in the slightest from the heterodox Mīmāṃsaka assertion that it is impossible for a person who has eliminated all
defilements to exist. Similarly, it should be understood that it would be erroneous to assert that there is no perception of knowable things in their multiplicity within the Buddha's subjectivity\textsuperscript{566} and the like.\textsuperscript{567}

At this point Asaṅga clearly states that, since the Element of Tathāgata, the twofold genetic potential, is the cause of the attainment of the Three Bodies, the word "Element" is here used in the sense of "cause." rGyal-tshab further explains that the word dhātu can be translated into Tibetan as a variety of things, such as ṛgyu (cause), dbyings (ultimate element), khams (element), and so forth.\textsuperscript{568}

Asaṅga then cites the famous "Element" verse from the MAS to prove the existence of the spiritual gene as discussed in Chapter 5. Because of its importance to Buddha-essence doctrine and to the RGVV in particular, I shall summarize some key points of rGyal-tshab's Explication. The verse runs as follows:

\begin{quote}
The Element that exists without beginning\hfill \textsuperscript{569}
Is the foundation of all things.\hfill \textsuperscript{569}
Because of its existence, there is samsāra\hfill \textsuperscript{569}
And the attainment of nirvāṇa.\hfill \textsuperscript{569}
\end{quote}

According to rGyal-tshab, this statement in general indicates the existence of the naturally existing gene for he points out, "if the nature of the mind were impure, it would be impossible for the defilements to be purified; if the production of the excellences were unfeasible, its producing function would be unacceptable; if the spiritual genetic potential did not exist, samsāra and the attainment of nirvāṇa would be absurd because all is established on the basis of the naturally pure genetic potential." Moreover, rGyal-tshab explains that Asaṅga pioneered the way for the Champions of the Yogācāra system in  

\textsuperscript{566}rang snang.  
\textsuperscript{567}rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ikšd, 154b.  
\textsuperscript{568}ibid., 155a.  
\textsuperscript{569}anūdi-kālika dhātuḥ sarva-dharma-samāśrayah | tasmīn sati gatih sarvā nirvāṇādhi gamo 'pi ca |.
other treatises which establish a fundamental consciousness by citing the same sūtra; these two different interpretations do not deny each other's validity. Asaṅga also cites the SMS to explicate different parts of the verse:

_anādikāliko_ (it exists without beginning): in rGyal-tshab's gloss, it is unacceptable to speculate that the Buddha-essence came into being at a certain point, and hence, unacceptable to speculate it not existing before that point;

_dhātuḥ_ (the Element): the Buddha-essence is called the "essence of transcendent qualities" and the "essence of naturally pure qualities" inasmuch as, as rGyal-tshab has explained, all transcendent qualities will arise through meditation that objectifies this Buddha-essence, and so it is the ultimate objective condition of these qualities;

_sarvadharmasamāśrayaḥ_ (the foundation of all things): in rGyal-tshab's gloss, Buddha-essence is the foundation, the basis, and the support of uncompounded things, which are connected with the possibility of being separated from all defilements, not dissociated from the possibility of cultivating all antidotes. Hence, it is impossible to be separated from the excellences; on the other hand, it is also the foundation, the basis, and the support of compounded things, which are unconnected, dissociated, and thus possible to be separated, because all defilements cannot penetrate into the nature of the mind;

_satigatiḥ_ (there is samsāra): it is logical for living beings to transmigrate in samsāra because of the existence of the genetic potential. In rGyal-tshab's view, as aforementioned, the naturally existing gene is the emptiness of the mind, which makes all functional things possible;
nirvāṇādhigamo'pi (there is the attainment of nirvāṇa): likewise, the aspiration for liberation would not arise if the spiritual gene did not exist. These are the actions of the spiritual gene as explained in the eighth chapter. 570

570 rGyal-tshab, rGyud bla ma'i, 155b-156a.
Chapter 8

The Twofold Spiritual Gene

rGyal-tshab extends his interpretation of the spiritual gene concept in his famous commentary on Haribhadra's SPh, rNam bshad snying bo'i rgyan, where he presents a critique of the Vijñānavādin theory concerning the spiritual gene and asserts the Mādhyamika viewpoint on some related soteriological issues, and discusses how the spiritual gene serves as the pratiṣṭhā (basis) of the thirteen pratipatti (practices) as classified in the AA.

Despite the fact that the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika interpretation is considered by dGe-lugs-pa exegetes as the ultimate intention of the RGV(V) and the AA, they have also carefully examined and explained the viewpoint of the Indian Yogācāra or Vijñānavāda school concerning the spiritual gene in numerous exegeses for the purpose of illuminating their own Mādhyamika position. This hermeneutical consideration, however, was not first given by rGyal-tshab and Tsong-kha-pa; it actually conforms to the intention of the Pañcavimśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitopadeśasāstrābhisamayālāṃkāravṛtti (AAv) of Vimuktiṣena (ca. 6th century), the first Indian commentary on the AA, in which the Vijñānavādin viewpoint on the subject in question is examined and critiqued. Consequently, before looking into rGyal-tshab's exposition of the spiritual genes corresponding to the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika standpoint, we shall first examine Tsong-kha-pa's comprehensive analysis of the Vijñānavādin interpretation of the spiritual gene,

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571 See Chapter 2 for rGyal-tshab's works on "Transcendence of Wisdom" (prajñāpāramit, phar phyin).
572 AA 1.37-39: 《sudhādīnakarmakṣāyasya pratipakṣaprahaṇṇayoh | tayoḥ paryaptatvasya prajñāyīḥ kṛpayā saha》.
573 He is usually called Ārya Vimuktiṣena in Tibetan works in order to distinguish him from Bhadanta Vimuktiṣena (ca. 6th - 7th century).
the Buddha-essence and natural luminosity of mind as presented in his own commentary, *Legs bshad gser phreng*, *gSer phreng* and *rNam bshad* combine to form the cornerstone of the whole dGe-lugs-pa exegetical system of the AA. The following discussions are presented in accordance with the basic framework provided in the *gSer phreng*, supplemented by rGyal-tshab's *rNam bshad* as well as important works of mKhas-grub and other dGe-lugs-pa thinkers.

1. Tsong-kha-pa's Analysis of the Vījñānavādin Standpoints

The entire soteriological theory of the Vījñānavādin school is centered upon the notion of āśrayaparāvṛtti (foundational transmutation).” Upon the attainment of buddhahood, the fundamental consciousness along with other seven consciousnesses are transmuted into four or five transcendent intuitions. This transmutation is the result of constant meditation on the emptiness of objective self, which is not other than the parinispamvasvabhāva (perfect reality) as defined in the Vījñānavādin doctrine of the “three realities.” Dharmatā (noumenon), dharmadhātu (ultimate element), and tathatā (reality) are viewed as equivalents of the emptiness of objective self. In the early Vījñānavādin sastras written by Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, the term “Buddha-essence” appears only twice: once in Asaṅga’s MSA and once in Vasubandhu’s commentary on the MS.

Asaṅga states in the MSA that all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence in terms of the ultimate reality that universally exists in all beings without distinction. Vasubandhu takes this one step further in proclaiming that all *things* have Buddha-

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574 chos blog gi stong pa nyid, dharmāmasānyata.
essence, since reality is all-encompassing and thus is not limited to living beings. The term “natural luminosity of mind” is also used by both Asanga, in the MSA, and Vasubandhu, in his commentary on MAV. Both Asanga and Vasubandhu characterize the mind through the simile of water. While the noumenon mind or reality of mind is claimed to be naturally luminous, it becomes stained by coincidental addictions, just as water, which is naturally pure, becomes polluted by accidental impurities. Sthiramati links the noumenon mind to the perfect nature in his commentaries on the Trimsikā and the AS.

Hence, the Vijnānavādin usage of the terms such as “Buddha-essence” and “natural luminosity of mind” does not entail that this school commits to the doctrine of the ultimate unique vehicle as advocated in the SRS, which proclaims that all living beings are certain to achieve buddhahood; rather, both terms are best seen to be the statement of this school's ontological presumptions. On the other hand, it can be argued that if the Buddha-essence were to serve as the soteriological foundation for any individual's spiritual evolution, this would lead to a contradiction with the spiritual gene theory as conceived in the Vijnānavāda school as explained immediately after this.

The Vijnānavādin texts are divided by Tsong-kha-pa into two types: one asserts that the fundamental consciousness is the person; the other does not. Both types seem to concur with each other in the view of a twofold division concerning the nature of the spiritual gene: the naturally existing gene, and the acquired gene or developmental

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576 dharmaçāra or cittatathā
dharmatācit or cittatathā
577 L.Jamspal et al., The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature, 172.
578 岑穠. 安慧三十唯識述略抄 (Anhui sanshi weiwei shi luechao), 现代佛教学术丛刊 (Xiandai Fojiao xueshu congkan) Vol.29, (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chu ban she, 2005), 311.
579 《大乘阿毘達磨唯识论》 (Dacheng Apidamo zhaji lun), T.31.1606.702b04.
581 yang dag par bsgrubs pa'i rigs, samudāññā-gotra.
Based on Vasubandhu's commentary on the MSA, Tsong-kha-pa glosses the spiritual gene in terms of its function as "delivering excellences." Tsong-kha-pa also quotes from the TBh a list of synonyms for the gene: basis (gzhi), cause (rgyu), support (rten), immanency (nyer gnas), prerequisite (sngon du 'gro ba), and abode (gnas).

By quoting references from a variety of technical commentaries including both types of assertions, Tsong-kha-pa puts forward his proposition that the spiritual gene as conceived by the Vijñānavādins is a created factor, thereby impermanent. Starting with the type of texts which assert that the fundamental consciousness is the person, Tsong-kha-pa argues that the naturally existing gene according to the Vijñānavādin school is a created factor in light of its definition given in the Vivṛtaguhyairthapīndā commentary as the potency within the fundamental consciousness of cultivating uncontaminated intuition. He also quotes from the MSA to verify his point. According to this treatise, the instinct, which has the three variants, small, middling and great, and is seen as the seed of the Truth Body, is cultivated by listening to Buddhist teachings. This seed co-exists with and serves as the remedy to the fundamental consciousness. It is exhausted when the fundamental consciousness is transmuted; hence it is impermanent.

Furthermore, Tsong-kha-pa argues that, from the Vijñānavādin viewpoint, the naturally existing gene is not reality inasmuch as there is no individual differentiation in terms of reality; otherwise, it would be in opposition to the statement found in the same treatise which validates the doctrine of the ultimate three vehicles. According to the MSA, there

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582 rgyas 'gyur gyi rig, paripuṣṭa-goitra.
583 von tan, gana.
585 Tsong-kha-pa, gSer phreng, 341.
586 dus byas.
587 Tsong-kha-pa, gSer phreng, 333-336.
588 dus pa.
589 bija.
590 rang rgyud pa'i dbye ba.
are three separate spiritual genes of the three finial vehicles on the basis of the individual distinctions of the basic constituent, faith, certainty of accomplishment, and fruition. In addition, it would be in opposition to the Vijñānavādin proposition that the genetic potential for the Śrāvakayāna will be exhausted upon the time when nirvāṇa without residue\textsuperscript{591} is attained. In conclusion, according to the Vijñānavādin texts accepting the fundamental consciousness as the person, the spiritual gene is deemed as the seed on that consciousness, differentiated by individual distinctions concerning the fruition; as explicated in this treatise, a person who has the genetic potential for the Mahāyāna has the ability to eliminate two types of obscuration, whereas a person who has the genetic potential for the Śrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna can only eliminate addictive obscurations, and someone with the spiritual gene deprived cannot hope for salvation.

The spiritual gene according to the second type of texts, which do not accept the fundamental consciousness as the person, is defined in the YBh (Bodhisattva-bhumi) as follows:

What is the spiritual gene? In brief, it is twofold: naturally existing and acquired. The naturally existing gene is that which is the distinction\textsuperscript{592} of the six sense media of bodhisattvas; it has a beginningless continuity during one [life] after another and [all virtues] are obtained by its nature. The properly acquired gene is that which is obtained by first cultivating the roots of virtue.\textsuperscript{593}

\textsuperscript{591} anupadhiseṣa-nirvāṇa.
\textsuperscript{592} viśeṣ, khyad par.
\textsuperscript{593} "云何種姓。謂略有二種。一由性任種姓。二習所成種姓。本性任種姓者。謂諸菩薩六處殊勝有如是相。從無始世展轉傳來法爾所得。是名本性任種姓習所成種姓者。謂先串習善根所得是名習所成種姓。"瑜伽師地論，T.30.1579478c12.
Similarly, the YBh (Śrāvakabhūmi) defines the naturally existing gene as being “something which is finer than body, conjoined with the six sense media and obtained through nature, and has a beginningless continuity one [life] after another.” In rGyal-tshab’s gloss, this "distinction" is the uncontaminated seed, i.e. the potency having the ability to produce realization on the three vehicles.\textsuperscript{594} Based on this reference, Tsong-kha-pa asserts that the six sense media which serve as the basis of designation of the gene can only be the inner sense media. He then explains the Vijnānavādin notion of the naturally existing gene, with the help of Sāgaramegha’s commentary on the YBh (Bodhisattvabhūmi)\textsuperscript{595} in the following passage:

Hence, the inner six sense media have, or anyone of them has, the distinction or status\textsuperscript{596} upon which the spiritual gene is designated. In sum, the spiritual gene is accepted as being a functioning factor capable of achieving enlightenment on the mental continuum of living beings, so called “six sense media,” which has engaged without interruption in realms, birth-places, etc. It has substantial status\textsuperscript{597} but is not self-sufficient.\textsuperscript{598} Therefore, neither can it be said to be identical to the basis of designation nor be different from that [basis].\textsuperscript{599}

Tsong-kha-pa concludes that the nature of the spiritual gene is neither the six sense media themselves nor something other than those. This crucial point made by Tsong-kha-pa has significant ramifications for the discussions concerning the gene transmutation and

\textsuperscript{594} rNam bshad smyang bo’i rgyan. gNa’ dpe gcig lasa dpe tshogs. (Lanzhou: Kan su’u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2000), 226.
\textsuperscript{595} Yogacaryābhūmabodhisattvabhūmivṛti. rNal ’byor spyod pa’i sa las byang chub sems dpa’i sa’i rnam par bshad pa, Toh.4047.
\textsuperscript{596} gnas skabs.
\textsuperscript{597} rdzas su yod pa.
\textsuperscript{598} rang rkyab thub pa.
\textsuperscript{599} Tsong-kha-pa, gSer phreng, 335-336.
the relative nature of mind among the dGe-lugs-pa thinkers. I shall return to this point later. Furthermore, regarding the possible misunderstanding of Sāgaramegha’s glossing of the phrase “obtained by nature” as “uncreated by anyone,” Tsong-kha-pa clarifies it by quoting Sāgaramegha’s own work to explain this phrase: the naturally existing gene is not newly created by study, contemplation and meditation, but primordially exists in the mental continuum. Similarly, the YBh (Śrāvakabhūmi) states that the six sense media are obtained by nature just as refuge and vows are in some cases obtained by nature - they are not obtained in this lifetime but are naturally inherited from previous lives. Tsong-kha-pa argues that it would become absurd to literally take the six sense media, etc., as uncreated. 600

Next, Tsong-kha-pa extends his analysis to the developmental gene, especially the relation between these two kinds of gene. Having resorted to Sāgaramegha’s commentary, Tsong-kha-pa makes the distinction between two spiritual genes on the grounds of whether the naturally existing gene has been nourished by study, contemplation and meditation, or not. Tsong-kha-pa defines the developmental gene as a mere designation upon the naturally existing gene once it has been nourished by study, contemplation and meditation throughout learning paths. 601 Vasubandhu comments on the MSA III.4a-b by saying that “[t]his shows the spiritual gene to be fourfold: existing by nature, being developed, having the nature of support, and having the nature of the supported, respectively. It exists as a cause; it does not exist as an effect.” 602 In Tsong-kha-pa’s glosses, “cause” refers to the naturally existing gene which exists as a cause but not an effect, whereas “effect” refers to the developmental gene which exists as an effect but not

600 Ibid., 336.
601 slob lam. He also cites another two different expositions on these two genes without giving references.
a cause. He immediately quotes from a passage from the Śrāvakabhūmi that “the seed remains subtle when an effect is not produced or does not occur; it is called coarse when this seed mingles with effect when an effect is produced or occurs.”

However, some dGe-lugs-pa scholars, such as rJe-btsun Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, explain “cause” as the learning paths in which both genes exist and “effect” as buddhahood in which both genes do not exist.

Tsong-kha-pa then defines the relationship between the two genes as “a differential contradiction but not a substantial [contradiction]” on the basis of the YBh (Śrāvakabhūmi). He has further pointed out that “from the perspective of the substance [the gene] becomes both [type of genes] after the engagement in the path.”

As reported by Gung-thang bLo-gros-rgya-mtsho, exegetical opinions of three great dGe-lugs-pa thinkers, Pan-chen bSod-nams-grags-pa, rJe-btsun Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, and 'Jam-dbyang-bzhad-pa, differ from each other in the interpretation of “contradiction.” Both Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan and 'Jam-dbyang-bzhad-pa accept that the two genes are not contradictory: 'Jam-dbyang-bzhad-pa takes Tsong-kha-pa’s words quite literally and asserts that the developmental gene is also the naturally existing gene, but the naturally existing gene is not necessarily the developmental gene; for Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, the developmental gene is not necessarily the naturally existing gene. Although bSod-nams-grags-pa agrees with Tsong-kha-pa on the proposition that two genes are not contradictory in substance, he argues that two genes are contradictory in terms of

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603 Tsong-kha-pa, gSer phreng, 336-337.
604 Both explanations seem to be acceptable. See dBal mang dKon-bchok-rgyal-mtshan, mDo sde'i rgyan gyi 'grel pa phub bstan rgyas pa'i me iog, (New Delhi: 1974), 45.
605 'dog pa'gal ba yin gyi rtsas 'gal ba ni min.
606 rTisas la bsam na lam du shugs nas gnyis ka yin.
607 Gung-thang bLo-gros-rgya-mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs dlo ma mChog gi phar phyin mtha' dpyod tin chen sgron me dang rje di pam mtsan can gyi mcham 'grel gnyis kys dzongs don gsal bar byed ba skal bzang 'jug ngogs, ACIP S0967, 196b.
property.\textsuperscript{608} bLo-gling mKhan-zur Padma-rgyal-mthsan illustrates this point by drawing an analogy between the gene and a field. A field lacks the property of having the ability of growing crops in the winter because of being deficient in the conditions of having enough water and fertilizer. When spring arrives, although the field itself remains the same, it starts to acquire the property of having the ability of growing crops when the conditions are right. Likewise, although the naturally existing gene or the seed of the uncontaminated intuition remains untransformed through study, and contemplation, etc, it develops itself to become the developmental gene. It possesses the property of having the ability to cultivate an uncontaminated intuition. According to bSod-nams-grags-pa, if two genes were not contradictory in terms of property, they would become absolutely identical. This conclusion would lead to a contradiction of the Vijñānavādins’ own proposition as well as of the statement of the YBh (Śrāvakabhūmi) cited above.\textsuperscript{609}

Finally, Tsong-kha-pa concludes his analysis of the spiritual gene theory from the perspective from the Vijñānavāda school. He points out that there seems to be at least one case of acceptance where the uncreated noumenon is the spiritual gene, as found in Ratnākarasanti’s interpretation of the Yogācāra/Madhyamaka synthesis according to his exposition of the AA.\textsuperscript{610} On closer inspection, however, this uncreated noumenon is proved by Tsong-kha-pa to be the objective condition and the causal condition\textsuperscript{611} for cultivating spiritual excellences of the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and buddhas. This is supported by the AS, where reality is designated in the Vijñānavāda school as the

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\item \textsuperscript{608} bLo gsal dga' bskyed snyi'n gi nor bu, (Mundgod, Drepung Loseling Library Society, 1980), 309.
\item \textsuperscript{609} Tsong-kha-pa, gSer phreng, 337.
\item \textsuperscript{610} dmigs rkyen and rgyu' rkyen.
\item \textsuperscript{611}
spiritual gene but not the gene per se. This position is akin to Tsong-kha-pa’s treatment of the Vijñānavādin viewpoint of the natural luminosity of mind.

Hence, according to Tsong-kha-pa, since beginningless time both kinds of spiritual gene are held in the Vijñānavādin texts as created and impermanent. Questions now arise regarding when the gene transmutation occurs, what happens to the gene after it has transmuted, and whether it transmutes into the uncontaminated intuition or it is just simply exhausted. mKhas-grub claims that because no other equivalent cause can be found at the first moment while the holy path occurs, the gene has to serve as the substantial cause for it. But, in Padma-rgyal-mtshan’s view, the speculations of both genes being other than cognitive continuum render this conclusion problematic.

First, as mentioned earlier, Tsong-kha-pa asserts that the gene is neither the six sense media themselves nor something other than those. According to Dharmakīrti, consciousness at any given moment can only have consciousness from previous moment as its substantial cause. If a non-cognitive entity could serve as the substantial cause to make consciousness coming into existence, it would be admitted that consciousness had its origin in the course of time. By inference, it would contradict the Buddhist belief that samsāra takes place without beginning. Second, Padma-rgyal-mtshan questions whether or not the gene has progressively transmuted into the intuitions of learning, contemplation, and meditation during the paths of Accumulation and Preparation, before serving as the substantial cause for the holy path. If so, the conclusion that the developmental gene transmutes at the first moment of the Path of Accumulation would cancel out the Vijñānavādin proposition that the developmental gene continues

612 except the Mahāyānasamgraha.
613 Phags lam skad cig dang po’nyer ion byed pa zhis gtsug, rTogs dka’ snang ba, Lhasa: Se ra dgon pa, 117.
functioning until its final transmutation occurs at fruition stage. If not, it would lay a claim to the simultaneist position that direct meditative intuition of emptiness comes about without essential prerequisites of studying and contemplating on emptiness.

The dGe-lugs-pa doxographical literature often divides the Vijñānavādins into two categories: followers of scripture and followers of reasoning. The former are fundamentalist Vijñānavādins who followed Asaṅga’s corpus of the YBh, and the latter are liberalist Vijñānavādins who followed Dharmakīrti’s corpus of validating cognition. The LAS classifies spiritual genes into five groups, including three distinct genetic potentials for the three vehicles, the indefinite gene and the deprived gene. On the basis of the gene theory formulated in the YBh, fundamentalist Vijñānavādins regarded this statement as definitive, thereby claiming that there are ultimately three vehicles and that a person deprived of the gene cannot attain the liberation from samsāra.

In addition to the explanation given by Vasubandhu and Sthiramati of the natural luminosity of mind above, according to Tsong-kha-pa, the Vijñānavādins also accept the mind as naturally luminous in the sense that the mind has the capacity to be separated from all coincidental defilements and to cultivate all spiritual excellences as the fruition. Tsong-kha-pa then says that the Vijñānavādins posit their spiritual gene theory on the basis of this way of understating the noumenon of the mind. These Vijñānavādins are by no mistake the followers of reasoning or logicians. Dharmakīrti deals with this concept exclusively in the PV II.205-211. David R. Jackson aptly summarizes the import of these verses by stating that “what is most interesting about Dharmakīrti’s treatment of the ancient Buddhist concept of the mind’s natural luminosity and the adventitiousness of its stains, is his analysis of luminosity in terms of the conventional nature of mind as the

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616 Tsong-kha-pa, gSer phreng, 339. See also Xuanzang (玄奘), 成唯識論 (Chen wei shi lun), T.31.1585.
correct apprehension of objects, and the adventitiousness of stains in terms of the incapacity of error to persist in a correctly cognizing mind because, relative to a correct cognition, it lacks a foundation in the way things actually exist." 617

Tsong-kha-pa accepts this notion of the natural luminosity of mind. As a result, he claims that no one exists as a being with his or her spiritual gene deprived on this basis. He also argues that if faults or obscurations could by no means be eliminated, then, they would become the nature of the mind, just as the heat is the nature of the fire. Hence, Tsong-kha-pa asserts that the scriptural statement of the LAS which mentions the existence of deprived-gene persons is a teaching requiring further explanation. 618

In the rNam bshad snying bo'i rgyan, rGyal-tshab further identifies this statement as intentional with respect to another time,619 and having three typical characteristic factors:

(1) Its intentional ground620 is that for a long-lasting period of countless eons one with the spiritual gene deprived can not cultivate the path of liberation in his or her mental continuum;

(2) The motive621 impelling the Buddha to give this teaching is to admonish those who are deeply hostile to the Mahāyāna teachings not to let this misfortune happen;

and

(3) An incompatibility with the literal meaning622 is demonstrated by showing that, in the definitive meaning, all living beings have a pure gene, and that the activity of the buddhas is all pervasive because all living beings without exception have or had attained high status such as god or human through the activities of the buddhas.

618 Tsong-kha-pa, gSer phreng, 341.
619 dus gzhan la dgongs pa gsal.
620 dgongs gcbi.
621 dgos pa.
622 sgru ji bzhi la gnod byed.
rGyal-tshab also elaborates his mentor's arguments by setting out five interrelated reasons based on the PV:

(1) Obscurations are impermanent;
(2) There are methods eliminating obscurations;
(3) Those knowing those methods exist;
(4) Beings in distress seeking those methods exist; and
(5) There are compassionate teachers of those methods. 623

To summarize, the thrust of the analyses of the Vijñānavādin gene theory of Tsong-kha-pa and his followers is best seen as an endeavor to cast off the spiritual fatalism of the fundamentalist Vijñānavādins. In addition to their oblique espousal of a liberal voice found in the Vijñānavāda school, Tsong-kha-pa and his follower's critique of this fatalism is clearly articulated in their explanations of the Mādhyamika position on the subject in question.

2. A Mādhyamika Critique of the Vijñānavādin Standpoint

Juxtaposed with the Vijñānavādin position, the AA asserts that the spiritual gene is the uncreated noumenon. According to Tsong-kha-pa, this assertion is validated by a number of scriptural references, such as the MRS and the AAS, in which space is commonly used as a simile to represent the uncreated noumenon often seen in the Mahāyāna literature. 624 The MRS explains the spiritual gene as permanent, it is the immanent reality of things; whereas the AAS calls it naturally luminous.

Vimuktisena, an important Indian Madhyamika thinker, critiques the Vijnanavadin theories concerning the spiritual gene, asserting that the nature of the twofold gene is the uncontaminated seed in the six sense media or the fundamental consciousness:

Those [Vijnanavadins] should explain the meaning of *prakrti* (nature) that is used in [the term] *prakrtisthagotra* (naturally existing gene). If it is considered as synonymous with cause, then, the acquired [gene] would also be that [cause]. What is the difference between these two meanings? If it is considered as synonymous with the noumenon, there is no fault. Furthermore, the [naturally existing] gene asserted by those [Vijnanavadins] is purely nominal, whereas this [noumenon] is the actual one. Thus, this way [of understanding the naturally existing gene] is not compatible with the Vijnanavadins.  

rGyal-tshab explicates this passage by saying that in the Madhyamaka school, the naturally existing gene is understood as the naturally pure noumenon of living beings' mind. This understanding is not compatible with the Vijnanavadin theory as found in the MSA, etc. According to the Madhyamaka school, the uncontaminated seed is not suitable to be called "naturally existing gene" for its real name because it belongs to the category of "created;" however, the seed is deemed as the spiritual gene in this school because it is the acquired gene, and purely nominal as being "naturally existing gene." In brief, the Madhyamikas assert that the uncreated noumenon alone is acceptable to be the naturally existing gene. It seems worth mentioning that rGyal-tshab's gloss of the naturally existing gene as the "naturally pure noumenon of mind" has remained as a *locus classicus* and validating criterion for defining Buddha-essence in the dGe-lugs-pa school since then.

Aside from a brief description of how the noumenon is the naturally existing gene according to the RGV, Tsong-kha-pa does not fully discuss the Madhyamika position on the Buddha-essence doctrine in any of his philosophical treatises. Instead, his thought is

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625 Vimuktisena, AAv, Tib. trans. Zhang Hua Da Zhang Jiu (sTan 'g)mr) V.49, 136.
626 rNam bshad snying bo'i rgyan, 228.
articulated in the exegetical works of rGyal-tshab and mKhas-grub, principally in the 
*rgyud blaِ tika*. The RGV(V) and the AA are deemed by Tsong-kha-pa and his followers 
as the texts of Maitreyanātha and Asaṅga, who advocated the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika 
view, thereby became the main foci in their philosophical debates with others on Buddha-
essence and related ideas. We have closely examined rGyal-tshab's interpretation of 
Buddha-essence according to his Mādhyamika standpoints in previous chapters. Now we 
shall pay attention to Tsong-kha-pa and rGyal-tshab's exegeses of the "spiritual gene" 
section of the AA, as well as some ongoing philosophical debates among the dGe-lugs-pa 
scholars supplement to our discussion on the *rgyud blaِ tika*.

3. The dGe-lugs-pa Exegesis of the "Spiritual Gene" Section of the AA

The "spiritual gene" section of the AA consists of three verses (1.37-39), in which 
the spiritual gene is identical to the ultimate element or the noumenon, and serves as the 
basis of the thirteen Mahāyāna practices. 1.37-39 are translated as follows:

The spiritual gene should be known as the basis of the engagements of these - six 
dharmas of realization, antidotes, abandonment, complete exhaustion of those 
[resistances], wisdom and compassion, difference from disciples, succession of 
altruistic deeds, and effortless intuition.
The spiritual gene has no divisions since the ultimate element is undifferentiated; its divisions are also told because of the distinctions of the dharma of which it is the basis.\textsuperscript{627}

Vimuktisena explains in the AA\textsuperscript{v} that the ultimate element is the reality of all things, devoid of any intrinsic reality.\textsuperscript{628} The line of exposition in the AA\textsuperscript{v} goes as follows:

\begin{equation*}
\text{intrinsic realitylessness} = \text{reality} = \text{ultimate element} = \text{spiritual gene}
\end{equation*}

Thus, the spiritual gene as explicitly mentioned in the AA is unquestionably the naturally existing gene. While Tsong-kha-pa glosses this spiritual gene as the noumenon of the inner six sense media,\textsuperscript{629} rGyal-tshab explains it as the truthlessness\textsuperscript{630} of the inner six sense mediums or the mental continuum. It seems to be clear that the noumenon in this regard as explained in the Madhyamaka school bears a different notion from what is understood in the Vijñānavāda school as examined above.

Here arises an objection. “If such a noumenon were the spiritual gene, it would follow that it already exists within all living beings.” As mentioned above, the term “spiritual gene” has the connotation of “delivering excellences;” this remains true for Vimuktisena as he explains in the AA\textsuperscript{v} that “the spiritual gene is something from which this and that excellence will be cultivated or will occur.”\textsuperscript{631} However, the noumenon itself does not entail that all living beings could automatically cultivate virtues and good qualities; this is simply not the case. As a result, Vimuktisena responded with the

\textsuperscript{627} sutt:Adhidharma\textsuperscript{ya} prati\textsuperscript{akṣ}agrha\textsuperscript{anaya}\textsuperscript{b} | tayoh paryay\textsuperscript{a}yoga\textsuperscript{ya} prajñ\textsuperscript{ā}dh\textsuperscript{ā}h kṛpe\textsuperscript{ā} sāh || sutt:Adhidh\textsuperscript{ā}ra\textsuperscript{m}vaya\textsuperscript{a} paurā\textsuperscript{b}hā\textsuperscript{d}kram\textsuperscript{a}ya\textsuperscript{m} ca | jñ\textsuperscript{ā}nāy\textsuperscript{a}vant\textsuperscript{v}ṛtte\textsuperscript{ī} ca prajñ\textsuperscript{ā}dh\textsuperscript{ā}h gor\textsuperscript{a}muc\textsuperscript{a}y\textsuperscript{a}e || dharm\textsuperscript{a}d\textsuperscript{ā}t\textsuperscript{m}r\textsuperscript{a}m\textsuperscript{ā}bh\textsuperscript{a}dh\textsuperscript{ā}d\textsuperscript{ā}h gor\textsuperscript{a}mbh\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{h}ed\textsuperscript{a} na yu\textsuperscript{y}ate \| dh\textsuperscript{a}bhy\textsuperscript{ā}d\textsuperscript{ā}r\textsuperscript{a}d\textsuperscript{ā}h\textsuperscript{ā}d\textsuperscript{ā}h gor\textsuperscript{a}mbh\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{h}ed\textsuperscript{a} na p\textsuperscript{a}r\textsuperscript{g}\textsuperscript{a}y\textsuperscript{a}nte ||

\textsuperscript{628} Vimuktisena, AA\textsuperscript{v}, Tib. trans. Zhang Hua Da Zhang Jin (sTan 'gyur) V.49, 136.

\textsuperscript{629} Nang gi skyi mched gi chos nyid kyi rigs.

\textsuperscript{630} bden pas stong pa.

\textsuperscript{631} Vimuktisena, AA\textsuperscript{v}, Tib. trans. Zhang Hua Da Zhang Jin (sTan 'gyur) V.49, 137.
following statement that “the noumenon is said to be the spiritual gene inasmuch as it serves as the cause of holy excellences when perceived.”\textsuperscript{632} In his commentary on the MAv, Tsong-kha-pa explains the noumenon here as the spiritual gene in connection with the paths of the Mahāyāna soteriology.\textsuperscript{633} He explains that the noumenon specifically refers to the spiritual gene of one of the three vehicles; it serves as the specific cause of holy excellences when perceived and meditated on by the path of each individual vehicle. As discussed earlier in the RGV(V), the way to understand the reality of the mind, or the spiritual gene, is as the cause that has an emphasis on the intrinsic foundation for liberation in accord with the expositions of the reality mingled with defilements or with the Element. Tsong-kha-pa continues to explain the “basis” in I.38 as the object,\textsuperscript{634} and the “dharmas” I.39 as the perceiving paths\textsuperscript{635} which include the Śrāvakayāna and Pratyekabuddhayāna. In conclusion, Tsong-kha-pa follows Vimuktisena’s assertion that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas must also have an understanding of the noumenon, intrinsic reality, because it is the object of their paths and they have to first negate in order to perceive the noumenon as the object. Vimuktisena and Haribadhara both agree that all noble beings of the three vehicles have the realization of the uncreated, ultimate intrinsic realitylessness.\textsuperscript{636} It seems that Tsong-kha-pa regards Vimuktisena and Haribadhara as advocates of the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika view at this point. Correspondingly, mKhas-grub reports that Tsong-kha-pa asserted that the ultimate intention behind the AA is also the Mādhyamika-Prāsaṅgika view. According to this view, there is no distinction between vehicles in terms of the mode of realization [of the

\textsuperscript{632} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{633} n\textsuperscript{N}am bshad dgongs pa rab gsal. Collected Works of Tsong-kha-pa, Zh. Vol.20, 46a.
\textsuperscript{634} dmigs pa.
\textsuperscript{635} dmigs byed gyi lam.
\textsuperscript{636} Vimuktisena states that “all holy beings are differentiated by the uncreated.” AA\textsuperscript{V}, 138.
There is another objection from the Vijñānavāda school as presented in AA I.39a-b: "The spiritual gene, then, has no divisions [of Śrāvakāyāna, Pratyekabuddhāyāna, and Mahāyāna] since the noumenon is undifferentiated." Gung-thang bLo-gros-rgya-mtsho rephrases this objection according to the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika view. Since the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika position asserts that there is no difference between the vehicles in terms of the mode of realization of reality, then the objection arising against the AA's standpoint concerning the spiritual gene would be like this: it is incorrect to accept the divisions of the spiritual gene just because there would be no difference between the vehicles by the elimination of the addictive obscurations through meditation on the same realitylessness of the mind; also there would be no difference because the same naturally existing gene universally exists within all practitioners of the three vehicles. According to Gung-thang, the Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamaka school would respond by asserting that this proposition is faultless for two reasons: (1) in terms of the spiritual gene as the cause, there are three different modes of meditation because of the levels of intelligence despite the fact that the object of realitylessness of the mind is the same; and (2) in terms of the spiritual gene as the basis, distinctions can be made with regard to person despite the fact that there is no difference in the naturally existing gene, just as three clay containers can be labeled differently as "honey jar," "sugar jar," and "milk jar" on the basis of three different contents despite that fact that there is no difference in the material of the containers.

Similar to the RGV(V)'s notion of reality mingled with defilements, the spiritual gene theory as discussed in the AA is a soteriological concept rather than a pure...
philosophical argument; it explains the close relationship between Buddhist philosophical presupposition and meditative praxis. In the AA, this spiritual gene is described as being connected to the Mahāyāna practices belonging to the Path of Application and beyond. According to bLo-gling-mKhan-zur Padma-rgyal-mthsan, terms such as the “naturally existing gene of Mahāyāna practices as presented in the text,” the “naturally existing gene of Mahāyāna practices,” and the “naturally existing gene of Mahāyāna” have nuanced meanings. The first term refers to the spiritual gene belonging to the Path of Application and beyond. The second refers to the spiritual gene of the Path of Accumulation. The third refers to the spiritual gene at the moment when one just becomes a Mahāyāna practitioner. Moreover, according to bLo-gling-mKhan-zur, the Buddha-gene or Buddha-essence is not identical to the spiritual gene of the Mahāyāna because śrāvakas also have the Buddha-gene or Buddha-essence but they do not participate in Mahāyāna practices. In order to illustrate that the spiritual gene theory of the AA is in line with Buddha-essence doctrine in general, mKhas-mchog Byams-pa-bkra-shis divides the naturally existing gene into two main categories:

(1) The naturally existing gene not being the basis of practices, which is the reality of the continuum of one who has not yet enter into the path;

(2) The naturally existing gene being the basis of practices of the three vehicles.

Within the second category, there are four divisions:

(a) reality of the continuum of a holy śrāvaka;

(b) reality of the continuum of a holy pratyekabuddha;
(c) reality of the continuum of a Mahāyāna practitioner on the Path of Accumulation; and

(d) reality of the continuum of a Mahāyāna practitioner on the Path of Application or beyond, which are included in the thirteen practices as mentioned in 1.37-38: six dharmas of realization, antidotes, abandonment, complete exhaustion of those, wisdom and compassion, difference from disciples, succession of altruistic deeds, and effortless intuition.

In short, according to the *rNam bshad*, the definitions of the twofold gene are given as follows:

First, the naturally existing gene is the noumenon, which is the truthlessness of a living being’s mind and has the potential for transformation into the Truth Body... It is established by valid reason that a living being’s mind has the potential for separation from the defilements and for cultivation of the holy realizations. This potential is posited and then nourished by the conditions of listening (to Buddhist teachings), hence called acquired gene; its ultimate transmutation is the Form Bodies.638

All famous dGe-lugs-pa exegetes, including rJe-bsod-nams-grags-pa, 'Jam-dbyang-bzhad-pa, and mKhas-grub bsTan-pa-dar-rgyas, have their subtle and finely nuanced expositions of the twofold gene. A detailed analysis has to wait for another occasion. Here I would like to point out two peculiar propositions set out by mKhas-mchog Byams-pa-bkra-shis and mKhas-grub bsTan-pa-dar-rgyas. The

638 *rNam bshad* snying bo'i rgyan, 228.
former scholar asserts that the mental consciousness itself is the developmental gene\textsuperscript{639} and the latter claims that, in addition to the twofold spiritual gene scheme, there is a third category called the "spiritual gene other than the twofold,"\textsuperscript{640} which is the relative aspect of the Truth of Cession in the continuum of a holy bodhisattva who has attained the Path of Insight and has the potential for transformation into the Truth Body that is pure without coincidental defilements.\textsuperscript{641}

4. Natural Luminosity of the Mind under Debate

In his commentary on the \textit{Atyayajñāna-sūtra}, \textit{rGyal-ba sKal-bzang-rgya-mtsho} (1708-1757), the seventh Dalai Lama, recapitulates the import of the phrase "natural luminosity of the mind" as found in a variety of Mahāyāna scriptures. According to him, its import is also twofold. This twofold import is explained in connection with the two truths of the mind: the ultimate reality or aspect of the mind is realitylessness of the mind; the relative reality or aspect of the mind is the factor of mere clarity and mere awareness.\textsuperscript{642} Both aspects are characterized as "luminosity.\textsuperscript{643}

\textit{sKal-bzang-rgya-mtsho} cites a commentary attributed to Śāntideva and uses a simile therein to explain the ultimate aspect of the mind as luminous. Just as the sunshine can not be perceived when the sky is overcast, however the nature of the sun rays remains the same unaffected by any obscurations. Similarly, the mind's own objective condition is not manifest to the mind when obscured by the addictions, but the nature of this objective condition would never deviate from its own luminosity, i.e. realitylessness of all things.

\textsuperscript{639} mKhas-mchog Byams-pa-bkra-shis, \textit{Phar payin bsha' dpyod}, (KarnataKa State: Gajang Computer Input Center, 2000), 317.
\textsuperscript{640} de las gshan pa' rigs.
\textsuperscript{641} mKhas-grub bsTan-pa-dar-rgyas, \textit{bsTan bcos mngon par rtogs pa' s rgyan 'grel pa dang bcas pa' mtha' dpyod legs par bshad pa padma dkar po' phreng ba}, ACIP, Catalog ID: S0010 S0010N ACT, 35b.
\textsuperscript{642} gsal tsam rig tsam.
\textsuperscript{643} 'Da' dka' ye shes mdo 'grel. \textit{Collected Works of the 7th Dalai Lama} (sKu'bum edition), Vol.Ka, 16b.
sKal-bzang-rgya-mtsho asserts that this way of exposition finds its justification in the Mahāyāna literature advocating the philosophy of emptiness. As we have briefly examined its usage in the history of Buddhist literature in Chapter 5, it seems to be clear that terms such as prakṛtiprabhāśvara, dharmā, and tathātā are synonymous with śūnyatā denoting the import of realitylessness and are often used alternatively in the Mahāyāna scriptures. It is, in addition, also evident that the Madhyamaka school and the Yogācārya school in India both accepted this notion as an equivalent to the ultimate reality in spite of the discrepancy in their understandings of it.

In order to explain the meaning of luminosity with respect to the relative aspect of the mind, sKal-bzang-rgya-mtsho cites two verses from the Dharmadhātu-stava, attributed to Nāgārjuna, stating that the luminous mind becomes defiled because of the addictions; the defilements are burned out by the fire of wisdom but the luminosity of the mind remains unaltered, just as the stain attached on the cloth made of asbestos is burned away by fire but the cloth itself remains unchanged. He then explains that, while the defilements of addictions such as attachment, etc., are cleansed by the power of meditation with the intuition that realizes emptiness, the luminous mind remains unaffected. sKal-bzang-rgya-mtsho also cites Tsong-kha-pa's commentary on the MAv and Dharmakirti's PV for his argument that the nature of the mind is mere clarity and mere awareness irremovable by any means of antidotes, and therefore no deviation from its own luminosity, whereas all defilements can be separated from the mind by the power of antidotes, thereby being accidental to the nature of the mind.\footnote{Ibid., 16b-17a.}

This explanation, however, is not accepted in the dGe-lugs-pa school without question. As reported by bLo-gling-mKhan-zur Padma-rgyal-mthsan, the dGe-lugs-pa
scholars hold two different views on the soteriological importance of this factor of the mind being mere clarity and mere awareness. One group, apparently including sKal-bzang-rgya-mtsho, asserts that the natural luminosity of the mind with respect to the relative reality refers to a mental continuation, distinct from the addictions in nature.

Hence, when recognized, it has great soteriological significance. But the other group strongly argues that it can be problematic to accept this factor as a mental entity distinct from the addictions especially when the addictions are active. If this factor can be differentiated at that time from the addictions, such as the truth-habit, then they would ask the following questions:

1) is this factor a consciousness observing the same objective object as the truth-habit does? and

2) or is it a consciousness substantially different than the truth-habit?

If the first question were true, it would follow that the object of the truth-habit's habit-pattern the intrinsic reality of form, sound, etc., is also the object of the factor of mere clarity and the awareness. Rather than being the subtle realitylessness, etc., the same objective object is being observed. Secondly, when the truth-habit becomes active, the objective object of the negation of the truth-habit can not be present. These reasons are, in turn, based on the fact that the factor of mere clarity and mere awareness and the truth-habit are substantially identical in terms of location, time, and nature because the factor is part of the truth-habit as suggested by the question. Furthermore, if these two had the same nature, it would lead to a conclusion that this factor cannot be said to be luminous or have the potential for separation from the defilements since its nature is defiled by the addictions. It would also lead to the conclusion that the addictions,

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645 Padma-rgyal-mthsan, bi Lo gsal dga' bskyed snyin gi nor bu, 357-362.
646 dmigs yul.
such as the truth-habit, attachment, etc., do not have dormant states. When the factor is conditioned by the inappropriate mentation,\textsuperscript{647} it becomes the nature of one of the addictions, then becoming the nature of another consciousness having a different objective object after the addiction ceases. During this process, while the objective object of the factor changes, the nature of consciousness remains continuously, hence there is no chance of positing the instincts for the addictions. Finally, if the factor of the realization of impermanent, emptiness, etc., and the factor of the truth-habit were the same continuum but only the objective object of the factor changes, it would follow that the realizations of impermanence, emptiness etc. become the nature of the truth-habit when the latter becomes to be active immediately after the realization.

If there is a consciousness substantially different from the truth-habit at that time, it would follow that when an eye consciousness is erroneously perceiving the snowy mountain as bluish, at that moment another sense consciousness having a different objective object can be simultaneously produced by the contact of sense organ, object and consciousness. This is apparently in direct contradiction to the principle of Buddhist epistemology.

In light of the discussions above, this group of scholars asserts that the addictions such as the truth-habit and the mental factors accompanying them are the defilements in nature. Thus, according to this group, the factor of mere clarity and mere awareness itself have no soteriological significance. In this group's view, the natural luminosity of the mind means that, although the addictions can temporally obscure the mind, these will be gradually eliminated from the mind through the power of antidotes, whereas the "luminous mind" or the nature of the mind remains intact. Thus they assert that the

\textsuperscript{647} Tshul min yid byed.
import of the *Dharmadhātu-stava* is analogous with the PV II.205-211, which explains “luminosity” as the correct apprehension of objects and the coincidental defilements as the misapprehension of objects. It seems to be clear that this group is inclined to be in favor of the viewpoint of the liberalist Vijñānavādins on the natural luminosity of the mind in terms of the relative reality. At this point, we might also like to recall the aforementioned assertion made by Tsong-kha-pa in his analysis of the spiritual gene theory according to the Vijñānavāda. According to Tsong-kha-pa, the spiritual gene is neither the six sense mediums nor something else other than these.

However, the problem remains unsolved for the scholars of this group when the theory of the subtle mind formulated by esoteric Buddhism is taken into account. According to this theory, a subtle mental consciousness called “primordial luminous mind,” along with its mounted subtle energy, do exist simultaneously with the coarse psycho-physical continuum of a living being. Pan-chen bLo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan mentions a possible fallacy associated with this theory considering there are two continua simultaneously existing in one person. According to him, when the coarse psycho-physical continuum is operating, the subtle continuum does not function but remaining in a state akin to the dormant state. However, as the Mongolian scholar Ngag-dbang-dpal-lidan points out, it would be still difficult to posit a consciousness without an objective object no matter how subtle it is. As to the nature of the “primordial luminous mind,” most of the dGe-lugs-pa scholars assert that it remains contaminated inasmuch as it has the dualistic perceptions until the fourth stage of the Perfection Stage according to the Guhyasamāja Tantra system. As mentioned above,

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648 According to the SC, the Mahāsamghika tradition asserts that the imprint is neither consciousness nor mental factors, thereby not having objective objects. The Sarvāstivāda school asserts that the imprint is kind of mental factor, thus having objective objects. 異部宗輪理論, T.49.2031.
mKhas-mchod Byams-pa-bkra-shis asserts that the mental consciousness itself is the developmental gene. This subtle mind is also accepted by some scholars in this group as the developmental gene in the sense that "through our increasing the qualities of this mind, eventually it will become the Wisdom Truth Body of a Buddha."650

Lastly, let us take a brief look at the dGe-lugs-pa's treatment of some apparently radical statements found in the esoteric literature proclaiming that the Buddha's transcendent intuition is innately present in all living beings. Similar passages indeed can also be found in the early Mahāyāna scriptures concerning Buddha-essence doctrine, such as the AAS, the MMPS, and the TGS. But these statements are more readily justified and accepted within the esoteric context for the simple reason that the esoteric teaching is deemed as the highest and ultimate teaching of the Buddha. Through their critical lens, however, the dGe-lugs-pa thinkers read these passages quite differently than scholars from other traditions. In mKhas-grub dGe-legs-dpel-bzang's exegetical exposition of the lIT, e.g., we can clearly see that the dGe-lugs-pa understanding of the esoteric teaching on this subject is entirely consistent with its exegesis of Buddha-essence doctrine in general. On the surface, the lIT seems to affirm that the mind of a living being is blissful enlightenment:

There exists not one being who is unenlightened from the awakening to his own nature. By their very intrinsic nature the beings in hell, ghosts, animals, gods, titans, men and even worms and son on in the dung, are eternally blissful, for they do not merely experience the pleasure of the gods and the titans.651

In mKhas-grub's glosses, all living beings are said to be eternally blissful because there is no difference between the reality of a living being's mind and the reality directly realized by the great bliss of a tantric adept. In other words, the object to be realized is loosely termed as the subject that realizes it. But this is by no means a new hermeneutical strategy conceived by mKhas-grub. We can find numerous exegetical practices in Indian commentaries on the esoteric discourses as well. In particular, we see that Kṛṣṇācārya, an important exegete of the fIT, uses the same strategy to gloss the first line of cited verses by explicating that "since there is a saying that the Thusness of individuals is the Thusness of the All-knowing One, all beings are enlightened ones." After all, this kind of linguistic convention is not peculiar to esoteric literature. A similar example can be found in the MSA where Maitreya asserts that "there is no other mind apart from the mind of reality which is naturally luminous," and also in Vasubandhu's gloss on the mind as being the reality of the mind.

To summarize, according to the dGe-lug-pa thinkers, the import of the scriptural statements which proclaim that all living beings are buddhas is in large part identical to the second factor of the tripartite Buddha-essence scheme of the RGV as discussed in Chapter 7. Thus, the second factor, which concerns the undifferentiated reality as the nature of both the Tathāgata and a living being, is the essence of the Mahāyāna philosophy of non-duality concerning the pure nature of realitylessness intrinsic to both enlightened and unenlightened ones. If realitylessness is taken to be the nature of the Buddha, then all living beings can be said to be perfect buddhas because of

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653 Ibid., 230.  
654 Jamspal, The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature, 172.
realitylessness of their minds when their continua are still defiled. This line of exposition developed in the dGe-lugs-pa school is sharply different from Dol-po-pa’s Other-emptiness philosophy that uses those scriptural statements to validate its explanation of the first factor of the RGV’s tripartite Buddha-essence scheme as advocating that the Buddha’s Truth Body replete with wisdom and compassion is intrinsic to living beings, instead of being a *sine qua non* for achieving enlightenment.
Conclusion

The long-standing socio-political confrontation of the dGe-lugs-pa school with other schools in Tibet has been entwined with heated philosophical arguments since its inception in the fifteenth century. These arguments distill into the various schools' disparate understandings of the ultimate truth postulated in Mahāyāna Buddhism. For Tsong-kha-pa and his followers, accepting the ultimate reality as something more than a mere negation of intrinsic reality equates to an alternative way of adopting non-Buddhist's ontological positions. For non dGe-lugs-pa schools, the ultimate truth is an affirmative or implicative negation that eliminates any conceptual constructs. From the detailed discussion in this study, we can clearly see that this difference remains true in competing interpretations of the Buddha-essence doctrine between dGe-lugs-pa and non-dGe-lugs-pa traditions.

Through their exegesis of the RGV and its commentary, the dGe-lugs-pa scholars, represented by rGyal-tshab, held the distinct view that the Buddha-essence doctrine is neither parallel with nor marginal to the emptiness discourse of general Mahāyāna philosophy. Instead, the Buddha-essence doctrine was central to Indian Mahāyāna thought as being a unique cataphatic expression of ultimate truth, a mere negation, as asserted in both Madhyamaka and Vījñānavāda. According to rGyal-tshab, the mere fact of the mind being devoid of intrinsic reality makes spiritual awakening possible. In addition to this prerequisite, conditions such as Buddha’s activities are also indispensable for achieving enlightenment. Such an interpretation of the meaning of Buddha-essence
accords closely with the uncompromising gradualism of Tsong-kha-pa, which emphasizes critical thinking of Madhyamaka philosophy in theory and analytical meditation in praxis. Correspondingly, for dGe-lugs-pas, an uncreated intrinsic buddha within a unenlightened being awaiting to be actualized is beyond wild imagination. Also, the way of actualizing it “through complete relaxation of conceptual contrivance,” as S. Hookham has put it, is to a great extent identical to the non-mentation meditation of Iiva-shang Mo-he-yen, and that non-mentation meditation was vehemently condemned by Tsong-kha-pa and his followers as harmful spiritual quietism.

Except for the Jo-nang-pas, who openly assert that ultimate truth is absolutely absolute, other non dGe-lugs-pa schools are careful to avoid the danger of reifying ultimate truth with a strong preference for the Mādhyamika or Vijnānavādin positions. However, in the dGe-lugs-pas' view, by including gnosis as part of ultimate truth, these schools are prone in practice to dismiss discriminative knowledge as erroneous perception, thereby unconsciously falling into the nihilistic trap of denying the relative world completely. On the other hand, since the gnosis is primordially present within everyone’s continuum, all spiritual and philosophical praxes are subsumed under so called “gnoseological nativism” that leads to the danger of reifying the ultimate reality. Historically, rNying-ma-pa and bKa’-brgyud-pa schools were less critical of Iiva-shang Mo-he-yen’s teaching. This strongly suggests that these schools may find Mo-ho-yen's type of Chan to be congenial to the expression of their own doctrinal positions. The view of ultimate truth as an affirmative or implicitive negation also became the doctrinal ground for the Non-sectarian Movement (ris med) in the nineteenth-century's Tibetan Buddhist world with a reinforced emphasis on the Buddha-essence doctrine. Similar to 'Gos-lo's position, advocates of this movement such as 'Ju Mi-pham made every endeavor
to justify the view that the Buddha-essence doctrine of the last Dharma-wheel is superior
to Madhyamaka thought at the philosophical level in order to compete with the perceived
religio-political hegemony of the dGe-lugs-pa school. The recent trend of syncretism
in the Tibetan exile society in India is regarded by conservative dGe-lugs-pas as a threat
to the tradition. Hence it is crucial to examine in detail the dGe-lugs-pas' position on the
Buddha-essence doctrine in particular, in order to have a better understanding of the
long-term religio-political conflicts in the Tibetan Buddhist world until the present.

While seeking not to be “sectarian” and “to redress a balance” in contemporary
academic study of Tibetan Buddhism, some scholars criticized “rang stong pas” such as
Bu-ston and rGyal-tshab for their misrepresenting and trivializing the Buddha-essence
d doctrine. It is true that the doctrinal distinction between Other-emptiness and anti-Other-
emptiness “can only be properly understood and evaluated in the light of a far deeper
knowledge than we have at present concerning the full range of the older commentarial
traditions.” But this does not mean that we can neglect the newer exegetical traditions
without having a correct understanding of them. For instance, some scholars are entirely
misleading in their designation of rGyal-tshab as being a “rang stong pa,” which,
according to dGe-lugs-pas, is an erroneous view of nihilism that has to be refuted.

Owing to its religious significance and doctrinal sophistication, the Buddha-essence
literature has generated a considerable body of scholarship across the intellectual world
in the East and the West. Although these works have pursued manifold fruitful and
illuminating lines of individual inquiry, few have carried out a broader analysis of
various theories concerning this doctrine developed in different historical periods, and
few have initiated a comparative analysis of how this doctrine was interpreted in various

655 Pettit, Mipham’s Beacon of Certainty, 101-124.
656 Hookham, The Buddha Within, 17.
cultural contexts. Again, it is my hope that this study has made a positive contribution to our understanding of a much under-studied aspect of the dGe-lugs-pa philosophical history. By examining this intriguing doctrine of great philosophical/soteriological significance in a comparative context with other Tibetan and Chinese expositions, we have had a better sense of the role that the Buddha-essence thought played in Buddhist history outside of India.
Abbreviations


AAN  Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanīrdeśasūtra. 不增不減經, T.16.668.

AAv  Pañcavimśatisahasrikāprajñāpāramitopadesāstrāḥbisamayālaṃkāra-vṛtti (Ārya Vimuktisena). 'Phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stong phrag nyan shi lnga pa’i man ngag gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa’i rgyan gyi 'grel pa, Toh.3787.

ACIP  Asian Classics Input Project.

AMN  Aksiyamatīnīrdeśasūtra. 'Phags pa blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo, Toh.175; P.842; 阿差末菩薩經, T.13.403; 大方等大集經, T.13.397.


AvS  Avatamsaka-sūtra. Sang rgyas phal po che shes bya ba shin tu rgyas pa chen po’i mdo, Toh.44; 大方廣佛華嚴經 T.9.278; T.10.279.


D  Derge Kanjur and Tanjur.

DDS  Dharmadhūtastava (Nāgārjuna). Chos kyi dbying su bstdod pa, Toh.1118; 賢法界頌, T.32.1675.

DhDhV  Dharmadharmatatiśvibhāga (Maitreya). For the edition of Tibetan text and Sanskrit fragments, see Mathes, 1996.

DIR  Dhāraṇīvarājapariprcchāsūtra (= Tathāgatamahākarunānirdeśa). 'Phags pa de bshin gshes pa’i snying rje chen po nges par bstan pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo, Toh.147; P.814; 大衰經, T.13.398; 大方等大集經, T.Vol. 13, no. 397.

HV

JñāĀ

K
sKu 'bum edition of rGyal-tshab's rGyud bla fīkā.

LAS

MA
Madhyamakālakāra (Śāntarakṣita). dBu ma rgyan gyi tshig le'ur byas pa, Toh.3884.

MAv

MAV

MMPS
Mahāyānamahāparinirvānasūtra. 'Phags pa yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa chen po theg pa chen po'i mdo, Toh.120; 大般涅槃經, T.12. 374-376.

MRS
Mahāratanakūṭasūtra. dKon brtsegs, Toh.45-93, P760; 大寶積經, T.11.310.

MS

MSA

P
Peking Kanjur and Tanjur.

PV

QXL
大乘起信論, T.32.1666-1667.

RCS
Ratnacīḍāsūtra. 大方等大集經, T.13.397.

RGV
Ratnagotravibhāga (Mañjuśrī). Contained in the RGVV.

RGVV

SMS

SC
Samayabhṛdoparacanacakra (Vasumitra). 異部宗輪論, T.49.2031.
SMP  Sāgaramati-pariprecchāsūtra. 'Phags pa blo gros rgya mthos shus pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, Toh.152; P.819; 大方等大集經, T.13. 397; 海意菩薩問淨印法門經, T.13. 400.

SNS  Śamādhīnimocanasūtra. 'Phags pa dgongs pa nges par 'grel pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, D.49, 1b-55b; P.774; 深密經, T.16. 676.

SPh  Abhisamatālākāranāmaprajñāpāramitopadesā-vṛttiḥ (Sphuṭārtha). Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan zhes bya ba'i grel pa, Toh.3793.


TGS  Tathāgatagarbhasūtra, ed. see Zimmermann 2002.


Zh  Lhasa Zhol edition of rGyal-tshab's rGyud bla šīkā.
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Part II

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B. Special Edition

(1a-29b)

(1a) སྭ་ཕྲེ་རེ་སྤུ་གུ་ཕྲི་གྲུབ་657 ཤོ་ཕྲེ་ལ།

(1b) བཟགས་ཀྱི་དཔེ་དབྱེ་བོ་བཅས་པའི་ཁོ་ན། རི་ལྷུན་བོ་བོད་བོད་ཀྱིས། བཟགས་ཀྱི་གཏོད་སློབ་ནས་གཤེགས་པོ་[། 657

657 Originally in the form of a stack of two letter "ka" (K, Zh).
308

(5a) 1.1. 1.

(5b) 1.1. 1.2.
2. 

3. 

3.1. 

3.1.1. 

3.1.1.1. 

3.1.1.1.1. 

3.1.1.1.1.2. 

3.1.1.1.2.
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3.1.1.1.1.3.
དབུ་བོས་ོབ་ོད་ོགས་ོད་ོན་(7)མི་ོང་ོར་ོགས་ལ་ོབ་ོས་དང་ོམ་གི་ོས་ོད་དང་ོམ་གི་ོས་ོད་དང་ོམ་གི་ོས་ོད་དང་ོམ་གི་ོས་ོད་

དེ་ཨིམ་ོས་ཆོས་ོད་ོམ་སོགས་ཆོས་དེར་བྱེད་པ་ནི། དེ་ཁྲིད་ཅིང་ཅིང་བོད་ལ་ོས་ོས་ོད་ོམ་སོགས་ཆོས་དེར་བྱེད་པ་ནི།

3.1.1.1.1.3.
དབུ་བོས་ོབ་ོད་ོགས་ོད་ོན་(7)མི་ོང་ོར་ོགས་ལ་ོབ་ོས་དང་ོམ་གི་ོས་ོད་དང་ོམ་གི་ོས་ོད་དང་ོམ་གི་ོས་ོད་

དེ་ཨིམ་ོས་ཆོས་ོད་ོམ་སོགས་ཆོས་དེར་བྱེད་པ་ནི། དེ་ཁྲིད་ཅིང་ཅིང་བོད་ལ་ོས་ོས་ོད་ོམ་སོགས་ཆོས་དེར་བྱེད་པ་ནི།
3.1.1.1.2

3.1.1.1.2.1.

3.1.1.1.2.1.1.

3.1.1.1.2.1.2.

3.1.1.1.2.2.
3.1.1.1.2.2.1.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.1.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.1.1.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.1.1.1.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.1.1.2.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.1.1.3.
3.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.2.3.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.1.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.1.
3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.2.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.2.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.2.
3.1.1.1.2.2.1.

3.1.1.2.

3.1.1.2.1.

3.1.1.2.2.1.
3.1.1.2.2.1.1.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.1.
3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.

3.1.1.2.2.2.

3.1.1.2.2.2.1.
བོད་དུང་ཁི་རིང་ཁུ་བཤད་པའི་འཕྲིན་པོས་ཞིག་སོང་བ་ཐོབ་པའི་ཐོབ་པ་ཐལ། དོ་ན་ཤིང་ཐོབ་པའི་བཤད་པའི་དོན་བཟོ་བཤད་པ་ཐལ།}

西藏藏文文献中的内容不自然。
3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.

(l'q1)
3.1.1.2.2.2.

3.1.1.2.2.2.1.

3.1.1.2.2.2.1.1.

3.1.1.2.2.2.1.2.

3.1.1.2.2.1.

3.1.1.2.2.1.1.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.
3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.
3.1.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.3.

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3.1.1.2.2.1.3.

3.1.1.2.2.2.2.

3.1.1.2.2.2.2.3.
3.1.1.2.3.

3.1.1.3.

3.1.1.4.
3.1.2.

3.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.1.

658 'grel (K, Zh).

659 'grel (K, Zh).
(64a-170b)

3.1.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.
зор་པ་(66a)གྱིས་ཡིན

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.
གཅིག་གྱིས་(66a)གྱིས་ཡིན

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.
зор་པ་(66b)གྱིས་ཡིན། ཆོས་ལུགས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག་གི་ང་ཚབ་ཐབས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག་གི་ང་ཚབ་ཐབས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.
зор་པ་(66b)གྱིས་ཡིན། ཆོས་ལུགས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག་གི་ང་ཚབ་ཐབས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.
зор་པ་(66b)གྱིས་ཡིན། ཆོས་ལུགས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག་གི་ང་ཚབ་ཐབས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.
зор་པ་(66b)གྱིས་ཡིན། ཆོས་ལུགས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག་གི་ང་ཚབ་ཐབས་བསྡུ་བྱེད་སྒྲུབ་ཕྲུག
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.

(67a)

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.

(68a)
བིགས་པའི་ཐབས་དང་ཡུག་ཡིན་པར་ཐོབ་པ་ལ།

བེད་པའི་ཐབས་སུ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་དང་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་གཅིག་པའི་དང་ཐབས་གཅིག་པའི་ཐབས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་པ་མི་ཞེས་པ་བ་ཏིང་དུ་ཞེས་པ་དགོངས་པ་ནོ། །

གེ་ཡིས་མཁན་ནི་དེ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་དང་ཐབས་དང་དེ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་དང་ཐབས་འཇོག་མེད་པ་ནི་ནང་དེ་ཐབས་དང་ཐབས་དང་ཐབས་མི་ཞེས་པ་བ་ཏིང་དུ་ཞེས་པ་དགོངས་པ་ནོ། །

འདྲེན་པ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་

འདྲེན་པ་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་དང་ཐབས་ཀྱི་མི་ཐོབ་དཔེ་ཅིག་

ལེ་ཞེས་པ་འདི་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་

དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་དེ་
དེ་གཅིག་བཞིན་དོན་དཔེར་བན། ༡༠༣བཟོ་གཅིག་བཞིན་དཔེར་བན། ༡༠༣བཟོ་
དེ་གཅིག་བཞིན་དཔེར་བན། ༡༠༣བཟོ་

do not translate
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.
3.1.2.1.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.1.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.1.1.1.1.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.
མེན་པོ་ལུགས་བོད་ཡིག་དབེན་མཐོ་ངོ་ཞིག་བསྡུའི་ཁྱབ་གཏམ་ལ་ཚོས་འབྲིལ་བྱེད་ཏེས་འཇུག་པའི་ཡིག་བོད་ཡིག་དབེན་མཐོ་ངོ་ཞིག་བསྡུ་འདི་དབང་པོ་ལུགས་བོད་ཡིག་དབེན་མཐོ་ངོ་ཞིག་བསྡུ་འདི་དབང་པོ

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.13.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.2.1.1.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.2.2.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.

351
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.

durmg la raljunga

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.

durmg la danang la drung bzing danang

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.

durmg la damchhe

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.

durmg la raljunga

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.1.

durmg la raljunga

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.

durmg la danang la raljunga
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.2.1.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.23.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.24.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.

660 ७७?
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.

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3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.2.
བོད་གཤེགས་ཡིག་སེམས་དཔེར་ན།

ལོ་བོད་དང་ཤེས་རབ་གྱི་བོད་ཡིག་དབང་ཕྲྲི་བཤད་པའམ་པོ་མ་བཟག་པ་བོད་ཡིག་སེམས་དཔེར་ན་ོ།

ཕོ་བོད་དང་པོ་སེམས་དཔེར་དང་། བོད་གཤེགས་ཡིག་དབང་ཕྲྲི་དཔོན་ལྡན་པའམ་མེ་ཏོག་འཛིན་ཐབས་འབྲེལ་བོད་དང་།

ལོ་བོད་དང་ཤེས་རབ་གྱི་བོད་ཡིག་དབང་ཕྲྲི་བཤད་པའམ་པོ་མ་བཟག་པ་བོད་ཡིག་སེམས་དཔེར་ན་ོ།

བོད་གཤེགས་ཡིག་སེམས་དཔེར་ན།

ལོ་བོད་དང་ཤེས་རབ་གྱི་བོད་ཡིག་དབང་ཕྲྲི་བཤད་པའམ་པོ་མ་བཟག་པ་བོད་ཡིག་སེམས་དཔེར་ན་ོ།
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.3.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.2.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2.2.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.2.2.
བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་གྲས། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་དང་། ཡིང་གི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་དབང་ཆུས་ལ་དམག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་བ་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལྷན་དབང་ dap
ཐོམ་དཔལ་ལམ་དང་པོར་བོ

(102b)བོ་བོ

(103a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(103b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(104a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(104b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(105a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(105b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(106a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(106b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(107a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(107b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(108a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(108b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(109a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(109b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(110a)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ

(110b)བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ་བོ
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.

662 Misnumbered (K, Zh).
3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.2.21.

3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.22.

3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.23.

3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.24.

3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.25.

3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.26.

3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.27.

3.1.2.21.2.2.2.2.28.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.
باحضور علی بن مرضع از فرماندهان علی، استوار گردان، کشته شد.

۳۰ بهمن ۱۳۹۴

در چنین وقایعی که برای سربازی‌هایی که در جبهه‌های مختلفی سربازی می‌کردند، واقعیت واقعیت مهمی تجربه می‌کردند. این نظریه‌ها، تجربه‌ها و تجربه‌ها که در جبهه‌ها واقعیت می‌پیدا می‌کردند، در پیامدهایی که در جبهه‌ها واقعیت می‌پیدا می‌کردند، در پیامدهایی که در جبهه‌ها واقعیت می‌پیدا می‌کردند، در پیامدهایی که در جبهه‌ها واقعیت می‌پیدا می‌کردند.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.1.

གཤུགས་པ་ཡིན། ཆོས་ཐོང་བསྐད།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.

ངད་པོ་གཤུང་བ་ཡིས་མངོན།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.1.

དུས་དུས། གཤེག་བྲིག་བཞི་མི་འཇོག་པའི་མཐུན་དུ་གསུམ་གསུམ་མི་ཤེས་བསྟོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཆུ་བ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.

ངོས་པ་ཡིན། གཤེག་བྲིག་བཞི་མི་འཇོག་པའི་མཐུན་དུ་གསུམ་གསུམ་མི་ཤེས་བསྟོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཆུ་བ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.

དུས་དུས། གཤེག་བྲིག་བཞི་མི་འཇོག་པའི་མཐུན་དུ་གསུམ་གསུམ་མི་ཤེས་བསྟོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཆུ་བ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.2.

ངོས་པ་ཡིན། གཤེག་བྲིག་བཞི་མི་འཇོག་པའི་མཐུན་དུ་གསུམ་གསུམ་མི་ཤེས་བསྟོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཆུ་བ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.2.1.

དུས་དུས། གཤེག་བྲིག་བཞི་མི་འཇོག་པའི་མཐུན་དུ་གསུམ་གསུམ་མི་ཤེས་བསྟོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཆུ་བ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.

ངོས་པ་ཡིན། གཤེག་བྲིག་བཞི་མི་འཇོག་པའི་མཐུན་དུ་གསུམ་གསུམ་�ི་ཤེས་བསྟོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཆུ་བ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན།

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.2.2.1.

དུས་དུས། གཤེག་བྲིག་བཞི་མི་འཇོག་པའི་མཐུན་དུ་གསུམ་གསུམ་མི་ཤེས་བསྟོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཆུ་བ་ལྟར་བྱས་ན།
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.1.
নামকরণ নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থলান্তরিত একটি পানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়া একটি নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠান

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.1.2.

নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থলান্তরিত একটি পানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়া একটি নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠান

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.

নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থলান্তরিত একটি পানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়া একটি নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠান

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.

নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থলান্তরিত একটি পানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়া একটি নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠান

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.1.

নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থলান্তরিত একটি পানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়া একটি নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠান

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.

নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থলান্তরিত একটি পানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়া একটি নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠান

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.

নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্থলান্তরিত একটি পানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়া একটি নিয়োগ প্রতিষ্ঠান

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.2.2.
Although both K and Zh read "tha dad," I suspect that "tha mi dad" might be the right form for it according to the meaning of this sentence.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.1.1.1.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.1.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.1.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.1.2.2.
৩১-২২-২২. এটি একটি আলোকিত পাতা যা একটি গ্রন্থের জন্য ব্যবহার করা হয়েছে।
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.2.2.1.
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3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.3.2.3.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.3.2.2.3.3.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.3.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.3.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.3.2.3.2.2.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.1.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.1.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.1.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.2.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.
ন্যায়নীতি ইংরেজি আকারে।
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.3.1.2.3.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.3.1.2.3.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.3.1.2.3.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.1.2.3.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.1.2.3.3.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.2.1.3.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.1.3.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.2.1.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.2.1.1.
3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.3.2.1.2.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.1.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.1.1.1.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.1.1.1.1.

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670) Ḳᠡᠮ་མ་ (Tob.4025).
671 Misnumbered (K, Zh).
2. Translations

1. The *Mahāyānottaratantravyākhyā*

   (Chapter One: 1.1-7.5 and 21.1-78.22)

[1.1-7.5]

*I bow down to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!*

The body of the whole treatise is comprised
Into the sevenfold vajra base:
The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṃgha,
The Element, the Enlightenment,
The Excellences, and, last of all, the Deeds of the Buddha.  // 1 //

The vajra-like base of the imports to be understood is so called in virtue of being the basis. The imports are should be known as vajra-like, because they are hard to penetrate by the means of the knowledge which comes from learning and the knowledge from critical reflection. Their inexpressible nature is to be known by the individual introspective wisdom. The letters which express those imports are called "bases" since they are the means of teaching the paths which conform to the attainment of that, and because of being the support of that. Hence, by that fact, they respectively mean, "hard to penetrate" and "support." One should realize that the imports and the letters are the vajra and the bases.

Now, what are the imports? What are the letters?

The sevenfold import to be understood is called "import." They are as follows: the import of the Buddha, the import of Dharma, the import of Saṃgha, the import of
Element, the import of Enlightenment, the import of Excellence, and the import of Deeds. They are called "imports." The letters, by which the sevenfold import to be understood is taught and elucidated, are called "letters."

The teaching of the vajra bases should be understood in detail according to the sūtras. [The first three] vajra bases should be understood by following the Drṣṭhādvāśayaparivarta:

Ānanda, the Tathāgata cannot be demonstrated. He cannot be seen by eyes. Ānanda, the Dharma cannot be expressed. That cannot be heard by ears. Ānanda, the Saṃgha is uncreated. It cannot be served by body or by mind.

The fourth vajra base should be understood by following the Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivatra:

Śāriputra, this import is an object for the Tathāgata. It belongs to the Tathāgata's sphere of experience. Śāriputra, for a while this import can neither be known be seen, nor be discerned correctly through all the śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas' own wisdom. Needless to say, this applies to the case of ordinary individuals [too]. That can be realized only by having faith in the Tathāgata. Śāriputra, the ultimate is realized through faith. Śāriputra, the so-called "ultimate" is a designation for the Element of living beings. Śāriputra, the so-called "Element of living beings" is a designation for the Buddha-essence. Śāriputra, the so-called "the Buddha-essence" is a designation for the "the Truth Body."
The fifth vajra base should be understood by following the Ārya-śrīmālā-sūtra:

Lord! The so-called "unexcelled perfect enlightenment" is a designation for the "Element of nirvāṇa." Lord! The so-called "Element of nirvāṇa" is a designation for the "the Truth Body of the Tathāgata."

The sixth vajra base should be understood by following the Antinatvāpūrṇatva-nirdeśa-parivatra:

Śāriputra, the Truth Body taught by the Tathāgata is like this: it is endowed with the Tathāgata's attributes which go beyond the particles of sands of the Gaṅgā river in number and with indivisible attributes. It is endowed with inseparable wisdom excellence.

The seventh vajra base should be understood by following the Tathāgata-guṇajñānā-cintyavīśatāvatārānirdeśa:

Mañjuśrī, neither does the Tathāgata effortlessly have constructive thought nor does he have thorough constructive thought. However, the Tathāgata spontaneously engages in such deeds without constructive thought and thorough constructive thought.

To summarize, this sevenfold vajra base should be known as the body of the whole Śāstra since it is a summary of introduction (mukha) to the teachings.
Of these [seven bases],
Connected in proper order by their defining characteristics,
One should know the [first] three bases,
From the introductory chapter of the Dhārani-rāja-sūtra,
And the [remaining] four from the chapters on the intelligent one's properties,
and on the Buddha's properties. //2//

Of these seven bases, connected in proper order by their own identities, the first three
bases should be known as being from the introductory chapter of the Dhāraṇīśvarāraja-
paripṛcchā-sūtra, and the remaining four from [the chapters on] the distinctions of the
bodhisattava's properties and those of the Tathāgata's properties.

The statement from that Sūtra is:

The Lord has obtained perfect buddhahood in the equality of all things, has set the
Dharma wheel turning well, and has gathered numberless disciples who are
absolutely tamed.

These three seminal sentences should be known in proper order as the presentation of
establishing the Three Jewels in stages. The remaining four bases should be known as the
statement of causes which are concordant with the occurrence of the Three Jewels.

Now, on the eighth stage of the bodhisattva, the sovereignty of the Dharma has been
obtained, so it is said:

[Having gone to the excellent essence of the enlightenment,] the Lord has
obtained perfect buddhahood in the equality of all things.
On the Ninth Stage of the bodhisattva, he is the exponent of the unexcelled dharma, knows well patterns of thinking of all living beings, has the supreme power transcendence and becomes an expert in the destruction of the chain of addictive instinct in all living beings. Therefore, it is said:

[Having obtained the perfect buddhahood,] he has well set the Dharma wheel turning.

On the Tenth Stage of the bodhisattva, after obtaining the anointment as the unexcelled Dharma regent of the Tathāgata, he will immediately obtain the Buddha's effortless and uninterrupted deeds. Thus, it is said:

[Having set the Dharma wheel turning well,] he has gathered numberless disciples who are absolutely tamed.

The meaning of "numberless disciples who are absolutely tamed" is further taught by that text, immediately after the sentence ["he has gathered numberless disciples who are absolutely tamed,"] as [the Buddha] states:

He was together with the assembly of a large number of bhikṣus ... with the assembly of numberless bodhisattvas.
Because [these disciples] were either absolutely tamed for the enlightenment of the šrāvaka or absolutely tamed for the enlightenment of the Buddha respectively, [the Buddha] states:

Being endowed with such excellences...

And then, immediately after [the section of] the teaching on the praises of excellences of šrāvakas and bodhisattvas, [the section of] the accomplishment of a magnificent hall adorned with precious jewels, which was conditioned by the inconceivable king samādhi of the Buddha, the gathering of the Tathāgata's retinue, the accomplishment of various celestial offerings and the pouring of rain from the cloud of praises should be known as the orderly presentation of the distinct excellences of the Buddha Jewel.

And next, [the section of] the splendid array of the dharma throne, the luminosity, the proclamation of the name of the set of dharma, and the proclamation of excellences should be known as the orderly presentation of the distinct excellences of the Dharma Jewel.

And next, [the section of] teaching on the power of each of the experiential object of the samādhi of bodhisattva, and various praises of their excellences, should be known as the orderly presentation of the distinct excellences of the Samgha Jewel.

[The following section] teaches the eulogy to the impeccable excellences of the Tathāgata on the basis of the accomplishment of the fearlessness and the supreme eloquence, through the anointment of the Buddha's light, for the unexcelled principle
child of the Dharma King. It records the speeches concerning the supreme teachings of
the Mahāyāna, and teaches the obtainment of the supreme sovereignty of the Dharma,
which is the fruition of realizing that. In light of this, [this section] is regarded as the
orderly presentation of the distinct unexcelled excellences of the Three Jewels and
indicates the ending of the introductory chapter.

After the introductory chapter of the sūtra, the teaching on the sixty purifying
excellences explicates the Element of the Tathāgata, because the objects to be purified are
endowed with the excellences, therefore deserving the purification.

In light of this, the Daśabhūmika-sūtra uses the simile of the purifying process of
gold. In this [Dhāranirūpa]-sūtra too, after the teaching on the Deeds of the Tathāgata,
the simile of unpurified vaidūrya is used:

Fortunate Child, take e.g. a skillful jeweler who knows well how to cleanse a gem.
Having picked out an unpurified precious jewel from the mine, he washes it with
strong sal-ammoniac, and then polishes it by rubbing with ox hair-knitted cloth. With
this much work, he does not cease to make efforts. After that, having washed the
jewel with pungent food juice, he polishes it by rubbing with a fine woolen blanket.
Even with this much work, he does not cease to make efforts. After that, having
washed it with great medical liquid [mercury], he polishes it with fine cotton cloth.
When completely purified from all impurities, it is called precious vaidūrya.

Fortunate Child, so the Tathāgata, knowing the scope of the impure living beings,
makes those infatuated with the world, tired at heart; [he] causes them to engage in
religious discipline by means of the teachings of renunciation, such as
"impermanence," "suffering," "selflessness," and "impurity." With these many deeds,
the Tathāgata does not cease to in his efforts. After that, he causes them to realize the
deep process of the Tathāgata's Dharma, by means of the teachings on emptiness,
signlessness, and wishlessness. Even with these many deeds, the Tathāgata does not
cease in his efforts. Next, he installs those living beings in the Buddha-realm by
means of the teaching of irreversibility and the teaching of the purification of the
three focal points [of acts]. And he causes those living beings, having various
dispositions, to engage with the object of the Tathāgata. They are dubbed "the
unexcelled worthies for offerings" when they have entered and have realized the
nature of the Tathāgata.
Intending this Element of the Tathāgata, which is the pure genetic potential, [the Buddha] declares [in a certain sūtra]:

Just as pure gold, though it is invisible in sand,
Comes to be discovered by the process of purification,
Likewise, in this world [of living beings],
The Tathāgata [becomes visible by purification].

Now, which are the sixty purifications with the excellence in purifying the element of the Buddha? They are, namely: four types of ornaments of the bodhisattvas; eight types of illuminations of the bodhisattvas; sixteen types of the bodhisattva's great compassion; and thirty-two types of the bodhisattva's activities.

Immediately after this statement, [the Dhāranirāja-sūtra] elucidates the Buddha's Enlightenment by demonstrating sixteen types of Great Compassion. Next to this statement, the Sūtra elucidates the Buddha's Excellences by demonstrating ten powers, four fearlessnesses and eighteen special qualities of the Buddha. And next, the Sūtra elucidates thirty-two the Buddha's Deeds by demonstrating unexcelled deeds of the Tathāgata.

Thus, these seven vajra bases should be understood in detail according to the Sūtra through the teachings on their defining characteristics.

And then, what is the conjunction of these bases?

From the Buddha comes the Dharma,
The noble congregation comes in turn from the Dharma,
Because of the noble congregation there occurs the Essence, which occurs Until its obtainment of the Element of gnosis;
Its obtainment of the gnosis is the Supreme Enlightenment,
Which is endowed with the Excellences,
Benefiting all living beings. // 3 //
Thus, the exposition of the conjunction of the treatise ends.

Immediately after the teachings on the Three Jewels, there is one verse with reference to the circumstances in which there are the productions of the Three Jewels, which is the birthplace of common and transcendent purities.

The reality mingled with defilements,
And [the reality] free of defilements,
The immaculate Excellences of the Buddha, and the Victor's Deeds;
[These four are] the objects
Of those who perceive the ultimate,
From which arise the three virtuous Jewels. // 23 //

What is elucidated by this verse?

The spiritual gene of these Three Jewels
Is the object of the omniscient ones,
And it is inconceivable in fourfold
For four reasons respectively. // 24 //

In this regard, the "reality mingled with defilements" is the Element, which is termed the "Buddha-essence" when unreleased from the sheath of addictions. The ["reality] free of defilements" is in the nature of the transformation of that reality in the stage of the Buddha, which is termed "the Truth Body of the Tathāgata." "Immaculate Excellences of the Buddha" refers to transcendent qualities of the Buddha, including ten powers and so on, existing within this the Truth Body of the Tathāgata in the nature of the transformation. "The Victor's Deeds" refers to unexcelled deeds of these qualities of the
Buddha, the ten powers, etc., which constantly give prophetic messages to bodhisattvas, without disappearance, without interruption, unceasingly. Furthermore, these four bases are inconceivable for four reasons respectively; thus, they are called the "object of the Omniscience."

Then, for which four reasons?

Because, [reality is] pure, and yet mingled with addictions,
[The Truth Body is] free of addictions and pure,
[The Excellences are] the inseparable qualities,
And [the Deeds are] spontaneous and of no constructive thoughts. // 25 //

In this regard, the reality with defilements is simultaneously mingled with purity and addiction; this is an inconceivable place, because this is the object even not for Pratyekabuddhas who believe in the way of profound Dharma. Thus, [the Buddha states in the Śrīmālā-sūtra:]

Goddess, these two things are quite difficult to understand. It is difficult to understand that the mind is intrinsically pure. It is also difficult to understand that this very mind has addictions. Goddess! Only you, or bodhisattvas endowed with great qualities, can hear these two things [with understanding]. Goddess! For the other śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, these two things are to be understood only through their faith in the Tathāgata.

In this regard, the reality free of defilements does not originally consist of addictions by defilements - that is yet purified afterwards; this is an inconceivable place. Thus, [the Buddha states in the Dhūranirāja-sūtra: ]
The mind is naturally luminous. This is known as it is. Hence, the Buddha
achieved the unexcelled perfect enlightenment by the gnosis endowed with one
moment. 672

In this regard, the immaculate Excellences of the Buddha are always found even in
the stage of ordinary individuals who are totally addicted, of no differentiation between
before and after with reference to the inseparable noumenon; this is an inconceivable
place. Thus, [the Buddha states in the Avatamsaka-sūtra:] 673

There is no one among the party of living beings in which all gnosis of the
Tathāgata does not penetrate. Nevertheless, the gnosis of the Tathāgata does not
manifest because of the construct-habit ("du shes kyi 'dzin pa). When free from this
concept-habit, the gnosis of the omniscience, self-arising gnosis, makes its
appearance unobstructedly.

Child of the Buddha, suppose there would be a canvas of a big painting equal to
the billion-world-galactic universe. And on this big canvas, the whole billion-world-
galactic universe would be painted completely. The vast surrounding horizon would
be painted in the exact size of the vast surrounding horizon. The great earth would be
painted in the exact size of the great earth. The two-thousand-world universe would
be painted in its exact size. [Likewise,] the one-thousand-world universe, the four
continents, the great ocean, the Southern Continent of Jambu, the Eastern Continent
of Videha, the [Western] Continent of Godāniya, the Northern Continent of Kuru, the
Mount Sumeru, the mansion of celestial beings living on the earth, that of celestial
beings living in the desire-world, and of celestial beings living in the form-world; all
of these would be painted in their exact sizes. Hence, this big painting cloth would
have the same size as the width and length of the billion-world-galactic universe. This
very big cloth would, then, be placed within one subatomic particle. Just as this big
cloth is placed within one subatomic particle, in each of all the other subatomic
particles there is a big cloth of the same size to be placed. Suppose there should be
born one person, sagacious, shrewd, clever, and intelligent, knowing how to penetrate
that [the big cloth]. And his eyes were divine eyes which were perfectly pure and
luminous. With these divine eyes he would perceive [and wonder]: Why does this big
cloth of such a great nature dwell in such a small subatomic particle! It is of no use to

672 Cf. Chinese translation, “知心性浄，是故言如來一念得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。”大方等大集
673 The Tathāgatoputramahāvairocana.
anybody! So he would think: Aha! I shall break this subatomic particle with *vajra* by the strength of great efforts and make this great cloth become useful for the beings. Then, producing the strength of great efforts, he would break this subatomic particle with a tiny little *vajra* and would make that great cloth useful for the all beings. Not only for one subatomic particle, would he do the same also for all the other subatomic particles.

Similarly, child of the Buddha, the immeasurable gnosis of the Tathāgata, the gnosis of caring for all living beings, thoroughly penetrates into the continua of living beings. And the continua of each living being are akin to the immeasurable gnosis of the Tathāgata. Fettered by the construct-habit, however, the naive ones are unaware of the Tathāgata's gnosis. Neither do they know of it well, nor do they directly experience it. Hence, the Tathāgata, having seen the ultimate realm, the state of all the living beings, by his unobstructed gnosis, resolves to be a teacher [and declares:]

"Alas! These living beings are not properly aware of the gnosis of the Tathāgata, though it penetrates them. I shall free these living beings, no matter how fettered they have been made by constructs, through the teaching of the noble path. In this way, they will loosen the big knot tied around gnosis by producing the strength of the noble gnosis themselves; and [they] will personally realize the gnosis of the Tathāgata, obtaining the equality with the Tathāgata's gnosis." [Accordingly], he teaches those the path of the Tathāgata, thus removing all the fetters made by constructs. And when all the fetters made by constructs are eliminated, this immeasurable gnosis of the Tathāgata then becomes useful to all living beings.

In this regard, the Deeds of the Victor simultaneously reach all [the disciples], at any time, spontaneously without efforts, without constructive thought, [yet act] according to the intentions [of the disciples], according to [the conditions of] the disciples, with none left out, correspondingly; this is an inconceivable place. Thus, [the Buddha states in the *Dhāranirūja-sūtra:*]

In order to introduce⁶⁷⁴ living beings to the deeds of the Tathāgata, though the deeds [of the Tathāgata] are immeasurable, [living beings] are taught briefly with a summarized number [of deeds]. However, fortunate child, the true deeds of the Tathāgata is inconceivable, immeasurable, unknown to all the world, unexpressed by letters, difficult to be acquired by others, dwell in all the Buddha fields, equal to all buddhas, beyond any effort and exertion, [are] of no constructive thought being equal to the sky, and of no differentiation as being the act of the ultimate element.

Then, after showing the simile of pure *vaiśīrya* jewel, [the Buddha] teaches in detail:

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⁶⁷⁴ *vatāraṇa, gṣud pa* (Toh.147), *gzhug pa* (Toh.4025).
Fortunate child, you should know the deeds of the Tathāgata through alternate ramifications as follows: inconceivable, equally pervasive,\textsuperscript{675} no blemish whatsoever, pervasive in the three times, and keeping the lineage of the Three Jewels from being cut off. The body of the Buddha, in which these inconceivable deeds of the Tathāgata dwell, never casts off its sky-like defining characteristic and shows itself in all buddhas fields. The speech [of the Buddha] never casts off its inexpressible reality and teaches the living beings the Dharma with the proper language skill. And the mind [of the Buddha] is free from all objects of the mind, yet is perfectly aware of the activities and intentions of the minds of all living beings.

The object to be realized,
The realization and its components,
The [deeds] which cause the realization;
[Of these four] respectively,
One base is the cause of purification,
[The remaining] three are the conditions. // 26 //

Of these four bases of import, the first base should be regarded as the "object to be realized" because all objects of knowledge is included in it. The realization of it is the second base, the "Enlightenment," as this is the realization. The components of the Enlightenment is the third base, the "components of the Enlightenment," as these are the excellences of the Buddha. The fourth base is the "[deeds] which cause the realization" because those components of the Enlightenment cause other people to realize. Hence, in terms of this, we should know that these four bases, being the factors of cause and conditions, are presented as the spiritual gene of the Three Jewels.

In that regard, we should understand that the first one of these four bases is the cause of the production of the Three Jewels depending on the purification, because it is the seed of the transcendent qualities and the focus of individual's proper mentation by which that [tainted reality] is purified. Thus, one single base is the cause. How the other three turn out to be conditions? These should be understood to be the conditions for the production

\textsuperscript{675} samatā-drjugata, kun tu rjes su song ba (Toh.147), mnyam pa nyid rjes su thob pa (Toh.4025).
of the Three Jewels in the way that the production of the Three Jewels depends on the purification of that [tainted ultimate reality,] and this purification is based upon the messages from others since the Tathāgata, having realized the unexcelled perfect enlightenment, performs the thirty-two deeds of the Tathāgata with those qualities of the Buddha such as the ten powers and so on. Thus, these three are the conditions.

Henceforth, the remaining text should be known as a detailed teaching of the discriminations among these four bases in stages.

In that regard, in terms of the reality mingled with defilements, [the Buddha] states that all living beings are possessed with the Buddha-essence. By which meaning does [the Buddha state thus]?

The buddhas' wisdom enters into
The multitudes of living beings;
That immaculate reality is non-dual;
And the Buddha-gene is designated after the fruition,
Therefore, it is said: all living beings are Possessed with the Buddha-essence.676 // 27 //
All living beings are ever possessed
Of the Buddha-essence,
In virtue of the diffusion of the buddhas' bodies,
The indivisible reality, and
The existence of the spiritual gene. // 28 //

In short, by three kinds of factors, the Lord states that all living beings are always possessed with the Buddha-essence. These [three] factors which [include] all meaning ramifications of that [statement] are taught in all scriptures without making any distinctions.677 With reference to that [three], I shall now explain as follows: (1) the Truth

676 This verse as found in nNgog's Tibetan translation is inserted between the first two sentences of the following prose. It is quite unusual for rGyal-tshab to skip over this seemingly redundant yet important verse without exposition.
677 Cf. Takasaki's treatment of this vague sentence. "Prior to it, however, there is [another] meaning by which this meaning in all its aspects is indicated in the Scripture with no variance anywhere." A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga,
Body of the Tathāgata diffuses in all living beings; (2) the indivisible reality of the Tathāgata; and (3) the existence of the spiritual gene [in every living being]. These three factors will be taught [in detail] below according to the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra.

Summary:

The nature and the causes,
The fruition, actions, possession, and engagement,
As well as the states and all-pervadingness,
Unchangeable eternity and indivisible excellences:
These should be known as the intended meaning
Of the ultimate element. // 29 //

In summary, as for the intention of the ten points: this [verse] should be known as the arrangement of the Tathāgata-essence which is the object of the ultimate wisdom of reality. What are the ten points? They are namely: (1) nature [of the Element]; (2) causes [of its purification]; (3) fruition [of its purification]; (4) actions [of the Element]; (5) possession [of the Element]; (6) engagement [of the Element in general]; (7) states [of its engagement]; (8) all-pervadingness; (9) unchangeability [of the Element through states]; and (10) indivisible excellences [in terms of their entities].

In that regard, here is the first verse concerning the points of "nature" and "causes."

[The Buddha-essence] is ever undefiled in terms of its nature,
Like a jewel, space and pure water;
It emerges through faith in the Dharma,
Higher wisdom, concentration and compassion. // 30 //

What is demonstrated here by the former half of this verse?

Because of their characteristics in terms of their natures
Of being powerful, immutable, and moist;

198. This translation is made according to my reading of 'Go Lo-tsa-ba's commentary. See Mathes, 'Gos Lo tsa ba gZhon nu dPal's Commentary, 253. Again, rGyal-tshab does not comment on it in his rGyud bla gāṇa.
These are analogous to the qualities of a jewel, 
Space, and water. // 31 //

In these aforementioned three [factors], the resemblance of the Element of the 
Tathāgata to the qualities of the pure wish-fulfilling jewel, space and water respectively, 
should be known with reference to their particular and common characteristics. Now, in 
that regard, the Truth Body of the Tathāgata should be known to be analogous to a wish-
fulfilling jewel, with reference to its particular characteristic in terms of its nature being 
powerful to fulfill wishes etc. The reality should be known to be analogous to space, with 
reference to its particular characteristic in terms of its nature being immutable. The gene 
of the Tathāgata should be known to be analogous to water, with reference to its 
particular characteristic in terms of its nature being moist with compassion towards living 
beings. And in this regard, with reference to their all being naturally ever undefiled by 
addictions and naturally pure as the common characteristic, those [three things] should be 
known to be analogous to a wish-fulfilling jewel, space and water.

Now, what is demonstrated by the latter half of this verse?

Enmity towards the Dharma, 
Belief in a self, 
Fear of sufferings in samsāra and 
Indifference to the welfare of living beings
Are the four kinds of obstruction... // 32 //
...of the desire-craving ones (Icchantikas), heterodox, 
Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas respectively.
Strong faith, etc., are
The four causes of purification. // 33 //
In brief there are three kinds of living beings among the multitude: (1) those who have desire for the worldly existence, (2) those who aspire for liberation from it, (3) those who wish neither of them.

In regard to the kind who have desire for worldly existence, it should be known as twofold: (a) those who feel enmity towards the path to liberation; therefore, they do not have the spiritual gene for nirvāṇa. Those people have only desire for samsāra and not for nirvāṇa; and (b) those who are Buddhists but have certainly fallen into that way. Some of these are hostile to the teachings of the Mahāyāna. With reference to them, the Lord states as follows:

I am not their teacher; they are not my disciples. Śāriputra, I speak of them as dark-ones, migrating from darkness to greater darkness, and kept in deep darkness.

As to the kind who aspire for liberation from the worldly existence, it is also twofold: (a) those who have engaged, lacking in liberative technique; and (b) those who have engaged with liberative technique. Those who have engaged, lacking in liberative technique are further divided into three types: (i) various heterodox groups, outsiders of this Dharma such as the Carakas, the Parivrājakas, and the Jains, etc. (ii) and (iii) those who are Buddhists but whose conduct is in conformity with the heterodox, taking a negative view about [the Buddha's teaching]. Then, who are those people? They are (ii) those who lack faith about the ultimate truth and believe in a personal self. With reference to these, the Lord states as follows:

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678 According to Chinese translation, it refers to the Sāṃkhya school.
679 The Vaiśeṣika school.
One who lacks faith in emptiness is not different from a heterodox.

And they are also (iii) those who feel overtly proud and hold a wrong view of emptiness. In this regard, the door of liberation [asserted by these people] also becomes held with a wrong view of emptiness. With reference to these, [the Buddha] states [in the Mahāratnakūṭa-sūtra] as follows:

Kāśyapa, the wrong view of a personal self as great as Mt. Sumeru is considered superior than the wrong view of emptiness by those who have overt pride.

Those who have engaged with liberative technique are further divided into two types: (i) those who have engaged into authentic certainty conforming to the Śrāvakayāna; and (ii) those conforming to the Pratyekabuddhayāna.

As to the kind who wishes neither of both, these are the people who are extremely sharp in intelligence, standing firmly amidst the Mahāyāna. They have no desire for saṃsāra as icchantikas do, nor are they those who have engaged but lack liberative technique like a heterodox, nor are they those who have realization with liberative technique like śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, but have entered the path to obtain the equality of saṃsāra with nirvāṇa. They are intent upon non-dwelling nirvāṇa and act in an addiction-free saṃsāra. The root is perfectly pure as being grounded in the firm compassion and superior intention.
In this regard, those icchantikas who have desire for worldly existence and those Buddhists who have certainly fallen into the same way are called the group of people who are definitely mistaken. Those people who aspire for liberation from worldly existence but lack of liberative technique are called the unsettled group of people. Those people who aspire for liberation from worldly existence with liberative technique and those who wish neither of both and have entered the path to obtain the equality are called the group of people who have settled in reality.

Aside from those people who stand firmly in the Mahāyāna and have realized there are not obscurations, other four kinds of people, namely, icchantikas, heterodox, śrāvakas, and pratyekabuddhas, cannot understand the Buddha-essence and perceive it directly owing to the four obscurations they have.

What are then the four obscurations? These are: (1) enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching. This is the obscurcation of icchantikas and its antidote is the meditation on faith in the teachings of the Mahāyāna by bodhisattvas; (2) the belief in a self. This is the obscurcation of heterodox and its antidote is the meditation on the wisdom transcendence by bodhisattvas; (3) knowing of samsāra as dire and fear of its sufferings. This is the obscurcation of those associated with the Śrāvakayāna and its antidote is the space-treasure concentration, etc., by bodhisattvas; and (4) aversion to the welfare of living beings and indifference to the welfare of living beings. This is the obscurcation of those associated with the Pratyekabuddhayāna and its antidote is the meditation on the great compassion by bodhisattvas.
These are the four types of obscuration of the four kinds of living being. By meditating on the four kinds of antidote to these obscurations such as faith, etc., bodhisattvas shall obtain the ultimate pure Truth Body, the unexcelled aim. Accompanied by these four causes for achieving the four purities, they become the child of the Dharma king in the Tathāgata's family. How so? It is said:

Those whose seed is faith in the Mahāyāna,
Whose mother is the wisdom, giving birth to the Buddha's qualities,
Whose blissful womb is the concentration,
And whose nanny is compassion -
These are born as the Buddha's offspring.  // 34 //

There is one verse with reference to the points of "fruition" and "action."

Transcendences of purity, self, bliss and
Eternity are the fruition.
Renunciation of sufferings, aspiration and prayer
For obtaining the peace are the actions.  // 35 //

In this regard, what is demonstrated by the former half of this verse?

The fruition of these [causes] is, in brief,
Distinguished by the antidotes,
Opposite to four kinds of delusion
About the Truth Body.  // 36 //

In brief, the fruition of these four qualities, faith, etc., as explained to be the causes of purification of the Element of the Tathāgata is the fourfold transcendence of excellence on the Truth Body, for the antidotes are the opposites of the four delusions respectively. [In general,] there is a notion of eternality, bliss, self, and purity regarding impermanence, sufferings, selflessness, and impurity of things such as matter, etc.
respectively. Such a notion is called the "fourfold delusion." The opposite of this notion should be known as the fourfold non-delusion. Which four? That is the notion of impermanence, sufferings, selflessness, and impurity regarding impermanent, etc., of things such as matter, etc. Such a notion is called the "fourfold opposite of delusion."

Furthermore, this very [notion of non-delusion] is accepted here as delusion with reference to the Truth Body of the Tathāgata whose defining characteristics are eternal, etc. The antidote to this delusion is the arrangement of the fourfold transcendence of excellence on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata: transcendence of eternity, transcendence of bliss, transcendence of self, and transcendence of purity. Furthermore, this passage of the Śāstra should be understood in detail according to the scripture. [In the Śrīmālā-sūtra, Śrīmālā states]:

Lord, living beings have a delusion regarding the five compulsive aggregates; they have a notion of eternity, bliss, self, and purity regarding impermanence, sufferings, selflessness, and impurity [of things] respectively. Lord, even all the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas have a delusion about the Truth Body of the Tathāgata which is the object of the omniscient gnosis and has never been seen before by their wisdom of emptiness. Lord, if living beings have the notion of eternity, bliss, self, and purity, they would be the child born of the heart of the Buddha. Lord, those living beings would not be the people of delusions. Lord, those living beings would correctly perceive.

For what reason? Lord, this is because the Truth Body of the Tathāgata is transcendence of eternity, transcendence of bliss, transcendence of self, and transcendence of purity. Lord, those people who perceive the Truth Body of the Tathāgata in this way perceive correctly. Those who perceive correctly are the heart-child of the Buddha.

The order of the four transcendences of excellence on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata should be known as the reverse of the one of causes. In this regard, (1) being opposite to taking delight in impure saṃsāra by icchantikas who feel enmity towards the
Mahāyāna teaching, transcendence of purity should be understood to be the fruition obtained by the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna teaching by bodhisattvas.

(2) Being opposite to taking delight in the self-habit regarding the five compulsive aggregates of which no self exists, by other heterodox schools; the transcendence of self should be understood to be the fruition obtained by the meditation on the transcendence of wisdom. Indeed, all other heterodox schools assert that things such as matter, sound, etc., have a self as their nature but [in reality] they do not. And things asserted in this way by the heterodox are deceptive with respect to their [false] characteristic of being self, hence they are always selfless. [On the contrary,] the Tathāgata has obtained transcendences of supreme selflessness by wisdom which correctly realizes reality. And selflessness correctly perceived by the Tathāgata is not deceptive with respect to its characteristic of being selflessness, hence it is always accepted as self. Selflessness is meant by "self," as [a scripture states:] "He stays by means of non-staying."

(3) Being opposite to taking delight in cessation of the sufferings of samsāra by those associated with the Śrāvakayāna who have fear of the sufferings of samsāra, transcendence of supreme bliss concerned with all matters, worldly and transcendent, should be understood to be the fruition obtained by the meditation on space-treasure concentration, etc.

(4) Being opposite to taking delight in the tranquil abode by those associated with the Pratyekabuddhayāna who are indifferent to the welfare of living beings, transcendence of eternity with respect to perfectly pure mastery, which works as long as samsāra exists, without interruption, of the welfare of living beings, should be understood to be the fruition obtained by the meditation on the great compassion by bodhisattvas.
Thus, the attainment of four kinds of transcendence of excellence regarding purity, self, bliss, and eternity on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata are respectively the fruition of the meditations on faith, wisdom, concentration, and great compassion by bodhisattvas. Because of these four kinds [of cause], the Tathāgata is acclaimed as the ultimate Element, infinite space and reaching to the end of time. Indeed, the Tathāgata is the one who has become the ultimate Element because he has obtained the utterly pure ultimate Element by the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna teaching. He is the one who has become infinite space because he has realized the space-like ultimate selflessness of living beings and their environments by the meditation on transcendence of wisdom, and because he has become the supreme Lord of the Dharma, pervading all and teaching all, by the meditation on the space-treasure concentration, etc. He is the one who will reach the end of time because he is endowed with endless compassion towards all living beings by the meditation on the great compassion.

For the attainment of the four kinds of transcendence of excellence on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata, there are four impediments even in cases of arhats and pratyekabuddhas, who are staying in the uncontaminated Element, as well as bodhisattvas who have obtained powers, having defining characteristics of (1) condition (pratyaya); (2) cause (hetu); (3) origination (saṃbhava); and (4) destruction (vibhava). In this regard, (1) condition is defined as the ground of instinct for misknowledge just as misknowledge (avidyāvāsa) is the ground for [stimulating] synthetic activities (saṃskārā). (2) Cause is defined as uncontaminated karma conditioned by the ground of instinct for misknowledge just as synthetic activities. (3) Origination is defined as the
accomplishment of the threefold mind-made body,\textsuperscript{681} conditioned by the ground of instinct for misknowledge and caused by uncontaminated karma just as the accomplishment of the threefold worldly existence is conditioned by the four kinds of function (upādāna) and caused by contaminated karma. (4) Destruction is defined as death of inconceivable transformation conditioned by the accomplishment of the threefold mind-made body just as old age and death (jaramaraṇa) conditioned by birth (jāti).

Arhats, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas who have obtained powers will not obtain transcendence of supreme ultimate purity insofar as they have not extirpated the ground of instinct for misknowledge which is the foundation of all addictions, thereby not being utterly free from the taint of stinky smell of addictions. They will not obtain the transcendence of uncreated self insofar as they follow a habitual pattern of subtle identity-reification\textsuperscript{682} depending on the ground of instinct for misknowledge. They will not obtain transcendence of supreme bliss as the extinction of the origination of the mind-made aggregates insofar as these aggregates have originated depending on the ground of instinct for misknowledge and uncontaminated karma which are motivated by the habit of subtle identity-reification conditioned by the ground of instinct for misknowledge. And they will not obtain transcendence of immutable eternity insofar as they have not overcome death of inconceivable transformation as long as they have not actualized the Buddha-essence by stopping all afflictions of addiction, karma, and birth. In this regard, the ground of instinct for misknowledge is similar to the affliction of addiction. The synthetic uncontaminated karma is similar to the affliction of karma. The

\textsuperscript{681} manomayātmabhāvakāya, yid kyi rang chzin gyi lus.
\textsuperscript{682} sūkṣma-nimitta-prapañca, mthun ma'i spros pa spyod pa phra mo.
accomplishment of the threefold mind-made body and death of inconceivable
transformation are similar to the affliction of birth. Again, this passage of the treatise is to
be understood in detail according to the scripture. [In the Śrīmālā-sūtra, Śrīmālā states:]

Lord, conditioned by function and caused by contaminated karma, there was the
origination of the threefold worldly existence; likewise, Lord, conditioned by the
ground of instinct for misknowledge and caused by uncontaminated karma, there was
the origination of the threefold mind-made body of arhats, pratyekabuddhas and
bodhisattvas who have attained powers. Lord, for the origination of the threefold
mind-made body in these three stages and for the accomplishment of contaminated
karma, the ground of instinct for misknowledge is the condition.

Thus, in these three mind-made bodies of arhats, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas,
there are no transcendences of purity, self, bliss and eternity. Seeing this, [the Śrīmālā-
sūtra] states:

Only the Truth Body of the Tathāgata is the transcendence of purity, the
transcendence of self, the transcendence of bliss, and the transcendence of eternity.

That is purity because it is naturally pure, and
Because the instincts are removed.
The pacification of the reifications of
Self and selflessness is the supreme self. // 37 //
That is bliss because the mind-made aggregate
And its causes have been turned around.
That is eternity in virtue of realization
Of the equality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. // 38 //

In brief, the transcendence of purity on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata should be
known by two reasons: (1) because of being naturally pure as the common characteristic;
and (2) because of being pure by the removal of defilements as the special characteristic.
The transcendence of the supreme self, too, should be understood by two reasons: (1)
because of being free from self-reification by rejecting the extreme of the heterodox; and
(2) because of being free from selflessness reification by rejecting the extreme of
śrāvakas. Transcendence of bliss is to be known likewise by two reasons: (1) because of
the destruction of taking rebirth by the instincts on account of the elimination of all kinds
of origin of suffering; and (2) because of the actualized termination of the mind-made
bodies on account of the actualization of all kinds of cessation of suffering. And the
transcendence of eternity is to be known by two reasons: (1) because he does not fall into
the nihilistic extreme through his not diminishing saṃsāra to the extent of being
impermanent; (2) nor does he fall into the eternalistic extreme through his not
exaggerating nirvāṇa to the extent of being permanent, as [the Śrīmālā-sūtra] states:

If someone perceives the created as impermanent, Lord, that would be a nihilistic
view. And it would not be correct. If someone perceives nirvāṇa as eternal, Lord, that
would be an eternalistic view. And it would not be correct.

It is said, by means of the mode of the ultimate Element, that ultimately saṃsāra
itself is nirvāṇa, because [the Tathāgata] has actualized the non-staying nirvāṇa without
constructing such duality. This passage shows that the non-staying place, which is neither
close to nor remote from all living beings, is obtained by two causes. Which two? The
bodhisattvas do not get close to all living beings, because all instincts for attachment have
been eliminated by their wisdom. Likewise, bodhisattvas do not feel remote from them,
because those beings will never be abandoned owing to their great compassion. These
[two] are the liberative techniques for attainment of the prefect enlightenment of which
non-stay is the nature. Indeed, bodhisattvas have eliminated all instincts for attachment by wisdom for their own sake, thereby being deeply intent upon nirvāṇa and not staying in samsāra as do those who do not have spiritual gene for nirvāṇa. Owing to their great compassion, they never abandon suffering living beings for the sake of others, thereby acting in samsāra and not staying in nirvāṇa as do those who aspire only for the peace. Thus these two qualities are the root of the unexcelled enlightenment, [as the Śāstra states:]

[Though] having completely severed self-cherishing by wisdom, Compassionate ones do not obtain the peace owing to other-cherishing; Thus depending on wisdom and compassion as techniques for enlightenment, Noble ones approach neither samsāra nor nirvāṇa. // 39 //

Now, with reference to the aforementioned point of "action," what is demonstrated by the latter half of that verse (1.35)?

If the Element of the Tathāgata did not exist, Aversion to suffering would not arise. Desire, aspiration and prayer for nirvāṇa Would also not arise. // 40 //

So [the treatise] states:

Lord, if there were no Buddha-essence, then there would arise neither aversion to suffering nor desire for nirvāṇa, nor the wish, aspiration or prayer for it.

Here in brief, the Element of the Tathāgata, the pure spiritual gene of even those people who are definitely mistaken, causes two kinds of action. It develops aversion to
samsāra on the basis of perceiving the faults of suffering, and it calls forth desire, wishing, aspiration and prayer for nirvāṇa on the basis of perceiving the virtues of its bliss. In this regard, "wishing" means manifested desire. "Desire" means longing for the attainment of the desired aim. "Aspiration" means searching for the means to obtain the desired aim. "Prayer" means causing the wish by thinking of the desired aim.

Perceiving samsāra as having the fault of suffering,
And nirvāṇa as having the excellence of bliss
Is due to the existence of the gene,
But not if without the gene. // 41 //

Because of the existence of the spiritual gene, the people who are possessed with white qualities perceive samsāra as having the fault of suffering and nirvāṇa as having the excellence of bliss. For what reason? [The Jñānalokaśāntikā-sūtra] states as follows:

After this, the intuition light rays of the Tathāgata sun fall upon the bodies of even those people who are definitely mistaken, thus benefiting them and producing correct cause of future [liberation]. They cause their virtuous qualities to increase.

As to the statement that "icchantikas have the quality of no nirvāṇa forever," it is said so because feeling enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching is the cause of being icchantikas. Intending to a certain period of time, it is thus stated in order to avert the enmity. None could be impure forever because of the existence of naturally pure gene. Intending the existence of possible purity in all beings without discrimination, the Lord therefore declares:
Being beginningless yet having its end,
It is naturally pure and endowed with eternity;
Not be seen because outside covered by beginningless sheath,
Just as the gold image concealed [in mud].

There is one verse with reference to the point of "possession."

Like a great ocean, an inexhaustible storage
Of immeasurable jewels of excellence, and
Like a lamp, because its nature
Possesses inseparable excellences. // 42 //

In this regard, what is shown by the former half of this verse?

Because it consists of the Truth Body, the Victor's
Intuition, and Compassion, the Element
Is demonstrated to be similar to an ocean,
Through being ocean bed, jewels and water. // 43 //

On account of the three points, which are analogous to three aspects of a great ocean respectively, the point of "possession" should be understood in terms of the Element of the Tathāgata being possessed with [the excellences of] the cause. Then, which are the three points? They are (1) the cause for purifying the Truth Body, (2) the cause for obtaining a buddha's intuition, and (3) the cause for receiving the Tathāgata's great compassion. Here, (1) the cause for purifying the Truth Body is to be known as the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna; (2) the cause for obtaining a buddha's intuition, the meditation on wisdom and concentration; and (3) the cause for receiving the Tathāgata's great compassion, the meditation on great compassion of bodhisattvas. In this regard, the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna is analogous to the ocean bed since it holds immeasurable and inexhaustible jewels of wisdom and concentration as well as the water
of compassion. The meditation on wisdom and concentration is analogous to jewel because of its free of constructive thought and being endowed with inconceivable powerful excellences. The meditation on great compassion of bodhisattvas is analogous to the water because it has one taste of supreme moist nature [permeating] all beings. This conjunction of [the Element] with that [causal fourfold excellence] in terms of these three causes of the three things is called "possession."

Now, what is shown by the latter half of the verse?

In the immaculate state, superknowledges,
Intuition and that immaculateness
Are inseparable, thereby being analogous to its light,
And heat and color of a lamp.  // 44 //

On account of the three points, which are analogous to three aspects of a lamp respectively, the point of "possession" should be understood in terms of the Element of the Tathāgata being possessed with [the excellences of] the fruition. Then, which are the three points? They are (1) superknowledges, (2) intuition of the termination of contaminations, and (3) the termination of contamination. Here, the five superknowledges are analogous to the light because they have the characteristic of engaging in the elimination of darkness which is discordant to the experiential knowledge of respective object. Intuition of the termination of contaminations is analogous to heat because of its characteristic of engaging in consuming the fuel of karma and addictions without the remains. The transformed termination of contamination is analogous to color because of its characteristic of being immaculate, pure, and luminous. In this regard, it is immaculate because it has eliminated addictive obscuration. It is pure because it has eliminated cognitive obscuration. It is luminous because it is not in its nature to be these
two coincidental\textsuperscript{683} obscurations. Thus, these seven things, which are consisted of five superknowledges, intuition, and the termination, in the continua of those people who have nothing further to learn are inseparable from each other in the immaculate ultimate element, not being differentiated but identical to the ultimate element. This is called "possession." And with reference to its point, the simile of a lamp is to be understood in detail according to the [Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdesaparivatra-] śūtra:

Śāriputra, just as a lamp is indivisible by and inseparable from its light, heat and color, a precious stone is also indivisible by and inseparable from its light, color and shape. Likewise, Śāriputra, the Truth Body taught by the Tathāgata is indivisible by the qualities of the Tathāgata, which are far beyond the sands of the Ganges in number, and is inseparable from the excellences of the intuition.

There is one verse with reference to the point of "engagement."

Because reality is engaged differently by
The Naïve, noble ones, and perfect buddhas,
The perceiver of reality has taught
This Buddha-essence is in living beings.  // 45 //

What is shown by this verse?

Naïve people are of error,
The perceivers of the truth are the opposite.
The Tathāgatas perceive it as it is
Absolutely correct without reification.  // 46 //

\textsuperscript{683} ṅagantuka, glor bur.
It should be understood that [engagements with] the Element of the Tathāgata have been taught to bodhisattvas in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, etc., with reference to the non-conceptual intuition. There are three different kinds of engagement with the general characteristic of the pure reality of all things as taught [in the sūtra] of naïve people who do not perceive the reality, of noble ones who perceive the reality, and of tathāgatas who have obtained the ultimate purity in perceiving the reality. In other words, they are of error, correct, and absolutely correct without reification respectively. In this regard, "of error" refers to naïve people on account of their erroneous notions, thoughts, and views. "Correct" refers to noble ones because they, being opposite to naïve people, have eliminated error. And "absolutely correct without reification" refers to perfect buddhas because they have destroyed addictive obscurations and its instincts as well as cognitive obscurations.

Four other points taught hereafter should be understood to be the ramifications of the point of engagement. In this regard, there is one verse with reference to the point of "states."

Impure, [both] pure and impure,  
And perfectly pure, are respectively  
Called an ordinary being,  
Bodhisattva, and the Tathāgata. // 47 //

What is shown by this verse?

The Element, subsumed under these six,  
The points of nature and so forth,  
Is, in accordance with its three states,  
Demonstrated by three names. // 48 //
The immaculate Element, taught by the Lord in detail in numerous ways, is hitherto subsumed under six points, namely: nature, causes, fruition, actions, possession, and engagement. This Element is also to be known as being taught through the teaching of three names in accordance with its three states respectively. That is to say, (1) it is called the "Element of living being" in the impure state; (2) it is called "bodhisattva" in the [both] pure and impure state; and (3) it is called "tathāgata" in the perfectly pure state, as the Lord states [in the Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivatrasūtra:]

Śāriputra, this the Truth Body, when it is covered with limitless sheaths of addictions, being carried by the current of saṃsāra and circling between death and birth in the course of beginningless and endless saṃsāra, is called the "Element of living beings."

This same the Truth Body, Śāriputra, when it has felt aversion to the sufferings in the current of saṃsāra and become free of attachment to all the objects of desire, ventures forth into the deeds for the sake of enlightenment. By means of the ten transcendences and after mastery of all of the eighty-four thousand aggregates of the Dharma, it is called "bodhisattva."

Furthermore, Śāriputra, when this very Truth Body, having been released from all the sheaths of addictions, having gone beyond all the sufferings, having been freed of all addictive defilements, has become pure, perfectly pure, and supremely pure, it ascends to the stage to be looked upon by all living beings, obtains the power of a person who is unexcelled in all knowable objects, and has obtained unimpeded and unconstructive power of controlling all things, then [the Truth Body] is called "the Tathāgata, Arhat, Perfect the Buddha."

There is one verse with reference to the point of the "all-pervadingness" of the Element of the Tathāgata in these three states.

Just as space, free of constructive thought by nature,
Is all-pervading. So
The nature of the mind, the immaculate element,
Is likewise all-pervasive. // 49 //

What is shown by this verse?
Its general characteristic pervades
Faults, excellences and the ultimate,
As space does the inferior,
Medium and supreme aspects of forms. // 50 //

The nature of the mind of an ordinary being, a noble one, and a perfect buddha,
being free of the constructive thought, is the general characteristic [of the Element].
Therefore, it is all-pervading, all-engaging, equal, of no difference in these three states of
having faults, excellences and the ultimate pure excellences, just as space pervades all the
vessels of clay, copper and gold. For this reason, immediately after the teaching on the
states, the Buddha states [in the Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivatra-sūtra:]

Therefore, Śāriputra, the Element of living beings and the Truth Body are not
different from each other. The Element of living beings is nothing but the Truth Body,
and the Truth Body is nothing but the Element of living beings. These two are non-
dual by meaning but different merely by letters.

Moreover, the Element of the Tathāgata, being all-pervading in these three states, is
unchangeable either by addictions or through purification. There are fourteen verses with
reference to this subject. The summarized meaning of these verses is to be known by the
following verse:

Though possessing coincidental faults,
Because it has excellences by nature,
It is the unchanging noumenon,
The same after as it was before.// 51 //
In the impure state as well as in the [both] pure and impure state, which are shown by the [following] twelve verses and by the [next] one verse respectively, [the Element of the Tathāgata] is possessed with coincidental [faults] of fundamental and subsequent addictions. [On the other hand], it is endowed by nature with the qualities of the Buddha in the perfectly pure state, which are indivisible, inseparable [from the Truth Body], inconceivable and far greater in number than the sands of Gaṅgā as demonstrated by the fourteenth verse. Therefore, it is demonstrated that the Element of the Tathāgata is eternally unchangeable like space throughout different times.

What are the twelve verses with reference to the unchangeable characteristic in the impure state?

As space is all-pervading and,
Because of being subtle, is completely unaffected,
So, that abode which exists in all living beings,
Is completely unaffected. // 52 //
Just as all worlds
Arise and disintegrate within space,
So in the uncompounded element
All the sense-faculties arise and disintegrate. // 53 //
Just as space has never before
Been burnt by fires,
So this is not burnt by the fires of
Death, sickness and aging. // 54 //
Earth is sustained by water,
Water by air, and air by space;
Space is, however, neither sustained
By air, water nor earth. // 55 //
Similarly the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties
Are based upon karma and addictions.
Karma and addictions are always based
Upon irrational thought. // 56 //
This irrational thought is based upon
The purity of the mind, yet the mind's nature is not based
Upon any of the things. // 57 //
The aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties
Should be known as akin to earth.
The karma and addictions of living beings
Are to be known as akin to water. // 58 //
The irrational thought is known
As having resemblance to air;
Being of no basis and of no abiding,
The nature is like space. // 59 //
The irrational thought abides
Within the nature of the mind.
By this irrational thought,
Karma and addictions are produced. // 60 //
From water of karma and addictions
The aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties Occur,
Arising and disintegrating just like
[Water] arises and subsides. // 61 //
The nature of the mind is like space-element:
It has neither causes nor conditions
Nor these in collection,
Nor arising, abiding or destruction. // 62 //
The nature of the mind is luminous,
Unchanging like space.
It has never become addicted by attachment and so on, the
Coincidental defilements which arise from irrational thought. // 63 //

How is this Buddha-essence in the impure state as being unchangeable in its nature
demonstrated by this simile of space? It is said as follows:

This cannot be produced,
By karma and addictions which are akin to water, etc.
Even the fierce fires of death, sickness and aging
Cannot consume it. // 64 //

The arising of the world that consists of aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties is
based upon the water of karma and addictions, which is in turn produced by a wind-circle
of irrational thought. This evolution, however, does not cause the spatial formation of the
nature of the mind. In the same way, in order to destroy the world that consists of the
aggregates, elements, and sense faculties founded on the air-like irrational thought and
water-like karma and addictions, a group of fires arise which are death, sickness and aging. It should be known, however, that even by this arising of the fires of death, etc., this [nature] cannot be destroyed. Thus, in the impure state, though all the defilements of karma, addictions, and birth arise and disintegrate like world environments, the uncompounded Buddha-essence, like space, is without arising and cessation. Therefore, it is demonstrated as being an absolutely unchangeable noumenon. And this space simile which refers to the means of [actualizing] the Dharma of luminosity with regard to the natural purity is to be understood in detail according to the [Gaganagajñānbodhisattva-paripṛcchā-] sūtra:

Great seer, addictions are the dark; purity is luminosity. Addictions are weak; transcendental analysis is powerful. Addictions are coincidental; the natural purity is the root. Addictions are of imagination; nature is free of imagination. For example, Great seer, this great earth is supported by water. Water is supported by air, and air is supported by space. But space, in turn, is not supported by anything. Thus, among these four elements, space is more powerful than any of the other three elements of earth, water and air. It is also firm and immovable. It has no decrease and no increase. It is not produced and does not cease. It is supported by its own essence. [However], the three other elements are possessed of arising and disintegration, being unstable. These are perceived as changeable, but space is not in the slightest. Likewise, the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties have their support in karma and addiction. Karma and addiction have their support in irrational thought and the latter, in turn, have its support in the natural purity. Therefore, it is said: the mind is naturally luminous, but it is defiled by coincidental addictions...

In this regard, all these things of irrational thought, karma, addictions, aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties are produced by the conglomeration of causes and conditions. When these causes and conditions are separate, they will cease. [On the contrary], the nature has no cause and no condition. Consequently, it has no conglomeration. It is not produced and does not cease. In this regard, the nature is akin to space, irrational thought air, karma and addiction water, and the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties earth. Therefore, it is said that all things are completely devoid of any root. They have a root of essence-free, of non-abiding, of purity, and of root-free.
Nature in the impure state has been explained as being analogous to space on account of its unchangeable characteristic; irrational thought, karma and addictions as being analogous to air and water respectively, on account of their characteristic of cause; and the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties which are produced [from the former two] as being analogous to earth element on account of their characteristic of result. Fires of death, sickness and aging which cause the disintegration [of the former three] have not yet been explained as being analogous to the fire element on account of their characteristic of headaches. So I shall explain.

The three fires, the fire at the end of the world,
The fire of hell and the ordinary fire,
These are to be known respectively as the analogy
For three fires of death, of sickness and aging. // 65 //

Death, sickness and aging to being analogous to the fires should be known for three reasons respectively. [They are namely]: (1) because [death] causes six sense-faculties to be not possessed by a person; (2) [sickness] causes various kinds of sufferings to be experienced; and (3) [aging] causes the compounded to develop. Even by these fires, the Element of the Tathāgata in the impure state cannot be changed at all. With reference to this point, it is stated [in the Śrīmālā-] sūtra:

Lord, this so called "death" and this so called "birth" are merely worldly superficial terms. Lord, this so called "death" causes sense-faculties to cease, and this so called "birth" causes sense-faculties to be obtained. Lord, the Buddha-essence, however, is never born, never ages, never dies, and is never born [again]. Why?
Because, Lord, the Buddha-essence is beyond the sphere characterized as being compounded, being eternal, firm, the peaceful and everlasting.

Now there comes one verse with respect to the unchangeability in the [both] pure and impure state.

Free from birth, death, sickness and aging,
They have realized nature as it is.
Through this cause, and by cultivating compassion for beings,
Though separated from the poverty of birth and so on,
The intelligent depend on (birth and so on).  // 66 //

What is shown by this verse?

The noble ones have completely eliminated
The suffering of death, sickness and aging.
It does not (apply) to them because their birth is
Not under the influence of karma and addictions.  // 67 //

In the impure state, the substantial cause of the fires of death, sickness and aging is the fuel-like birth based upon the irrational thought, karma and addictions. In the [both] pure and impure state, however, for bodhisattvas who have obtained mind-made body there is no such fires that we can know of because there is no appearance whatsoever.

Because of perceiving immaculate reality,
They have passed beyond birth and so on.
Still, the compassionate-natured display
Birth, death, aging and sickness.  // 68 //

Indeed, because of their all-engagement through the virtuous roots, bodhisattvas properly engage with three worlds out of compassion on the basis of their power of
controlling the birth by their will. They make appearance of birth, of aging, of sickness, and of death. But there are in reality no such things of birth, etc., among them. Because, of course, they have correctly perceived that the Element is of no birth and of no arising as it is. And this state of bodhisattvas should be understood in detail according to the [Sāgaramatipariprcchā-] sūtra as follows:

Which are the addictions associated with the virtuous roots that serve as the cause of saṃsāra for those [bodhisattvas]? They are namely: non-satisfaction in searching for the store of merits; taking rebirth in worldly existence out of their own volition; an earnest wish to meet with buddhas; an unweariness towards the perfect development of living beings; making efforts for the thoroughly apprehension of the Holy Dharma; working to fulfill all kinds of need of living beings; a non-separation from passionate thought for Dharma; a non-abandonment of thorough engagement with the transcendences. Sāgaramati, these are addictions associated with virtuous roots by which bodhisattvas join themselves [to saṃsāra] but they are never affected by the fault of addictions. . . .

[Then, Sāgaramati asked:] Why then, Lord, are the virtuous roots called addictions? [The Lord answered:] Sāgaramati, it is in the sense that bodhisattvas join themselves to three worlds by these addictions in such nature, for the three worlds are originated from addictions. In this regard, bodhisattvas join themselves to three worlds out of their own volition, by their art of liberative techniques, and the cultivation of the power of virtuous roots. Therefore, these are called "addictions associated with virtuous roots." [These are called so] inasmuch as these cause bodhisattvas to join themselves to three worlds, but not because of [actual] addictions on the mind.

Sāgaramati, suppose there was an only son of some merchant or householder. Suppose he was beloved, handsome, cherished, and attractive. Suppose this boy, being a child, would fall into a filthy pit while playing. The mother and relatives of this boy would see him fall into the filthy pit. Upon seeing this they would cry, distressed and would scream. They could not, however, take the boy out by entering into the pit. Then the boy's father would come to that place, and would see his only son fallen in the filthy pit. Upon seeing this and complying with the fervent wish to pull out his only son, he would jump into the filthy pit in a hurry without any feeling of disgust, and would take out his only son.

Sāgaramati, this analogy is made in order to understand a special meaning. What meaning is suggested by this analogy? Sāgaramati, "filthy pit" is a synonym of the three worlds. "Only son" is a synonym of living beings for bodhisattvas have a notion of the only son towards all living beings. "Mother and relatives" is a synonym of those people who belong to the Śrāvakayāna and Pratyekabuddhayāna since they, having seen living beings fallen into saṃsāra, are distressed and cry out, but have no ability to rescue them. "Great merchant or householder" is a synonym of bodhisattvas...
who are pure, undefiled, of undefiled mind, have directly realized attained the uncompounded Dharma, but still take rebirths in three worlds out of their own violation for the sake of living being's development. Sāgaramati, such is the great compassion of bodhisattvas that, being thoroughly free from all rebirths, they still take rebirths in worldly existence. Embraced by the art of liberative techniques and wisdom, they are never harmed by defilements; and, in order to liberate living beings from all the bondage of addictions, they teach the Dharma.

Through this scripture passage, [both] pure and impure state is demonstrated in a sense that powerful bodhisattvas engage with rebirths out of their own violation for the sake of others, by the powers of their virtuous roots and compassion, but at the same time, they are not defiled due to the powers of their art of liberative techniques and wisdom.

In this regard, when bodhisattvas have obtained the correct perception of the Element of the Tathāgata as being of non-production and non-origination, then they automatically become such bodhisattvas. This point should be understood according to the Sūtra as follows:

Sāgaramati, perceive that things are of no real essence and there is no creator, no owner, no living being, no life, no person, and no self. Indeed, these things are established according to [bodhisattva's] wish. Thus do not think or imagine! Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas who believe this unchangeable noumenon (dharma) never cultivate the feeling of resistance towards any thing. They will be possessed with the pure intuitive perception that there is nothing which causes benefit or harm. Thus, they know correctly the noumenon of things and thus they will never cast off the amour of great compassion.

Sāgaramati, suppose there were an invaluable vaidūrya stone, well purified, well cleaned and stainless. Suppose it would be left in mud and would remain there for a thousand years. Then, this stone would be taken out from mud and would be cleaned by wash and purification. As being cleaned well, however, it would never abandon its nature of jewel, pure and stainless. In the same way, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas know the mind of living beings as being naturally luminous. But they also perceive that the same mind is defiled by the coincidental addictions. Then bodhisattva think as follows: These addictions would never penetrate into the naturally luminous mind of living beings. Being incidental, these addictions are the production of incorrect imaginations. We can teach these living beings Dharma in order to heal their addictions. Thus, they never have their minds discouraged. Instead, they cultivate the

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685 imāṁ odhisatva-dharmatāṁ anuprāṇnoti, byang chub sems dpa’i chos byid ‘di rje su thob pa.
spirit of engaging with living beings many times. Again they think as follows: These addictions have no power and strength. These are powerless, weak, and have no real support at all. These addictions are [produced] by incorrect imaginations. We will never feel angry with addictions if we investigate them with correct and proper mentation. We shall never connect ourselves with addictions so we shall investigate them in detail. We would do better not to connect with addictions. It is not good to connect with addictions. If we connected ourselves with addictions, how could I teach the Dharma to living beings who are bound by the bondages of addictions in order to eliminate these bondages of addictions? In any case, we shall never connect ourselves with addictions, and then we shall teach the Dharma to living beings in order to eliminate their bondages of addictions. On the other hand, we shall connect ourselves with those addictions associated with virtuous roots which cause saṃsāra to be connected in order to develop living beings.

Here, the expression "saṃsāra" is accepted as the threefold mind-made body which is the reflection of three worlds within the uncontaminated element. It is saṃsāra because it is compounded of uncontaminated virtuous roots. At the same time, it is nirvāṇa because it is uncompounded of contaminated karma and addictions. With regard to this point, the Sūtra states:

Therefore, Lord, there is saṃsāra, compounded as well as uncompounded. There is nirvāṇa, compounded as well as uncompounded.

Being possessed with all-engagements arisen from the mind that is a mixture of compounded and uncompounded, this state is called the "[both] pure and impure state."

This state is chiefly established for the Confronting stage of bodhisattva because, [in this stage], bodhisattvas, proceeding to the attainment of knowledge of the termination of defilement through their meditations of transcendence of unobstructed wisdom and great compassion, still do not actualize that attainment in order to protect all living beings.

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686 abhimukhi, mngon du gyur pa.
687 āsravakṣayājñāna, zag pa zul pa'i mngon par shes pa.
With reference to this knowledge of the termination of defilement, there is a simile of a
man [who has just arrived in a city] in the [*Ratnacūḍā-]* sūtra.

Thus, fortunate child, bodhisattvas cause the five superknowledges to be
cultivated through practices on the basis of great effort, great exertion and high resolve.
Having the mind purified by concentration and superknowledges, they confront with the
termination of defilement. Having the mind purified by intuition from the termination of
defilements and through the cultivation of the spirit of great compassion in order to
protect all living beings; they are confronted by the termination of defilements again
when they have produced unobstructed wisdom in the Sixth Stage. Thus, bodhisattvas
who are in the "confronting" stage of bodhisattva obtain power to actualize the
termination of defilements so their state is explained as "pure."

Bodhisattvas having such natures wish to protect straying living beings with their
great compassion, proclaiming: "I shall lead others to this correct realization." While
familiarizing themselves with the techniques for the bliss of the peace, bodhisattvas do
not taste it. When looking at living beings who are confronting saṁsāra, bodhisattvas are
confronting with nirvāṇa by contrast. In order to perfect the aids to enlightenment, they
return from places of meditation and voluntarily take rebirths in the Desire-world.
Wishing to work for the sake of living beings as quickly as possible, they have obtained
the power for manifesting all kinds of bodies, as naïve people, and by taking various
rebirths [even] in the form of animals. From this point their state is explained as
"impure."

There following is another meaning of the verse [66]:

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688 I agree with Takasaki that the word "kulaputra" is probably an excess because the simile is missing and the
following passage is best seen as a paraphrase of the *Ratnacūḍā-sūtra*. But it is also possible, as Takasaki has pointed
out, that Sanskrit original and Tibetan redaction has a lacuna here. A Study on the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, 251.
Those blinded by misknowledge perceive the Buddha’s child,
Who have realized this unchangeable noumenon,
As though they were born and so on.
This is really wonderful! // 69 //
Having obtained the experiential object of noble beings,
They show themselves within the experiential object of the naive;
Thus the techniques and compassion of these friends for beings
Are truly excellent. // 70 //
Though they have transcended all worlds,
They are not separate from the world.
They act within the world for the world,
Without being affected by worldly defilement. // 71 //
Just as a lotus born of water
Is not affected by water,
Similarly, though having been born in the world,
They are never affected by worldly things. // 72 //
In order to accomplish their deeds,
Their intelligence is always burning like fire.
At the same time, they are always immersed
In meditation on the peace. // 73 //
Because of the power of [their previous prayers],
And being free from all constructive thoughts,
They do not make any effort
In order to develop living beings. // 74 //
They know precisely whichever technique
To educate disciples and whichever teaching,
Physical form, conduct and behavior
Would be most appropriate. // 75 //
In this way, those of unobstructed intelligence
Properly engage themselves in benefiting beings
As limitless as the sky,
Continually and spontaneously. // 76 //
During the aftermath of their meditation,
Bodhisattvas become equal to the Tathāgata
On account of the way in which they properly act in the worlds
To liberate living beings. // 77 //
There is however a great difference
Between bodhisattvas and the Buddha,
As those between the atom and the earth,
Or between [water] in a bull’s hoof-print and in the ocean. // 78 //

Of these ten verses taken respectively, [the first] nine verses refer to [the “purity” of
noble bodhisattvas] in comparison with the absolute defilement below the Joyous stage of
bodhisattva, and the tenth verse refers to [the "impurity"] in comparison with the supreme purity above the Cloud of Dharma stage. In brief, there is explained the purity and impurity of the four kinds of bodhisattva in the ten stages of bodhisattva. The four kinds of bodhisattvas are as follows: (1) bodhisattvas who have cultivated the spirit for the first time; (2) bodhisattvas who have engaged with deeds; (3) bodhisattvas who have reached the stage of Non-regression; and (4) bodhisattvas who are separated from enlightenment by one birth. In this regard, the first and second verses demonstrate the characteristics of pure excellences of bodhisattvas in the first Joyous stage who have cultivated the spirit for the first time, because these bodhisattvas have perceived the transcendental noumenon which had never been perceived before since the time without beginning. The third and fourth verses demonstrate the characteristics of the pure excellences of the bodhisattvas in the Immaculate stage up to the Far-reaching stage who have engaged in deeds, because these bodhisattvas perform unblemished deeds. The fifth verse demonstrates the characteristics of pure excellences of bodhisattvas in the Immovable stage who have reached the stage of Non-regression, because these bodhisattvas constantly remain in the meditation pertaining to the attainment of great enlightenment. The sixth, seventh and eighth verses demonstrate the characteristics of pure excellences of bodhisattvas in the Cloud of Dharma stage who are separated from enlightenment by one birth, because these bodhisattvas have perfected all the techniques for benefiting themselves and others and because this is their last birth prior to the attainment of the stage of Buddha, the supreme unexcelled perfect enlightenment. The ninth and tenth verses demonstrate the equality as well as the difference between bodhisattvas who have achieved perfection and the Buddha in terms of the excellences of benefiting themselves and others.
Now there comes one verse with respect to the unchangeability in the absolute pure state.

Its nature is unchangeable
Because it is endowed with inexhaustible qualities.
It is the refuge of beings
Because it has no limit in the future.
It is always non-dual
Because it is non-conceptual.
It is also of indestructible character
Because its nature is not altered. // 79 //

What is demonstrated by this verse?

It has no birth, no death,
No sickness, no aging.
Because it is eternal,
Enduring, the peace and unchanging. // 80 //
It has not birth even with mind-made body
Because it is eternal.
It has no inconceivable death
Because it is enduring. // 81 //
It is unharmed by the sickness of the subtle instincts
Because it is the peace.
It has no aging conditioned by uncontaminated [karma]
Because it is unchanging. // 82 //

While this Element of the Tathāgata is abiding on the stage of the Buddha that is absolutely immaculate, pure and naturally luminous, it has no birth even in the form of mind-made body in regard to its beginning because it is eternal. It has no death even in the manner of inconceivable transformation in regard to its end because it is enduring. It is unharmed by the disease of the producing ground of instinct for misknowledge in regard to both its beginning and end because it is the peace. It has no aging through the
development of the fruition of uncontaminated karma through lack of things and thus
unaffected because it is unchanging.

The meaning of eternity, etc.
With respect to the uncompounded element,
Is to be known respectively,
By each pair of terms. // 83 //

The distinction of each pair of terms shows the statement and exposition of the
meaning of each term - eternity, enduringness, peace and unchangeability respectively -
and should to be understood according to the [Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivatras] sutra
as the uncompounded element. It is said:

[Its unchangeable nature is the meaning of eternity
Because it is endowed with inexhaustible qualities.
Its nature of being refuge is the meaning of enduringness,
Because it exists as far as the farthest limit.
Non-duality is the meaning of the peace
Because it is of non-conceptual nature.
Indestructibility is the meaning of unchangeability
Because it is of unaltered nature.] 689

This unchangeable Truth Body, Śāriputra, is eternal because it is of
inexhaustible characteristic. This refuge Truth Body, Śāriputra, is enduring because
it exists as far as the farthest limit. This non-dual Truth Body, Śāriputra, is peace
because it is of non-conceptual nature. This indestructible Truth Body, Śāriputra, is
unchanging because it has the characteristic of being unaltered.

689 These two verses are unfound in the Chinese version and the current Sanskrit redaction. According to J. Takasaki,
these two verse appeared in rNgo-gTsug-po's translation are interpolations. A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga, 258.
There is one verse with reference to this point of "indivisible [excellences]" in connection with this pure state of the Buddha-essence that has reached the ultimate point of being absolute pure.

It is the Truth Body. It is the Tathāgata.
It is the holy truth. It is nirvāṇa.
Like the sun and its rays, excellences are indivisible.
Therefore, there is no nirvāṇa apart from the buddhahood. // 84 //

In this regard, what is demonstrated by the former half of this verse?

It should be known, in brief,
There are four synonyms, the Truth Body and so on.
Because the meaning of this immaculate element
Is classified into four aspects. // 85 //

In short, the Buddha-essence as the immaculate element has four synonyms in accordance with these four meanings. Then which are the four meanings?

It is indivisible from the Buddha qualities,
And the attainment of the gene as it is.
It is reality, neither false nor deceptive,
And natural peace from time primordial. // 86 //

With reference to [the first meaning that is the Buddha-essence, it is] indivisible from the Buddha qualities. The following statement from the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra states:

Lord, the Buddha-essence is not empty because it is possessed of the Buddha qualities that are indivisible, inseparable, and inconceivable, and are far greater in number than the sands of the Gaṅgā.
With reference to [the second meaning that] its spiritual gene has obtained the inconceivable form in terms of nature, the [Śaḍāyatana-] sūtra states as follows:

This naturally acquired [spiritual gene], coming down since beginningless time, is like the distinction of the six sense-media.

With reference to [the third meaning of] being neither false nor deceptive, the scripture\(^690\) states as follows:

In this regard, the ultimate truth is nirvāṇa that is not deceptive in terms of their entities. For what reason? Because this spiritual gene is eternal by nature being peace.

With reference to [the fourth meaning that] it is always the peace, the [Jñānālokaṇḍa-] sūtra states as follows:

Being primordially in nirvāṇa, the Tathāgata, Arhat, the perfectly enlightened ones are of neither origination nor cessation.

For these four meanings, there are four synonyms, namely, (1) Truth Body; (2) Tathāgata; (3) ultimate truth, and (4) nirvāṇa respectively. For what reason? The scriptures\(^691\) states as follows:

\(^{690}\) Unidentified.

\(^{691}\) The first passage in found in both the Jñānālokaṇḍa and the Anūnavāpīṣṭavāvanirdeśaparivāra. The remaining three passages are found in the Śrīnālīta.
Śāriputra, the so-called "the Buddha-essence" is a denomination of the Truth Body.

Lord, the Tathāgata and the Truth Body are not different from each other. Lord, the Truth Body is nothing but the Tathāgata.

The so-called "cessation of sufferings," Lord, indicates the Truth Body of the Tathāgata who is endowed with such excellences.

The so-called "ultimate element of nirvāṇa," Lord, is a denomination of the Truth Body of the Tathāgata.

Now, what is demonstrated by the latter half of the verse?

Being the perfect enlightenment regarding all kinds [of thing],
And being the elimination of defilements along with instincts,
The Buddha and nirvāṇa
Are non-dual in the ultimate sense. /* 87 */

For what reason? These four synonyms of the uncontaminated element converge into the single meaning of the Element of the Tathāgata. Therefore, these four are identical in meaning, and hence, in terms of Dharma of non-duality, "the Buddha" and "nirvāṇa" should be viewed as "indivisible" or "inseparable;" that is to say, they are "non-dual." The former is called this because of his perfect enlightenment regarding all kinds of things, and the latter is called because of its elimination of defilements along with their instincts which takes place simultaneously with the perfect enlightenment in the immaculate element.

Liberation is of the characteristic
Indivisible from the excellences, which are
Of all kinds, immeasurable, inconceivable and immaculate;
This liberation is the Tathāgata.

This point is made clear in the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra in connection to the nirvāṇa of arhats and pratyekabuddhas:
Lord, this so-called "nirvāṇa" is a technique used by buddhas.

This scriptural passage demonstrates that this [nirvāṇa of arhats and pratyekabuddhas] is a technique used by perfectly enlightened ones who are the supreme lord of Dharma in order to prevent regression, just as an illusory city in the forest is created for the exhausted travelers after their long journey. [On the other hand,] the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra states as follows:

Lord, the Tathāgata, Arhat, the perfectly enlightened ones are possessed of the immeasurable, inconceivable, and ultimate pure excellences because of their attainment of nirvāṇa.

This scriptural passage demonstrates that, having obtained nirvāṇa which is characterized as being indivisible from the accomplishment of four kinds of excellence, the perfectly enlightened ones are identified with this nirvāṇa. Therefore, as both the Buddha and nirvāṇa are possessed with an inseparable quality, no one can obtain nirvāṇa without becoming a buddha.

The buddhas are possessed of all excellences because the emptiness endowed with every supreme form (sarvākāravaratopetaśūnyatā) has been established within the immaculate element. This point is to be known through the simile of the painters [in the Ratnacūḍā-sūtra] as follows:
Compare this to painters,
Specialized in different parts.
So whichever part one knows,
The others can not understand. // 88 //
Their ruling king gives them a canvas,
With the following order:
"You all must paint my portrait on this!" // 89 //
Having received the command,
They start their work of painting.
However, one of them engaging in this work,
Leaves for a foreign land. // 90 //
Because of his absence,
Through having going to another land,
This portrait, with its all parts, would remain unfinished.
This is the simile. // 91 //
These painters are generosity, morality, tolerance, and so on.
Emptiness, endowed with every supreme form,
Is said to be the portrait. // 92 //

In regard to this, even each of these [excellences], such as generosity, etc., should be known as being "immeasurable" since it is differentiated into limitless varieties in the object of the Buddha. It is "inconceivable" on account of its number and power. It is "supremely pure" because of the removal of instinct of its resistance, such as stinginess, etc.

Through the means of concentration on emptiness endowed with every supreme form, the [tolerance of] the non-origination noumenon is obtained. Because of this attainment, [bodhisattvas] at the eighth "Immovable" stage accomplish all excellences of buddhas in the immaculate element on the basis of their non-conceptual, faultless, uninterrupted, and spontaneously engaging knowledge of path. Through innumerable ocean-like means of concentration and incantation (dhāraṇī), [bodhisattvas] at the ninth "Positively Intelligent" stage accomplish immeasurable excellences on the basis of their knowledge
of holding immeasurable qualities of the Buddha. [Bodhisattvas] at the tenth "Cloud of Dharma" stage accomplish inconceivable excellences on the basis of their knowledge of revealing the secret of all buddhas. Immediately after [this stage], the supreme pure excellences are accomplished on the basis of knowledge that liberates from addictive obscuration along with its instincts and cognitive obscuration because of the attainment of the buddhahood.

As arhats and pratyekabuddhas cannot perceive these four foundations of the intuitions in these stages, they are said to be far from the element of nirvāṇa that is characterized as being indivisible from the accomplishment of the [aforementioned] four kinds of excellence.

Wisdom, intuition, and liberation are
Clear, luminous, and pure, and are
Inseparable, thereby being similar to the light,
The rays, and the sun itself. // 93 //

Wisdom, intuition, and liberation are the illustrations of the element of nirvāṇa that is characterized as being indivisible from the accomplishment of the four kinds of excellence. They are demonstrated to be analogous to the sun in four aspects, namely, by three [respective] aspects, and by one [in general]. In this regard, (1) the transcendent non-conceptual wisdom in the continuum of the Buddha is analogous to light because it dispels darkness [that hides] the ultimate reality of the knowable object; (2) The omniscient intuition that is obtained subsequently is analogous to the luminosity of the net of rays because it engages with all aspects of knowable things in their entirety; (3) The natural liberation that is the basis of the above two is analogous to the purity of the sun because of its being absolutely free from defilements and its being luminous; and (4)
As these three are indivisible from the ultimate element in terms of their entities, they are analogous to the light, etc., through their indivisibility [from the sun].

Therefore, until buddhahood is obtained,
There is no attainment of nirvāṇa,
Just as the sun cannot be seen,
Without its light and rays.  // 94 //

This Element that is possessed of virtuous qualities as its own nature since beginningless time is the noumenon that is indivisible from the excellences of buddhas. Therefore, until the attainment of the Tathāgata which possesses unobstructed intuitive perception, it is unfeasible to actualize the realization of nirvāṇa that is characterized as the liberation from all obscurations, just as the sun cannot be seen without perceiving its light and rays. Therefore, the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra states as follows:

Lord, the realization of nirvāṇa does not exist in the inferior and superior (pratīta) things. Lord, the realization of nirvāṇa is equal to wisdom. Lord, nirvāṇa is equal to intuition, equal to liberation, and equal to the intuitive perception of liberation. Therefore, Lord, it is said that the element of nirvāṇa is of one taste, of equal taste, that is to say, [it is of one] taste with knowledge and liberation.

Like this Buddha-essence has been
Explained through the arrangement of ten aspects,
The fact that it exists within the husk of addictions,
Is known by the following similes.  //95//

Thus, with reference to the existence of the noumenon which is eternal in the way it is analogous to the ultimate limit of the future, the arrangement of this Buddha-essence

692 samvidyamānīti, rig par bya ba nyid.
has been hitherto explained by ten points. [And hereafter,] with reference to the covering of addictions which is essentially unconnected although co-existing since the beginningless time and the naturally pure noumenon which, likewise existing since the beginningless time, is essentially connected; it should be understood, by nine similes according to the [the Tathāgatagarbha-] sutra, that the Buddha-essence is concealed by the limitless coverings of addictions. What are the nine similes?

Like a buddha within faded lotus, honey amidst bees, Kernels within their husks, gold inside filth, Treasure beneath the floor, and sprout, etc. grown from a small fruit, A buddha's image in tattered rags, and // 96 // Like a king in a poor woman's womb, A precious statue existing within a clay [mould]; Similarly, this Element exists in all living beings, Obscured by the defilements of coincidental addictions. // 97 // The defilements are analogous to the lotus, the bees, The husks, filth, the floor, the fruit, the tattered rags, The woman severely afflicted by burning misery, and clay. the Buddha, honey, grain, gold, treasure, a nyagrodha tree, Precious image, supreme ruler of the world and Precious statue are akin to this supreme, immaculate Element. // 98 //

The addictions are like the petal-sheath of the faded lotus, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a buddha.

Suppose a buddha, shining with thousand marks, Were abiding within an faded lotus. When perceived by a man with the pure divine eye, It would be extracted from the petal-sheath of lotus. // 99 // Similarly, the Tathāgata sees with his Buddha-eye, His own noumenon even in those who are in the avici hells. Unobstructed, and remaining through compassion till the limit of the future, He liberates us from obscurations. // 100 // Just as a person of divine eye perceives The Tathāgata within the closed faded lotus flower, And cuts away the petals, The Tathāgata perceives the perfectly enlightened essence
Covered with the sheath of defilements, attachment, hatred, etc.,
And destroys such obscurations through compassion. // 101 //

The addictions are like honey-bees, and the Buddha-essence is akin to the honey.

Suppose a clever person, having seen
Honey surrounded by a swarm of bees,
And endeavoring to get it, with techniques,
Would separate the swarm of bees completely of it. // 102 //
Similarly, the Great Sage, with his omniscient eye,
Perceives this honey-like essence of the mind,
And brings about the complete and perfect
Elimination of the bee-like obscurations. // 103 //
Just as a man who endeavors to get honey
Surrounded by myriad bees,
Disperses them all and makes use of the honey as he planned;
The uncontaminated wisdom within living beings is like the honey.
The Defilements are like bees, and the Buddha,
Skillful victor over bee-like obscurations, is like that man. // 104 //

The addictions are like the outer husk, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to the inner kernel.

The kernel of grain is covered by the husk,
And cannot be consumed by any person;
Those seeking food and so on
Must take it out from the husk. // 105 //
Similarly, the Buddha [-essence] in living beings
Is mixed with the defilements of addictions.
As long as it is not freed from them,
It cannot perform the deeds of the Buddha in the three worlds. //106//
Just as the kernel of grain like rice, wheat, barley, etc.,
As long as they have not been fully threshed and still have beards,
Cannot be enjoyed as delicious food for humans;
The king of Dharma, present in living beings,
Having his body unreleased from the husk of addictions,
Will not grant the taste of Dharma joy,
To beings afflicted by the hunger of addictions. //107 //
The addictions are like a place rotting with filth, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to the gold.

Suppose, while walking in a hurry, a person's gold fell into a place rotting with filth. This gold, being of indestructible nature, would remain there as it was for many centuries. Then a god with the pure divine eye, seeing it there, would tell a man: "Here is a piece of gold, cleanse this supreme precious thing, and fashion it into something valuable."

Similarly, the Muni perceives the excellences of living beings drowned in filth-like addictions, and pours the rain of Holy Dharma over all beings in order to purify that mire of addictions. Just as a god, perceiving the gold fallen into a place rotting with filth, showed it with great insistence to the people that most beautiful of things so that it might be completely cleansed; perceiving the victor, the precious perfect buddhahood, within all beings has fallen into addiction's great mire, the Victor teaches them Dharma in order to purify it.

The addictions are like underground, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a treasure of jewels.

Suppose there was an inexhaustible treasure beneath the floor within a poor man's house. This man does not know of it. Also the treasure cannot say to him, "Here I am!" Similarly, though in the mind there is a treasure of jewels, the immaculate noumenon, neither established nor negated, without recognizing it, these living beings constantly experience sufferings of poverty in various ways. Just as a treasure of jewels in the house of a poor man would not say to him, 'I, the treasure of jewels, am here' nor the man would know it to be there; all beings, who have the treasure of Dharma in the house of their mind, are like the poor man; to enable those beings to obtain this treasure, the Sage has taken rebirth, perfectly.
The addictions are like the sheath of fruit-skin, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to [the quality of] a sprout contained within a seed.

The imperishable quality [capable of producing] a sprout is contained within a seed of the fruit of a mango tree and the like. When in the presence of ploughed soil, water and so on, the sprout will gradually grow into the nature of a kingly tree. Likewise, enclosed within the fruit-skin of Misknowledge, etc., of living beings, is the pure ultimate Element. And so, by depending on this and that virtue, it gradually transforms into the nature of a King of Muni. Just as a tree grows from within the skin of a banana or mango fruit, conditioned by water, sunshine, air, soil, time and space; the seed and the sprout of perfect buddhahood, contained within the fruit-skin of addictions of living beings, conditioned by this and that virtue, Dharma will emerge and increase.

The addictions are like the tattered rags, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a precious image.

Suppose a buddha image made of precious jewels, wrapped in tattered, smelly rags, and fallen on a road, were seen by a god. In order to retrieve it, he would point it out to travelers about this matter. Likewise, the one who has an unobstructed eye perceives, even in animals, the nature of the Tathāgata wrapped in the various forms of addictions, and, for the purpose of liberating it, demonstrates the techniques. Just as a god with divine eye, seeing a buddha image wrapped in smelly rags and fallen on a road, would point it out to people in order to retrieve it; the Victor, perceiving even in animals, the Element fallen on the road of saṃsāra, wrapped in tattered rags of addiction, teach the Dharma in order that it be liberated.

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The addictions are like a pregnant woman, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a cakravartin contained in the embryonic elements.

Suppose an ugly woman, unprotected,
And staying in a shelter for the homeless,
Bore a glorious king inside her womb,
Yet did not realize that a ruler existed within her abdomen.  // 121 //
Birth in saṃsāra is like a shelter for the homeless.
Impure living beings are like the pregnant woman.
And the immaculate Element is like that within the womb;
Owing to having it, one is protected.  // 122 //
Just as an ugly woman, dressed in dirty cloths,
Is experiencing the greatest pain in a shelter for the homeless,
even though the ruler is inside her womb;
Even though the protector resides within,
Living beings believe themselves unprotected,
And never find peace by the power of addictions,
So remaining in the basis of suffering.  // 123 //

The addictions are like a clay mould, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a golden image.

Suppose that inside [a mould] there were a complete, peaceful statue of melted gold.
But outside is in the nature of dirt.
By seeing and knowing of it, a person
Would remove the outer covering to expose the gold inside.  // 124 //
Likewise, the one who has attained the supreme enlightenment,
Thoroughly seeing the nature [of the mind] is luminosity, and
Defilements are coincidental,
Purifies living beings, resembling jewel-mines, from obscurations.  // 125 //
Just as an expert removes the clay, knowing of a peaceful statue,
Made of pure, shining gold, enclosed within;
The omniscient knows of the peaceful mind,
Which is like pure gold, and removes obscurations
By means of expounding Dharma, like chipping away the clay.  // 126 //

The summarized meaning of the similes is as follows:
Within a lotus, amidst bees,
Inside the husk, filth, and ground,
Within the fruit-skin, within tattered rags,
In the womb of a woman, and inside clay // 127 //
Is that like a buddha, the honey,
The grain, the gold, a treasure,
A tree, a precious image,
A cakravartin, and a golden image. // 128 //
Similarly, it is said that the immaculate nature
Of the mind is beginningless, and is not bound
By the covering of living being's addictions,
Though being beginningless as well. // 129 //

In brief, these similes given in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra demonstrate the fact that,
for all living beings, the defiling factors over their beginningless minds are coincidental,
whereas the pure qualities are simultaneous with and inseparable from the mind without
beginning. Therefore, the sūtra states as follows:

Living beings are defiled because of the defilements on the mind; they are pure
because their mind is pure by nature.

In this regard, with reference to which the nine similes, the sheath of lotus, etc., have
been demonstrated? Which are the defilements on the mind?

Attachment, hatred and misknowledge,
Their intense outbursts and instincts,
The eliminations of the paths of insight and meditation,
And [those related to] the impure and pure stages - // 130 //
These nine defilements are demonstrated well
By the similes of the sheath of lotus and so forth.
The coverings of secondary defilements
Have limitless millions of divisions. // 131 //
In brief, these nine kinds of addictions are coincidental in connection to the Element of the Tathāgata that is pure by nature, just as the sheath of a lotus, etc., [is coincidental] to a buddha's image, etc. What are the nine addictions? They are, namely: (1) the addiction characterized as the latent state of attachment; (2) the addiction characterized as the latent state of hatred; (3) the addiction characterized as the latent state of misknowledge; (4) the addiction characterized as the intense outburst of attachment, hatred, and misknowledge; (5) the addiction included in the ground of instincts for misknowledge; (6) the addiction to be eliminated by [the Path of] Insight; (7) the addiction to be eliminated by [the Path of] Meditation; (8) the addiction related to the impure stages; and (9) the addiction related to the pure stages.

In regard to this, (1-3) the addictions which exist in the continua of those worldly people who are freed from attachment, and, being the cause of synthetic activity that accumulate immovable karma, give rise to the material and the immaterial worlds, and which are to be destroyed by transcendental intuition. These are called the addictions characterized as the latent state of attachment, hatred and misknowledge. (4) Those which exist in the continua of those living beings who indulge in attachment, etc., and which, being the cause of synthetic activity that accumulate merit and demerit karma, give rise only to the desire world, and are to be destroyed by the wisdom of the meditation on impurity, etc. They are called the addictions characterized by the intense outburst of attachment, hatred and misknowledge. (5) Those which exist in the continua of arhats, being the cause that produces the uncontaminated karma, give rise to the pure mind-made bodies, and which are to be destroyed by the Tathāgata's intuition of enlightenment. These are called the addictions included in the ground of instincts for misknowledge.
There are two kinds of person who enters higher education [on the path]: ordinary people and noble ones. In this regard, (6) those which exist in the continua of ordinary people in being educated on the path, and which are to be destroyed by the wisdom obtained through the first insight into transcendent reality are called the addictions to be eliminated by [the Path of} Insight. And, (7) those which exist in the continua of noble ones in being educated on the path, and which are to be destroyed by the wisdom of the meditation on transcendent reality, perceiving it as it is, are called the addictions to be eliminated by [the path of] meditation. (8) Those which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas who have not reached the ultimate perfection, and which are, in disagreement to the wisdom obtained on the [first] seven stages, to be destroyed by the wisdom of the meditation of the three stages, the eighth stage, etc., are called the addictions related to the impure stages. (9) Those which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas who have reached the ultimate perfection, and which, in disagreement to the wisdom obtained through the meditation of the [last] three stages beginning with the eighth, to be destroyed by the wisdom of the "Vajra-like" concentration are called the addictions related to the pure stages.

These nine addictions, attachment and so on,
In short, are respectively demonstrated well
By the nine similes of,
The sheath of lotus and so on. // 132 //

And, if taken in detail, these addictions can be differentiated into 84,000 types, and hence, are as infinite as the Tathāgata's intuition. On this point, the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra states that the Buddha-essence is covered by the sheath of addictions with limitless divisions.
By these defilements, the naïve,  
Arhats, persons in being educated, and the wise,  
Are respectively contaminated by  
Four, one, two and two. // 133 //

The Lord states [in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra] that all living beings are possessed with the Buddha-essence. Here, "all living beings," in brief, refer to the four types of beings. They are: (1) naïve people; (2) arhats; (3) persons in being educated [on the path]; and (4) bodhisattvas. These are defiled by four, one, two, and again by two kinds [of addictions] respectively, in connection with [the obscurations to] the uncontaminated element.

Furthermore, how should the respective similarity between nine addictions, attachment, etc., and the sheath of lotus, etc., be understood? How should the Buddhah-essence be understood to be being analogous to a buddha's image and so forth?

Just as a lotus, grown from the mire,  
Delights the mind when first appearing,  
But later that delight disappears,  
So is attachment's joy. // 134 //  
Just as a swarm of bees  
Sting when irritated;  
Likewise, when hatred arises,  
It brings suffering to the heart. // 135 //  
Just as the kernel of rice and so on  
Are obscured by the external husk;  
Likewise, the perception of the meaning of the essence,  
Is obscured by the covering of misknowledge. // 136 //  
Just as filth is something unpleasant;  
Those having attachment  
Engage in passion - in this way  
Intense outbursts are similar to filth. // 137 //  
Suppose that wealth is obscured.  
Not knowing it, that treasure cannot be obtained;  
Likewise, that self-arising [intuition] in living beings is obscured  
By the earth of instincts for misknowledge. // 138 //
Just as the sprout and such gradually grow
And split the skin of the seed;
Likewise, the perception of reality overcomes those
To be eliminated by [the path of] insight. // 139 //
Having connected with the noble path,
For those who have overcome the essence of the futile views,
Those to be eliminated by the wisdom of the path of meditation
Are demonstrated to be similar to the tattered rags. // 140 //
The defilements related to the seven stages
Are similar to the impurities of the womb.
Release from that womb is like the
Non-conceptual intuition, well matured. // 141 //
The defilements related to the three stages
Are known as like stains of mud,
The objects to be destroyed by
The Lord' vajra-like concentration. // 142 //
Thus the nine defilements, attachment and so on,
Are analogous to the lotus and the other.
Because the Element is included within the threefold nature,
It is similar to the similes of the Buddha [image] and so on. // 143 //

The analogy between the Buddha-essence, being the cause for purifying the mind, and a buddha's image, etc., should be understood with reference to the threefold nature [of the Buddha-essence]. What is the threefold nature?

The natures of this [Essence] are the Truth Body,
Reality, and also spiritual genes. They are known by three,
One, and five similes. // 144 //

This Element as being of the nature of the Truth Body is understood by the [first] three similes: the Buddha image, the honey and the kernel [of grains]. Its being of the nature of reality is understood by one simile: the gold. Its being of the nature of the spiritual genes from which the Buddha's three bodies are produced is understood by [the

\[^{694}\text{cittayavad\text{	extasciitilde}bahetu. rNgog-lo' s translation reads }\text{sems kyi rnam par byang ba' khams ("the pure Element of the mind").}^\]
remaining] five similes: the treasure, the tree, the precious image, the cakravartin, and the golden statue.

Here, how is the Truth Body understood?

The Truth Body is known in two aspects:
The ultimate element, which is perfect immaculate;
Its natural outflow, the profound teaching
And that taught in diverse ways. // 145 //

The buddhas' Truth Body should be understood in two aspects: (1) perfect immaculate ultimate element is the object experienced directly by the non-conceptual [intuition]. Moreover, this is known with reference to the Dharma realized by the Tathāgatas' individual introspective wisdom; (2) natural outflow (nisyanda, rgyu mthun pa) of perfect immaculate ultimate element as the cause for its attainment, from which comes forth the teaching for other beings according to their educational needs. Moreover, this is known with reference to the Dharma to be taught. The teaching is further divided into two, according to the means of arranging either subtle or extensive Dharma: (a) the teaching expounding the ultimate reality, the way of profound Dharma, in the scriptural collection for bodhisattvas; and (b) the aphorisms, the discourses in prose and verse mingled, prophecy, verses, the special utterances, the narration, etc., expounding the superficial reality, a variety of things.

Because of being transcendent, there is
No conceivable analogy with it in the world.
Thus, the Tathāgata and the Element
Are demonstrated as being similar. // 146 //
The subtle, profound teaching
Is like the one taste of honey;
While the teaching on various aspects
Are known as like the kernel of various grains. // 147 //
Thus, the statement that "living beings are possessed with the Buddha-essence" is made with these three similes: the Buddha's image, the honey and the kernel, with reference to the meaning that, with no exception, the Tathāgatas' Truth Body is all-pervading in living beings. Indeed, there is no one among living beings who remains outside of the Tathāgatas' Truth Body, just as no the material can exist outside of space since [the Sūtrakārā] states as follows:

Just as space is always all-pervading,
Similarly, this is accepted as being all-pervading.
Just as space is always pervasive in the material,
Similarly, this is pervasive in all living beings.

Being unchangeable by nature,
Virtuous and pure,
Reality is therefore said
To be like the forms of gold. // 148 //

Being associated with limitless addictions and sufferings notwithstanding, the mind does not show any change because of its being naturally luminous. Therefore, it is called "reality" in the sense of being unchangeable like excellent gold. Furthermore, without difference in nature, all living beings will join the rank of "the Tathāgata" whenever they have purified all coincidental addictions, even those who have the causes of definite wrong-doing. Thus, the statement that "living beings are possessed of the Buddha-essence" is made by this simile of gold, in reference to the meaning that reality is indivisible. Having in view the nature of the mind, the pure and non-dual noumenon, the Lord states [in the Jñānālokaśākṣha-sūtra] the following:
Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata knows full well his own substantial basis, and hence, he protects. Through his own purity, he has understood the purity of living beings. His own purity and the purity of the living beings are non-dual; they cannot be divided into two.

It is also stated in [the Sūtrālamkāra] as follows:

Though being undifferentiated among all,
The reality, after purification,
Is buddhahood; therefore, all living beings
Are possessed with the Buddha-essence.

Like a treasure and a fruit tree,
The spiritual gene is known to be twofold:
That by nature existent without beginning, and
That supreme developmental. // 149//
By this twofold gene, a buddha's
Three bodies are considered to be obtained:
The first body by the former;
The other two by the latter. // 150 //
The beautiful Natural Body is
Known to be like a precious statue,
Not created by nature,
As well as the precious treasure of excellences. // 151 //
Owing to possession of the kingdom of the great Dharma,
The perfect Beatific [Body] is analogous to the cakravartin.
Because of being in the nature of a reflective image,
The Incarnational [Body] is like a golden statue. // 152 //

Thus, the Element of the Tathāgata is demonstrated to be the essence of all living beings with these five similes: a treasure, a tree, a precious image, a cakravartin, and a golden statue, with reference to the fact that there exist the spiritual genes which produce a buddha's three bodies. Indeed, the buddhahood is distinguished by a buddha's three bodies. Therefore, since the Element of the Tathāgata is the cause of the attainment [of
these three bodies], the word "Element" is here used in the sense of "cause." So it is said that there exists in each of living being the essence, the established Element of the Tathāgata. But these living beings do not know about it.

The Buddha states [in the Mahāyānābhidharmasūtra] as follows:

The Element that exists without beginning
Is the foundation of all things.
Because of its existence, there is samsāra,
And the attainment of nirvāṇa.

Here, how is it that "it exists without beginning?" It has been taught and ascertained by the Buddha, with reference to the Buddha-essence, that "beginning-limit is not to be perceived." As to the "Element," the Buddha states [in the Śrīmālā-sūtra] as follows:

Lord, this Buddha-essence is the essence of transcendent qualities, and the essence of naturally pure qualities.

As to the statement "the foundation of all things," this Sūtra states as follows:

Therefore, Lord, the Buddha-essence is the foundation, basis, and support of the uncompounded things, which are connected, not dissociated, and impossible to be separated. [At the same time], Lord, this Buddha-essence is also the foundation, basis, and support of the compounded things, which are unconnected, dissociated, and possible to be separated.
As to the statement "because of its existence, there is samsāra," the Sūtra states as follows:

Owing to the existence of the Buddha-essence, Lord, this essence is designated as "samsāra."

As to the statement "and the attainment of nirvāṇa," the Sūtra states as follows:

Lord, if there were no the Buddha-essence, there would be neither aversion towards suffering nor desire, longing, and prayer towards nirvāṇa.

Furthermore, this Buddha-essence, which is vast as the Truth Body, has the characteristic indivisible from the Tathāgata, and is of nature of the definitive gene, exists the whole time among all living beings without distinction. This fact should be perceived on the valid evidence of the noumenon. The Buddha states [in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra] as follows:

Fortunate child, this is the noumenon of things. Whether the Tathāgata appears in the world or not, these living beings are always possessed with the Buddha-essence.

[The reasoning of] the noumenon here refers to the reasoning (yukti), syllogism (yoga), or the means (upāya) which realizes that things would reasonably become such and not otherwise. One should not conceive of the ascertainment or the proper
understanding itself as the realization or the reasoning of the. This [noumenon] is not accessible to constructive thought. It is accessible only to faith.

Self-arisen ones' ultimate reality
Can be understood only by faith,
[Just as] the radiating sun
Cannot be perceived by the blind. // 153 //

In brief, there are four kinds of individuals who are classified as being blind to the Buddha-essence. Who are these four? They are: (1) naïve people; (2) śrāvakas; (3) pratyekabuddhas; and (4) bodhisattvas who have just entered the vehicle, as the Buddha states [in the Śrīmālā-sūtra] as follows:

Lord, for those who have fallen into the futile view, for those who attach to misconceptions, for those whose mind has deviated from emptiness, the Buddha-essence is not their object of experience.

In this regard, "those who have fallen into the futile view" refer to (1) naïve people. Indeed, they cannot believe in uncontaminated element which stops the futile view, because of their habitual adherence to egoism and possessiveness by accepting a personal self and property in connection with contaminated things such as the aggregates, etc. Being so, how could they be expected to cognize the Buddha-essence that is the object of the omniscient [the Buddha]? This is impossible.

[Next,] "those who attach to misconceptions" refer to (2) śrāvakas and (3) pratyekabuddhas. Why? This is because, although the Buddha-essence should be meditated upon as being eternal, they indulge in the meditation on the notion of
impermanence instead of meditating upon the notion of eternity. Likewise, although the Buddha-essence should be meditated upon as being blissful, they indulge in the meditation on the notion of suffering instead of meditating upon the notion of bliss. Although the Buddha-essence should be meditated upon as being regarded as being self, they nevertheless indulge in the meditation on the notion of selflessness instead of meditating upon the notion of self. And, though the Buddha-essence should be meditated upon as being pure, they indulge in the meditation on the notion of impurity instead of meditating upon the notion of purity. Thus, this enumeration explains that this Element, which is characterized as the supreme eternity, the supreme bliss, the supreme self, and the supreme purity, is also not the object experienced by any śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha because they indulge in the path which is in direct contradiction to the attainment of the Truth Body. As to this fact that [the Element] is not the object experienced by those who indulge in misconceptions with the notions of impermanence, suffering, selflessness, and impurity, the Lord has explicated in detail in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* with the example of a jewel in the pond. It runs as follows:

Bhikṣus, suppose that in the hot season, people put on their swimsuits and were playing in the water with various ornaments and enjoyments. Suppose then, someone would lose a valuable vaidūrya jewel in the water. Thus, in order to retrieve this vaidūrya jewel, all the people, leaving aside their ornaments, would dive into the water. They would mistake pebbles or gravel in the pond for the real jewel, take them out, thinking: "I have got the jewel!" Looking at them from the bank of the pond, they would notice: "It is not the jewel at all!" Meantime, the water of that pond would seem to shine by the power of that jewel. Such perception would make them realize its quality and proclaim: "How wonderful!" Then, a skillful and intelligent person would get the real jewel out.

Likewise, bhikṣus, you who are ignorant of ultimate reality of things, meditate with all perceptual habits, maintaining that all things are impermanent, that all things are suffering, that all things are selfless, and all things are impure, and meditate repeatedly and increasingly. But all these attempts are useless. Therefore, bhikṣus, you should become skillful, not taking those like the pebbles or gravel in the pond.
Bhikṣus, these things upon which you meditate with all perceptual habits, maintaining that all things are impermanent, that all things are suffering, that all things are selfless, and all things are impure, and mediate repeatedly and increasingly, are [actually] eternal, blissful, pure, and possessed of self.

These [perceptual habits] should be understood in detail, according to the scripture, as misconceptions with regard to the arrangement of ultimate reality of things.

[Lastly,] "those whose minds have deviated from emptiness" refer to (4) bodhisattvas who have just entered the vehicle, deprived of [the understanding of] the Buddha-essence with regard to emptiness. They are the people who either accept emptiness as the door to liberation because it destroys phenomena, thinking that nirvāṇa means annihilation and destruction of any current existence, or have the apprehension of emptiness as being an entity that is different from material, etc., and that is the one which we should realize, upon which we should meditate.

Then, how is this Buddha-essence expressed with regard to emptiness?

From this there is nothing whatever to be removed
And absolutely nothing to be added;
Reality should be perceived correctly,
And correct perception comes into liberation. // 154 //
The Element is empty of the coincidental [defilements],
Which have a character separable from it.
It is not empty of the unexcelled qualities
Of character indivisible from it. // 155 //

What is demonstrated by this statement? There is no cause of defilement whatever which is to be removed from this naturally pure Element of the Tathāgata since it is by nature devoid of coincidental defilements. Also, there is no cause of purification at the
slightest which is to be added to it since its nature is the noumenon\textsuperscript{695} indivisible from the pure qualities. Therefore, the Buddha states [in the \textit{Śrīmālā-sūtra}] as follows:

The Buddha-essence is empty of all the sheath of addictions that can be differentiated and separated [from the essence]. The Buddha-essence is not empty of the Buddha's qualities that are inconceivable, far beyond the sand grains of the Gaṅgā in number and cannot be differentiated and inseparable [from the essence].

Thus, the [fact] that something does not exist is correctly observed as "emptiness of something." The [fact] that something remains is correctly known as "rational existence."\textsuperscript{696} These two verses demonstrate the exact definition of "emptiness" because [they teach about it] as being free of two extremes of reification and repudiation.

Those whose minds have deviated from emptiness and are distracted, neither doing meditation nor concentration upon it, are called by this reason "those whose minds have deviated from emptiness." Indeed, lacking intuition of ultimate emptiness, no one would be able to realize and obtain the pure reality which is free of constructive thought. Intending this point, the Buddha states [in the \textit{Śrīmālā-sūtra}] as follows:

The intuition of the Buddha-essence is nothing but the buddhas' intuition of emptiness. This Buddha-essence has never been perceived, has never been realized by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.

\textsuperscript{695} No equivalent is found in E.H. Johnson's Sanskrit edition.

\textsuperscript{696} \textit{rtag par yod}. No equivalent for \textit{rtag par} is found in E.H. Johnson's Sanskrit edition.
This Buddha-essence in terms of being the essence of the ultimate element is said to be the object not experienced by those who have fallen into the futile view, since the ultimate element is an antidote to such view. The Buddha-essence in terms of being the Truth Body, the essence of transcendent qualities, is said to be the object not experienced by those who indulge in misconceptions, since the Truth Body is demonstrated as being an antidote to the worldly things, such as impermanence, etc. The Buddha-essence in terms of being the Truth Body, the essence of the perfectly pure qualities, is said to be the object not experienced by those whose mind has mentally deviated from emptiness, since the transcendent Truth Body, from which the pure excellences are indivisible, is by nature empty of coincidental defilements which are separable.

Being the realization of [the Element] with reference to the unique intuition that is undifferentiated from the ultimate element, this perception of the natural purity of the transcendent Truth Body is here accepted as the slight observation of the Buddha-essence by bodhisattvas who are abiding in the ten stages, as stated [in the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prājñāpāramitā-sūtra]:

> Even by noble ones with pure vision of wisdom,
> You cannot be perceived fully,
> Since their intellect is still partial,
> Just as the sun in the sky [is seen] through a gap in clouds.
> Lord, your Truth Body can be only perceived
> By those with limitless intellect,
> Which pervades everything knowable
> Infinite like space.

[Question:] If this Buddha-essence is thus so difficult to cognize inasmuch as it is not always the object even for supreme noble ones who are abiding on the stage characterized as being ultimately free of attachment, then what is the use of this teaching to the naïve?
[Reply:] There are two verses summarizing the purpose of this teaching: the first is a qualm, and the second is the response.

It has been taught in this and that scripture
That all knowables are ever empty - like clouds, dreams, and illusions;
Why has the Buddha declared here again
The existence of the Buddha-essence in living beings? // 156 //
Being disheartened, contempt for inferior beings,
Apprehending the unreal, repudiating reality,
Excessive attachment to oneself: To those with these five faults,
It has been taught for the purpose of dispelling them. // 157 //

The meaning of these two verses should be known briefly by the following ten verses:

It has been said that the reality-limit is ever empty
Of compounded things, and hence,
Addictions, karma, and retributions,
Are like clouds and so forth. // 158 //
Addictions are likened to the clouds,
Karma is like the experience in dreams
And the aggregates, the retributions of addictions and karma,
Are likened to illusions made by magic. // 159 //
So has it been arranged previously,
And again, in this Uttaratantra,
In order to dispel these five faults,
The existence of the Buddha-essence has been taught. // 160 //
Indeed, not learning this,
Some of them, being disheartened,
Caused by the fault of self-contempt,
Will never cultivate the spirit of enlightenment. // 161 //
Someone has cultivated this spirit,
Through pride, thinking: "I am better!"
They insistently accept the notion that
Those who have not cultivated this spirit are inferior. // 162 //
Correct understanding will never arise
In those who think in this way.
Thus, since they are apprehending the unreal,
They will not cognize the reality. // 163 //
These faults of living beings are not real
As they are a reification and coincidental.
In reality, these faults do not have a self,
While the excellences are pure by nature. // 164 //
If one apprehends the unreal faults,
And repudiates the real excellences,
One will not obtain the loving-kindness by which
The wise sees the equality between oneself and others. // 165 //
On the contrary, through learning this teaching,
There arises enthusiasm, respect as for the Teacher,
Wisdom, intuition, and great love. // 166 //
Because of the production of these five qualities,
The fault will be absent and the equality will be perceived.
Being devoid of faults and possessed with excellences,
Recognizing the equality between oneself and living beings,
One will swiftly obtain the buddhahood. // 167 //

Finished is the exposition of the first summary verse with reference to the Buddha-
essence in the Ratnagotravibhāgaḥāyānottaratantra as well as the exposition of
reality which is mingled with defilements.
2. The *Theg pa chen po rgyud bla ma'i jikā*  

(Chapter One: 1a-72a and 64a-170b)

[1a-72a]  

[Opening Verses]  

I bow down to the reverend Gurus,  
Who made that jewel torch of the Buddha’s teaching,  
With impeccable reasoning,  
Shine like pure gold through melting, cutting, and rubbing.  
I bow my head to the feet of that excellent mentor,  
The superb exegete of the Teachings,  
Uprooting all mistakes by the power of intelligence,  
Who perfected excellent accomplishments of the elimination and realization,  
Emblazing three realms with his luminous fame,  
And looked after all beings with compassion like his children.  
I bow to Maitreya, the empowered regent of the King of Munis,  
Who was the superb guide for gods and human,  
And to Bodhisattva Mañjughosa,  
The embodiment of all Victor’s wisdom.  
Asaṅga, illustrious in this three realms,
Foretold by the Victor as an exegete,
Who would elucidate the interpretable meaning and the definitive meaning of
the scriptures of the Victor,
Clearly discriminate the connotation of the words of that superb text;
However, those pretentious people made arbitrary claims,
Believing non-Buddhist philosophy to be the intention of Muni,
Thereby, damaging the system of this Champion.
It is extremely hard to realize the inner meaning of scriptures;
And the liability of erroneous explanation about the noble Dharma is severe.
It is also difficult to have excellent mentors,
Thus, intelligent ones should always remain discreet!
The ambrosia of the noble Dharma has exquisite taste,
Whoever enjoys will be bestowed with immortal state.
Conforming to the reverend mentor's teaching,
I shall elucidate the precious import of the scriptures of the first wheel and the
middle wheel.

[Asanga and the Five Treatises of Maitreya]
This life, which has leisure and opportunity, is so difficult to find and is greatly
meaningful. In this lifetime, we should do something better than the worldly systems of
our ancestors. Instead of putting in effort to gain profit and respect for this life alone,
which are like chaff in the wind, we should lay a sound foundation for achieving the
provisional and ultimate aims of future lives. Having known that our behaviors are no
more than that of animals, we shall make earnest endeavor to seize the essence of leisure and opportunity.

The personification of validating reason (the Buddha) established the spiritual paths and fruitions that noble beings had passed through in the past, or are passing through now, or will pass through in the future. We, the followers of their system, shall comprehend their imports, and then proceed to practice in the appropriate manner by means of three precious educations. We shall realize that there is no other finer ways to please the Victors.

Asaṅga, the noble Master, had done excellent deeds towards Victors, cultivated vast virtuous roots in the past. Now, he is under the care and protection of buddhas and bodhisattvas. His intelligence is superior. He fulfilled his aspiration to take on responsibility towards the Lord Buddha Śākyamuni’s doctrine. He was also foretold to be a perfect exegete of inner meaning of both definitive scriptures and interpretable scriptures. Asaṅga realized that future disciples of Buddhism are similar to passengers going-astray when they study ocean like Mahāyāna scriptures. It is hard to understand the connection between two words [in the scriptures], let alone the extremely profound meanings. He also knew that all secrets of the Tathāgata remain obscure to him. Thus, he went to meditate in order to please the noble Regent (Maitreya), to whose eyes all secrets of Muni are no longer obscure, thereby achieving desired result. Finally, Asaṅga could see Maitreya directly. By the miraculous power of the Lord (Maitreya), Asaṅga arrived in the Tuṣita heaven where he received teachings and fully understood the intentions of all scriptures. For the purpose of helping future disciples of Jambudvīpa, Asaṅga showered us with gifts of noble Dharma.
There are five great treatises of Maitreya: two Alamkāras: the Mahāyāna-sūtrālāmākāra and the Abhisamayālāmākāra; two Vibhāgas: the Madhyaanta-vibhāga and the Dharma-dharmatā-vibhāga; and the Mahāyānottaratantra.

It is said that there are, in general, two ways to discriminate between the interpretable meaning and the definitive meaning with respect to the scriptures taught by Lord. One method is told in the scriptures such as the Aksayamatinirdeśa-sūtra and the Samādhīrāja-sūtra, and the other one is found in the Samādhinimocana-sūtra. The former system demonstrates that those scriptures, which are the teaching of emptiness of intrinsic identifiability⁶⁹⁷ of all things, are definitive in meaning, and those scriptures, which are the teaching of “person,” “aggregate,” etc., with various words and letters, are interpretable in meaning. The latter Samādhinimocana-sūtra teaches that, while the imagined [nature]⁶⁹⁸ is not established by means of any intrinsic identity,⁶⁹⁹ the relative⁷⁰⁰ and perfect⁷⁰¹ [natures] have intrinsically identifiable status. Thus, a scripture that either unilaterally teaches all things to be not established with intrinsic identity, or unilaterally teaches all things to be established with intrinsic identity, is said to be interpretable in meaning. A scripture that clearly differentiate between [some things] being established with intrinsic identity and [other things] being not established with intrinsic identity is said to be definitive in meaning.

Following the former [group of scriptures, i.e. the Aksayamatinirdeśa-sūtra and the Samādhīrāja-sūtra], the Savior Nāgārjuna pioneered the way for Champions for differentiating the interpretable meaning and the definitive meaning, thereby proving

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⁶⁹⁷ svalaksanāsiddha, rang gi mtshan nyid gyis grub pa.
⁶⁹⁸ parikalpita, kun brtags.
⁶⁹⁹ svalaksanāsiddha, rang gi mtshan nyid.
⁷⁰⁰ paratntra, gzhon dbang.
⁷⁰¹ parinispanna, yongs grub.
without effort that the second scripture [the *Samdhinimocana-sūtra*] is interpretable in meaning; Asaṅga, the noble Master, mainly pioneered the way for Champions of the Vijñānavāda system, according to the criterion of distinction laid down in the *Samdhinimocana-sūtra*, by following two *Vibhāgas* and the *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkāra*. In addition, he explicated the intention of the corpus of Hinayāna scriptures.

The *Dharma-dharmatā-vibhāga* teaches that *dharma* (things) are the basis of the creation of saṃsāra, the relative [nature] with the truth-status where the subject-object duality appears, and *dharmatā* (noumenon) is emptiness of substantial subject-object duality, which is the support of the attainment of liberation by means of being the object of meditation. Having taken the truth-status of dualistic perception as the basis, the *Madhyānta-vibhāga* [4] discriminates three natures, and presents the arrangement of the basis, path and fruition for both common and uncommon vehicles. Likewise, the *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṃkāra* does not refute the truth-status of dualistic perception, and ascertains in detail what the methods are used to refine a bodhisattva’s realization, starting from the means of awakening his or her genetic potential for the Mahāyāna, as well as the means of tutoring other types of disciples. There is no clear articulation in these three texts of the ultimate reality as the emptiness of identifiable intrinsic status, but rather a kind of the ultimate reality merely in accordance with the inclination of disciples. Following those treatises, this Master pioneered the way for Champions of the Vijñānavādin system in his five *Bhūmis* and two *Samgrahas*, conforming to the *Samdhinimocana’s* way of differentiation between the interpretable meaning and the definitive meaning. It is mentioned in the *Śrāvaka-bhūmi* that a certain Hinayāna scripture

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702 satyasiddha, bden par grub pa.
703 *grāhyagrahaka-drayavabheda, gzung 'dein rdzas tha dad
goitra, riggs.
704 paramārttha, don dam pa.
teaches the way how a rhinoceros-like pratyekabuddha and someone who has genetic potential for the Mahāyāna progress in one session to the "warmth" level of the Application Path and above, after having accumulated stores on the Accumulation Path for one hundred eons and three incalculable eons respectively. In spite of the fact that the Ābhisamāyālamkāra reiterates the ultimate view on emptiness, its overriding concern is to ascertain nature, numeration, and sequence of the realizations of three kinds of spiritual gene possessor in stages. Those are the hidden meanings of the [Prajñāpāramitā] sūtra in three lengths: extensive, middling and brief.

As to the Mahāyānotaratantra, it should be taught to the Vijñānavādins at a later time when they have become spiritually mature by getting used to the way of the Vijñānavāda first. It can be taught at first, however, to superb intelligent ones who have spiritual genetic potential for the Mahāyāna. This treatise clearly shows that there is no divergence between the [Prajñāpāramitā] sūtra in three lengths: extensive, middling, and brief, and the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra in terms of truthlessness of all things, i.e. the ultimate reality without any reifications, which, as the object of the paths, has to be realized in order to attain even the enlightenment of the Śrāvakayāna or the enlightenment of the Pratyekabuddhayāna. It is the main doctrine of this treatise. The Master clearly explicates this doctrine conforming to [Maitreya's] intention.

With reference to the "path wisdom," the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra statement is:

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706. khaṅgavāṃṣākalya, bse ru lta bu.
707. ekāsana, stan yeṣig.
708. bḥāva, ngo bo.
709. * gorroka, riga can.
710. bden paṣ stongs pa.
711. mūrgajikana, lam shes.
For those who have entered [the state of] complete faultlessness, they are unable to cultivate the spirit of perfect enlightenment. Why? That is because they have cut off the continuum of samsāra.

When commenting on this passage, Haribhadra mentions that the noble Master Nāgārjuna is the advocate of the "unique vehicle"712 and the Master Asaṅga is the advocate of the "multiple vehicles."713 However, the difference between these two Masters' ways of explanation is intentional because Asaṅga pioneered the way of Champions by demonstrating that there are three ultimate vehicles for the sake of helping those who have genetic potential for the Viśiṇṇavāda but the Master himself should not be thought of as a Viśiṇṇavādin. If not, it would be in contradiction to the fact that in the commentary Asaṅga establishes the "ultimate unique vehicle" and determines the subtle emptiness in great detail. We should therefore not think of this Master as the one who pioneered different way of Champions other than what Nāgārjuna did for he was indeed truly an adherent of Nāgārjuna.

1. The Import of Title

1.1. Translation

The translation of this treatise's Sanskrit title Mahāyānottaratānta is as follows: mahaś is "universal;" yanaś is "vehicle;" anuttara or uttaraś is "later;" tantraś is "continuum;" and treatiseś is "treatise."

712 ekayāna, theg pa gcig.
713 theg pa sna tshogs su sna ba.
1.2. Explanation

The word "vehicle" refers to both the traveling causal vehicle and the traveled frutional vehicle. That vehicle is called "universal," since it is blessed with the sevenfold greatness such as the great apprehension in terms of the apprehension of an extensive corpus. "Continuum" means continuation\(^{714}\) (rgyun chags pa) which refers to the scriptures (gtsug lag) that teach how to purify defiled consciousness. "Later" means the later [wheel], denoting the later classics of the Mahāyāna. "Treatise" is an exegetical work. An etymological explanation about the word treatise is as follows: śās is "to educate," and tra means "to protect." In brief, [this is the work] "to edify the enemies who are [readers'] addictions and to protect readers from the dangers of lower rebirth and sheer saṃsāra.

2. Homage of Translator

In order to accomplish a variety of provisional and ultimate aims, the translator adds his hommage [at the beginning of his or her translation]. Here it reads "I bow down to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!" With regard to the teaching of the stages of path, for this homage is the teaching of taking refuge, [it reminds its readers that] they should recall that on all occasions, such as lectures, etc.

3. The Meaning of the Text

3.1. Actual Explanation

3.1.1. Textual Body

3.1.1.1. The Nature of Textual Body

\(^{714}\) anubadha, rgyun chags pa.
3.1.1.1. General Meaning

3.1.1.1.1. Statement of the Sevenfold Vajra-like Base

Each base should be understood in two aspects: ultimate and relative. (1) The ultimate Buddha is the Truth Body\(^{715}\) of which perfect elimination\(^{716}\) and perfect intuition\(^{717}\) are the defining characteristics; the relative one is the form bodies of a buddha. (2) The ultimate Dharma is both the truth of cessation and the truth of path in the mental continuum of a Mahāyāna [bodhisattva]; the relative one is scriptural corpus. (3) The ultimate Samgha is knowledge\(^{718}\) and liberation\(^{719}\) in the mental continuum of a noble\(^{720}\) Mahāyāna bodhisattva; the relative one is the congregation of noble Mahāyāna bodhisattvas. (4) The ultimate Element is reality mingled with defilements, which is the emptiness of intrinsic reality-status\(^{721}\) of the mental continuum of a living being; the relative one is the ability possessed by a living being's mind to produce transcendent excellences. (5) The ultimate Enlightenment is the Truth Body; the relative one is the form bodies. (6) The ultimate Excellences are the thirty-two excellences of freedom\(^{722}\) including ten powers and so forth\(^{723}\); the relative ones are the thirty-two excellences of retribution.\(^{724}\) (7) The ultimate deeds are the All Accomplishing Intuition;\(^{725}\) the relative ones are the scriptural corpus.

3.1.1.1.2. Number Determination

\(^{715}\) *dharma*/*chos kyi sku.*

\(^{716}\) *pratikṣeṇa*/*spang ba.*

\(^{717}\) *jñāna*/*ye shes.*

\(^{718}\) *vidyā*/*rig pa.*

\(^{719}\) *vairakti*/*rnam smin.*

\(^{720}\) *śraddhā*/*'phags pa.*

\(^{721}\) *svabhāvasiddha*/*rang tshin gyis grub pa.*

\(^{722}\) *broad ba*/*yon tan.*

\(^{723}\) The remaining excellences are the four fearlessnesses and the eighteen unique qualities.

\(^{724}\) *rnam smin yon tan.* The thirty-two characters of the physical body of Buddha.

\(^{725}\) *kṛśnaṃsthamajñāna*/*bya ba sgrub pa*/*ye shes.*
Neither does the numeration of [the vajra-like bases] need to go beyond seven, nor can [it] be condensed to less than that amount, since the number of the bases in this treatise keeps the [textual] causality intact.

The great Lama Lo-tsha-ba\textsuperscript{726} has two modes of exposition: one regarding the wheel of non-abiding nirvāṇa, and the other regarding the wheel of Jewels. In my opinion, although the former mode of exposition follows the literal meaning of the verse showing the sequence later in the text, it is more reasonable to explain the general essence of the treatise according to the latter mode of exposition.

The ultimate Three Jewels is the fruition to be attained, for it is determined that only that is the perfection of two aims. The reasoning will be expounded later. It is also determined that there are two factors in the accomplishment of the fruitional Three Jewels: substantial cause and contributive conditions. The first factor is the Element, which is reality mingled with defilements. It is not something that can produce, but is [merely] a designation as "cause;" because if the Element were not naturally pure, it would be impossible for coincident defilements\textsuperscript{727} to be removed. Therefore, there would be no enlightenment. Nevertheless, the developmental gene\textsuperscript{728} is a productive cause. The second factor is the contributive conditions, which have been accomplished by other beings, i.e. the Enlightenment, the Excellences, and the Deeds. They are no more than external conditions in the sense that the revolutions of the wheel of Dharma by other beings who have perfectly enlightened make inner purification of defilements possible.

Furthermore, this arrangement of cause and fruition is merely taught in terms of being cause and fruition of purification in relation to reality mingled with defilements as

\textsuperscript{726} An appellation for rNgog-lo.
\textsuperscript{727} āgaṃtukamala, glor burgyi dri ma.
\textsuperscript{728} bsgrub ba las gyur pa’ rigs.
the main subject-matter to be determined, not a clear-cut differentiation. We should know that the rational mentation\(^{729}\) and so forth as inner conditions are included in the Element for the Element will be realized depending on the teachings how to purify the Element.

Moreover, the occurrence of inner ultimate Three Jewels comes from the meditation on the correct view. This view comes along, in turn, through relying upon the two causes and the two conditions. The two causes are the inner Element and the rational mentation. The two conditions are the three factors comprised of previous Tathāgatas' enlightenment, etc., and their verbal teachings. We should also know that other's verbal teachings are included in the "Deeds."

3.1.1.1.3. Dispelling Doubts

*Question:* It is sufficient to teach on the Buddha Jewel alone as the fruition to be attained. What is the necessity to teach on the Three Jewels?

*Reply:* There is no such fault. For the sake of educating the possessor of the three types of spiritual gene, [the teaching on the Three Jewels] demonstrates different designations for fruition refuge with respect to different types [of people]: the person who has genetic potential for the Mahāyāna who aspires for to be a perfect buddha as the object of fruition refuge; the person who has genetic potential for the Pratyekabuddhayāna aspires for the extinguishment of sufferings of samsāra by the realization of the dependent origination (Dharma) as the object of fruition refuge; the person who has genetic potential for Śrāvakayāna, in his last samsāra existence, aspires for the extinguishment of suffering by the reliance on other's verbal teaching (Sāṃgha). Hence, for the pedagogical reason, the Three Jewels are presented as the fruitional refuges.

\(^{729}\) *yoniso-manasikāra, tshul khris yid la byed pa.*
Question: If it is explicated that the Three Jewels are the fruitional refuges for the three types of genetic potential-possessor, it would not be a unique Mahāyāna treatise, for it would be also necessary to teach on the enlightenment of the Śrāvakayāna and the enlightenment of the Pratyekabuddhayāna.

Reply: There is no such fallacy. This ultimate Three Jewels taught here are incorporated into the ultimate refuge, the Buddha [Jewel] alone. The Three Jewels as the immediate causes of its attainment are the Eighth Stage designated as the Buddha Jewel, the Ninth Stage as the Dharma Jewel, and the Tenth Stage as the Saṅgha Jewel. The distant cause of its attainment is the Saṅgha Jewel of the Seventh Stage and below. In terms of being the objects of causal refuge, the Three Jewels taught here are the refuges for Hīnayāna. And [the treatise] does not actually show that the enlightenments of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna are the Jewels as the fruitional refuges. Hence, there is no fallacy. The text refers to those enlightenments as mere designations in similarity with Dharma and Saṅgha [respectively]. In this way, [disciples of those two vehicles are] progressively led into the Mahāyāna. In sum, the Jewels explicitly taught here are regarded as the First Stage onward. And the Jewels of the First Stage through the Tenth Stage are regarded as the causes of the ultimate Three Jewels. Thus, there is no fallacy that this treatise would become a writ common to all vehicles. I shall explain this point later.

3.1.1.1.2. Detailed Meaning

3.1.1.1.2.1. The Śāstra

3.1.1.1.2.1.1. Identification
The Buddha, comprised of the Three Bodies; the Dharma, comprised of cessation and the path; and the Saṃgha, which is the congregation of noble Mahāyāna bodhisattvas - these three bases refer to the provisional and ultimate fruitions to be attained. And the remaining four bases are treated in terms of causes and conditions: the Element, i.e. Buddha-essence, which is reality mingled with defilements and the ability of a living being’s mind to develop transcendent excellence; the Enlightenment, comprised of the elimination and wisdom relating to the ultimate transformation; the Excellences of freedom and retribution depending on the Enlightenment; and, last of all the sevenfold bases, the Deeds of perfect Buddhas. Alternatively, the Three Jewels are taken from the viewpoint of the accomplishment of others and the Element, Enlightenment, and the Excellences are taken from the viewpoint of the inner revolution in the future. This arrangement accords slightly with the explanation on the latter sequence. Either way, the Element is under consideration as a causal factor alone. If it were taken as the ultimate fruition, that would become the nonsense of someone who does not know the way to explain the treatise. I shall explain this later.

3.1.1.2.1.2. Numeration

It should be known that the whole body of contents of this treatise is comprised into the sevenfold import to be understood. And the whole body of the descriptive treatise is comprised into the sevenfold vajra-like base of imports to be understood. Furthermore, the meanings of the Dhāranīśvararājaparīcchā-sūtra, etc., which are the reference scriptures for the sevenfold bases here, are also comprised into this sevenfold [import].

\footnote{tathāgatagarbha, de ba rin gshegs pa’i snying po.}
3.1.1.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.1.2.2.1. Detailed Exposition

3.1.1.2.2.1.1. The Reasoning behind the Explanations of the Words "Vajra-like" and "Bases"

3.1.1.2.2.1.1.1. Statement

The sevenfold import realized by individual the introspective wisdom\textsuperscript{731} of noble beings is "vajra-like." The descriptive letters are the "bases." Because they are the basis on which [the sevenfold import] can be understood, elucidated, and taught, they are called "vajra bases."

3.1.1.2.2.1.1.2. Explanation

The sevenfold import to be understood should be understood to be "vajra-like," because their natures cannot be fully expressed by way of function of language and constructive thought,\textsuperscript{732} but they are realized by the individual retrospective wisdom of noble beings. Not only is the ultimate reality concerned, but also the wisdom which realizes it. The sevenfold vajra-like import is "inexpressible," for they are realized as distinctively featured\textsuperscript{733} ultimate reality. As to the "individual retrospective wisdom," it does not exclusively refer to noble beings' meditative equipoise vis-à-vis ultimate reality. In addition to that, the aftermath wisdom is also a type of that wisdom. The following two matters are not identical: a thing's identity\textsuperscript{734} is not the object of verbal expression and the ultimate reality cannot be reached by verbal expression. Despite the fact that the nature of

\textsuperscript{731} pratisarivid, so so rang gis rig pa.
\textsuperscript{732} sgra rtog gis rtogs tshul.
\textsuperscript{733} viśiṣṭatā, khyad par du byas.
\textsuperscript{734} rang mtshan.
a thing's identity cannot be penetrated by verbal expression, ultimate reality can be fully realized in a dualistic way. On the other hand, a noumenon can neither be realized by language and constructive thought in the way of noble beings' meditative equipoise, nor by mentation. This does not suggest that the ultimate reality cannot at all be the object of language and constructive thought. If you assert that the ultimate reality is not an object of knowledge, it would follow that this would be a repudiation of the objective condition and would make the undertaking of monastic discipline worthless. This inferior way of thinking should be discarded.

As to the proof of the former reason, it is valid so far because [the sevenfold import] is hard to penetrate in a complete way by means of the knowledge which comes from learning and the knowledge from critical reflection. The text does not elaborate but implies that this also applies to the knowledge which comes from worldly concentrated meditation. While realizing ultimate reality, these three knowledges do not transcend dualistic perception. The perfect way of realization is akin to [the simile of] pouring water into water. The letter which expresses the sevenfold import is called vajra-like bases, because of being the support of the imports. It is so in view of the fact that those imports first need to be understood by the knowledge which comes from learning, and of the fact that the letters form the basis for the attainment and actualization of those imports. This [argument] is valid so far, because those letters express the paths, as the topics, which conform to the attainment of that status which realizes the sevenfold import. In order to resolve the contradiction between the statement here that those imports can be expressed and the statement above that they cannot be expressed, someone in the past

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735 dharmatā, chos nyid.
736 gnas lugs.
explains that the paths of realization are verbally expressible, but not the ultimate reality. This [answer] is incorrect, because there is no distinction at all in terms of expressibility between the ultimate reality and the wisdom which realizes it. Hence, the treatise which teaches the sevenfold import conveys the meanings (letters?) which will become the basis of the sevenfold import. Those imports first serve as the topics of the treatise. Relying upon those topics, we acquire the knowledge which comes from learning and the knowledge from critical reflection. We, then, develop transcendent paths by relying upon those two kinds of knowledge. [Thus,] those paths are taken as the topics as well.

3.1.1.1.2.1.3. Précis

We should know that the sevenfold import and the letters which express that are "vajra-like" and "bases" respectively, because, as in aforementioned explanations, [the vajra] means hard to penetrate in a complete way by means of the knowledge which comes from learning and the knowledge from critical reflection, and [the letters] mean the support of the elucidation of those imports as the subjects.

3.1.1.1.2.1.2. Statement of Basis for Usage of Term

3.1.1.1.2.1.2.1. Question

Now, what are the imports? What are the letters?

3.1.1.1.2.1.2.2. Answer

The answer is found in aforementioned paragraph:
The sevenfold import to be understood is called "import"... They are called "imports."

The letters, comprised into words and phrases, by which the sevenfold import to be understood is taught as the subject and is elucidated in the object of wisdom, are called "letters." The "letter" here does not exclusively refer to the letter which is a branch of word-phrase-letter tripartite, but to the treatise which teaches the sevenfold import.

3.1.1.2.1.3. Scriptural References to Their Being Hard to Understand

3.1.1.2.1.3.1. Prelude

The teaching of the vajra bases should be understood in detail according to the sūtras.

3.1.1.2.1.3.2. Scriptural References

3.1.1.2.1.3.2.1. On the Three Jewels

[The statement from the Drdhādyāsayaparivarta-sūtra is as follows:]

Ānanda, the ultimate Tathāgata, who is empty of intrinsic reality status and is free from any coincident defilements, cannot be shown to the eye consciousness. He cannot be seen by the eyes. In addition to that, he cannot be understood by relative knowledge.

Ānanda, the ultimate Dharma cannot be fully expressed by the way that language and constructive thought understand. It cannot be heard by ears.

Ānanda, the ultimate Saṃgha is uncreated, empty of intrinsic reality status. The "ultimate" means ultimate reality. That cannot be served by performing body prostrations, or by offering praises through the mind which realizes it.
It is well known in the world that the Buddha is the object worthy of seeing, the Dharma worthy of listening, and the Saṅgha worthy of serving. When these three are expounded individually with regard to the reification of the truth habit to be cut off, they are all the same in the sense that ultimately they cannot be seen, etc.

The relative [Three Jewels] is also elicited from this way of teaching the ultimate reality of the Three Jewels. As stated in the sūtra that "all noble beings are differentiated by the uncreated," those noble beings are designated by their realizations of the uncreated the ultimate reality. In addition to that, the Mahāyāna's Three Jewels and the Hinayāna's Saṅgha and Dharma Jewels, in terms of under the sway of vast and narrow methodologies respectively, must be designated in the same way. In the commentary, Asaṅga teaches that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have the realization of the subtle selflessness. I shall explain this later.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.2. On the Topic of the Last Four Bases

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1. On the Element

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.1. The Element Is Always an Object Solely for the Tathāgata

[The Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdesaparivatra-sūtra statement is:]

Śāriputra, this import of reality mingled with defilements is an object for the Tathāgata. If it were something with truth proliferation it would be apprehended, but the Tathāgata always remains in meditative equipoise by way of not seeing a bit of truth proliferation and of the subsiding dualistic appearance proliferation. To be clearer, it belongs to the Tathāgata's sphere of experience.
3.1.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.2. Not Being a Permanent Object for Others

Śāriputra, because this import proves the ultimate unique vehicle, (for śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas,) it will be realized in the future through their own wisdom or by faith if not, or it will not be realized (even by faith). With respect to the levels of these the two types of person, (it cannot be realized) for a while. Since śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not have the ability to perfectly meditate on objective selflessness (chos kyi bdag med) like bodhisattvas do, this import can neither be known nor be seen, nor be discerned correctly, on the three stages of preliminaries, main body and conclusion of meditation or on the three stages of learning, reflection and meditation, correspondingly, through their own wisdom. Needless to say, this applies to the case of ordinary individuals.

Rejection: It is unacceptable that you connect this to the three paths of: application, seeing, and meditation, because it would be following to state that "if ordinary individuals cannot see, needless to say in the case of ordinary individuals." It is unacceptable as well for you to explain this as the wisdom of learning, for that is the wisdom relying upon scriptures, therefore, it cannot be own wisdom.

Reply: It is clear that you do not understand the meaning of "own wisdom." Although śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas also directly see the ultimate reality, they do not master it thoroughly by means of infinite lines of reasoning, as taught in the Mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā, to cut off the proliferation from the ultimate reality. Unlike sharp intelligent bodhisattvas, they are unable to realize the ultimate reality by way of ever increasing their own wisdom. This is the meaning of "disabilities" in the statement such as "this import cannot be seen through their own wisdom," etc. If you wonder whether śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas cannot realize the ultimate reality at all, the sūtra answers:
They realize it by having faith in the Tathāgata instead of their wisdom. 

Śāriputra, the ultimate reality is realized by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas through faith.

Although they realize objective selflessness, they are said to be of dull intelligence in comparison with the Mahāyāna practitioners. Someone who holds that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not realize objective selflessness, and that they realize the Tathāgata to be the personification of validating reason alone through faith, has an idea of this that does not stand up to close examination. If the ultimate reality were not realized by validating reason, this would be in contradiction with the statement "the ultimate reality is realized through faith." If the ultimate reality is realized by validating reason, in general, we shall not explain emptiness as the object of mere faith. We can understand that the ultimate unique vehicle is proved in this treatise and the commentary. It is also proved that there are śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who are able to realize objective selflessness.

3.1.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.3. Identifying the Nature of the Ultimate

[The Buddha also states:] 

Śāriputra, the so-called "ultimate," being reality mingled with defilements at the time when defilements remains intact, is a designation for the Element of living beings. Śāriputra, the so-called "Element of living beings," at the time when defilements have been abandoned to certain degree but still remains a little, is a
denomination of Buddha-essence. Śāriputra, the so-called "essence," at the time when defilements has become completely isolated, is a designation for the "Truth Body."

This single reality, while defiled, is designated as the "Element of living beings" and the "Buddha-essence." When completely isolated from defilements, it is called "Truth Body."

Someone claims that reality is Buddha-essence, because it is the Essence at the time when it is defiled; if this were accepted, then, reality is the Buddha's Truth Body, because it is the Truth Body at the time when it is isolated from defilements. This reveals his ignorance about reasoning. As to the word "denomination," it means [these terms are] verbally synonymous, not literally equivalent. For example, "hand-possessor" is a synonym for "elephant," but it is not concomitant to the notion of elephant. The prior two terms, "Element of living beings" and "essence," are mutually concomitant in meaning, but they do not entail the notion of the last term, "Truth Body," because both the treatise and its commentary teach that the prior two exist at casual level, exclusively on the continuum of a living being. No single word can be found of demonstrating the enlightenment, which is completely isolated from defilements, as the "Buddha-essence."

The third sentence of the scripture teaches that reality is designated as Truth Body when it is completely purified from defilements, as clearly elucidated in the treatise such as "impure, impure and pure," etc. To hold that a perfect Buddha primordially exists within the continuum of a living being makes only verbal difference in names from non-Buddhist Śaiva monotheistic assertion of a permanent, ultimate omniscience.

737 khyab pa.
Someone claims that all environments are primordially perfect as immeasurable celestial mansion and all living beings are Vajradhara, and this is the noble teaching of Great Perfection.\textsuperscript{736} That also makes no difference from Śaiva's view that the ultimate omniscience is impermanent in terms of being produced from a continuum of similar type since beginningless time.

\textit{3.1.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.2. On the Enlightenment and so forth}

[On the Element, the Buddha states in the Āryasrīmālā-sūtra:]

Lord, the so-called 'unexcelled perfect enlightenment,' which is both pure by reality and pure by the extinguishment of all coincidental defilements, is a denomination of the 'Element of nirvāṇa.' Do śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have a nirvāṇa free from coincidental defilements as well? Lord, The so-called 'Element of nirvāṇa,' having the twofold purity, is a denomination of the 'Truth Body of the Tathāgata.'

On the Excellences, [the Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśa-parivatra statement is:]

Śāriputra, the excellences of Truth Body taught by the Tathāgata are like this: the Truth Body is endowed with the Tathāgata's attributes, such as powers and so on, which go beyond the particles of sands of the Gaṅgā river in number and with undifferentiated attributes, the excellences of freedom and the excellences of

\textsuperscript{736} rdzogs chen.
retribution, which are like the lights and colors of Jewels not different in type but in reality.

To explain this, the Buddha states in the same text:

It is endowed with inseparable wisdom excellences, one following another.

On the Deeds, [the statement from the Tathāgatagūjñānācintyaviśatāvatāra-nirdeśa is:]

Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata effortlessly benefits others. Neither does he have constructive thought, thinking of reality of the three things regarding the deed: the deed itself, the receiver and the agent, nor has he thorough constructive thought, thinking of the detailed descriptions of three things. However, when a disciple is due to be tamed, the Tathāgata will never be late. He engages in benefiting deeds, nothing lacking, to help all living beings. The Tathāgata spontaneously engages in such deeds without constructive thought and thorough constructive thought.

3.1.1.2.2.1. Précis

To summarize the explanations above, these are the seven vajra bases which should be known as the body of all detailed expositions of this whole treatise, which elucidates the intentions of scriptures cited above and below. How does this summary turn to be the body of the treatise? This sevenfold vajra base should be known as the body of the whole treatise since it is a summary of the introduction - the reason for composing the treatise -
to the teachings of [relevant] scriptures and this elucidating treatise. The actual
arrangement of the textual body is this verse. However, I think there is no contradiction
to include sections of "Scriptural Reference" and "Certainty of Arrangement" as parts
of the body.

3.1.1.2. Scriptural References

3.1.1.2.1. The Šāstra

If you wonder whether this treatise, which is comprised into seven imports, is an
independent work or follows scripture authoritative, [you should know that] it is free
from the fault of being out from author's own whim, for these seven vajra-like bases are
taught in the Dhāraṇīvarāṭapariprcchā-sūtra. How are they taught? By describing the
unique reality of each base such as the Buddha, the sūtra teaches their defining
characters. It also teaches that [these seven bases] are connected coherently by their
identities in proper order as taught in the treatise. Which words of the sūtra teach which
base? We can understand the three bases of the fruiotional Three Jewels are taught in its
introductory chapter. The last four bases are taught in the chapters teaching the sixty
properties of the intelligent Bodhisattva's purification of the Element, which is the base of
Element, and teaching the eighty properties of the Victor perfect Buddha, which are the
three bases of Enlightenment, and so forth.

3.1.1.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.1.2.2.1. How Fruiotional Three Jewels Are Taught

739 V.2 and V.3, respectively.
740 svalakṣaṇa, rang mchun nyid.
3.1.1.2.2.1.1. Explaining Its Literal Meaning

Of these seven bases, the unique reality of each base is coherently connected in proper order as taught before by their defining characters; the first three bases should be known as taught in the introductory chapter of the Dhāraṇīśvarājaparyāpṛchchā-sūtra, and the last four in the chapters\(^4\) on teaching Bodhisattava's properties and on the Tathāgata's properties.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2. Scriptural References

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1. The Way of Establishing Defining Characters according to the Scripture

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.1. Brief Statement

The Buddha states in that sūtra:

The Lord has attained perfect buddhahood in its entity in the sameness of all things as the object, which is free from truth reifications, has set the wheel of Dharma turning well for those disciples who have genetic spiritual potential by his realization in way of the total extinguishment of obscurations and has gathered numberless disciples who are ultimately tamed.

These three seminal sentences are the demonstration of the ultimate fruitional Three Jewels. They should be also known as the arrangement in proper order of establishing the production of the Three Jewels in stages: the eighth stage designated as The Buddha

\(^4\) nirdeśa-bheda. rNgog's translation omits "nirdeśa," but rGyal tshab clearly uses "dhye ba dstan pa nas" here, which may indicates that he checked Sanskrit original when he was working on the rGyud blā ṭikā.
Jewel, the Ninth Stage as the Dharma Jewel and the Tenth Stage as the Samgha Jewel, which are the three pure stages and the immediate causes\textsuperscript{742} of the attainment [of the fruitional Three Jewels.] It is unacceptable to explain that these three seminal sentences teach the immediate causes alone since it is in contradiction to the exposition that [these three seminal sentences] are the demonstration of the unique realities of the Three Jewels, and it would be absurd to teach the Buddha Jewel as in causal state alone.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2. Subsequently Identifying Causality

The last four bases, the Element, etc., should be known as the statement of substantial cause and co-operative conditions, which are concordant with the occurrence of the fruitional Three Jewels. This is only a supplementary arrangement and it will be taught below when opportunity arises.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3. Detailed exposition

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.1. The Way of Establishing Three Stages of Purification Which Are Immediate Causes as Three Jewels in Stages

Now, on the eighth stage of the bodhisattva, the sovereignty of the Dharma has been attained because of the attainment of ten sovereignties,\textsuperscript{743} as the Buddha states in the \textit{sūtra}:

\textsuperscript{742} nye rgyu.
\textsuperscript{743} daśa-विषय, dbang bcu.daśa-विषय!
[Having gone unto the excellent Bodhi Tree which is the essence of the enlightenment to be attained,] he has attained perfect buddhahood in the sameness of all things.

The attainment on the eighth stage of the sovereignty of the Dharma, such as the non-conceptual wisdom, is set as the cause for the occurrence of the Three Jewels to be attained.

On the Ninth Stage of the bodhisattva, he is the exponent of the unexcelled Buddha dharma because of the attainment of the four perfect specific knowledges,744 knows well a variety of patterns of thinking of all living beings, who have different genetic potential and inspirations, has the transcendence of supreme spiritual faculties745 such as faith, etc., because there is no difference in spiritual faculties between sharp, middle and dull among those who have attained the Ninth Stage, and becomes an expert in the destruction of the chain of homogenous addictive instincts,746 which are the cognitive obscurations, in all living beings. Therefore, the Buddha states:

[Having attained the perfect buddhahood in the future,] he has well set the wheel of Dharma turning for his spiritual child, the four types of noble being,747 to accomplish their wishes.

[In brief,] he will attain the Dharma Jewel.

744 catvāri-pratisamvid, so sor yang dag pa rig pa bzhi.
745 indriya-paramāpamitā, dbang mchos gi pha tol tu phyin pa.
746 klesa-vāsanā, nyon mong pa’ bo bshags.
747 ’pho pa bzhi.
On the Tenth Stage of the bodhisattva, after attaining the anointment as the unexcelled Dharma regent of the Tathāgata, he will immediately attain the Buddha's effortless and uninterrupted deeds, which will be expounded below. Thus, the Buddha states:

[Having well set the wheel of Dharma turning,] he has gathered numberless disciples who are ultimately tamed.

He will attain the ultimate fruition.

3.1.1.2.1.2.1.3.2. Specific Explanation of the Saṃgha Jewel

The meaning of "gathering numberless disciples who are ultimately tamed" is further taught by that text, immediately after the sentence of that sūtra ["he has gathered numberless disciples who were ultimately tamed."] The sūtra statement is:

He was together with the congregation of a large number of bhikṣus … with the congregation of numberless bodhisattvas.

The explanation about the word "ultimately tamed" in particular is as follows: the congregation of bhikṣus had ability and was suitable to accomplish the enlightenment of
śrāvakas, and those bodhisattvas who had the ability and were suitable to accomplish the enlightenment of the Buddha. Thus, the Buddha states:

Being endowed with such excellences....

This [statement] explains in particular the import of "gathering numberless disciples who were ultimately tamed," we can understand that the word "gathering"[or "having"] also indicates ultimate fruition.

3.1.1.2.1.2.2. Scriptural Reference to the Excellences

3.1.1.2.1.2.2.1. Extensive Excellences

And then, immediately after [the section of the] teaching of the praises of excellences of śrāvakas and bodhisattvas, [the next section] teaches the excellences of the Buddha:

Then, Lord taught a set of dharmas (dharma-parāyaṇa, chos kyi rnam grangs), called the "door of unobscured definite freedom through engagement of bodhisattva's deeds" (byang chub sans dpal spyod pa la 'jug bas sgrib pa med pa' sgo). At that time, sixteen years after he had attained the perfect enlightenment, the Lord knew that pure conduct (tshangs spyod) had prevailed. He also saw and knew a huge congregation of bodhisattvas ... He decided to teach the set of dharmas, called the "door of unobscured definite freedom through engagement of bodhisattva's deeds." Then, the Lord was absorbed in the samādhi of the Tathāgata, called 'miraculous display of the experience of the Buddha' (sangs rgyas kyi spyod yul gyi rnam par 'phrul pa ji lta ba bzhin du yangs dag par ston pa)⁷⁴⁹. Immediately after the absorption, by the power of the Buddha, there appeared between the skies of the desire-world and the form-world a congregation hall (khor gyi dkyil 'khor gyi khyams), which was an abode of the Buddha, accomplished by the virtue roots of the Tathāgata. That hall purified the thoughts of bodhisattvas, illuminated worlds in ten directions, caused the minds of immeasurable living beings satisfied, and outshone all the celestial mansions. It had

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⁷⁴⁸ vArna, bangags pa.
⁷⁴⁹ Derge sans rgyas kyi yul rnam par sprul pa ji lta ba bzhin du yangs dag par ston pa.
white vāḍīrīya as the foundation, Jambū gold as the walls, a variety of jewels as pediments, vestibules, platforms, ledges and upper houses, was decorated with dangling pearl garlands, upstanding parasols, flags and victory banners and tassels. The praise to [its magnificence] was unfathomable. Its size was equal to three thousand world systems of the universe. The hall was anointed with [paste of] "snake-heart" sandalwood, and the timely generosity of its fragrance. It was filled with the scent of the essence of the supreme agaru, decorated with the nāga flowers and precious flowers, covered with flower pastels, and beautified with precious trees and space ornaments (mkha’ rten). Every display of beautiful ornaments in the worlds of the ten directions made its appearance in that hall. A hundred thousand koṭi niyuta lion-thrones also appeared. On the grounds of the four continents [of this world,] there were four thousand precious ladders with various ornaments mounted to that hall. This applied to all the four continents [of three thousand world systems of the universe.]

In short, this is the accomplishment of a magnificent hall adorned with precious jewels, which was conditioned by the inconceivable king samādhi of the Buddha.

The same sūtra continues:

And then, the Lord intentionally arose from that samādhi and immediately caused the worlds to move in six ways and emit intense lights. Surrounded by bodhisattvas and led by śrāvakas, with praises offered by celestial beings and nāgas, etc. ... The Lord disappeared on Massed Vultures Mountain and ascended into the hall. The celestial beings of the six classes of the desire heavens showered rains of celestial flowers, incenses, clothing, precious clouds, ornaments and flower garlands in turn, and praised with a paean of verses. They all followed the Buddha as servants and arrived at that precious hall and sat down. This applied to all the four continents [of three thousand world systems of the universe.]

And then, the Lord was absorbed in the samādhi called the "Buddha's play in the unobscured liberation." Immediately after absorption, lights were generated from all the pores of Lord. Each pore was filled with lights as much as the sand grains of the Gāngā River in number, illuminating the ten directions, thereby cutting off the continuum of suffering in the lower rebirths and pacifying addictions of all living beings. All beings attained the mind of mutual love. Those lights produced many verses and caused them to be heard in all [buddha] fields, encouraging bodhisattvas, benefiting all living beings, and destroying the pride of all màras. The lights went back and dissolved into the top of head of the Tathāgata. And then, ten bodhisattvas, surrounded by retinues of countless bodhisattvas, came from ten directions, showering offering rains of various celestial precious substances. Having made myriad circumambulations, they praised the Buddha with a paean of verses and sat down.

750 sgrib pa med pa’ rnam par thar pa la sangs rgyas rnam par rol ba.
[Together with these paragraphs on] the gathering of the Tathāgata's retinue, the accomplishment of various celestial offerings, and the shower of rain from the cloud of praises, [this section] should be known as the orderly arrangement of the distinct excellences of The Buddha Jewel.

[The following section] demonstrates the excellences of the Dharma, the sutra statement is:

And then, knowing the great congregation of the retinue, the Lord radiated from the ringlet of hair between the eyebrows, the light called 'demonstrating the power of bodhisattvas.' That light circumambulated the entire retinue seven times, and then disappeared into the heads of bodhisattvas. Touched by the light, the Bodhisattva 'Essence of Glorious Flower Controlling all' (was absorbed into the samādhi of the Bodhisattva, called the 'array of ornaments.' Immediately after the absorption, a lion-throne of the Tathāgata appeared at the center of that precious hall in height of hundred thousand koti niyuta tāla trees, decorated with all kinds of precious substances. It was covered with a variety of fabrics and was adorned with all attractive canopies ... Bodhisattva "Essence of Glorious Flower" magically created such a lion-throne of the Tathāgata, called "endless paeans for eons." Then arising from samādhi, the Bodhisattva joined his palms together, praising the Lord with paean verses ... sat on the lion-throne.

In short, [these paragraphs teach] the splendid array of the dharma throne and the luminosity.

The sutra continues:

And then, having attained the unobscured definite freedom, the Lord first proclaimed the name of a set of dharma discourses as the "door of unobscured definite freedom through engagement of Bodhisattva's deeds," then thoroughly
proclaimed the excellences, such as the apprehension of the arrayed paths of the Bodhisattva, the accomplishment of all profound properties of the Buddha, the ten powers, and the four fearlessnesses, the source of intuition ... the Lord sat on the dharma throne.

[This section] should be known as the orderly arrangement of the distinct excellences of the Dharma Jewel.

[The following section] teaches the excellences of the Samgha:

And then, by the power of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva "Precious Mainstay" was absorbed in the samādhi, called the 'array of ornaments.' In the samādhi, the Bodhisattva blessed the entire retinue with the ornaments of the Buddha...Lord gave the prophecy that [the demons] had been free from demonic behaviors by the power of their requests.

In short, [these paragraphs teach] the power of each of the experiential object of the samādhi of the Bodhisattva.

The same text continues:

And then, there was a Bodhisattva in the congregation, called 'Powerful King of the Dhāraṇī.' He made a request in these words: "Lord, The experiential object of the Buddha blessed by the Tathāgata and its teaching are inconceivable...Lord,

\[755 \text{ avacara, spyod yul.}\]
those worthy sons who have produced or will produce the Spirit of enlightenment with sincere thought, he or she will have such properties."

Along with teaching various praises of Bodhisattva's excellences, [this section] should be known as the orderly arrangement of the distinct excellences of the Saṁgha Jewel.

3.1.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2. Profound Excellences

[The sūtra statement that teach] the excellences of the Buddha is as follows:

And then, the Lord beheld that great congregation of bodhisattvas. "Marvelous!" he thought, "these bodhisattvas are aspiring for the Dharma, capable of upholding the treasury of the Tathāgata's Dharma!" Through the anointment of the Buddha's light, Bodhisattva "Powerful King of the Dhāraṇī" became the unexcelled principle child of the Dharma King and accomplished the fearlessness with respect to all secrets of the Tathāgata and the supreme unimpeded eloquence. Consequently, the Bodhisattva 'Powerful King of the Dhāraṇī' praised the impeccable excellences of the Tathāgata with such verses:

Illuminating and luminous in all ways,
The supreme king of beings teaches the ultimate\(^{756}\) with the omniscient eye,  
Who is well-versed in the self-existing reality of things,  
And endowed with inconceivable excellences...  
Please explain to us:  
How the Lord knows and engages?  
And how did you get educated for a long-period of time?  
Then become the powerful king of the Dharma?  
What are the experiential objects of the Guides?

[The sūtra statement that teach] the excellences of the Dharma is as follows:

\(^{756}\) don rnams (Toh.175).
And then, the Bodhisattva ‘Powerful King of the Dhāraṇī’ made such request:

"Lord, The objects of the Tathāgata are inconceivable…"

These are the record of the speeches concerning the supreme teaching of the Mahāyāna.

As to the excellences of the Saṃgha, the sūtra teaches the attainment of the supreme sovereignty of the Dharma, which is the fruition to be attained by the Saṃgha Jewel, who realizes that supreme teachings of the Mahāyāna. "The sovereignty of the Dharma" means the attainment of all teachings, as taught in the sūtra:

Lord, these bodhisattvas have by all means destroyed demons and hostile forces and unquestionably...

In light of this, [this section] is regarded as the orderly arrangement of the distinct unexcelled excellences of the Three Jewels and indicates the ending of the introductory chapter.757

3.1.1.2.2.2. How the Last four Bases Are Taught

3.1.1.2.2.2.1. The Sūtra Statements regarding the Element

3.1.1.2.2.2.1.1. The Element Is Indicated by Sixty Purifying Factors

757 Not as found in available Tibetan and Chinese Translations. The section of the profound excellences of the Three Jewels is included in the second chapter (bam po gnyis, 大方等大集經陀羅尼自在王菩薩品第二) or the fourth chapter (大集經陀羅尼自在王菩薩品第四) of these translations. This has led to my speculation that it is quite possible for the author of the vyākha to take the fourth place, the Element, as the core subject of the Dhāraṇīsvarājaparipṛcchāsūtra, thereby treating the first three places as its introduction but not a real textual chapter, for the sūtra itself often uses le’u to express the idea other than chapter, such as "sgrīb pa med pa’ sgo’ le’u’ e’has kyi rin’grem grang."
After the introductory chapter of the *sūtra*, subsequent to the section of the Three Jewel's excellences, the teaching of the sixty purifying excellences that purify reality mingled with defilements explicates the relative Element of the Tathāgata and reality mingled with defilements.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2. Its Proof

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.1. Proof of Reasoning

*Rejection:* While [the *sūtra*] indeed teaches the sixty excellences, how does it become the teaching of the Element? There is no contradiction in saying that the teaching of the sixty excellences does not prove the existence of the Element.

*Reply:* It does. Because the objects to be purified, which are the mind of a living being and reality mingled with defilements that is emptiness of intrinsic reality, or the ultimate reality, are endowed with the excellences of potentials for being purified and producing the Buddha's intuition, therefore deserve purification. If there is nothing to be purified, it logically follows that there is no need [for the Buddha to teach] the purifying factors.

To assert that the twofold purity, i.e. the natural purity and the purity isolated from all coincidental defilements primordially exist in the continua of living beings, while accepting the arrangement of the purifying factors, it is logically incompatible in the common locus, because it is mutually exclusive to assert that a living being's continuum is both free from coincidental defilements and not free from that. Thus, it is foolish speech.

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758 *dngos 'gal.*
759 *samādhisākarama, gzhi mthun.*
760 *phun tshun spang 'gal.*
Rejection: The transcendent nature\textsuperscript{761} of the living being is free from defilements, but accompanied by coincidental defilements.

Reply: This reveals your ignorance of logical reasoning as well. It is true that the mind's objective condition has never been infiltrated by addictions such as attachment, etc., and is not in accord with the perceptual habit\textsuperscript{762} of the truth-habit conviction. But there is a flaw in your expression that "nature\textsuperscript{763} is free from defilements." It logically follows that the nature of a living being's mind is the perfect Buddha, because the nature of the mind, which is naturally pure, is free from all coincidental defilements. And you agree on the latter part of my reasoning.

Rejection: The ultimate reality is a permanent entity,\textsuperscript{764} so that it is the profound Other-emptiness\textsuperscript{765} which is empty of all relative things.

Reply: Does the Other-emptiness mean that ultimate reality is empty of being conventional reality? Or does it mean that ultimate reality is empty of the existence of relative things? If the latter were the case, then it would contradict your assertion that the ultimate reality exists in the way of pervading all stable (environments) and transmigrating (creatures). So think about how these two assertions are not contradicting each other! If the former were the case, then it seems that your disciples who are worthy of the teaching of the Other-emptiness are the uttermost intelligent, because they are the ones who first have doubt about whether ultimate reality as a permanent entity is conventional reality, then they are in need of dispelling this type of doubt!

Rejection: I actually meant that the ultimate reality's own objective condition has

\textsuperscript{761} chos nyid kyi ngo bo.
\textsuperscript{762} graha, 'dzin stangs.
\textsuperscript{763} ngo bo.
\textsuperscript{764} riog dogos.
\textsuperscript{765} gzhan stong.
never been infiltrated by the relative.

*Reply:* What do you mean by that statement? Does it mean that the relative things such as vase, woolen cloth, etc. are not permanent entities? Or does it mean that the relative things do not have the truth-status? Or does it mean that these things are not the ultimate reality?

If the first were the case, it follows that śrāvakas such as Sautrāntikas would also master thoroughly the import of Other-emptiness, for they have fully realized that vase, woolen cloth, and so on, are impermanent by validating cognition. If accepted, the disciples who understood that would be the great Mādyamikas.

If the second were the case, when you accept that self-emptiness means that relative things such as vase and woolen cloth, are void of the truth-status, then what do you do with the erroneous "Other-emptiness" heresy? If you assert that the relative cannot be held [to be existent at all], and that self-emptiness is [void of a relative thing itself; e.g.,] a vase is void of the vase itself, then this assertion is the ultimate nihilism that deprecates all relative things.

If the third were the case, it follows that the Yogācārya proponents would be the great Mādyamikas too, having understood the ultimate meaning of the own objective condition, for they also assert that the relative things such as vase and woolen cloth are not the ultimate reality.

*Rejection:* The ultimate reality can only be thoroughly mastered through meditation. It cannot be examined and investigated by only a little intellectual study and contemplation.

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766 rang stong.
767 parāvāda, gzhon smra pa.
Reply: It is true that the ultimate reality can only be directly realized through meditation. The second part of your assertion is an utterance causing desperation, for by no means can you teach what the ultimate reality is to a disciple who has doubts about it.

There is no question of these assertions being deluded erroneous. Nevertheless, it seems that numerous people who have had little stores of merit have become involved in this, so I shall set forth its negation from time to time.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2. Scriptural References
3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.1. To the Daśabhūmika-sūtra

The mind of a living being and its reality, reality mingled with defilements, were previously unpurified because of the defilements, but could be purified in stages by the power of corrective measures in meditation. In light of this, the Daśabhūmika-sūtra draws an analogy between the purifying process of gold and the way of purifying defilements to be removed on the Path of Insight, and on the Path of Meditation.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2. To the Dharanirajā-sūtra
3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1. Prelude

In this Dharanirajā-sūtra, after the teaching of the Deeds of the Tathāgata, the simile of unpurified vaidūrya mixed with stone, dirt, etc., is also used.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2. Gloss on the Simile

768 pratipakṣa, gnyen po.
769 drṣṭiheya, mthung spangs.
770 bhāvanāheya, sgom spangs.
[The simile runs as follows:]

Worthy son! For example, there is a skillful jeweler who knows well how to cleanse a gem. Having picked out an unpurified precious jewel covered by mud, dirt, and so on from the mine, in order to remove the impurities first, he washes it with strong sal-ammoniac, and then polishes it by rubbing with ox hair-knitted cloth. With this much work, he does not cease to make efforts. After that, having washed the jewel with pungent food [fish] juice, he polishes it by rubbing with a fine woolen blanket. Even with this much work, he does not cease to make efforts. After that, having washed it with great medical liquid [mercury], he polishes it with fine cotton cloth. When completely purified from all impurities, it is called precious vaiñjñavyāra.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.3. Applied to Meaning

[The sūtra says:]

Analogous to the three stages of purification, Worthy son, so the Tathāgata, knowing the scope of living beings unpurified from the impurities, guides disciples in three stages: firstly he makes those infatuated with saṃsāra, viewing it as something attractive, tired at heart and causes them to engage in the religious discipline by means of the doctrine of renunciation or repulsion of it as fire ditch, such as "impermanence," "misery," "selflessness," and "ugliness."

The lower level of beings\textsuperscript{771} think about "impermanence," which refers to death, the transitory nature of this life, and the shortcomings of lower realms, thereby well producing the aspiration for rebirth in higher states. All three kinds of spiritual gene possessor first need to recognize the "impermanence," which refers to momentarily production and cessation, the distinctive feature of the noble truth of suffering, and the

\textsuperscript{771} skyes bu chung ngu.
"misery" created through karma and addictions. They also need to understand the personal "selflessness," which is the negation of substantial existence of a self-sufficient person,\textsuperscript{772} and filthy ditch-like "ugliness" of samsāra. In consequence, the Tathāgata causes them to enter the discipline of the noble Dharma, the practice of the three precious educations, which is the common path required for person who either or not understood the subtle selflessness of person and object. The "selflessness" taught herein is the coarse selflessness. Mastery of that is the maturing path\textsuperscript{773} for both the Hinayāna practitioners and the Mahāyāna practitioners to progress to the path of noble.\textsuperscript{774} The subtle selflessness of person and object, as the objective object of the path that directly cuts off the root of samsāric existence, will be taught in latter two stages. So it is said in the Catuḥśākata that this first stage is the maturing path, as Āryadeva states:

First prevent the non-meritorious,
Next refute [ideas of a coarse] self,
Later eliminate views of all kind.
Whoever knows of this is wise.

The first line of [this verse] shows the path of lower level of beings which prevents the lower realms. The connotations of the next two lines are comparable to the latter two stages taught in this sūtra.

[The same text continues:]

With these many deeds, the Buddha does not cease to make efforts. After that, he causes them to realize the deep process of the Tathāgata doctrine, which is the

\textsuperscript{772} rang rgya thub pa' gang zag.
\textsuperscript{773} smin byed pa' lam.
\textsuperscript{774} 'phags pa' lam.
reality of the Tathāgata or the ultimate reality, by means of the teaching of "emptiness,"\textsuperscript{775} "signlessness,"\textsuperscript{776} and "wishlessness,"\textsuperscript{777} for all three kinds of spiritual gene possessor.

Selflessness, signlessness, and wishlessness refer to the emptiness of intrinsic reality status with regard to view, conduct and aim to be attained respectively, or to the emptiness of intrinsic reality status of reality, cause, and fruition respectively. This stage is the teaching of the two types of the subtle emptiness: the emptiness of intrinsic reality status of person and the emptiness of intrinsic reality status of aggregates, for the reason that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, if lacking this realization, will not attain the fruition of liberation, i.e. the arhatship.

Now I shall explain how this treatise demonstrates that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have the realization of the two types of the subtle emptiness. It is so, because this treatise teaches the first two stages as guidance on how to attain the realization of Hinayāna arhatship and above, and then teaches the third stage as well, thereby establishing the ultimate unique vehicle. Someone asserts that it is unfitting to discuss whether the noble beings of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna have the realization of the personal selflessness. Consequently, he makes noises in debating whether they have the realization of the objective selflessness. But he should be convinced of the fact that, if by lacking the realization of emptiness of intrinsic identifiability of person, the personal self cannot be completely negated, for it is impossible for a person who has realized that not to realize the realitylessness of the aggregates. Thus, the

\textsuperscript{775} śānyatā, stong pa nyid. 
\textsuperscript{776} Animittatā, mtshan ma med pa. 
\textsuperscript{777} Apranihitātā, smon pa med pa.
differentiation between emptiness being coarse and subtle is made in connection to the negation-ground\textsuperscript{778} person and aggregates, which is either a substantial existence\textsuperscript{779} or a designative existence,\textsuperscript{780} instead of being made in connection to the negatee,\textsuperscript{781} to the intrinsic identifiability of the object, which cannot be logically differentiated between being coarse and subtle.

\textit{Rejection:} In the case of this teaching system concerning the Mahāyāna person, it would be incorrect to have a third stage in this system after the teachings of the two types of selflessness, because the profound meaning of reality should be taught in a timely way after the complete teaching of the liberative technique.\textsuperscript{782} In case this system concerns the stages of spiritual development in the continuum, it would be also be incorrect to do so, because the transcendence of wisdom occurs after the attainment of the first five transcendences, and the discourse on the purification of the three focal points of the third stage is the one teaching the subtle selflessness too. Therefore, the second stage concerns the three doors of liberation which negate the coarse negatee.

\textit{Reply:} Such doubt is quite reasonable. But you should know the following: as taught in Master Śāntarakṣita's \textit{Madhyamakālaṃkāra}, there are two types of stages: the stage of engaging in the path for the intelligent ones and the stage of engaging in the path for the dull ones. Here too, this \textit{Mahāyānottaratantra} directly demonstrates the stages of engaging in the path for the intelligent ones among those who possess genetic potential for the Mahāyāna as its intended chief disciples, and indirectly causes the other [type of stages] to be understood. What the treatise has proved is that the intelligent ones who also

\textsuperscript{778} \( \text{dgag gzhi} \).
\textsuperscript{779} \( \text{rdzas yod} \).
\textsuperscript{780} \( \text{btags yod} \).
\textsuperscript{781} \( \text{dgag bya} \).
\textsuperscript{782} \( \text{upāya, thabs} \).
possess genetic potential for the Mahāyāna first try to convince themselves by the validating cognition of the necessity and the possibility of attaining the perfect buddhahood for the benefit of all living beings; then they make a commitment of producing the actual Spirit of enlightenment. Making a commitment without valid reasons is the way of the dull ones. Furthermore, while the recognition of the necessity of attaining buddhahood for the benefit of living beings comes from the mastery of the method of producing the genuine great compassion and high resolve, the recognition of the possibility of attaining buddhahood comes from the realization of emptiness and related ideas. In light of this significance, we should know that for the intelligent ones it is necessary to realize emptiness before producing desire for liberation. As to the dull ones, we can understand that they try to produce the supreme spirit of enlightenment first, and then go on to master emptiness as taught in the third stage. We should also know that emptiness taught in the third stage is distinguished by its connection with liberative technique, thus being secondary [important in this stage].

[The sūtra continues:]

Even with these many deeds, the Tathāgata does not cease to make efforts in guiding disciples. Next, he installs those living beings in the Buddha-realm, which is the emptiness realized under the sway of liberative technique, by means of the teaching of irreversibility, defusing the situation of producing the selfish thought that indifferently abandons other beings and aspires for private liberation alone, and by means of the teaching of purification of intrinsic reality-status of the three focal points [of acts, that is, agent, action, and recipient] conjoined with liberative techniques. And he cause those living beings, having various dispositions such as different psychological makeups (khams), genealogies, and different aspirations (mos pa) for three types of enlightenment - the Śrāvakayāna, the Pratyekabuddha-yāna and the Mahāyāna, to engage with the object of the Tathāgata, the realization of emptiness associated with complete liberative techniques. They are dubbed the "unexcelled worthies for offerings" when they have entered into the Mahāyāna and have realized the noumenon of the Tathāgata.

783 adhyātmya, lhag bsam.
The phrase "various characters" demonstrates the three kinds of spiritual gene possessor. The first two stages guide the disciples who have genetic potential for the Sravakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna to their respective enlightenment, and then the third stage guides them to Mahāyāna.

The assertion that the stages taught here are identical to the three wheels taught in the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra, and the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra is an example of the third wheel taught in the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra is an audacious claim which does not understand [the subject] a little. In the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra, the Bodhisattva Paramārthaśramudgata asks the Buddha which scriptures are interpretable in meaning and which scriptures are definitive in meaning, because in some scriptures the Lord proclaims without distinction the intrinsic identifiability of all things, which are included in the three realities, whereas in other scriptures he proclaims that all things without distinction are not established by intrinsic identity. The Buddha replies, with particular discrimination, that the constructed [reality] is not established by intrinsic identity, whereas the relative and perfect [realities] are established by intrinsic identity. Paramārthaśramudgata then reports to the Buddha his understanding that the first the two types [of scriptures mentioned in his own question] are interpretable in meaning, whereas the discriminating [scriptures mentioned in the Buddha's answer] are definitive in meaning. Thus, the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra is not involved in being an example of the definitive scriptures according to the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra, defined by the Teacher in his answer which I just expounded.

Likewise, someone asserts that there is no difference between the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra and the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra in being a definitive scripture. But [in fact these two are not the same:] while the former states that the constructed reality is devoid of reality,
and the relative and perfect realities are really established, the latter teaches that all things are devoid of reality, thus naturally pure, and defilements are coincidental. There are other similar assertions, including the assertion that the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, which teaches the three ultimate vehicles, and the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* along with its commentary, the *Uttaratantra*, which [in fact] promulgate the ultimate unique vehicle are mutually inclusive. Someone asserts that both the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* and the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* teach the ultimate reality as being a permanent entity; its meaning is elucidated in the *Uttaratantra* and its commentary. Someone claims that the nonconceptual wisdoms of the paths of insight and meditation, which are contained in the Dharma Jewel taught in the *Uttaratantra*, should be known as what is taught in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, and this sūtra just teaches self-emptiness of the relative but not the Other-emptiness of the ultimate. All these assertions are the speech of lunatics!

The teaching of the three stages here is also the demonstration of the guidance for one person [on how to make progress] in the stages for the sake of establishing the ultimate unique vehicle. So it stands in contrast to the statement of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* that the three wheels in stages are meant for different persons. Someone asserts that the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* is an example of the third wheel as taught in the *Samdhinirmocana*. This should be known as something deviant from the intention of the scriptures without examining in detail the way how the *Samdhinirmocana* teaches and the way how the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* teaches.

3.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.3. To the Other Scripture
Intending that this naturally pure Element of the Tathāgata is the pure genetic potential\textsuperscript{785} possessed by living beings for the origination of the Buddha's intuition, [the Buddha declares in a certain \textit{sūtra}]:

Just as pure gold, though it is obscured by sands and becomes invisible, comes to be discovered by the process of purification, likewise, in this world [of living beings], there exists the naturally pure noumenon of the Tathāgata; it is obscured by constructive thought of the truth-habit and becomes invisible. It will be directly perceived when the seeds of constructive thought of the truth-habit are eliminated. When this happens, the freedom from all defilements is called the Truth Body of the perfect Buddha.

The naturally pure noumenon of the perfect Buddha, which exists in all living beings without distinction, is designated as the "perfect Buddha." The explanation that the Truth Body, having the twofold purity, exists within the continua of living beings is clearly a statement which is blind to the simile used in this \textit{sūtra}, and to its applied meaning. If the freedom from all coincidental defilements existed on the continua of all living beings, there would be not the slightest unfavorable conditions for obscuring the naturally pure Element of living beings to be directly perceived. How could that be appropriate for this simile and its meaning! Think!

\textit{Rejection}: Although the Truth Body having the twofold purity exists within the continua of living beings, it cannot be perceived by living beings because of the coincidental defilements.

\textsuperscript{785} vi\textit{sūddhagotra}, yongs su dog pa' \textit{rigs}. 
Reply: If the coincidental purity existed within the continua of living beings, which continua would be free from those defilements? It is not correct to say it is a self-continuum; otherwise, that freedom already existed on a self-continuum since beginningless samsāra when there is not the slightest defilement which has been eliminated.

Rejection: I meant that defilements of other-continuum do not exist on the self-continuum.

Reply: Then it follows that the attainment of the cessation truth would not depend on the direct realization of the meaning of reality. Instead, it would more like [ascertaining] non-existence of a vase on the ground which is devoid of any vases. This is quite ridiculous!

3.1.1.2.2.1.3. Statement of Purifying Factors

Now, which are the sixty purifications with the excellence in purifying the Element of the Tathāgata? They are, namely: four sorts of ornaments of the bodhisattvas; eight sorts of illumination of the bodhisattvas; sixteen sorts of a bodhisattva's great compassion; and thirty-two sorts of a bodhisattva's activities.

The four sorts of ornament are the enhancements of the bodhisattva's activities: the three educations including morality, concentration, and wisdom, along with recollection. The eight sorts of illumination are based on the attainment of the light of noble Dharma and the freedom from folly: the illumination which elucidates the entrances of Dharma, the illumination of mindfulness, the illumination of intelligence, the illumination of recognition, the illumination of Dharma, the illumination of conscious

\[\text{\textsuperscript{786}} \text{dhārāni, } \text{gzungs.}\]
awareness, the illumination of superknowledge, and the illumination of practice. Sixteen sorts of the bodhisattva's great compassion are the feelings born of the wish for the following sixteen types of living beings to be free of suffering: holding various mistaken views, having four pervert adherences, having egotism and possessiveness, having five types of obscurations, having attachment towards objects of sense-faculties, having seven types of deluded pride, having deteriorated from the noble paths, being powerless, having hatred and committing evil karma, lacking of noble wisdom, no realization of profound relativity, no elimination of instinct of mistaken views, no freedom from burden of suffering, acting in deceitful and arrogant behaviors, and having deteriorated from a higher rebirth and liberation. Thirty-two sorts of bodhisattva's activities [of helping living beings] are as follows: awakening from the folly of sleep; rectifying inferior beliefs to superior ones; rectifying the wishes for non-Dharma to ones for Dharma; rectifying the impure life-styles to pure ones; rectifying false views to right ones; rectifying irrational mentation to proper ones; rectifying adherences to perverse dharma to correct dharma; rectifying unfavorable factors of the six transcendences to favorable ones; rectifying unskillful means to skillful ones; rectifying addictives to non-addictives; rectifying the object [of the truth-habit] to the non-object; rectifying being untamed to being tamed; rectifying non-answer to kindness to answer; rectifying having fallen into the four rivers to liberation; rectifying being uncomfortable about the Buddha's discourse to being comfortable; rectifying obsession to non-obsession; rectifying not having noble wealth to having wealth; rectifying illness to non-illness, rectifying having lack of wisdom light to having light; rectifying unknowing the three worlds to knowing; rectifying engagement into the left path to into the right path; rectifying attachment to body and life to non-
attachment; rectifying being away from the Three Jewels to non-cutting off the genetic potential of the Three Jewels; rectifying the deterioration of Dharma to adherence to Dharma; rectifying being away from the six remembrances to being not away from; rectifying being obscured by addictions to being non-addictions; and rectifying non-virtuous dharma to virtuous dharma.

3.1.1.2.2.2.2. The Sutra Statements concerning Enlightenment, Excellences and Deeds

As to Enlightenment, immediately after the statement about the Element in the context of the teaching of the sixty purifications, [the Dhāranirūpa-sūtra] elucidates the Buddha's Enlightenment, which is both naturally pure and is eliminated from all coincidental defilements, by demonstrating sixteen types of Great Compassion. Engaging in sixteen types of Great Compassion is based on the observation of living beings, who have not attained the sixteen properties of Great Enlightenment and do not understand the meaning of reality of Great Enlightenment. The sixteen properties of Great Enlightenment are as follows: no root and location; tranquil and peaceful; naturally pure; no acceptance and rejection; no signs and objects; equanimity of three times; no body and uncreated; no differentiations and places; not having objects of body and mind; no object and basis; void; space alike; authentic place; engaging in forms and engaging in formless; no outflows and functions, and pure, stainless and no addictions.

787 ásrava, zag pa.
788 upiddāna, nye bar len pa.
Next to the statement on Enlightenment, the sūtra elucidates the Buddha's Excellences by demonstrating the ten powers, four fearlessnesses and eighteen special qualities of the Buddha, which will be expounded later.

And next to the statement on the Buddha's Excellences, the sūtra elucidates thirty-two of the Buddha's Deeds by demonstrating unexcelled deeds of the Tathāgata: the deeds of the ten powers which are the ten unmistaken teachings conforming to the occurrence of the ten powers; the deeds of the four fearlessnesses which are the four teachings on fear; and eighteen special qualities' deeds which are eighteen teachings of fruition.

3.1.1.2.3. Précis

Thus, these seven vajra bases, which have been just expounded, should be understood in detail according to the Dhāranīśvararājaparipṛcchā-sūtra, through the teachings of their uncommon defining characters.

3.1.1.3. Ascertaining Sequentiality

Question: And then, what is the conjunction, intrinsic sequentiality, of these seven imports to be realized?

Answer: From the perfect Buddha [enlightened] in all things, comes the revolution of the wheel of Dharma for noble beings. The gathering of numerous noble congregations of disciples, the supreme Samgha Jewel, comes in turn from the revolution of the wheel of Dharma. The revolution of the wheel of Dharma after attaining perfect buddhahood is
the object of the spirit of enlightenment in the Mahāyāna produced in the continua of the intended disciples of the Uttaratantra, while the occurrence of numerous noble congregations dependent on that wheel is the objective of the conception of the spirit of enlightenment.

Because of the noble congregation, there occurs Buddha-essence. It means that, in order to attain the ultimate Three Jewels and the Three Jewels as being the immediate causes, and then, to gather the noble congregations as the fruition of revolution of the wheel of Dharma, we wish to purify Buddha-essence from defilements. Thus, there comes Buddha-essence which is purified from defilements to a certain degree. For how long will this Buddha essence last? It will last until its attainment of the "element of the Buddha's intuition," depleted of all defilements. Throughout this duration, reality mingled with defilements, the susceptibility to Buddha's deeds entering in the continua of living beings, and genetic potential are called the "Buddha-essence." After the attainment of Buddha's intuition, this designation no longer exists. Some dimwits assert that the meaning of Buddha-essence as taught in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra remains valid even in the state of ultimate fruition. We can understand that this treatise obliquely takes a stand against such assertion in light of [the analysis of this verse].

According to the aforementioned alternative way of exposition, the Three Jewels appear in the world as the objects of the causal refuge. Because of the Three Jewels there occurs the purification of our Elements, and from the purification there comes the

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789 abhāmāna, dmigs pa.
790 ci rigs pa.
791 jñāna-dhītvinājñāna. Owing to the ambiguity in rNgog-lo's translation ("sning po ye shes khang lobs dmtsa"), Rong-ston takes garbho jñāna as a compound, referring to Buddha's intuition. See Legs bshad, 59. This seems to be not the correct rendition as suggested by Sanskrit edition.
792jug rung.
793rgyu' skyabs 'gro.
attainment of the Enlightenment and so on. Although this way of exposition is fit a little for this verse indicating sequentiality, the gist of this treatise is very clear in taking the Enlightenment and so on as conducive conditions for purifying the Element from defilements. The attainment of the Buddha's intuition, which is depleted of all defilements after the purification of the Element, is called "Supreme Enlightenment." The Excellences dependent on that Enlightenment, including the powers, fearlessnesses and special qualities of the Buddha, are indicated as the distinctive features of Enlightenment. And the Deeds dependent on the Excellences, which benefit all living beings in both simultaneous and incessant ways, are indicated as the distinctive features of the Excellences.

Thus ends the expositions of conjunction and preface of the treatise. The "conjunction" mentioned here is not identical to the one in question above; the latter relates to the question of sequentiality, while the former is the final summary of [the first] three verses.

[64a-170b]

3.1.2.1.2. Arrangement of Cause and Conditions Attaining Fruitional Three Jewels

3.1.2.1.2.1. General Arrangement

3.1.2.1.2.1.1. General Prelude
Immediately after the teachings of the fruitional Three Jewels, there is one verse with reference to the cause and conditions of the production of the Three Jewels, which are the birthplace of all common good things and transcendent purities.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2. The Import of Inconceivability

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1. Statement

I shall explain the cause and conditions from which arise the three virtuous Jewels to be attained. "Virtuous" means excellent. Reality mingled with defilements is the substantial cause. And the Enlightenment which is free from defilements, the immaculate Excellences of the Buddha, and the Victor's Deeds are the co-operating conditions. Whose objects are these? These four in their complete forms without remaining are the objects of buddhas, who perceive the ultimate.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2. Explanation

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1. Question

What is elucidated by this verse?

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1. Being Inconceivable and Objects of Buddhas Alone

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.1. The Siistra

The spiritual genetic potential of these fruitional Three Jewels, namely, the complete cause and conditions [for the Three Jewels] without remaining, is the direct object of the

794 upādāna, nye bar len pa'i gnas.
795 sahakārikāraṇa, than cig byed pa'i rkyen.
omniscient buddhas. As it is inconceivable in fourfold for others to directly [behold] for four reasons respectively, which I will explain later, it is the direct object of buddhas alone. The former verse first describes one cause and three conditions and then shows whose objects these are; the latter further shows the reason.

3.1.2.1.1.2.2.1.2. The Commentary

In this regard, the "reality mingled with defilements" is the Element, the naturally pure ultimate reality, which is termed the "Buddha-essence" when unreleased from the sheath of addictions. As to [reality] having two sorts of purities, there is not the slightest indication in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra along with its commentary, the Uttaratantra, that the formal name796 the "Buddha-essence" has such connotation. Therefore, it is merely out of someone's own whim to take the Truth Body as the Essence. This is not taken as the system of this treatise and its commentary. To prove the Essence to be the Truth Body which is free from defilements by using other scriptures is regarded as a sign of ignorance of reasonings.

The "reality free of defilements" is reality on which all defilements have come to an end; therefore, it is in the nature of the transformation of that reality in the Stage of the Buddha, which is termed "Truth Body of the Tathāgata."

Rejection: Your claim is completely contradictory, because you accept reality mingled with defilements as the one free of defilements.

Reply: Nonsense! You did not examine it well with reasoning. What I said is that reality mingled with defilements, when completely transformed, is called the "Truth Body." If not, then, living beings themselves would be inevitably buddhas, as they are

796 dngos ming.
buddhas whose defilements no longer exist. Therefore, reality mingled with defilements is accepted as Buddha-essence and reality free of defilements is accepted as the Truth Body. Consequently, we must not accept the Essence as the Truth Body! Likewise, there is not the slightest contradiction in accepting reality mingled with defilements as the Truth Body when all defilements have come to an end. If reality mingled with defilements could never be free from all defilements, living beings would never become buddhas. You must also accept that white woolen serge would be never transformed into a red color. This is due to your unawareness of the method of presenting the collective streaming⁷⁹⁷ and it finally amounts to accepting the heterodox view of a permanent, real [entity].

"Immaculate Excellences of the Buddha" refers to transcendent qualities of the Buddha, the excellences of freedom, including ten powers and so on, and the excellences of retribution, existing within or depending upon this Truth Body of the Tathāgata, in the nature of the transformation of the mind mingled with defilements into the pure mind. "The Victor's Deeds" refers to the thirty-two unexcelled deeds of these qualities of the Buddha, ten powers, etc., which, e.g., constantly give prophetic messages to bodhisattvas, spontaneously acting without disappearance, firmly flowing without interruption, and unceasingly engaging. Furthermore, these four bases are inconceivable for four reasons respectively; thus, they are called the "object of the Omniscience."

₇⁹⁷ tshogs rgyun.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2. Proof of Inconceivability

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1. Question
Then, for which four reasons?

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1. The Śāstra

Because reality mingled with defilements is the intrinsic purity of the minds of living beings, it is naturally pure, and yet mingled with addictions. That these two [incompatible] things share a common ground is something inconceivable and difficult to understand. Because reality free of defilements is originally free of addictions, and yet is pure and free of coincidental defilements, this is difficult to understand. Because the Excellences are free defilements, and yet are inseparable from the continua of addictive ordinary individuals in the context of nature of noumenon, this is difficult to understand. Because the deeds are spontaneous and are of no constructive thoughts of doing the deeds, this fact is inconceivable and difficult to understand.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1. Difficulty of Understanding Reality Mingled with Defilements

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.1. The Main Meaning

In this regard, reality mingled with defilements, which is the emptiness of intrinsic reality of the minds of living beings, is simultaneously of intrinsic purity and addiction where the minds of living beings are contaminated; this is an inconceivable place in the sense that the two realities are difficult to understand. If the mind is contaminated by the addictions, then we must accept the relativity of the contaminated and contaminating.
Such being the case, it would be extremely difficult to establish emptiness of intrinsic reality. But we must accept the following two things that share a common ground: all things are devoid of intrinsic identifiability even small as single atom, and all functionality is valid. This is similar to the difficulty of understanding the emptiness of intrinsic reality of the minds of living beings and to the difficulty of understanding reality mingled with defilements. Furthermore, [this is an inconceivable place] because this object is not even realized by the wisdom of pratyekabuddhas themselves who believe in the way of the profound Dharma, being emptiness free of reification. The claim that [pratyekabuddhas] could not understand it a bit is contradictory to the meaning of the reference.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2. Scriptural Reference

[As the Buddha states in the Śrīmālā-sūtra:]

Thus, Goddess, these two things are quite difficult to understand. What are the two things? It is difficult to understand by validating cognition that the mind is naturally pure, devoid of intrinsic identifiability even small as single atom. It is also difficult to understand that this very mind has addictions. The latter alone is not difficult to understand but the former and the compatible dichotomy is difficult to understand. The difficulty of understanding the former, knowing how to represent it as proved by validating cognition, is similar to the difficulty of understanding the compatible dichotomy. If knowing how to represent properly the arrangement of the emptiness of intrinsic reality as verified by validating cognition, there is no way not to accept the relative as verified by validating cognition. If not knowing this, it will amount to mere presumption of the negation of truth status and prevent the person from entering into the camp of experts in the two realities. Therefore, one should be expert in these two things: there is no such thing, even small as single atom, which is the functional basis of the sign-habit, and all functionality must be accepted. Goddess! You or bodhisattvas endowed with great qualities alone can hear these two things [with understanding]. Goddess! For the other śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, these two things, which can be accepted as the integration of the two realities, are to be directly understood only through following their faith in the Tathāgata.

798 mtshan 'dzin.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. Difficulty of Understanding Reality Free of Defilements

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1. The Main Meaning

In this regard, reality free of defilements does not originally have addictions from defilements, yet is purified from coincidental defilements afterwards; this compatible dichotomy is an inconceivable place, difficult to understand.

The intellect having the aspect of aspiring for the apprehension of reality virtuous is in the nature of beings, whereas the addictions such as attachment are inappropriate and unable to apprehend reality. We can understand a similar situation by examining each habit-pattern\(^{799}\) of other addictions. When the mind is defiled by the addictions, the addictions can apprehend the mind, and the "principal" mind consciousness and its "retinue," mental functions of addictions, become the same entity.

**Rejection:** If the addictions did not apprehend reality, then this would be in contradiction to [the fact that reality is] mingled with defilements.

**Reply:** The mind is defiled by the addictions. If [the addictions] were not obscurations for [seeing] the emptiness of intrinsic reality of the mind, it would be reasonable for us to perceive [reality] directly. Just because our minds are obscured by the fault of these defilements and are unable to perceive [reality], this reality is called "being mingled with defilements."

**Rejection:** In that case, reality free of defilements would be inevitably mingled with defilements, because, if no obscuring defilements, ordinary individuals would directly see, but the mind of ordinary individuals are obscured by these defilements, thereby not seeing.

\(^{799}\) 'dzin stangs.
Reply: Ordinary individuals do not see the noumenon of the Buddha because of obscuration within their mind. That fact cannot prove the excellences of the Buddha as mingled with defilements. [On the other hand,] it is valid to state that reality of their continua is mingled with defilements, when the minds of living beings are obscured by defilements, as the minds of living beings and their reality are the same entities. Furthermore, although there is no slightest habit-pattern of defilements infiltrated into reality of a living being's mind, we shall not interpret "originally not defiled by erroneous engagement" as reality existing in the minds of living beings [already] free of defilements.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. Scriptural Reference

Thus, [the Buddha states in the Dhāranirāja-sūtra:]

The mind is naturally luminous. This is known as it is directly by the noble beings. Hence, after having a habitual affinity with that, the Buddha achieved the unexcelled perfect enlightenment by the intuition endowed with one moment.

The former half of this verse is the proof of [reality free of defilements] as originally not having addictions, and the latter half is the proof of the purification of coincidental defilements afterwards.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.3. Difficulty of Understanding Excellences Free of Defilements

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.3.1. Thesis
In this regard, the immaculate Excellences of the Buddha are always found even in the stage of ordinary individuals who are totally addicted, of no distinction between before and after with reference to the inseparable noumenon, their realities; this is an inconceivable place because it is difficult to understand that there is no distinction between reality which is isolated from all defilements and reality mingled with defilements in the context of nature, unlike blue and yellow.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.2. Proof

Thus, [the Buddha states in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra:*]

There is no one among the party of living beings in which the possibility of producing all intuition of the Tathāgata and emptiness of intrinsic reality, the noumenon of all things, does not penetrate. Nevertheless, the intuition of the Tathāgata, the Truth Body, does not manifest in the continua of ordinary individuals because they are fettered by the construct-habit of the truth conviction about person and aggregates. When free from this concept-habit, the intuition of the omniscience, which is a self-arising one, makes its appearance unobstructedly.

This statement shows that all living beings without discrimination have the possibility of producing all excellences of the Buddha in their continua, and the so called "emptiness of intrinsic reality," which is established as the noumenon of the Buddha when purified from all defilements and is established also as the noumenon of living beings when mingled with defilements. But living beings cannot directly see emptiness because of obscuration of their truth-habits; otherwise, the intuition of the Tathāgata would arise. This is difficult to understand, similar to the difficulty of understanding the twofold truth above.

800 'du shes kyi 'dzin pa.
The metaphor for the factor to be obscured is as follows:

O Child of the Buddha, suppose there would be a big canvas, equal in size to the billion-world-galactic universe. And on this big cloth, the whole billion-world-galactic universe would be painted completely. The vast surrounding horizon would be painted in the exact size of the vast surrounding horizon. The great earth would be painted in the exact size of the great earth. The two-thousand-world universe would be painted in its exact size. [Likewise.] the one-thousand-world universe, the four continents, the great ocean, the Southern Continent of Jambu, the Eastern Continent of Videha, the [Western] Continent of Godāṇīya, the Northern Continent of Kuru, the Mount Sumeru, the mansion of celestial beings living on the earth, that of celestial beings living in the desire-world, and of celestial beings living in the form-world; all of these would be painted in their exact sizes. Hence, this big painting cloth would have the same size as the width and length of the billion-world-galactic universe.

The metaphor for the obscuring factor:

This very big cloth would, then, be placed within one subatomic particle. Just as this big cloth is placed within one subatomic particle, in each of all the other subatomic particles there is a big cloth of the same size to be placed.

The metaphor for the spiritual teacher who removes the obscuring factor:

Suppose there should be born one person, sagacious, shrewd, clever, and intelligent, knowing how to penetrate that [the big cloth]. And his eyes were divine eyes which were absolute pure and luminous. With these divine eyes he would perceive [and wonder]: "Why does this big cloth of such a great nature dwell in such a small subatomic particle! It is of no use to anybody!"
"Sagacious" and so on are the metaphors for the knowledge of things as they are, the knowledge of things as they are found, the clear sense faculties, the wisdom endowed with mindfulness and the analytical skills.

The metaphor for the teacher's resolve to care for disciples:

So he would think: "Aha! I shall break this subatomic particle with vajra by the strength of great efforts and make this great cloth become useful for the beings."

The metaphor for engaging in deed:

Then, producing the strength of great efforts, he would break this subatomic particle with a tiny little vajra and would make that great cloth useful for the all beings. Not alone for one subatomic particle, would he do the same also for all the other subatomic particles.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.3.3.2. The Import

The import of the metaphor for the factor to be obscured is as follows:

Similarly, Child of the Buddha, the profound intuition, the immeasurable extensive intuition of the Tathāgata and the intuition of caring all living beings are possible to be produced in the continua of living beings, and reality, which is the object of meditation producing the intuition of the Buddha and is established as a buddha when it has been purified from defilements, thoroughly penetrates into the continuum of each living being. And the continuum of each living being is akin to the immeasurable intuition of the Tathāgata.
I shall slightly elaborate the imports of these metaphors. The metaphor of the inconceivable big cloth with the size equal to the billion-world-galactic universe was used [by the Buddha] for the purpose of stopping erroneous constructive thought of a certain future disciple who would accept that a buddha, who has perfected all the excellences of elimination and realization, primordially exists within the continuum of a living being. Otherwise, there is no need [for the Buddha] to use the metaphor that does not exist among knowable things.

**Rejection:** That has not been proved to be erroneous constructive thought.

**Reply:** Let us closely examine this assertion that the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity exists within the continuum of a living being. Do you mean that the intrinsic purity of a living being's mind is isolated from all coincidental defilements? Or do you mean that the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity exists within the continuum of a living being as the same nature of his or her mind? Do you assert that [the Truth Body] exists in an entirely different way? Or in an inseparable way? Because you accept [the ultimate reality] as a phenomenon, do you think of it as a permanent entity? Or impermanent?

In the case of the first position, any living being would be inevitably a Buddha, yet he or she never recognizes that he or she *is* a buddha! If you insist that there is no fault in such an assertion, then you would be forced to make such a speech of repudiating the Buddha as a foolish, idiotic and ignorant person, not even knowing whether he himself was a buddha or a living being.

In the case of the second position, by taking that Truth Body endowed with the
twofold purity that exists within the continuum of a living being as the basis of
differentiation, is it or is it not obscured by the coincidental defilements in the continuum
of a living being? If the former were the case, then it would be in contradiction to the
[notion] of the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity. If the latter were the case,
then the continuum of a living being and the twofold purity would be the same in nature.
This would refute your own position that the continuum of a living being is thoroughly
tainted by defilements. Furthermore, if the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity
existed within the continuum of a living being as the [mind's] noumenon, what else
would be more incorrect than saying that [the continuum of a living being] is both
mingled with defilements and free of coincidental defilements in its objective condition?
There is no other way which would stand up to the examination above.

In the case of the third position, it would be totally incorrect to assert that a living
being and a buddha are mingled together, because two opposite simultaneous things are
not suitable to have a relation of relativity.

In the case of the fourth position, the assertion that the Truth Body endowed with the
twofold purity primordially and intrinsically dwells within the continuum of a living
being in an inseparable manner would contradict all reasonings.

Putting aside [the position of] being impermanent for a while, if [the ultimate reality]
were a permanent phenomenon, then it would be a spatial, temporary thing with limited
characters. You would admit inevitably that it is impermanent. If it were not a spatial,
temporary thing with limited characters, you would admit inevitably that what exists in
the continuum of a particular person, e.g., Devadatta, also exists in the continua of all
living beings, as this is a thing unsuitable to be spatial and temporary. Furthermore, the
past things would still exist in the future and the future things would already exist in the past. And the one who falls asleep would be also awake and the one who stays awake would be also asleep, thus, no difference could be drawn between sleeping time and non-sleeping time. Viewing [the ultimate reality] as a permanent entity, like blue or yellow, not depending on the negation of negatee, amounts to the [notion] of permanence [as conceived] only by the ones outside this tradition. Although the Vaibhaṣikas accept a permanent entity as something having functionality, they consent that it depends on the negation of negatee. No single Buddhist scholar would accept a permanent entity as an independent establishment. Furthermore, is the ultimate reality, a permanent entity, at the time when it is seen directly absolutely identical to the ultimate reality at the time out of equipoise? Or is it different? In the first case, someone named Devadatta, who directly sees the ultimate reality in equipoise, would also directly see the ultimate reality out of equipoise; as the ultimate reality at different times are absolutely identical. In the second case, it would reject your own assertion that [the ultimate reality] is not suitable to be a spatial, temporary thing with limited characters.

The import of the metaphor for the obscuring factor:

The ultimate reality, which is the object of the path of producing all the intuition of the Tathāgata, exists within the continuas of living beings. Fettered by the construct-habit, which is the truth-habit about the person and aggregates, however, the naives are unaware of the Tathāgata's intuition, in general. Neither do they know

\[801 \text{bsgrub pa rang dbang pa.}\]
of it well through analogies and reasons, nor do they directly experience it by the perceptual validating cognition.

The import of the metaphor for the removal of obscuration in the continua of living beings:

Hence, having seen the ultimate realm, which is the ultimate reality and the state of all the living beings, by his unobstructed intuition, the Tathāgata resolves to be a teacher, for the sake of cleansing the tainted reality within the continua of living beings from all defilements.

This clearly shows that reality which exists within all living beings is designated as the intuition of the Tathāgata, as reality is the object of the equipoise wisdom of the Tathāgata and the Tathāgata's intuition is produced by directly realizing the relative, and meditating on it to completion.

[So the Tathāgata declares:] "Alas! These living beings are not properly aware of the intuition of the Tathāgata, the ultimate reality, though the object of it penetrates them. I shall free these living beings, no matter how, from all the fetters such as attachment made by constructs of the truth-habit, through the teaching of the noble path. In this way, they would loosen the big knot of the construct-habit, which is the truth-habit and its instinct by producing the antidote, the strength of the noble intuition themselves, and they would personally realize the intuition of the Tathāgata, attaining the sameness with the Tathāgata's intuition." [Accordingly], he teaches those living beings the path of the Tathāgata, thus removing all the fetters made by constructs. And when all the fetters made by constructs are eliminated, this immeasurable intuition of the Tathāgata, then, becomes useful to all living beings.

[This statement that the immeasurable intuition of the Tathāgata, i.e. reality] was not
previously useful to all living beings and will become useful depending on the meditation of path contradicts [your assertion that all living beings] are primordially buddhas endowed with the twofold purity. A living being attains buddhahood depending on the meditation of path. If you claim that a buddha endowed with twofold purity primordially exists within the continua of a living being, then, while the mind of a living being is mingled with defilements, its natural state would be free of any defilements. No other people would conceive such arrangement, except idiots!

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.4. Difficulty of Understanding Deeds of the Victor

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.4.1. The Main Meaning

In this regard, the Deeds of the Victor simultaneously reach all [the disciples], at any time, spontaneously without efforts, without motivational constructive thought, [yet act] according to the intentions of the disciples, according to virtuous roots collected by the disciples, with none left out; this is an inconceivable place.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.4.2. Scriptural Reference

Thus, [the Buddha states in the Dhāranirāja-sūtra:]

In order to introduce the living beings to the deeds of the Tathāgata, though the deeds are immeasurable, they are taught briefly with a summarized number of thirty-two excellences. However, Worthy son, the true profound and magnificent deeds of the Tathāgata is inconceivable, immeasurable; unknown directly to all the world, unrealized directly by depending on the words of others, so unexpressed by letters and difficult to be acquired by others; dwelled in all the Buddha fields, so having magnificent abode; collectively engaged [by buddhas], thus equal to all buddhas; spontaneously accomplished, so beyond any effort and exertion; of no motivational constructive thought as equal to the space; engaged [by buddhas] while always remaining in the equipoise of the ultimate reality, where duality declines, thus, of no differentiation as the act of the ultimate element.
Then, after showing the simile of a pure vaidūrya jewel, [the Buddha] teaches in detail the conclusion:

Worthy son, you should know the deeds of the Tathāgata through alternate ramifications as follows: inconceivable, pervasive in all, no blemish whatsoever as they are engaged in the world yet not tainted with the worldly faults, incessant and pervasive in the three times, and keeping the lineage of the Three Jewels from being cut off as [constantly] producing all good things of transcendence. The body of the Buddha, in which inconceivable deeds of the Tathāgata dwell, never casts off its undifferentiated space-like defining characteristic and shows itself in all the buddha-fields. The speech [of the Buddha] never casts off its inexpressible reality in the context of the decline of duality and teaches the living beings the Dharma with the proper language skill. And the mind secret [of the Buddha] is free from all objects of the mind, always remaining in the equipoise of the ultimate reality, where duality declines, yet is perfectly aware of the activities and intentions of the minds of all living beings.

3.1.2.1.2.1.3. Specific Arrangement of Cause and Conditions

3.1.2.1.2.1.3.1. The Śāstra

The "object to be realized" is the ultimate reality mingled with defilements. If it is realized, all the qualities of the Buddha would be produced; on the other hand, even the liberation from samsāra would not be possible. This single base called "Element" is the ultimate object to be determined and to be realized. It is the cause of the purification from defilements. Although it is not the cause which produces the intuition of the Buddha, it is designated as the cause in the sense that it is the object of the equipoise wisdom of the noble bodhisattvas which is the chief cause for producing the intuition of the Buddha. There would be no origination of the intuition of the Buddha if there was lack of it. The direct realization of the ultimate reality is the ultimate Enlightenment, and its components
are the excellences of the Buddha. By these excellences, the deeds cause disciples, the three types of genetic potential, to realize the ultimate reality. [Of these four] respectively, one base is the cause and [the remaining] three are the conditions for purifying defilements. Hence, we should know that the ultimate reality of the continua of disciples, for whose sake the Uttaratantra is taught, is the substantial basis, and the other three [bases], the Enlightenment, etc., as the causal refuge accomplished in other's continua, are the conditions.

3.1.2.1.3.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.3.2.1. Statement of Cause and Conditions

Of these four bases of import, the first base, the ultimate reality mingled with defilements, should be regarded as the "object to be realized" because the ultimate reality includes the ultimate objective condition of all things knowable. The second base is the ultimate realization of the ultimate reality, "Enlightenment;" this is the realization where all defilements have come to an end. The components of Enlightenment are the third base; the "altruistic components of the Enlightenment," are these excellences of the Buddha. The fourth base is [comprised of] the "[Deeds] which cause realization" because those components of Enlightenment cause other people, i.e. disciples, to realize the ultimate reality. Hence, in terms of this, we should know that these four bases, being the factors of cause and conditions, are presented as the spiritual genetic potential of the Three Jewels. The last three bases are the conditions for attaining the frutional Three Jewels and are designated as "spiritual genetic potential." In no sense can those be the twofold spiritual gene as expounded below.
3.1.2.1.3.2.2. How [the Four Bases] Become Cause and Conditions

In regard to that, we should understand that the first one of these four bases is the cause for the origination of the Triple Jewel, the ultimate objective, depending on the purification of that tainted ultimate reality; because the ultimate reality is designated as the seed of the transcendent things. All of these originate from the meditation which objectifies it, and it is the basis of the real seed which is the wisdom of bodhisattvas in the form of individual's rational mentation on the import of reality before and after attaining the First Stage. Thus, one base [the fourth base] is the cause. This indicates that the tainted ultimate reality is designated as the cause instead of being the producing cause. How do the other three turn out to be conditions? These should be understood to be the conditions for the production of the Three Jewels as the objective to be attained in the way that the production of the Three Jewels depends on the purification of that tainted ultimate reality. This purification is done by the rational mentation based upon messages from others, i.e. the Mahāyāna instructions taught by the Buddha who was formerly enlightened - the Tathāgata has realized unexcelled perfect enlightenment, performed the thirty-two deeds of the Tathāgata with those qualities of the Buddha such as the ten powers, and so on. Thus, these three bases, the Enlightenment, etc., are the conditions.

Although the messages from others and the rational mentation are indispensable for attaining enlightenment as the external condition and the internal condition respectively, they are arranged in the way of being cause and conditions in connection to those four bases for the sake of understanding the extended meaning.
These explanations above have determined what the four vajra-like imports are, whose objects they belong to, the reason why they are difficult to understand, and how they become the cause and conditions for the unexcelled enlightenment if understood.

3.1.2.1.2.2. Specific Differentiations

3.1.2.1.2.2.1. Exposition of the Element or Buddha-essence as a Causal Factor

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1. Prelude

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.1. General Prelude

Henceforth, the remaining text should be known as a detailed teaching of the discriminations among these four bases in stages.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2. Specific Prelude

In terms of reality mingled with defilements, [the Buddha] states in the sūtra, that all living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence. For what reason and by which purpose does [the Buddha state thus]? This is a prelude with questions. In this prelude, it is extremely clear that the Essence, which is said to be possessed by all living beings, is treated as a casual factor alone. We should thus know that taking the Essence as the Truth Body is not the meaning of this treatise and its commentary. Later in the text no extra question on the purpose of teaching the Element is made, this prelude therefore asks for the meaning of the term "Buddha-essence" and the necessity of the proclamation that living beings are possessed of it.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2. The Main Meaning
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1. Briif Statement on the Element, Buddha-essence, by Indicating Threifold Import

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.1. General Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.1.1. Identifying Buddha-essence

Buddha-essence is expounded with reference to the fruition of the Tathāgata, the nature of the Tathāgata, and the casual factor of the Tathāgata. Hence, the mere reality and the Truth Body of the perfect enlightenment cannot serve as the exemplification of the Essence, as it is explained to be something at living being's stage and as a causal factor alone in this treatise and its commentary.

The description of the three exemplifications is as follows:

The Buddha proclaims that all living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence because of the fact that the deeds of the Truth Body of the perfect enlightenment, the attained fruition through meditation on the path of purifying the Element, penetrate and pervade all living beings and the continuum of a living being alone is specifically qualified as being receptive to the deeds of the Truth Body. The similar meaning is found in the Abhisamayālaṃkāra:

The Buddha is said to be pervasive because of his vast deeds; [he is also said to be eternal because his deeds are inexhaustible.]

The Buddha proclaims that all living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence, thinking that they all have reality that is naturally isolated from defilements in their continua. Although it is true that the nature of a living being and the nature of the Buddha is the same reality that is naturally isolated from defilements, in view of being the nature
of the Buddha, it is [called] Buddha-essence while yet mingled with defilements in the continua of living beings.

Intending that all living beings are possessed of the Buddha-gene\textsuperscript{802} as a causal factor, which cause the attainment of the Three Bodies, the Buddha proclaims that they all are possessed of the Essence. The naturally existing gene\textsuperscript{803} is one of the [twofold] genetic potential. In view of possession of the genetic potential, it is said to be the Essence with regard to the causal aspect of the Tathāgata. In view of possession of the ultimate reality, it is said to be the Essence with regard to the nature of the Tathāgata.

Hence, we shall know that the scriptures, such as the \textit{Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra}, along with this treatise and its commentary determined precisely the so called "Buddha-essence" have three imports: the receptive ability in the continua of living beings to the deeds of the Truth Body, the ultimate reality mingled with defilements in the continua of living beings, and the Buddha-genes that can be transformed into the Three Bodies, existing in the continua of living beings. The particular pattern of uniting the necessity of such determination and the stages of the path will be expounded in the "benefits" section.

Without the understanding of these imports, someone asserts that the Truth Body is also the Essence expounded here with reference to the three categories of the Essence: fruitional, natural and causal. This is an arrangement that produces wonder for the deluded, but not the meaning of this treatise and its commentary. So read with your eyes wide open!

\textsuperscript{802} \textit{buddha-gotra, sangs rgyas kyi rigs.}
\textsuperscript{803} \textit{svabhāvavasthita-gotra rang behin du gnas pa’ rigy}.
[In addition,] as to the deeds that cause the higher rebirths,\textsuperscript{804} we shall know that these deeds have already entered into all living beings, and therefore, not one of them has not experienced the status of god or human. As to the deeds that cause the ultimate good,\textsuperscript{805} all living beings must have the susceptibility to them as well.

### 3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.1.2. How it is taught in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra

The \textit{Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra} first uses a simile of the Tathāgata's emanation:

Noble Child! just as images of the Tathāgata are sitting cross-legged inside the ugly lotuses created by the Tathāgata, emitting hundreds of thousands of rays of light... And the Tathāgata, having seen inside those living beings, who are totally addicted, the noumenon of the Tathāgata is unshakable and untainted by all states of existence...

Buddha-essence is then explicated in detail by nine similes. In this \textit{Uttaratrana}, the Essence is determined thoroughly by the nine similes of the obscured factor and their corresponding imports, and the nine similes of the obscuring factors and their corresponding imports. Another important arrangement is also determined in this treatise with reference to the ten points, which is not found literally as elucidated in the \textit{Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra} but in the \textit{Āryaśrīmālā-sūtra}. What is determined in this treatise shall be held as the real meaning of the Essence.

\textsuperscript{804} abhyudaya, mgon mtho.  
\textsuperscript{805} nihśreyasa, nges par legs pa.
[The Buddha] explicated extensively with emphasis, in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* which has three lengths - extensive, middling and brief, that all things, from the material up to omniscience, are void of intrinsic reality status and are therefore free from all the extremes of the reification. Similarly, in this *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra*, which belongs to the final wheel, [the Buddha] explicated with emphasis that the minds of living beings are naturally pure as they are void of intrinsic reality status and the obscuring defilements are coincidental in this regard. In this treatise, which is an accurate commentary on the intention of the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra*, the way of proving that defilements are coincidental is explicated with reference to the fact that addictions and conceptuality are isolated from intrinsic reality status, as Asaṅga states that "addictions are terminated primordially." Just as this establishment of defilements as coincidental is declared in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, the reason for proving that the mind is truthless is also similar in meaning to what is taught in that sūtra. Hence, we can know that the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* as an ultimate definitive meaning scripture is equal to the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*.

Someone accepts the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* as an exemplification of interpretive meaning scripture which declares an essence being a permanent entity as found in the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*. This thought is mistaken. If the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* is not literally intended but interpretive in meaning, there would be no slightest need for this treatise to have the section below, which consists of questions and answers which show the necessity of the teaching on the Element.

There is another one who accepts the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* as a scripture definitive in meaning, teaching a permanent real entity. This would just change the name of soul constructed by the heterodox to the "Buddha-essence" and would be in contradiction to the

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806 bden stong.
Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra in which the so taught essence theory proves to be interpretable.

Yet another one accepts the fundamental consciousness, which is different from the collection of the six consciousnesses determined in the Master Asaṅga's Mahāyāna-\textit{saṅgṛaha}, as the Essence and that is what this treatise and its commentary mean. This idea lacks the examination completely, as there is not even the smallest fragment of this treatise and its commentary that explicates such fundamental consciousness and is not accepted in the Master's own system that accepts external things. I will explain. If it were accepted in the Master's own system, then the ultimate three vehicles must be also accepted. This would be in direct contradiction to the text's establishment of the ultimate unique vehicle above and the verse below [including] "the Saddharma-\textit{puṇḍarīka} and so on, teaching Thatness of thing..."

[The Buddha] states in the \textit{Ghanavṛtta-sūtra}:

The various grounds are the fundamental consciousness, and Buddha-essences are virtuous. Tathagatas indicate that very nature by means of the expression "fundamental consciousness." Although the "essence" is renowned as the "fundamental," the feeble-minded are unaware of it.\footnote{As translated in \textit{The Central Philosophy of Tibet}, 350.}

This statement does not indicate that the Essence as a permanent entity and the fundamental consciousness as an entity different from the collection of the six consciousnesses are the intended meanings mutually for each other, in spite of the fact that this statement seems to show that the Essence is the intended meaning for the fundamental consciousness. In addition, these two are not synonyms in terms of...
designation. What is then the meaning of this passage? [The Buddha] expounded in the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* that the sūtra teaching such an Essence cannot be taken literally but has a deeper intention, intending the emptiness that is free from any reifications as its intended basis, including emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. Likewise, intending the very same emptiness, [the Buddha] teaches the fundamental consciousness, an entity different from the collection of the six consciousnesses. Being unaware of it, the feebleminded literally take the scriptures teaching fundamental consciousness and Essence like such, as intended. Hence these two are synonyms in terms of intended meaning. We shall therefore not regard "Essence" and "fundamental consciousness" as literally equivalent just because of being synonyms. So intending, the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* states:

Mahāmati, this deep understanding of the scriptures of all buddhas has the nature of emptiness, non-production, non-duality, and intrinsic realitylessness...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.1.3. Explaining the Purpose of Other Scripture

If the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* is indicated to be a definitive meaning scripture literally intended, then how do you prove the following statement as found in the *Laṅkāvatāra* interpretive? In that sūtra, Mahāmati questions:

The Lord promulgates Buddha-essence in the discourses, saying it is naturally luminous, primordially pure, endowed with the thirty-two marks, and existing within the bodies of all living beings. You say it is like a precious gem, wrapped in a filthy rag, being permanent, stable, and eternal, but wrapped by the [rag] of the aggregates, Elements, and sense-media, [overpowered by attachment, hatred and misknowledge, and defiled with constructive thoughts.] How is this Buddha-essence-theory different
from the soul-theory of the heterodox? For the heterodox also espouses a soul as permanent, inactive, qualityless, all-pervading, and indestructible.808

In reply, the Lord states:

Mahāmati, my teaching of Buddha-essence is not the same as the heterodox soul-theories. Mahāmati, the Tathāgatas, Ārḥats, the Buddha teach the Essence for the meaning of the words such as "emptiness," "correct extreme," "nirvāṇa," "non-production," "signlessness," and "wishlessness," in order to avoid the fear of selflessness on the part of the naïve. Their discourse with reference to Buddha-essence teaches the state of non-conceptuality, the non-apparent object.

Mahāmati, present and future bodhisattvas should not become attached to it as a self. Mahāmati, for example, potters manufactures a variety of vessels out of one mass of clay particles with their hands, manual skill, a rod, water, thread, and efforts. Mahāmati, similarly the Tathāgatas also teach the objective selflessness which is a dearth of all constructive thoughts. Endowed with wisdom of that [selflessness] and liberative technique, they, like a potter, teach it with various expressions in words and letters either as Buddha-essence or as selflessness.

Thus, Mahāmati, the teaching of Buddha-essence is not the same as the heterodox soul-theories. Mahāmati, in order to educate the heterodox who are attached to soul-theories, the Tathāgatas teach Buddha-essence through the teaching of Buddha-essence. Thinking that those beings whose thoughts have been dominated by soul-ideologies will more quickly come to unexcelled perfect enlightenment if their thoughts dwell in the sphere of the three doors of liberation ...

These statements prove the interpretability of other interpretable scriptures which cannot be taken literally as mentioned before. In order to help disciples of the future generations, pretending some doubts, Mañjuśrī questions if [the statement] could be taken literally that within the bodies of all living beings there exits a permanent and substantial Buddha-essence which, like a precious gem wrapped in a filthy rag, is decorated with the thirty-two marks but wrapped by the rags of contaminated aggregates, elements, and sense-media, overpowered by three poisons, and mixed with defilement of constructive thoughts, it would be no difference from advocacy of a personal self. If it has a deeper

808 As translated in The Central Philosophy of Tibet, 347, slightly modified (in brackets) according to the edition used in the rGyud bla tika.
intention, then what is the intended basis? What is its purpose? What is the refutation of the literalness [of this teaching]? The Lord proves the interpretability [of that statement] in answer: the intended basis is "emptiness" and so on; this [kind] of scripture was taught for the purpose of educating in stages the naïve disciples of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna who are afraid of selflessness, and the heterodox who are attached and previously habituated to soul-theories on the ultimate reality; if taken literally then [this teaching] would be no different from the soul-theories advocated by the heterodox, and we should know that the refutation of the literalness [of this teaching] consists of the reasoning refuting a personal self as well.

In the *Vimalaprabhā*, a great commentary on the Śrīkālacakra-tantra, the reasoning for refuting the permanent entity is used extensively. We shall therefore know that there is a serious flaw in the theory accepting the ultimate reality that is a permanent entity as the final intention of the *Vimalaprabhā* and this treatise. In regard to the statement of the *Pramāṇavārttika*, "validating cognition is not permanent," it would be catastrophic to say that the text [merely] refutes [the position that] relative validating cognition is permanent, for the heterodox Śaivaism accepts Śiva as the validating cognition of a permanent entity. Furthermore, we shall have a full realization dependent on this treatise that the *Samādhinirmocana-sūtra* is interpretive in meaning because, as aforementioned, it indicates the ultimate three vehicles, the fundamental consciousness that is different in terms of their entities from the collection of the six consciousnesses, and the relative and the perfect which are established with intrinsic identity. We shall therefore understand there would be a great obstacle to promoting properly the Buddha’s teaching and its
explanation, if accepting there is no difference between the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* and the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* in being definitive.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.1.2. Detailed Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2. The Siistra

The *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* states that "all living beings are ever possessed of Buddha-essence." This statement is made by thinking the facts that the Truth Body of the Tathāgata diffuses in all living beings, that is, all beings are receptive to the Tathāgata's liberative activities, and that reality as the nature of both the Tathāgata and a living being is undifferentiated, that is, reality mingled with defilements exists within all living beings. It is made also by thinking the fact that the naturally existing gene, which is fit for transforming into the Truth Body, and the developmental gene, which is fit for transforming into the Form Body, exists within all living beings. Therefore, it is made in terms of three factors: susceptibility to the Tathāgata's liberative activities, nature, and casual aspect [of the Tathāgata].

*Question:* What is the difference between the naturally existing gene and reality mingled with defilements which exists within a living being?

*Reply:* Although there is no slightest distinction [in meaning] between these two, their applications are different: the former is explained separately to indicate [Buddha-essence as the factor] fit for transforming into the Truth Body at casual stage; the latter to indicate the undifferentiated nature between the Tathāgata and a living being.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2. The Commentary
In short, by three kinds of factors with regard to connotation and purpose, [the Lord] states in the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* that all living beings are ever possessed of Buddha-essence. It means that (1) living beings are receptive to the liberative activities of the Tathāgata's Truth Body; that (2) reality mingled with defilements is undifferentiated from the ultimate reality of the Tathāgata in terms of its nature; and that (3) the spiritual genetic potential exists [in every living being]. These three factors will be taught [in detail] below according to the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* in the section of the nine similes, starting with the verse: "Because the Element is consisted of the threefold nature, it has a resemblance to the Buddha and so forth..."

The [following] determination of the Element by the arrangement\(^\text{809}\) of ten points is not literally intended in the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra*, but implicit in the *sūtra* if we examine the definitions closely. This is well explained by oral instructions. As to the literalness, the *sūtra* clearly shows the proof with the nine similes.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2. Detailed Exposition of Proof

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1. Proof of Element Being Naturally Pure with Ten Arrangements

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.1. Indicating Summary

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.1. Prelude

Summary:

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1. The Šāstra

Nature is the tripartite Buddha-essence just explained. These three [factors] with reference to Buddha-essence are also included within the category of nature.

\(^{809}\) *vyavasthāpana*, *rnam gzhag.*
The causes refer to faith, etc., which cause the tripartite meaning [Buddha-essence] to be purified. These are the purifying causes applicable to being the causes with reference to the tripartite meaning. Thus, these should not be held as the ones which produce the tripartite meaning, seeing that these are the causes which purify reality from defilements and purify the spiritual genetic potential, thereby attaining the Truth Body through purifications.

The fruitions are the attainment of the transcendence of purity and so on through the purification of the element by faith, etc.

*Question:* Are the fruitions of the element not supposed to be shown here? Why are the fruitions of faith, etc., explained?

*Reply:* The four fruitions of faith, etc., are likewise the fruitions of the element, owing to the fact that the attainment of the four fruitions through the purification of the element surely depends upon the purifying forces such as faith.

The cultivation of the renunciation of samsāra that comes from ascertaining its vices, and the aspiration for nirvāṇa from ascertaining its virtues should be known as the actions of the spiritual genetic potential which exists [within all living beings].

Possession refers to the possession of the four causal excellences such as faith, etc., as well as the possession of the seven fruitional excellences such as superknowledge, \(^{810}\) etc.

The categories of engagement determine [there are two kinds of categories:] the one regarding the nature existing in the state of impure, etc.; the other one regarding the engagement [itself] which is consisted of [the arrangements] of the states, all-pervadingness, unchangeable eternity and undifferentiated excellences. [The element] is

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\(^{810}\) abjñā, mgon shes.
not distinctive from one another in terms of its nature. The distinction is merely concerned with states. Therefore, the same nature is pervading in all states. Someone may wonder that there would be a contradiction in asserting a same pervading nature if the three different states are established. There is no such contradiction, insofar as the emptiness of intrinsic reality is unchangeable in three states. Because of the unchangeability in the extremely pure state, at the time of ultimate fruition, the three excellences of the three liberations associated with śrāvakas and so on are undifferentiated in terms of their natures. This is the meaning of the undifferentiated [excellences], in other words, there are no ultimate liberations associated with śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas different from the excellences of the Buddha in terms of their entities.

These ten [points] should be known as the ones which cause the intended meaning of the ultimate element, the Element which is designated as the "Buddha-essence" in the scriptures, to be determined. A proper understanding of the element is contingent upon that.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.3. Categories

In summary, intimating to the ten points, these should be known as the arrangements of the Tathāgata-essence, which is the perceptual object of the ultimate wisdom that is the subject perceiving reality. What are the ten points? They are namely: (1) nature (svabhāva) [of the Element]; (2) causes (hetu) [of its purification]; (3) fruition (phala) [of its purification]; (4) actions (karman) [of the Element]; (5) possession (yoga) [of the Element]; (6) engagement (vṛtti) [of the Element in general]; (7) states (avasthāprabheda)

811 don dam pa' dbhyings.
[of its engagement]; (8) all-pervadingness (sarvatraga); (9) unchangeability (avikāra) [of the Element through states]; and (10) indivisible excellences (asampheda).

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2. Exposition of Each Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1. Nature and Causes

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.1.1. Prelude

In regard to that, here is the first verse concerning the points of "nature" and "causes."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2. Brief Statement

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.1. Nature

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.1. Similes and Their Imports

The three [things of Buddha-essence], with reference to their characteristics, are analogous to a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water respectively. Their common characteristic is pure [in terms of their entities]. More specifically, the Truth Body of the Tathāgata is analogous to a wish-fulfilling jewel. Reality is analogous to space. The spiritual genetic potential is analogous to pure water. [The treatise] explains the Truth Body with respect to its diffusion of liberative activities. In order to make it easy to understand that [living beings are] receptive to its activities, the Truth Body is explained to be analogous to a wish-fulfilling jewel. If the Truth Body itself were taught as the Element, there would be no point mentioning the word "diffusion" unnecessarily in the verse (1.28) which states "in virtue of the diffusion of the Buddha’s Body." Their common characteristic is ever naturally pure and undefiled by addictions in terms of their entities.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2. Causes

The Truth Body is the reality purified from all defilements and transformation of the spiritual genetic potential by purification; [it] emerges through faith in the Mahāyāna teaching, higher wisdom including the category of the transcendence of wisdom in the mental continua of bodhisattvas, infinite concentrations of bodhisattvas, and great compassion, which are analogous to the seed, mother, womb, and nanny respectively.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1. Nature

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.1. Question

What is shown here by the former half of this verse?

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.1.2.1. The Śāstra

All living beings that are receptive to the liberative activities of the Truth Body of the Tathāgata have the power to attain that Truth Body because these activities are endowed with the power to fulfill all wishes. Reality mingled with defilements is in the immutable form of being empty of intrinsic reality because reality is immutable. And the characteristic of the developmental gene is by nature moistened with compassion towards living beings when the seeds have been planted. Because of that, these three [factors] are analogous to the qualities of a wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water respectively, with
reference to their particular characteristics, and to natural purity with reference to their common characteristic.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.1.2.2. The Commentary

In these aforementioned three [factors] in verse 28, the resemblance of the Element of the Tathāgata to the qualities of the pure wish-fulfilling jewel, space, and water respectively, should be known with reference to its particular and common characteristics: this is the brief statement. Now, in a more detailed exposition, the Truth Body of the Tathāgata should be known to be analogous to a wish-fulfilling jewel, with reference to its particular characteristic in terms of its nature being powerful to fulfill wishes for all good things worldly or transcendent, etc. Although reality is unchanged by causes and conditions, it should be known to be analogous to uncompounded space, which cannot be posited as something other than the mere exclusion of resistant tangible objects, with reference to its particular characteristic in terms of its nature being immutable as the mere exclusion of truth reification. The genetic potential of the Tathāgata, which refers to the developmental gene besides the naturally existing gene, should be known as being analogous to water, which is moist in nature, with reference to its particular characteristic in terms of its nature being moist with compassion towards living beings.

Among all living beings, there is no one who has not developed compassion towards each and every living being, wishing them to be free from suffering. All living beings are already subsumed under the object towards which compassion is developed. And all of them are already the ones who have developed compassion. If the compassion, which was developed towards each and every living being during the time when he or she...
to be our relatives, were not destroyed by adverse conditions such as hatred, etc., and were not separated from favorable conditions including a habitual affinity for compassion; our compassion would be the great compassion which is the mind in the form of wishing all living beings free from sufferings. [This mind] nevertheless remains a mediocre one because it will be destroyed through lack of favorable conditions and by adverse conditions - it cannot be called the "great compassion." Although that compassion is considered as one of the causes of the great compassion, here we should know the developmental gene as the uncontaminated seed produced by hearing the noble Dharma, as well as the great compassion of bodhisattvas, etc.

And in this regard, with reference to the general character, all - the Truth Body, intuition, and compassion - are naturally ever undefiled by addictions, which are devoid of real status and have never infiltrated into their objective conditions due to a disparate habit-pattern, and are naturally pure; those [three things] should be known to be analogous to a wish-fulfilling jewel, space and water [respectively].

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2. Causes

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.1. Question

Now, what is shown by the latter half of this verse?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1. General Explanation

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1.1. The Śāstra
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.1.1. Explaining Obscured Persons and Their Obscurations

There are four kinds of obstruction for obtaining omniscience: (1) enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching by desire-craving ones; (2) belief in a personal self by the heterodox; (3) inclination to desert living beings resulting from the fear of suffering in samsāra by śrāvakas; and (4) indifference to the welfare of living beings, not thinking "I'm going to free living beings from sufferings," by pratyekabuddhas. Although the obstructions are differentiated in terms of people, these should be eliminated by everyone who embarks on the Mahāyāna path.

The division of the multitude of living beings into three groups, i.e. (1) those who desire worldly existence, (2) those who aspire for liberation from worldly existence, and (3) those who wish neither of them, should be known as a factor in the determination of the path to obtain the non-stay nirvāṇa.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.1.2. Explaining Characteristics of Causes Being Antidotes

Strong faith in the Mahāyāna teaching, etc., should be known as the four causes of purifying the Element from defilements.

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812 icchantika, 'dod chen pa.
In brief, there are three kinds of living beings among them: (1) those who desire worldly existence and no desire for liberation, thereby falling into the extreme of sāṃśāra; (2) those who aspire for liberation from worldly existence, thereby falling into the extreme of nirvāṇa; and (3) those who wish neither of them, thereby not falling into both extremes.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.2.2. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.2.2.1. Explaining Obscured Persons

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.2.2.1.1. Explaining Respectively

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.2.2.1.1.1. Those Who Have Fallen into the Extreme of Sāṃśāra

In regard to the kind who has desire for the worldly existence, it should be known as twofold: (a) those who felt animosity towards the path to liberation, repudiating its possibility, or who are icchantikas, although they know it is possible, remaining indifferent to it. Therefore they do not have the spiritual genetic potential for nirvāṇa, called "gene-cut." Those people have only desire for sāṃśāra and do not aspire for nirvāṇa. Despite their being temporarily unable to feel repulsed by everything in sāṃśāra and aspire for liberation, it is intentional to label them "utterly gene-cut" as will be proved later; and (b) those who are Buddhists but have certainly fallen into that way. Some of these are only suitably receptive to the education of monastic discipline but temporarily are not [receptive] even to [the teaching on] coarse emptiness of a personal self. Adhering to the Hinayāna canon, they are hostile to the Mahāyāna teaching,

\(^{813}\) rags pa.
repudiating it as not being the word of the Buddha. With reference to them, the Lord states as follows:

I am not their teacher; they are not my disciples. Śāriputra, I speak of them as dark-ones covered in the thick darkness of misknowledge constantly afflicted by inexhaustible misery of its consequence, migrating from darkness to greater darkness, and kept in deep darkness.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2. Those Who Have Fallen into the Extreme of Nirvāṇa

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.1. General Teaching

As to the kind who aspires for liberation from worldly existence, it is also twofold:
(a) those who have engaged, but lack liberative technique; and (b) those who have engaged with liberative technique.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.2.2. Explaining Respectively

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1. Those Who Have Engaged but Lack Liberative Technique

Those who have engaged, but lack liberative technique are further divided into three types: the first type of person is the [from the] various heterodox groups, an outsider to this Dharma in terms of both philosophic view and religious praxis such as the Carakas, the Parivṛājaka, and the Jains, etc. Their theories are of either eternalism or nihilism, e.g.,
some of these even repudiate the higher rebirths in the framework of reincarnation, and some, though accepting the higher rebirths, repudiate the possibility of liberation.

[The latter two types of people] are Buddhists but whose conduct is in similarity with the heterodox, erroneously take a negative view about [the Buddha's teaching] on the import of emptiness. Then, who are those people? The second type of person is that [type of] person who lacks faith in the ultimate reality and believes in a substantial personal self which is not designated upon the spatial assembly and temporal stream of the [five] aggregates and is akin to what the heterodox has imagined. The Vātsīputrīya school, for example, holds such a tenet. This type of Buddhist is similar to the aforementioned [type of the Buddhist who has the desire for worldly existence] in accepting a personal self. But the former does not aspire for liberation and is hostile to the Mahāyāna teaching, the latter aspires for liberation alone, though some of them are not hostile to the Mahāyāna teaching. It should be known that there are two kinds of people in the Vātsīputrīya school: one repudiates [the authenticity of] the Mahāyāna scriptures; the other not. It is also true in other schools such as the Vaibhāṣīka, etc. As to the scriptural reference, with reference to these, these are temporarily unable to listen to even [the teaching on] coarse emptiness of a personal self. The Lord states as follows:

One who lacks faith in emptiness is not different from the heterodox.

Someone asserts that impermanence is concomitant\(^{814}\) with anything which exists and takes this as the intention of the seven treatises on valid cognition. Having an instinct for such perverse views would cause severe destruction. That is, the one who talks like this

\(^{814}\) khyab pa.
would not properly understand and believe the arrangement proved by validating
cognition that the permanence which is addressed by scholars is the negation\textsuperscript{815} of
disintegration. Consequently, he or she would repudiate the arrangement proved by
validating cognition that the import of selflessness is an absolute negation,\textsuperscript{816} it is the
mere exclusion of a personal or objective self, understood by the wisdom which has
recognized selflessness. Thus, it should be known that [this kind of assertion] would
posit a strong instinct for an intellectual personal self-habit.

And the third type of person is that one who feels excess pride thinking, "I have
comprehended the ultimate meaning of reality" but actually has not and holds a wrong
view of emptiness through the truth-habits with respect to emptiness. In this regard, the
door of liberation [asserted by these people] also becomes a wrong view held of
emptiness. Although the wisdom which realizes emptiness is the door or means of
liberation, if the truth-habit with respect to emptiness had been formed, it is said to be a
temporarily untreatable view. Apparently, this view refers to the Yogācāra tenet that
accepts emptiness of subject-object duality as the ultimate reality which has the truth-
status by intrinsic identifiability. That is explicated by Je Rinpoche (Tsong-kha-pa), the
omniscient one. Otherwise, this view would not fit into any of these three groups
including the one discussed below. Knowing how to posit the arrangement that the truth-
habit is negated by validating cognition, keeping in mind that intrinsic identifiability is
involved, we will make no mistake for seeing the negatee as something having truth-
status. As mentioned in \textit{Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra}: "when the negatee is negated, no basis

\textsuperscript{815} \textit{vyavacchinna, rnam par bcad pa.}
\textsuperscript{816} \textit{prasajyaprativedha, med dgag.}
for analysis is left. For someone who understands subtle emptiness, there is no basis for the truth conviction about intrinsic identifiability of the negatee when under the sway of the wisdom which realizes emptiness. Thus, when accepting emptiness which merely negates a coarse negatee, one is doomed to make the mistake of forming a tenet with respect to the truth-status. As long as there is a strong truth-habit with respect to a coarse emptiness, it is untreated. On the other hand, this viewpoint of the Yogācāra school should be known as the means of maturing to the realization of the subtle emptiness propounded by the Mādhyamikas.

Here "those who have engaged, but lack liberative technique" denotes to the type of people who, while incorporating a full range of the Mahāyāna praxis into their experience, have formed a tenet in disharmony with the ultimate view of emptiness by truth conviction about emptiness. But we should know it would be a great erroneous view uninformed about the knowledge of the stages and paths if we accept the viewpoint of the Cittamātra school which is as an obstacle to obtain liberation. As to the scriptural reference, with reference to these, [the Buddha] states in the Kāśyapaparipṛcchā-sūtra:

Kāśyapa, the belief in a personal self as great as Mt. Sumeru is considered superior than the belief in an [erroneous] emptiness by those who have excess pride.

This passage denotes that [the Yogācārins], while in unconscious personal self-habit, does not accept [personal self-habit] as the fundamental [mistaken] view, and not consider emptiness of a personal self-habit as ultimate, asserting instead that emptiness of subject-object duality is the ultimate reality. Thus, they are in an intellectual self-habit, in

817 Chapter IX, v. 110.
addition to an unconscious one, and this makes it even more difficult to expel obscurations. It would not be valid to set forth this commentary as a teaching on the Vijñānavādin system in light of the following fact: Asaṅga, the noble Master, who was concerned with how to educate a certain type of people who have genetic potential for the Vijñānavāda, pioneered the way for Champions of the Vijñānavādin system and gave extensive teachings on it. In the Bodhisattavabhūmi, he takes this scriptural reference to refute the realitylessness philosophy which asserts there is no such thing, even small as an atom, that has intrinsic identifiability. But here he takes the same scriptural reference to refute [the Vijñānavādin system] which accepts emptiness as having truth-status. It is true that his scriptural reference is sometime applied with reference to the Śrāvaka schools, but is by no means exclusive. Otherwise, it would be no indication of the Vijñānavāda in the context of this text.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.2.2. Those Who Have Engaged with Liberative Technique

Those who have engaged with liberative technique are further divided into the two types: (i) those who have engaged into authentic certainty, which refers to the understanding of the subtle emptiness with respect to personal selflessness and objective selflessness and the perceptual realization after have obtained the Path of Insight, conforming to the Śrāvakayāna; and (ii) those conforming to the Pratyekabuddhayāna which is in accord with the Śrāvakayāna with respect to the mode of realizing emptiness. This statement indicates that [some people associated with] the Śrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna do understand the two subtle selflessnesses, by virtue of the

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818 samyakta-niyama, yang dag pa nges pa n:id.
aforementioned fact that those who do not realize the meaning of reality, who accept both things and emptiness as having the truth-status, are the type of people who have engaged but lack liberative technique in terms of philosophic viewpoint. If the term "liberative technique" denotes the praxis for obtaining buddhahood and the basis for such praxis, i.e. cultivation of the spirit with respect to the Mahāyāna, it would be rational to include śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas into the type of people who have engaged, but lack liberative technique. Therefore, the ultimate liberative technique for obtaining buddhahood or liberation in terms of philosophic viewpoint is nothing but the understanding of the subtle emptiness. Although the noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have that understanding, it is not necessarily true for everyone in the Śrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna. It has been mentioned before and will be explicated again later.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.3. Those Who Have Not Fallen into Both Extremes

As to the kind who wishes neither of them, rebirth in saṃsāra by force of addictions and karma and nirvāṇa which is obtained by cutting off rebirth in saṃsāra, these are the people who are extremely sharp in intelligence and stand firmly amidst the Mahāyāna. The type of disciples of the Mahāyāna scriptures is twofold: chief and mediocre. The latter refers to the Yogācārins and the former the people "who are extremely sharp in intelligence," incorporating a full range of views and praxis of the Mahāyāna into their experience. They do not desire saṃsāra as the icchantikas do, nor are they those who have engaged but lack liberative technique like the heterodox, nor those who have realization with liberative technique, like śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, but have entered
the path to obtain the sameness of samsāra with nirvāṇa. They are intent with pure thought upon the non-stay nirvāṇa and act with pure praxis in an addiction-free samsāra where they take rebirths out of compassion and prayer. The basis for, or root of cultivation of the spirit, with respect to the Mahāyāna is absolutely pure and grounded in the firm compassion, and they think, "may all living beings be free from suffering," and with high resolve, they think, "I shall be responsible for liberating them from suffering!" This is the great Madhyamaka way of incorporating complete path of the Mahāyāna, which eliminates both extremes of samsāra and nirvāṇa, into experience.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.1.2. All a/Them Subsumed Under Three Groups

In this regard, those icchantikas who have desire for worldly existence and those Buddhists who have certainly fallen into the same way are called the group of people who are definitely mistaken. Those people who aspire for liberation from worldly existence but lack of liberative technique are called the group of people unsettled. Those people who aspire for liberation from the worldly existence with liberative technique and those who wish neither of both and have entered the path to obtain the sameness are called the group of people who have settled on reality. These statements are easy to understand.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.2. Their Obscurations

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.2.1. Statement

Aside from those people who stand firmly in the Mahāyāna and have realized there are not obscurations, there are four other kinds of people, namely: icchantikas,
heterodox, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. They cannot understand Buddha-essence and cannot perceive it directly owing to the four obscurations they have. Here again [the text] does not indicate that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not have the realization of emptiness in general, seeing the fact that it later shows they do not have the space-treasure concentration as the distinguished practice [of bodhisattvas].

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.2.2.2. Explanation

What are then the four obscurations? These are: (1) the enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching. This is obscuration of the icchantikas and its antidote is the meditation on faith in the teachings of the Mahāyāna by bodhisattvas; (2) the belief in a [substantial personal] self. This is obscuration of the heterodox and its antidote is the meditation on the transcendence of wisdom by bodhisattvas; (3) knowing of saṃsāra as dire and fear of its sufferings, thereby abandoning living beings without paying attention. This is the obscuration of those who are associated with the Śrāvakayāna. Its antidote is the space-treasure concentration, etc., by bodhisattvas; and (4) aversion to the welfare of living beings and indifference to the welfare of living beings, not taking responsibly by thinking "I shall be responsible for liberative them from suffering." This is obscuration of those who are associated with the Pratyekabuddhayāna and its antidote is the meditation on the great compassion by bodhisattvas. Each obscuration is explained in conjunction with each antidote.
These are the four types of obscuration of the four kinds of living being. By meditating on the four kinds of antidote to these obscurations such as faith, etc., bodhisattvas will obtain the ultimate pure Truth Body, the unexcelled aim. In summary, the whole body of antidote is consisted of, firstly, enormous faith in both causal aspect and fruitional aspect of the Mahāyāna teaching, then, cultivation of the spirit of supreme enlightenment through meditation on the great compassion, and meditation on the distinguished concentration of the Mahāyāna which integrates mental quiescence with transcendental analysis.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2. Explaining in Detail Characteristics of Causes Being Antidotes to Obscurations

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.1. Prelude

Accompanied by these four causes of achieving the four purities such as the transcendence of purity, etc., they become the child of the Dharma King in the Tathāgata's family. How so?

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.3.2.2.2. The Śāstra

It is said: those whose seed, like the one that produces a child of a cakravartin, is faith in both causal aspect and fruitional aspect of [the Dharma] of the Mahāyāna; whose mother is the wisdom which realizes emptiness and is beautified by extensive liberative technique, gives birth to the Buddha's qualities. As explained in the statement, "wisdom is the mother and liberative technique is the father," the wisdom which realizes emptiness

\[^{819}\text{samatha, zho gnas.}\]

\[^{820}\text{vipaśyana, lhag mthung.}\]
is likened to a mother as a common cause of the enlightenment in connection with each
vehicle, and liberative technique a father as a fundamental cause; whose blissful womb is
the concentration which includes the space-treasure concentration, etc.; and whose caring
nanny is the great compassion, equally important in the initial, middle, and final stages
[of the Mahāyāna path], are born as the Buddha's offspring. There are three types of faith:
clarifying faith, wishing faith, and believing faith. The faith in both causal aspect and
fruitional aspect of [the Dharma] in Mahāyāna mentioned here is a believing faith and it
is articulated in order to recognize it as the root of all Dharma. The function of faith is to
induce aspirations. Thus, we shall know that faith [in the Mahāyāna teaching] will
induce aspiration for the perfect enlightenment of which the great compassion is the
cause. It will, in turn, induce aspiration for causes of buddhahood. Then those four
aforementioned obscurations will be destroyed in stages by incorporating into experience
the Mahāyāna concentration which integrates mental quiescence with transcendental
analysis.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2. Fruitions and Deeds
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1. Prelude

There is one verse with reference to the points of "fruition" and "actions."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1. Brief Statement
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1. Statement on the Fruition

821 yid ches pa' dad.
The ultimate transcendences of purity, supreme self, bliss and eternity are the fruition. These will be explicated below in detail.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2. Statement on the Actions

Renunciation of saṃsāra's sufferings on the understanding that it is like unbearable pus, aspiration for obtaining peace, i.e. nirvāṇa, and prayer: "May I obtain!" are the actions and the significance of the spiritual genetic potential.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1. Fruition

In this regard, what is shown by the former half of this verse?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1. General Explanation about the Defining Characteristics of the Fruition Obtained by Four Antidotes

The fourfold fruition of these [causes], such as faith in the Mahāyāna teaching, etc., is, in brief, distinguished through eliminating the fourfold delusion about the Truth Body of the Tathāgata by the four antidotes which are the opposites of these delusions.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.1. Brief Statement
The fruition of these four qualities, faith, etc., explained as the causes of the purification of the Element of the Tathāgata is, in brief, the fourfold transcendence of excellence on the Truth Body; these antidotes are the opposites of the four delusions respectively.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1. Explaining the Delusions and the Fruition Obtained by Antidotes

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1. The Main Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.1. Delusions about the Conventional reality

[In general,] there is a notion of eternality, bliss, self, and purity regarding impermanence, sufferings, selflessness, and impurity of things such as matter, etc. respectively. Such a notion is called the "fourfold delusion." Ordinary people who are not under the influence of any philosophical viewpoint have this sort of delusion which is mistaken about the conventional reality of the holy truth of suffering.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.2. Delusions about the Ultimate Reality

The opposite of this notion should be known as the fourfold non-delusion. Which four? That is the notion of impermanence, sufferings, selflessness, and impurity regarding impermanence, etc., of things such as matter, etc. Such a notion is called the "fourfold opposite of delusion." Furthermore, this very [notion of non-delusion] is accepted here as delusion with reference to the Truth Body of the Tathāgata whose defining characteristics are eternal, etc.
The wisdom which realizes the aggregates' impermanence, etc., and the mind asserting the aggregates as permanent, etc., share the same object of apprehension but are opposites with respect to their habit-patterns. The former habit-pattern is in accordance with the conventional reality. Therefore, it is the perfect antidote to eternity-habit, etc. It is posited as erroneous with reference to the Truth Body as long as the truth-habit regarding the aggregates' impermanence, etc. is involved. Nevertheless, it would be a wrong view if you accept the mind asserting the aggregates as impermanence, etc. to be erroneous with respect to its object, a nihilism which repudiates relativity. The assertion that it is not even tenable to accept the aggregates as impermanent is an obstacle for liberation and should be known as the system of Hva-shang, the Chinese Abbot, who asserted that nothing exists whatsoever and that nothing can be to accepted. If this were valid, then we would not be able to differentiate error and non-error in any way. Furthermore, selflessness that is involved with the truth-habit is a coarse one because the subtle selflessness, when realized by validating cognition and not be forgotten, would never give way to the tenet of the truth-habit regarding the negation which negates such a self. But supposing that the mind of the truth-habit regarding selflessness which is the negation of the subtle negatee, is actually produced, this mind should be understood to be an unconscious [truth-habit].

Rejection: This is unacceptable because since beginningless time in saṃsāra, people are not familiar with the emptiness of intrinsic identifiability, which is the basis of such truth-habit.

Reply: There is no such fault. Although we are not familiar with the paths and fruition of the Mahāyāna since timeless saṃsāra, the truth-habit which is produced by
apprehension of them, unrelated to analysis through reasoning, should be understood to be an unconscious [truth-habit]. Otherwise, it would be impossible for the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* to list many suppositions\(^{822}\) regarding subject and object which are the factors to be removed on the Path of Meditation of the Mahāyāna.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1.3. Fruition Obtained by Eliminating the Delusions

The antidote to this delusion is the arrangement of the fourfold transcendence of excellence on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata: the transcendence of eternity, transcendence of bliss, transcendence of self, and transcendence of purity. Those meanings will be explicated below.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2. Scriptural Reference

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2. Reference to Four Delusions of Eternity, etc.

Furthermore, this passage of the treatise should be understood in detail according to the scripture - this is the prelude to scriptural reference. [In the Śrīmālā-sūtra, Śrīmālā states]:

Lord, living beings have a delusion regarding the five compulsive aggregates; they have a notion of eternity, bliss, self, and purity regarding impermanence, sufferings, selflessness, and impurity [of things], respectively.

\(^{822}\) *vikalpa, rnam par rtog pa.*
This fourfold delusion can be understood to be erroneous with respect to its conceptual object\textsuperscript{823} even by conventional validating cognition. No understanding of emptiness is required.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2. Reference to Truth-habit regarding Eternity, etc.

Lord, even all the Šrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas, owing to their truth-habits, have a delusion about the Truth Body of the Tathāgata, which is free from all truth reifications and is the object of the omniscient intuition, has never been seen before by their intuition of emptiness by its own power.

People who have genetic potential for the Šrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna and do not understand the subtle emptiness have delusions about the Truth Body because of their truth-habits regarding the realization of impermanence, coarse selflessness, etc. As for noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who have perceptual realization of the subtle emptiness, they still have a delusion about the Truth Body because of their inability to realize emptiness by their own power like people who have genetic potential for the Mahāyāna and have sharp intelligence do as well as the manifestation of their unconscious truth-habit regarding impermanence, etc. Even in the cases of arhats of the Šrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna, they lack the antidote required for obtaining fruitional transcendence of supreme self because they do not meditate on transcendence of wisdom.

\textsuperscript{823} zhen yul.
Lord, if living beings have the notion of eternity - through the attainment of the antidote which is [the realization] of the sameness between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa of bodhisattvas, bliss - through the meditation on the antidotes to the twelve links of dependent origination which are subsumed under the category of cognitive obscurations and are perceived as the factors to be eliminated, self - through the understanding of the mere exclusion of the reifications of personal self and objective self as the own condition and the ultimate reality of things, and purity - through cognition of [the mind] being naturally pure and the evil instincts in connection with the three doors being the factors to be eliminated, they would be the child born of the heart of the Buddha.

Rejection: Did the text not state that the notion of eternity, etc. is erroneous? Why does the Buddha call people who have such understanding "heart-child?"

Reply: They are similar in names but not similar in connotations. [As the sūtra states:]

Lord, those living beings would not be people of delusions. Lord, those living beings would correctly perceive. For what reason? Lord, this is because the Truth Body of the Tathāgata is the transcendence of eternity, the transcendence of bliss, the transcendence of self, and the transcendence of purity. Lord, those people who perceive the Truth Body of the Tathāgata in this way perceive correctly. Those who perceive correctly are the heart-children of the Buddha.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2. Explaining the Correlation of Fruition with Causes

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1. Explaining Respectively

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.1. Brief Statement

The order of the four transcendences of excellence on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata should be known as the reverse of the order of causes just mentioned, i.e. faith,
wisdom, concentration, and great compassion. It will be explicated below that the reverse of the order as stated in the *sūtra* "the Truth Body of the Tathāgata is transcendence of eternity, transcendence of bliss, transcendence of self, and transcendence of purity" is in accordance with the order of causes.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.1.2. Explained Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2. Explaining the Correlation of Transcendence of Purity with Cause Which Is Faith in the Mahāyāna teaching

In this regard, (1) being opposite to taking delight in impure saṃsāra by icchantikas who are fully occupied with it and feel enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching, the transcendence of purity should be understood to be the fruition obtained by the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna teaching by bodhisattvas. We shall understand that there are four factors mentioned in this explanation: obscuration, the type of person who has it, the antidote to it, and the fruition which is obtained by the meditation on the antidote.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.1. Explaining Transcendence of Supreme Self as Fruition of Meditation on Transcendence of Wisdom

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.1. The Main Meaning

(2) Being opposite to taking delight in the self-habit of other heterodox [groups] regarding the five compulsive aggregates which are void of personal self and objective self, the transcendence of self - the Truth Body isolated from all reifications of personal self and objective self - should be understood to be the fruition obtained by the
meditation on transcendence of wisdom, which is the perceptual realization that person
and aggregates are void of intrinsic reality-status even as small as an atom.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.2.2. Specific Explanation of the Import of
Supreme Self

Indeed, all the other heterodox groups assert persons and things such as matter, etc.
of which a self of the truth-status or independent-status\textsuperscript{824} is not their nature, have a self
of the truth-status [as their nature]. Persons and things asserted in this way have such a
self by the heterodox, and are deceptive with respect to their [false] characteristic of
being self. [Such a self] does not exist in the object of knowledge, hence it is always
selflessness. [On the contrary,] the Tathāgata has obtained the transcendences of supreme
selflessness by noumenally omniscient intuition which correctly realizes reality.
Selflessness correctly perceived by a noumenally omniscient intuition is not deceptive
with respect to its characteristic of being selfless as established by the nature of things, is
reality which is correctly perceived in total mental equanimity by the Buddha, hence it is
always accepted as reality, nature, and self of things. Here, personal selflessness and
objective selflessness is meant by "self" - this is based on the understanding that a
positive, independent self as a permanent entity does not exist in the object of knowledge
- as [a scripture states:] "He stays in the way of reification-free emptiness of true
existence by means of non-staying in any truth-status" - if things to be 'stayed' had truth-
status, it would be apprehensible, but actually not.

Here, the exemplification of the supreme self is clearly explicated as selflessness
which is perceived by the Buddha's noumenally omniscient intuition. Thus, the assertion

\textsuperscript{824} rang dbang du grub pa.
that the exemplification of the supreme self is not the mere exclusion of a personal self and objective self; but is a positive, independent self, a permanent entity, should be known as coming from a great habitual affinity for heterodox view. And this assertion which accepts such an obsession with an erroneous self as the realization of the meaning of reality should be known as the chief negatee of this treatise and the commentary. If you do not believe this when you read them, then open your eyes and read them carefully! Think whether "self" means a positive, independent, permanent entity and you will come to the understanding that only selflessness is explicable.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.3. Explaining Transcendence of Supreme Bliss as Fruition of Meditation on Transcendence of Meditation

(3) Being opposite to taking delight in the cessation of the suffering of samsāra by those associated with the Śrāvakayāna who have fear of the sufferings of samsāra, the transcendence of supreme bliss concerned with all matters, worldly and transcendent, should be understood to be the fruition obtained by the meditation on space-treasure concentration, etc.

The transcendence of supreme bliss is the uncontaminated bliss which is obtained through the complete the elimination of the mind-made bodies [conditioned by] the ground of the instinct for misknowledge. It is also explicated by the aforementioned four factors.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.2.4. Explaining Transcendence of Eternity as Fruition of Meditation on Great Compassion
(4) Being opposite to taking delight in the tranquil abode by those associated with the Pratyekabuddhayāna who are indifferent to the welfare of living beings, the transcendence of eternity with respect to absolute pure mastery works as long as saṃsāra exists, without interruption, for the welfare of living beings. [This] should be understood to be the fruition obtained by meditation on the great compassion by bodhisattvas. This is easy to understand.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.3. Précis

Thus, the attainment of the four kinds of transcendence of excellence regarding purity, self, bliss, and eternity on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata are respectively the fruition of the meditations on faith, wisdom, concentration, and great compassion by bodhisattvas. This explains that the four kinds of transcendence obtained respectively by the four kinds of cause.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.2. Summary

Because of these four kinds of cause, the Tathāgata is acclaimed as the ultimate Element, pervading infinite space and reaching to the end of time - these are three distinctive features of the Truth Body with reference to nature, pervasiveness, and time as stated in the scripture. Alternatively, this [statement] can be divided into four points and will be respectively explicated by the following four [statements]. Indeed, the Tathāgata is the one who has become the ultimate Element endowed with twofold of purity because he has obtained the utterly pure ultimate Element through the elimination of addictive obscurations and cognitive obscurations by the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna.
teaching, which is the realization of twenty-one types of uncontaminated intuition in causal and fruitional aspects. He is the one who has become infinite space because he has realized the space-like ultimate selflessness, the emptiness of intrinsic reality which is free from all reifications, of living beings and their environments by the meditation on transcendence of wisdom, and because he has become the supreme Lord of the Dharma, pervading all disciples in all worlds and teaching all, by the meditation on the space-treasure concentration, etc. "Pervading all disciples" denotes liberative activities of the Tathāgata's body which simultaneously teaches to all disciples who are suitably receptive to the Dharma. [This position is unlike] heterodox systems such as the Vaiśeṣika school which accept that the part which pervades disciples in the east also pervades disciples in the west. He is the one who will reach to the end of time because he is endowed with endless compassion towards all living beings by the meditation on the great compassion.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3. Detailed Exposition of the Obstacles for Three Types of People to Obtain the Truth Body

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1. The Main Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.1. Categories of Obstacle for Attainment of the Truth Body

For the attainment of the four kinds of transcendence of excellence on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata, there are four impediments even in cases of arhats of the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna, who are staying in the uncontaminated Element and have eased samsāric sufferings by the power of perceptual realization of noumena, as well as for bodhisattvas who are staying in the pure stages, and have
completely eliminated addictive obscuration, and obtained the ten powers. [These four impediments] have the defining characteristics (lakṣaṇa) of (1) condition (pratyaya) just as craving (trṣṇa) and function (upādāna) which are included in the category of the affliction of addiction; (2) cause (hetu) just as karma; (3) origination (saṃbhava) just as name-matter (nāmarūpa); and (4) destruction (vibhava) just as old age and death (jaramaraṇa).

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.1.2. Explaining the Nature of Obstacle

There are four aspects in this regard. First, condition is defined as the ground of the instinct for misknowledge,⁸²⁵ which is in the nature of uninterrupted homogenous non-addictive misknowledge included in the category of cognitive obscuration and is called "ground" insomuch as it has created an opportunity for homogenous addictions to be continually produced in the past, just as addictive misknowledge of the truth-habit regarding person and aggregates is the cause of synthetic activities (saṃskārā) consisting of virtuous, non-virtuous, and immutable karma.

Second, cause is defined as karma which is uncontaminated by addictions but is conditioned by the ground of the instinct for misknowledge. This is the substantial cause of the mind-made body,⁸²⁶ i.e. the motivation with subtle effort, included in the category of thought,⁸²⁷ producing cognitions⁸²⁸ of body and speech. As mentioned before, it is just as synthetic activities.

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⁸²⁵ avidyāvāsa-bhūmi, ma rig pa'i bag chags kyi sa.
⁸²⁶ manomayītāmabhāva-kāya, yid kyi rang bzhiṅ gyi lus.
⁸²⁷ abhiprāya, bsam pa.
⁸²⁸ rnam rig.
Third, origination is defined as the accomplishment of the threefold mind-made body, having the ground of the instinct for misknowledge as the co-operative condition and uncontaminated karma as the substantial cause just as the accomplishment of the threefold worldly existence - the desire world, the material world, and the immaterial world - is conditioned by the four kinds of function, i.e. desire, view, regarding moral discipline and sanction as superior, and soul-theory, and caused by contaminated karma. The mind-made body is the body which is in the nature of mind-like and travels without any impediment. It cannot be perceived by those whose realization is inferior to that of the three types of people.

Fourth, destruction is defined as death of the inconceivable transformation like one experienced by someone going through a period of "in-between" who, supposing he will stay for two weeks, is going to die at the end of the first week, which is conditioned by the accomplishment of the threefold mind-made body just as old age and death conditioned by birth (jāti) in the control of karma and addiction.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.3. How Obstacles Function

Arhats, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas who have obtained the powers will not obtain the transcendence of supreme ultimate purity, depleted of all obscurations, insofar as they have not extirpated the ground of the instinct for misknowledge which is the foundation of all addictions. Thereby they are not utterly free from the fetid trace of addictions which is included in the category of cognitive obscurations. They will not obtain the transcendence of self uncreated by the addictive and cognitive obscurations, which is not only the perceptive realization of the twofold emptiness but also the opposite

829 antarābhava, bar do.
of all truth-appearance, insofar as they follow a habitual pattern\textsuperscript{830} of subtle identity-reification\textsuperscript{831} depending on the ground of the instinct for misknowledge - the appearance of intrinsic identifiability is still intact despite the fact that they no longer have habitual conviction about intrinsic identifiability - as well as they have aforementioned uncontaminated karma. They will not obtain the transcendence of supreme bliss as the extinction of suffering, which is the fruition of addictions, and the mind-made bodies insofar as these bodies have originated depending on the ground of the instinct for misknowledge and uncontaminated karma which are motivated by the habit of subtle identity-reification conditioned by the ground of the instinct for misknowledge.

And they will not obtain the transcendence of eternity unchanged by birth and death insofar as they have not overcome the death of inconceivable transformation; and as long as they have not actualized Buddha-essence, reality-limit\textsuperscript{832} through the way of constant equipoise by stopping all afflictions\textsuperscript{833} with respect to addiction, karma, and birth. Such an explanation of the import of eternity is intended as prevention from forming a notion of its being a permanent entity as accepted by the heterodox! The bodhisattvas on the path of learning are able to simultaneously show the emanated bodies in three thousand world systems of the universe multiplied by a number of thousand million, etc. and to develop innumerable disciples to the extent that they are eligible for the fruition of arhatship just as fruit ripen. Nevertheless, during this time, these activities are done by a motivation for teaching with subtle effort, yet these activities depend upon the actualization of the reality-limit. When we can stay forever in the equipoise regarding

\textsuperscript{830} kun spyod.
\textsuperscript{831} sūkṣma-nimitta-prapāñca, mtshan ma'i spros pa spyod pa phra mo.
\textsuperscript{832} bhūtako!i, yang dag pa'i mtha'.
\textsuperscript{833} saṃklesa, kun nas nyon mongs.
reality without ending it as long as samsāra exists, having stopped not only the stages of operation with respect to the twelve links of dependent origination, included in the category of addictions but also in all the stages of operation included in the category of cognitive obscurations, we have obtained the fourfold transcendence that is called "transcendence of eternity," in particular. Thus, the assertion that accepts a positive, independent, permanent entity should be known as a system outside this [Buddhist] Dharma. If bodhisattvas did not develop living beings in such aforementioned number, they would fall into the nihilistic extreme despite the actualization of reality-limit! And we should know that the extent of the development of living beings as explicated in the Sūtrālāṃkāra and the Sphutarthā, [Haribhadra's] commentary on the Abhisamayālāṃkāra is also based on that [number].

Just as the twelve links of dependent origination with respect to the category of affliction are included in the three points regarding affliction: the affliction of addiction, the affliction of karma, and the affliction of birth, these [obstacles] also consist of the three points regarding affliction: the ground of the instinct for misknowledge similar to the affliction of addiction, the synthetic uncontaminated karma similar to the affliction of karma, and the accomplishment of the threefold mind-made body and death of inconceivable transformation similar to the affliction of birth.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.1.2.2.3.2. Scriptural Reference

Again, this passage of the treatise is to be understood in detail according to the Śrīmālā-sūtra.
Lord, conditioned by function and caused by contaminated karma, there was the production of the threefold worldly existence such as the desire-world, etc.; likewise, Lord, conditioned by the ground of the instinct for misknowledge and caused by uncontaminated karma, there was the production of the threefold mind-made body of arhats, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas who have attained powers. Lord, for the production of the threefold mind-made body in these three stages and for the accomplishment of contaminated karma, the ground of the instinct for misknowledge is the condition.

It is suitable to explain "these three stages" as the stage of śrāvaka, etc., in accordance with the statements below in a sense that temporary fruitions of the three vehicles before the attainment of the Truth Body are in with a chance for getting the three [mind-made] bodies.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.2.1.2.3.3. Indicating That Only the Tathāgata's Truth Body Is Endowed with Fourfold Transcendence

Thus, in these three mind-made bodies of arhats, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas, there are no transcendences of purity, self, bliss and eternity despite the fact that all sufferings have been eliminated. Seeing this, [the Śrīmālā-sūtra] states:

Only the Truth Body of the Tathāgata is the transcendence of purity, the transcendence of self, the transcendence of bliss, and the transcendence of eternity.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.2.2. Explaining Respectively the Defining Characteristics of the Four Fruitions

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.1. The Śāstra

That Truth Body of the Tathāgatas is the transcendence of purity because it is naturally pure, and because the instincts of addiction are completely removed. It is the
transcendence of supreme self because it is concomitant to the permanent pacification of
reification of dual perception regarding selflessness, directly realizing there are no
reifications of personal self as imagined by the heterodox, and selflessness with truth-
status. That is the transcendence of bliss because the mind-made aggregate, which is
produced by non-addictive misknowledge and karma, and its causes, the ground of
instinct for misknowledge and karma, have been turned around and completely
eliminated. In addition, that is the transcendence of eternity by virtue of the realization of
the sameness of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa in terms of the emptiness of intrinsic reality, the
ultimate freedom of both extremes.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.2.2. The Commentary

In brief, the transcendence of purity on the Truth Body of the Tathāgata should be
known by two reasons: (1) because of being naturally pure as the common characteristic;
and (2) because of being pure by the removal of defilements with powerful antidotes as
the special characteristic.

The transcendence of the supreme self, too, should be understood by two reasons: (1)
because of being free from self-reification with freedom from falling into the extreme of
the heterodox, which is the extreme of saṃsāra resulting from the habitual conviction
about a personal self; and (2) because of being free from selflessness reification with the
elimination of falling into the extreme of śrāvakas, which is the extreme of nirvāṇa,
despite their direct realization of selflessness. This demonstrates the mode of being free
from the two extremes in terms of fruition. As to the mode in terms of apprehended
object, freedom from self-reification is the realization of twofold selflessness, and
freedom from selflessness-reification is the realization of twofold selflessness as intrinsic realitylessness. And freedom from reification with respect to the mode of realization is the disappearance of duality regarding selflessness.

The transcendence of bliss is to be known likewise by two reasons: (1) because of the destruction of taking rebirth by the instinct that ensures continuity of homogenous misknowledge on account of the elimination of all kinds of origin of suffering regarding the twofold obscuration; and (2) because of the actualized termination of the mind-made bodies on account of the actualization of all kinds of cessation of suffering.

As to the transcendence of eternity, it is explicated under three subcategories: (a) the main meaning; (b) scriptural reference; and (c) nirvāṇa as liberation from two kinds of extreme.

First, there are two kinds of falling into the extremes of saṁsāra and nirvāṇa: one regarding the relative, the other regarding the ultimate. In relative terms, falling into the extreme of saṁsāra is taking rebirth in saṁsāra by the force of karma and addiction. Falling into the extreme of nirvāṇa is seeking for nirvāṇa peace that is the attainment of stopping rebirth even by the force of compassion and prayer with the view that any kind of rebirth in saṁsāra is the negatee. In ultimate terms, these two are the habitual convictions about truth in saṁsāra and nirvāṇa as eliminated and cultivated. As to the Truth Body of the Tathāgata, in ultimate terms, (1) he does not fall into the nihilistic extreme through not diminishing saṁsāra to the extent of being impermanent as something having intrinsic reality status that is realized to be newly eliminated; (2) nor does he fall into the eternalistic extreme through not exaggerating nirvāṇa to the extent of being permanent as something that has recently acquired intrinsic reality status. In the
relative terms, (1) the Truth Body of the Tathāgata does not fall into the nihilistic extreme through the Tathāgata's not diminishing saṃsāra to the extent of being impermanent, taking rebirth instead by the force of compassion and prayer despite stopping doing so by the force of karma and addiction; (2) nor does the Truth Body of the Tathāgata fall into the eternalistic extreme through not exaggerating nirvāṇa to the extent of being permanent, not showing the way of setting its attainment depending on the discontinuance in mere rebirth in saṃsāra as the objective to be obtained in the continuum.

Second, the Śrīmālā-sūtra states:

If someone perceives the created as impermanent, Lord, that would be a nihilistic view. And it would not be correct. If someone perceives nirvāṇa as eternal, Lord, that would be an eternalistic view. And it would not be correct.

Viewing created saṃsāra as previously having intrinsic reality status and then having vanished later is a nihilistic view. Viewing mere rebirth in saṃsāra as the negatee is also a nihilistic view which is taught in this text. In light of this, we should know that it would be a mistake to repudiate the superficial [reality] by accepting the view that the created is impermanent, for that is a nihilistic view. Likewise, viewing nirvāṇa as having intrinsic reality status is an eternalistic view. Viewing nirvāṇa as attainment dependent on the discontinuance of mere rebirth in saṃsāra as an ultimate objective is also an eternalistic view which is taught in this text. Thus, we should know that it would be an erroneous
view to repudiate nirvāṇa by accepting the view that nirvāṇa is permanent and eternalistic, for it is inappropriate to hold that nirvāṇa is either permanent or impermanent.

Third, it is said, by the demonstration that the Truth Body is free from two kinds of extreme, the means of the mode of the ultimate Element which causes nirvāṇa to be actualized, that ultimately saṃsāra itself is intrinsic realitylessness, i.e. the natural nirvāṇa, and the non-stay nirvāṇa is the ultimate extinction of coincidental defilements on the basis of direct realization of that, because [the Tathāgata] has actualized the non-stay nirvāṇa without constructing such duality of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa after he had developed a habitual affinity for intuition which realizes the sameness of these two.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3. Indicating that Bodhisattva's Wisdom of Emptiness and Compassion Are the Root of the Truth Body

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.1. The Commentary

Although it is appropriate to consider this [following] passage of the commentary as the continuation of the pervious passage, it seems that this is the exposition of the verse below [I.39] thus it comes before [the treatise]. This passage shows that the non-stay place, which is neither close to nor remote from all living beings, is obtained by two causes which cause the extremes of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa to be stopped. Which two? The noble bodhisattvas do not get close to all living beings, because all instincts for attachment have eliminated by their wisdom which is direct realizations of emptiness, impermanence, sufferings, etc. In stopping the fall into the extreme of saṃsāra, for stopping the type with respect to the ultimate, it is done by wisdom which realizes emptiness; for stopping the type with respect to [the relative,] the mere rebirth in saṃsāra,
it is done by the force of compassion and prayer. Likewise, bodhisattvas do not feel remote from living beings, because those beings will never be abandoned due to bodhisattvas’ great compassion. This superb wisdom and technique are the liberative techniques for attainment of perfect enlightenment of non-staying nature in both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Indeed, the noble bodhisattvas have eliminated all instincts for attachment by wisdom which is the realization of emptiness, impermanence, etc., for the sake of their own perfection, thereby being deeply intent upon nirvāṇa but having no desire to obtain it and not staying in the extreme of saṃsāra as do those icchantikas who do not have spiritual genetic potential for nirvāṇa. This statement means that [the noble bodhisattvas] have acquired antidotes which cause all instincts to be eliminated and succeed as much as circumstances allow, but have not yet completely eliminated them. Owing to their great compassion as motivation, they never abandon suffering living beings. They take rebirth in saṃsāra for the sake of others, thereby acting in saṃsāra and not staying in the extreme of nirvāṇa as do those who aspire only for peace.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.2. Prelude

Thus these two qualities, wisdom and compassion, are the root of the unexcelled enlightenment.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2.3.3. The Śāstra

[Though] having completely severed self-cherishing by the wisdom which is the realization of emptiness, impermanence, etc., and not staying in the extreme of saṃsāra, compassionate the noble bodhisattvas do not obtain the extreme of nirvāṇa owing to their
other-cherishing which wishes for all beings to be free from sufferings. Thus, depending on a habitual affinity for techniques, which is comprised of aforementioned wisdom and compassion, for actualizing unexcelled enlightenment, the noble bodhisattvas had fallen into neither the extreme of nor of nirvāṇa.

The Abhisamayālaṃkāra states: "[They] stay neither in saṃsāra because of wisdom, nor in nirvāṇa because of compassion." An ancient one explicates this statement as exclusive reference to wisdom realizing emptiness which stops the extreme of saṃsāra. It clearly shows this person does not understand a bit because both Āryavimuktisena and Haribhadra explain "wisdom" as the one that perceives disadvantages of saṃsāra. The validating cognition that realizes the disadvantages of saṃsāra is of the relative, not the one that fathoms the ultimate. In addition, the aforementioned śrāvakas who aspire only for peace are the ones who are definite but temporary in that lineage. Do not hold Yogācārins' literal explanation of this point as true in the Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.2. Actions

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.1. Question

Now, with reference to the aforementioned point of "actions," what is demonstrated by the latter half of that verse (1.35)?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.1. Proving Inference

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.1.1. The Śāstra
If the naturally pure the Element of the Tathāgata and uncontaminated seeds did not exist, aversion to suffering would not arise by perceiving its faults. Desire, aspiration and prayer for nirvāṇa would also not arise by perceiving its bliss. The proof induced by this statement is as follows: The Buddha-gene exists in living beings because it is apparent that they have desire for the abandonment of saṁsāra due to their aversion to it and they have desire for the attainment of nirvāṇa.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1. Scriptural Source

So [the treatise] states:

Lord, if there were no Buddha-essence, then there would arise neither aversion to suffering nor desire for nirvāṇa, nor the wish, aspiration or prayer for it.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.2. Explication

Here, in brief, the Element of the Tathāgata, the pure spiritual genetic potential, even of those people who are definitely mistaken, causes two kinds of action. It develops aversion to saṁsāra on the basis of perceiving the faults of suffering and it calls forth desire, wish, aspiration and prayer for nirvāṇa on the basis of perceiving the virtues of bliss. In this regard, "wish" means manifested desire, regarding nirvāṇa as the aim with excellences. "Desire" means longing for the attainment of the desired aim, having desire for the attainment of that aim with excellences. "Aspiration" means searching for the means to obtain the desired aim. This is easy to understand. "Prayer" means causing the
wish by thinking of the desired aim, and feeling joy by perceiving that nirvāṇa can be achieved by liberative techniques.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2. Establishment through Circularity

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.1. The Śāstra

Perceiving samsāra as having the faults of suffering, and nirvāṇa as having the excellences of bliss is due to the existence of the genetic potential. Why so? For those who lack spiritual genes do not have such perceptions. The former part of this statement demonstrates positive concomitance\textsuperscript{835} and the later part demonstrates negative concomitance.\textsuperscript{836}

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.1. Establishment of Spiritual Genetic Potential through Circularity

Because of the existence of the spiritual genetic potential for liberation within their continua, the people who are possessed of white qualities perceive samsāra as having the faults of suffering by pondering general and specific disadvantages of samsāra, and nirvāṇa as having the excellences of bliss. It will not be logical for [these thoughts] to arise without cause and conditions. When hearing the faults of samsāra and the benefits of nirvāṇa, and when the mere sound of [the teachings on] emptiness causes the hairs of the body to stand on end, etc., it is an indication of the existence of the virtuous roots associated with liberation. This association is not identical to the one with reference to

\textsuperscript{835} \textit{rjes 'gro.}  
\textsuperscript{836} \textit{ldog pa.}
the five paths, for it is not required to meditate on paths. It would be difficult to produce genuine vows for individual liberation without these thoughts; we shall therefore make an effort to deposit instincts with an aversion to samsāra by perceiving its faults. It should be known that we are endowed with the virtuous roots associated with liberation when we have developed such thoughts by just hearing once the teaching properly given by a virtuous friend.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.2. Proving Inference

Why is this so? If these perceptions would arise without cause and conditions in terms of the situation where sins such as killing, etc., have not been depleted, then icchantikas would have such perceptions despite their lack of the genetic potential for nirvāṇa. The authentic reasoning induced by this consequence is as follows: the proper acquisitions with the four kinds of wheel, i.e. the conditions for the attainment of liberation: such as reliance upon sages, previous merit collection, staying in conducive locations, and proper prayer and mentation; these are the awakening conditions of the genetic potential free from coincidental defilements existing from the beginning. The existence of the spiritual genetic potential can be realized on the basis of such awakening. Indeed, the mind that perceives the faults of samsāra and the benefits of nirvāṇa will not arise as long as faith in the Dharma of one of the three vehicles has not been developed. This demonstrates the opposite to the thesis of consequence.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3. Establishing the Scriptural Statement concerning the Person Who Will Not Obtain Liberation as Having a Deeper Intention
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.1. Scriptural Reference

The spiritual genetic potential even exists within those people who are temporarily gene-cut. For what reason? The *Jñānālokālaṃkāra-sūtra* states:

After this, because of hearing the holy Dharma, the intuition light rays of the Tathāgata sun falls upon the bodies of even those people who are definitely mistaken, bodhisattvas with pure high resolve, those who have genes for the pratyekabuddha, those who have genes for the śrāvaka, living beings who are endowed with virtuous high resolve and correct belief respectively, thus benefiting them and producing the correct cause of future [liberation]. They cause their virtuous qualities to increase.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.2. Establishing the Scriptural Statement as Having A Deeper Intention

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1. Its Purpose and Intended Basis

As to the statement that "icchantikas have the quality of no nirvāṇa forever" as found in many *sūtras* such as the *Mahāparinirvāṇa*, it is said so because feeling enmity towards the Mahāyāna teaching and dislike of liberation is the cause of being icchantikas; they increasingly strengthen the attachment to erroneous saṃsāra. They will not obtain liberation when roaming in saṃsāra for long time beyond countless eons (as its intended basis), it is thus stated for the purpose of averting the enmity.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. Indicating How to fault the literal Meaning

No living being could be impure with coincidental defilements forever, thus it is impossible to obtain buddhahood because of the existence of the naturally pure genetic potential and developmental gene within all beings.

*Rejection:* We shall analyze this position. If it is possible for all living beings to obtain buddhahood, then for the last few buddhas, his altruistic deeds would be very
limited and his merit store would be incomplete since he can only benefit very few living beings. When all beings have become buddhas, their altruistic deeds have also come to an end, thus falling into the extreme of peace for there would be no single living being left who needs help. On the other hand, if it is not possible for all living beings to obtain buddhahood, then it would be futile for buddhas to take the responsibility of placing all beings on buddhahood similar to their own and to revolve the wheel of Dharma in the form of twelve deeds until the end of samsāra. If all beings [are instructed] to seek the mere cessation of sufferings in samsāra, then [the Buddha] would not have the complete characteristic of the great compassion of Mahāyāna, that is to say, if he does not place all beings on the level buddhahood similar to his own, he would be stingy with the Dharma! These five refutations are in contradiction to your position. If all beings are capable of obtaining the cessation of sufferings in samsāra, then the ultimate unique vehicle can be well established. It would be effortless to establish that all beings will obtain buddhahood. If it is not possible for some living beings to obtain even liberation, this would contradict the fact that the noble Master [Asaṅga] proves with scriptural sources and reasoning that [such a statement] cannot be taken literally for it has a deeper intention. Therefore, you shall explain it. In addition, if it is possible for all living beings to obtain buddhahood, then it would be invalid to explain that samsāra is endless.

Reply: In this regard, I shall first refute the views held by opponents, and then present my own.

Firstly, someone asserts that by setting aside consideration of the certainty that all beings will become buddhas, even its possibility is questionable. In order to establish the possibility of producing result, the collection of causes must be complete and be set as the
reason. If all beings have already completed the collection of causes of buddhahood, then there would be no living being who has not entered into the path to liberation. And for this reason, samsāra would never come to an end as living beings are caught up in samsāra until that point. As to the establishment of the ultimate unique vehicle, it means all living beings who have entered the path will become buddhas. This assertion does not seem to be logical. It is the logicians' intention that the completion of the collection of causes is concomitant to the possibility of producing result; it is not their intention, however, that the possibility of producing result is concomitant to the completion of the collection of causes since it contradicts logic. For example, although it is possible for barley seeds to produce sprouts, this does not require the completion of all causes.

Furthermore, can noble śrāvakas possibly obtain buddhahood, or not? If they can, it would be valid to state that they have completed the collection of causes of buddhahood. If that is acceptable, then it would be valid to state that they have entered the path of Mahāyāna, and that you accept reasons and concomitances in both theses as well as attribute in the later thesis. [This would lead to the conclusion that] your assertion is deficient [in reasoning] since all beings have not merely entered into the path. If they cannot, this would be in direct contradiction to your position and to the concept of the ultimate unique vehicle.

Moreover, it is quite clear if all beings will become enlightened we must accept that it is possible for them to become buddhas. Other people assert that the mode of samsāra being endless is like that [mentioned above], that it is not possible for all beings to become buddhas despite the fact that [theoretically] they will get enlightened, and if it were acceptable that the fact that all beings will get enlightened is concomitant to the
possibility of all beings becoming buddhas, then it would demonstrate the thesis which does not show any valid cognition and accepted reason as in the case as follows: it follows that it is possible for all phenomena to disintegrate because all phenomena disintegrate. What fault can be found in our assertion? It is highly acceptable to state that it would be possible for all phenomena to disappear if it is possible for all phenomena to disintegrate. If it is not possible for all phenomena to disappear then we must accept that it is not possible for all phenomena to disappear. A phenomenon exists until this point and it will disappear after that since it is possible for all phenomena to disintegrate. This means that it would be impossible for a phenomenon to exist after that point. [For example,] it can be established that blue exists until this point and it will disappear after that since it is possible for blue to disintegrate. If the reason were not established, blue would be a permanent entity for it is impossible for blue to disintegrate after it has been produced by its own causes. It also follows that it is impossible for all phenomena to disintegrate. Someone faults our position by the thesis as follows: it follows that all beings are invariably dead because all beings will invariably die. This clearly reveals coarse intelligence of this person. Understand my previous thesis properly! Do I say that "all beings have invariably become buddhas?" or that "it is possible for all beings to become buddhas?"

As to the statement that "all beings will get enlightened but it is by no means certain," it is a clear sign indicating this person does not know reasoning. Is your ascertainment that "all beings will get enlightened" gained by the force of validating cognition in your continuum or not? If the former were the case, then it follows that it is certain for all being to get enlightened because it is ascertained by the force of validating
cognition. If you argue that this association cannot be established since in reality it is uncertain despite the certainty ascertained by the force of validating cognition, then it follows that this ascertainment is an erroneous cognition with respect to the conceptual object because its certainty only exists in your mind but has nothing to do with reality. If you assert that it is not certain for fire to produce smoke despite the fact that it is established by validating cognition; otherwise, it would be impossible for unfavorable conditions to exist as stated in the Pramāṇavārttika that "it is uncertain because of possible obstacles;" likewise, if enlightenment is certain then it would be impossible for unfavorable conditions to exist. Both your example and meaning cannot be established. In regard to that example, if it is ascertained by the force of validating cognition then this contradicts your statement that it is uncertain for fire to produce smoke. If it is not ascertained by validating cognition, then the meaning of thesis is not established by validating cognition. But you claim that "there is no proof whatsoever for the subject of my thesis." This reveals your sheer stupidity.

Moreover, it follows that noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas would certainly not get enlightened because the obstacles of unfavorable condition to enlightenment possibly exist. You have accepted this concomitance. If so, it contradicts your assertion on the certainty of the ultimate unique vehicle. The meaning of that statement in the Pramāṇavārttika is not like what you have construed. I have given detailed exposition in the commentary on this text. On the contrary, if it were the position as you accept, then it follows that it is uncertain for the vase to exist since there are possible obstacles of unfavorable condition to the existence of the vase. Therefore, why must there be a
contradiction between possible obstacles of unfavorable condition to production and the lack of power to stop production?

If the latter were the case, to say, your ascertainment that "all beings will get enlightened" is not gained by the force of validating cognition, then it follows that your thesis would be unacceptable, and that your investigating cognition does not agree with truth since your thesis is not established by validating cognition. If there were no concomitance in this case, then this would be a repudiation that "there is no authentic reason of non-observation of the non-appearing." And you have to accept that there is no proof whatsoever for all hidden phenomena since there would be no other authentic reasons as well. Thus, the difference between a realized scholar and an ignorant person is the one between knowing how to correctly establish the meaning of accepted thesis by validating cognition and not knowing.

If validating cognition established that all beings will get enlightened but there were no certainty, then validating cognition would not be able to establish anything with certainty. There would be no greater misknowledge than proclaiming that there is no certainty that all beings will get enlightened after you have ascertained the certainty. Can you decide whether all beings will get enlightened according to their own objective conditions? If not, it would contradict your assertion. If you could decide that they will not get enlightened, it would also contradict your assertion. If you could decide that they will get enlightened, it would contradict the opposite that it is uncertain for them to get enlightened. If you claim that there is nothing to be decided on according to living beings' own objective conditions, your decision that all beings will get enlightened would be irrelevant.

837 mi snang ma dmigs pa.
Having neither the ability of explicating flawless reasoning,  
Nor the instruction revealing the scriptures as advices,  
We shall skillfully remain in equanimity towards the Buddha's Teaching,  
Instead proclaiming "I shall explain the Buddha's intention,"

Secondly, I have explained above that it would contradict reasoning if we accept that all beings will get enlightened but not its certainty. It would be also hard to sustain reasoning analysis if we claim that all beings will not get enlightened. If all beings' mind were not naturally pure, then we must accept that there would be things having truth-status among things knowable, that it would be impossible to posit the ultimate reality since all things' voidness of truth cannot be established by validating cognition. [On the other hand,] if it is provable that the mind is naturally pure by validating cognition, then it can be established by the same reasoning that defilements along with the instincts of the truth-habit are coincidental and possible to be removed. Otherwise, we must accept that defilements enter into the nature of the mind as the heterodox Mīmāṃsā tradition asserts. If you claim that defilements are established by validating cognition to be removable but the antidotes of eliminating them are not possibly developed in the continuum. Is it because of lacking the technique that eliminates defilements in the continua of all beings that an antidote isn't developed? Is it because no one knows, despite the existence of the technique? Is it because no one would possibly seek that technique despite the existence of such people who know it? Is it because the people who know the technique could not possibly teach it out of compassionate motivation? Is it because it is impossible to meditate on that technique and implement it despite the fact that the teaching is available? The first position is not correct since defilements will come to an end by meditating on the wisdom which realizes selflessness. The second is not correct since it is established
by reasoning there are teachers who have perfected their meditation on the wisdom which realizes selflessness, the technique used for the benefit of living beings. The third is not correct since there is no living being who would not seek higher rebirths when exhorted by buddhas, since all beings are possessed of the twofold Buddha-gene. Despite the fact that [some people] do not temporarily seek the ultimate good, since [those people] would have the renunciation of saṃsāra and seek nirvāṇa, and owing to the unwavering compassion [of the Buddha] in the form of taking responsibility to place all beings on buddhahood, these people would eventually seek the ultimate good. This can be also established on the basis of correct reasoning of the authentic scriptures proved by the three kinds of analysis. The fourth is not correct since the Buddha Lord would never stop the deed of teaching the Dharma, because of his unwavering compassion towards all beings that is like caring for his only child when they voluntarily seek [liberation]. The fifth is not correct since this treatise and the commentary thereon, etc., prove that the spiritual genetic potential would awaken in the right conditions at a certain time. Therefore, we shall not accept that all beings cannot get enlightened and that it is uncertain for them to do so if we accept there is no person who would not possibly get enlightened. Indeed we shall accept that all beings would become buddhas because they will get enlightened.

It has been explained to be incorrect if implying that all beings are buddhas already. If you claim that it follows that living being would never exist because there will become buddhas. There is no concomitance since you would not exist if you would become the buddha. You have no choice but to accept that it would be impossible for all beings to exist because of utter non-existence of things. You have to also accept, as mentioned
above, that there would be no living beings, the object which buddhas are aiming at benefiting. It follows that there would be a ceasing of existence of living being because they will become buddhas. If so, bodhisattvas on the Eighth Stage would cease to exist because they will become buddhas. It is concomitant by the same force. Thus you have to accept all three consequences. The proof of this concomitance is that if someone were a Buddha he would necessary not be a living being. Analyze it carefully and you will realize that you failed to differentiate the position that all beings will become buddhas from the one that all beings are already buddhas. You may ask if all beings would become buddhas then where and when these buddhas exist.\(^{838}\) In that case, [I shall ask,] when you think "I shall obtain buddhahood for the benefit of living beings," within which continuum will that perfect buddhahood to be obtained, exist? And when? If you reply that it exists within the continuum of the Buddha when we have obtained perfect buddhahood since buddhahood to be obtained does not exist within the continua of bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation, and since cause and fruition are not simultaneously arising. Likewise, my answer will be the same. Why do you find it unacceptable?

If samsāra had a beginning, it would come into existence without causes, thus there is not a starting point. Nevertheless, is there an ending point? Someone claims that samsāra in general does not have an end but specific samsāra does. This is a contradiction since it is similar to the claim that something does not exist in things but exists in a vase. Therefore, both general and specific samsāra have an endpoint. As to the scriptural statement that "the end of samsāra is unfound," we shall understand it means that the

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\(^{838}\) "All beings would become buddhas (sems can thams cad sangs rgyas pa yod)." Literally it means "all beings have obtained buddhahood." In order to clarify what the term means, rGyal-tshab puts this question to himself.
naive should not construe the certainty of the time for liberation despite the fact that here is no living being who would not possibly obtain liberation as explained above. Someone claim that samsāra does not have an end but all beings will be enlightened.” This is a totally contradictory burden. This is enough for elaborations.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.2.3. Scriptural Reference

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.2.3.1. Prelude

It is unacceptable to maintain that it is impossible for living beings to be purified from coincidental defilements. Intending the existence of natural purity and possible purity from coincidental defilements in all beings without discrimination, the Lord therefore declares:

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.2.3.2. The Scripture

The minds of living beings and their defilements are beginningless but coincidental defilements will come to an end. The mind is naturally pure and endowed with eternity engaging in [altruistic deeds] until the end of samsāra after it has been purified from all coincidental defilements; the naturally pure reality [of the mind] is not be directly seen because outside is covered by beginningless sheath of defilements, just as gold image concealed in mud and so forth.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3. Possession

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1. Prelude

There is one verse with reference to the point of "possession."
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.2. Brief Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1. Possession of the Causal Excellences

The spiritual genetic potential existing within living beings should be understood to be like a great ocean, an inexhaustible storage of immeasurable jewels of excellence. Just as a great ocean which is the container of jewels and so on, collecting jewels and the water, the Element in the continua of living beings is the abode of four excellences of faith, wisdom, concentration, and compassion. Faith is like the container, wisdom and concentration are like jewels and compassion is like the water.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2. Possession of the Fruitional Excellences

[The Element] is like a lamp, because its nature possesses seven inseparable fruitional excellences: [knowledge of] magical operations, divine hearing, telepathy, knowledge of former lives, knowledge of death and future lives, knowledge of the termination of defilements, and the termination of defilements.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.3. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.1. Possession of the Causal Excellences

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.1.1. Question

Now, what is shown by the former half of the verse?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.1.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.1.1. The Śāstra
Because it consists of the four causal excellences, that is to say, faith in the Mahāyāna which is the cause for purifying the Truth Body, unique mental quiescence and transcendental analysis of the Mahāyāna, the cause of obtaining a buddha's intuition, and compassion, the cause for receiving the Tathāgata's great compassion, the Element is demonstrated to be similar to an ocean, through three similes of faith being the ocean bed, mental quiescence and transcendental analysis jewels, and compassion the water.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.1.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.1.2.2.1. Statement

On account of the three points, namely, faith, meditation and wisdom, and great compassion, which are analogous to three aspects of a great ocean respectively, the point of "possession" should be understood in terms of the Element of the Tathāgata being possessed of [the excellences of] the cause.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.1.2.2.2. Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.1.2.2.1. Categories of Excellence

Then, which are the three points? They are (1) the cause for purifying the Truth Body, (2) the cause of obtaining a Buddha's intuition, and (3) the cause for receiving the Tathāgata's great compassion.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.1.2.2.2. Exposition of Each Category

Here, (1) the cause for purifying the Truth Body is to be known as the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna. This cause is of paramount importance since there would be no
meditation on concentration of integrated mental quiescence and transcendental analysis and meditation on great compassion if lacking it as the foundation; (2) the cause for obtaining a Buddha's intuition, the meditation on wisdom and concentration as the path of stopping extremes of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa which is the technique for obtaining the non-staying nirvāṇa; and (3) the cause for receiving the Tathāgata's great compassion in order to purify the Element of all beings, the meditation on great compassion of bodhisattvas.

**3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.3.1.2.2.2.3. Similes and Their Imports**

In this regard, the meditation on faith in the Mahāyāna is analogous to an ocean bed since it holds immeasurable and exhaustible jewels of wisdom and concentration as well as the water of compassion, causing all qualities of the Buddha to be accomplished. The meditation on wisdom and concentration is analogous to jewel because of its being free of constructive thought that "this result should be given," and its being endowed with inconceivable powerful excellences which are in nature capable of producing fruition. The meditation on great compassion of bodhisattvas is analogous to the water, never going beyond [its nature being] moist and nurturing, because it has one taste of supreme moist nature [permeating] all beings with the wish for them to be free from sufferings. This conjunction of [the Element] with that fourfold causal excellence in terms of these three causes - the cause for purifying, the cause for obtaining and the cause for receiving - of the three things - the Truth Body, the Buddha's intuition and compassion - is called "possession."

**3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2. Possession of the Fruitional Excellences**
Now, what is shown by the latter half of the verse?

In the immaculate state called "Element" or the immaculate uncontaminated ultimate element state, the fruitional excellences of the five superknowledges, the intuition of the termination of contaminations, and that immaculate termination are inseparable in terms of nature, thereby being analogous to light, and the heat and color of a lamp. Intuition of the termination of contaminations is the knowledge of the termination of contaminations, the perceptive intuition of that immaculate termination. That termination is also called "liberation."

On account of the three points which are analogous to three aspects of a lamp respectively, the point of "possession" should be understood in terms of the Element of the Tathāgata being possessed of [the excellences of] the fruition.

Then, which are the three points? They are (1) the superknowledges, (2) the intuition of the termination of contaminations, and (3) the termination of contamination.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.2.2. Similes and Their Imports

In regard to the fruitional excellences, the five superknowledges are analogous to light because they have the characteristic of engaging in the elimination of darkness which is discordant to the experiential knowledge of the respective object. The whereabouts of teachers, friends and disciples is perceived directly. The presence or absence of attachment and so on in the minds of others is perceived directly. Having directly seen immeasurable previous lives of self and others, the connections between disciple and teacher and so on are perceived directly. Intuition of the termination of contaminations is analogous to heat because of its characteristic of engaging in consuming the fuel of karma and addictions without the remains. The transformed termination of contamination is analogous to color because of its characteristic of being immaculate, pure, and luminous. In this regard, it is immaculate because it has eliminated addictive obscuration of the truth-habits regarding person and aggregates. It is pure because it has eliminated cognitive obscuration which includes instincts for addictions and erroneous truth-perception. It is luminous because it is not in the mind's nature to be these two coincidental obscurations.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.3. Précis

Thus, these seven things, which consist of the five superknowledges, the intuition of the termination of contaminations, and the termination in the continua of those people who have nothing further to learn, are inseparable in terms of nature from each other in the immaculate ultimate element. [These seven things] are [the object of] eternal
meditative equipoise on reality free of all defilements, not being differentiated but identical to the ultimate element. This is called "possession."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.2. Scriptural Reference

Thus, these seven things, which consist of the five superknowledges, intuition, and termination in the continua of those people who have nothing further to learn, are inseparable from each other in the immaculate ultimate element, not being differentiated, but identical to the ultimate element. This is called "possession." And with reference to its meaning, the simile of a lamp is to be understood in detail according to the [Anañatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivaratva-] sūtra:

Śāriputra, just as a lamp is undifferentiated by and inseparable from its light, heat, and color, the precious stone is also undifferentiated by and inseparable from its light, color, and shape. Likewise, Śāriputra, the Truth Body taught by the Tathāgata is undifferentiated by the qualities of the Tathāgata, which are far beyond the sands of the Ganges in number, and is inseparable from the excellences of the intuition.

This sūtra teaches that these excellences are possessed at the time of the ultimate fruition, not existing within the continua of ordinary individuals.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4. Categories of Engagement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.1. The Main Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.1.1. Prelude
There is one verse with reference to the point of "engagement." There are two kinds of engagement: engagement with respect to person and engagement with respect to category according to the bases and the differentiated time periods in which reality presences respectively.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.1.2. Statement

Engagement with respect to person refers to the presence of reality in three kinds of person: naïve people, noble ones, and perfect Buddhas. Engagement with respect to category refers to the presence of reality in three categories of impurity with defilements, partially separation, and termination of all obscurations. Owing to this engagement, the perceiver of reality has taught that this Buddha-essence, reality mingled with defilements, is in living beings. The Element that is the natural purity of the minds of living beings serves as the foundation for living beings to obtain buddhahood because it produces the buddha's qualities by meditating on it; this is the mine of qualities. Reality mingled with defilements is called the "Buddha-essence" because it includes essential techniques for the attainment of perfect buddhahood.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.1.3. Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.1.3.1. Question

What is shown by this verse?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.1.3.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.1.3.2.1. The Śāstra
The reality of the continua of naïve people is erroneous since it is mingled with the seeds of defilements and the seeds of obscurations to reality that have not been eliminated in the slightest. The reality of the continua of yet-to-be-buddhas-direct-perceivers of the truth is the opposite and is correct since the seeds of defilements have been eliminated to various degrees, although have not been totally terminated. The reality of the continua of the Tathāgatas, who ultimately perceive it as it is, is absolutely correct without reification. Although the second stage mainly refers to those the noble bodhisattvas, other noble ones should be also included.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.1.3.2.2. The Commentary

It should be understood there are three different categories of engagement with the Element of the Tathāgata. In which [scriptures] have these been taught? These have been taught in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, etc., with reference to the non-conceptual intuition that is the direct realization of reality. Thus, you should not repudiate the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra along with this treatise and its commentary by claiming "this sūtra teaches self-emptiness of the relative only but not other-emptiness of the ultimate reality since it has been proved that this sūtra does state the categories of the ultimate. To whom are these have these been taught? To bodhisattvas. On which basis have these been taught? And how? There are three different kinds of engagement with the general characteristic of the pure reality of all things being the emptiness of intrinsic reality as taught [in the sūtra] of naïve people who do not perceive reality, of noble ones who perceive reality, and of the Tathāgatas who have obtained the ultimate purity in perceiving reality. What are these three? They are erroneous, correct, and absolutely
correct without reification, respectively. In this regard, to be more specific, "erroneous" refers to the reality of the naives on account of being mingled with erroneous notions of permanence, etc., for something that is actually impermanent and so on; having addictive thoughts of attachment, etc., and views which insist upon tolerance and acceptance of what is held by erroneous notions. "Correct" refers to noble ones because they, being opposite to naïve people, have eliminated error to various degrees. And "absolutely correct without reification" refers to perfect Buddhas because they have destroyed addictive obscurations and their instincts, as well as cognitive obscurations.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2. Its Ramifications
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.1. General Prelude

The other four points taught hereafter should be understood to be the ramifications of the point of engagement: categories different in state but not in terms of nature, establishing the same nature pervading all states, establishing the nature as being unchangeable, and establishing possession of indivisible excellences of liberation at the time of being absolute pure.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2. Expositions of Each Meaning
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1. Categories Different in State but Not in Terms of Nature
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.1. Prelude

In this regard, there is one verse with reference to the point of "states."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.2. Statement
The reality of being impure, [both] pure and impure, and absolute pure, are respectively called the Element of an ordinary being who has not eliminated the seeds of obscurations the slightest; the Element of the continuum of a the noble bodhisattva who has eliminated the seeds of mental constructions to various degrees but not has completely eliminated obscurations; and the Tathāgata. This is a statement on the categories of reality. Although it is acceptable to establish the reality of being extremely pure as the Tathāgata without contradiction, it is not acceptable to establish the reality of the former two as ordinary beings and bodhisattvas, since it is the heterodox way that posits the ultimate reality as a person. The word "called" indicates that reality of the three kinds of people is the basis of their designations just as none of the collection, continuum, its component, etc., can be accepted as an exemplification of "person," since person is designated as being dependent on the collection and continua of the aggregates. To explain in more detail, as stated in the Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra "matter is emptiness; emptiness is matter," when investigating the mode of existence with regard to the nature of matter, we will know there is no intrinsic reality-status of matter even small as an atom; and when investigating under the sway of previous understanding of the basis on which matter is designated, we will know that something void of intrinsically identifiable reality is designated as matter. Likewise, something void of intrinsically identifiable reality is designated as the three kinds of people. The meaning of Buddha-essence will be understood in light of this.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.1. Question

What is shown by this verse?
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.1. The Śāstra

The Element, reality mingled with defilements, is demonstrated by the designations of three names in accordance with its three sequential states, which are not exemplification of the Element as aforementioned. What is the Element? It is subsumed under the six points of nature, etc., as explained above. The meaning determined by those six is further summarized and is demonstrated by the designations of three names in accordance with three states.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.1. Meaning of the Words

Any teaching on the immaculate Element, which is the basis of the differentiation of the Element into states by the Lord, [made] in detail in many profound discourses of the Dharma such as non-production, non-cessation, etc., is hitherto subsumed under six points, namely: nature, causes, fruition, actions, possession, and engagement. This Element is also to be known as taught through the teaching of three names in accordance with the three states, respectively. That is to say, (1) it is called the "Element of living being" in the impure state. A general term notwithstanding, this name is for ordinary being alone since it is distinguished by the state when the seeds of defilements have not been eliminated in the slightest; (2) it is called "bodhisattva" in [both] the pure and impure state. A general term notwithstanding, this refers to noble ones as clarified in the sūtra as proof. Moreover, it should be known that bodhisattva is the chief type in this
state and noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are also included because they are not accepted as naïve people - this statement is also true for "categories of engagement;" and (3) it is called "the Tathāgata" in the absolute pure state...

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3.2.2.2. Scriptural Reference

...as Lord states [in the Anānatinātvanirātvanirdesaparivatrasūtra:]

Śāriputra, this reality mingled with defilements, which will be designated as the Truth Body if it has been purified, when it is covered with limitless sheaths of addictions, being carried by the current of saṃsāra, namely, staying in the continuum of a ordinary being in saṃsāra by the forces of karma and addictions, and going circle between death and birth in the course of saṃsāra without beginning and end, is called the "Element of living beings."

This same Truth Body, Śāriputra, when it has felt aversion to the sufferings in the current of saṃsāra and become free of attachment to all the objects of desire, venturing forth into the deeds for the sake of enlightenment by means of the ten transcendences after mastery of all of the eighty-four thousand aggregates of Dharma, it is called "bodhisattva." Because it is unacceptable to maintain that the Truth Body circles in saṃsāra; reality, which will be designated as the Truth Body if it has been purified, is called "bodhisattva" when it is qualified by those [corresponding features]. Those features are demonstrated by the deeds of a the noble bodhisattva who has realized the disadvantages of saṃsāra perceiving them as the opposite [to liberation], and who has ventured forth into the deeds by means of the ten transcendences after mastery of all of the eighty-four thousand aggregates of Dharma, which are the antidotes to the eighty-four thousand conducts of a living being.

Furthermore, Śāriputra, when this very Truth Body has been released from all the sheaths of addictions - the elimination of active addictions, having gone beyond all the sufferings - the elimination of fruitional truth of suffering, having freed of all defilements of addictions - the elimination of cognitive obscuration, it has become pure, absolute pure, and supreme pure - the elimination as part of the perfection of self-benefit, ascending to the stage to be looked upon by all living beings - the perfection of other-benefit, has obtained the power of person which is unexcelled in all knowable objects, and has obtained unimpeded and unconstructive power of controlling all things - the twofold realization of reality and the multiplicity of things, for this reason, then it is called "the Tathāgata, Arhat, Perfect Buddha."
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2. Establishing the Same Nature Pervading All States

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.1. Prelude

There is one verse with reference to the point of the "all-pervadingness" of the Element of the Tathāgata in these three states. The distinction of the Element can be made merely on the basis of the states since emptiness of intrinsic identifiability is all-pervading in three states. If the distinction were made in terms of nature, it would contradict this fact that emptiness of intrinsic identifiability is undifferentiated and is all-pervading in three states.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.2. Statement

Just as space is naturally pervading all places which are free of tangible objects, without thinking that "I shall pervade all empty vessels," so the nature of the mind, the immaculate element which is empty of intrinsic identifiability, should be known likewise as all-pervasive in all things. The term "immaculate element" does not exclusively mean that the nature of the mind is free of coincidental defilements. Instead, it means that the nature of the mind is not penetrated by defilements. Uncompounded space is the mere exclusion of tangible objects and would not arise as a positive, independent entity. Although it pervades all different vessels, it would not arise in different forms with regard to the nature but different names posited on vessels that hold space. That pure nature of the mind is the mere exclusion of intrinsic identifiability. Although it is all-pervading in all things, it likewise would not arise as different forms in terms of nature. Thus, one nature is all-pervading in the states and its distinctions are made merely by the states.

839 dri ma med pa’ dbyings.
What is shown by this verse?

The general characteristic of that Element, reality, pervades the people who have all sorts of faults, the people who have excellences of the elimination of the seeds to various degrees, and the people who have the ultimate excellences, as space is all-pervading in the vessels of clay, copper, and gold, which are the inferior, medium and supreme aspects of forms respectively.

The nature of the mind of an ordinary being, a noble one, and a perfect buddha, being free of the constructive thought, is the general characteristic [of the Element]. Therefore, it is all-pervading, all-engaging, equal, of no difference in these three states of having faults, excellences and the ultimate pure excellences, just as space pervades all the vessels of clay, copper and gold. This is easy to understand.
For this reason, the Buddha states [in the *Anūnatvāpiśatvanirdeśaparivatra-sūtra,*] immediately after the teaching:

Therefore, Śāriputra, the Element of living beings and the Truth Body are not different from each other. The Element of living beings, reality mingled with defilements, is nothing but the Truth Body when it has been purified from all defilements, and the Truth Body is nothing but the Element of living beings when emptiness of intrinsic identifiability is mingled with defilements. These two do not arise by meaning as dual forms in terms of nature but merely by different letters.

It would contradict reasoning if we maintained that the Element of living beings is a synonym of the Truth Body. Although the path in space flown by a crow would not appear different from the one flown by a vulture, and space would not appear as different forms in different vessels, there is a distinction between in mere expressions. Aside from the mere fact that emptiness of intrinsic identifiability is called the "Element of living beings" when mingled with defilements and is called the "Truth Body" when free of them, it would not arise as different forms in terms of nature. This is the meaning of the *sūtra.*

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3. Establishing the Nature Being Unchangeable

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1. Prelude

The Element of the Tathāgata, being all-pervading in these three states, is, moreover, unchangeable either by addictions or through purification. There are fourteen verses with reference to this subject. These fourteen verses are root-like, consisting of twelve verses
which demonstrate the unchangeability in the impure state, one verse the unchangeability in both the impure and pure state, and one verse the unchangeability in the absolute pure state. [If verses of explanation are included,] there would be thirty-five verses in total: one verse of summary, twelve root-like verses with reference to the first state, one root-like verse and twelve verses of explanation with reference to the second state, one root-like verse and six verses of explanation with reference to the third state. \(^{840}\)

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2. Exposition of Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 1. General Statement

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 1.1. The Śāstra

The summarized meaning of these verses is to be known by the following verse:

The mind's emptiness of intrinsic identifiability is the unchanging noumenon, the same reality, which is the mere exclusion of intrinsic identifiability, in the absolute pure state after as it was before in the state of an ordinary being as well as in the state of a noble śrāvaka, a noble pratyekabuddha or a the noble bodhisattva.

Rejection: "The same reality after as it was before" cannot be established since the former two states are of defilements and the last state is free of defilements and is possessed of excellences.

Reply: There is no fault. Though possessing coincidental faults, the mind can be possibly separated from those faults. That can be established because it is possible for all

\(^{840}\) There are actually only four verses of explanation with reference to the last state. So there are thirty-three verses in total about the point of unchangeability.
excellences of the Buddha to be produced and the mind naturally has the object which produces excellences. The mere exclusion of intrinsic identifiability cannot be changed into something else by the faults as well as by the excellences. All kinds of water become one taste, so do all things in the essence of emptiness of intrinsic identifiability. The ultimate reality cannot be changed into something else except being the mere exclusion of intrinsic identifiability and would not arise as different forms when it is perceived by any noble one's concentration. Thus, it is call "unchangeable." To accept that [reality] is a positive, independent, permanent entity, it should be understood as a non-Buddhist viewpoint.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 1.2. Explanations of Each Point

In the impure state as well as in the [both] pure and impure state, which are shown by the [following] twelve verses and by the [next] one verse respectively, [the Element of the Tathāgata] is possessed of coincidental [faults] of fundamental and subsequent addictions. [On the other hand], it is endowed by nature with the qualities of the Buddha in the perfectly pure state, which are indivisible, inseparable [from the Truth Body], inconceivable and far greater in number than the sands of Gaṅgā as demonstrated by the fourteenth verse. Therefore, it is demonstrated that the Element of the Tathāgata is eternally unchangeable like space throughout different times.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2. Explanation of Each State

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1. Unchangeability in the Impure State

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.1. Question
What are the twelve verses with reference to the unchangeable characteristic in the impure state?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1. [The Element of the Tathāgata] Is Unchanged by Karma and Addictions Which Cause the Aggregate, etc. to Arise

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.1. Brief Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.1.1. Being Unaffected by Defiled Things

Space is all-pervading in world environments, and because of being subtle in the sense that it is uncompounded; it is the mere exclusion of resistant tangible objects and is not the direct apprehension objects of sense-faculties. The Element is completely unaffected by the faults of world environment such as dust, etc., so the naturally pure Element, the uncontaminated abode, which universally exists in all living beings, is completely unaffected or unchanged by karma and addictions.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.1.2. Being Unaffected by Their Arising and Disintegrating

Just as all world environments such as air-mandala, etc., arise and disintegrate because of the fire at the end of world, etc., and on the basis of space; so in the uncompounded naturally pure Element, all the sense-faculties arise and disintegrate, but the Element itself cannot be changed by those things that arise and disintegrate.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.2. Detailed Explanations
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.2. Being Unaffected by Things

Disintegrating

Just as space has never before been burnt by fires, so this reality mingled with defilements is not burnt by the fires of death, sickness, and aging, and cannot be destroyed. The plural "fires" refers to three kinds of fire [occurring at the end of world]. Since it is relatively simple in content, being unaffected by things disintegrating is explicated first.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.2. Being Unaffected by Things Arising
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.2.1.2. Similes and Imports

Earth-\textit{mandala} is sustained by water-\textit{mandala}, water by air, and air by space; uncompounded space is, however, known to be neither sustained by air, water nor earth.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.2.2.2. Imports

Similar to this simile, the aggregates, elements, and media of sense-faculties such as eyes, etc., which are included in retribution are based upon their own causes, including karma and addictions, such as attachment, etc. Karma and addictions are always based upon irrational thought, the truth-habits regarding persons and things. This irrational thought is based upon purity, its own objective condition, of the mind, yet the mind's nature, the ultimate reality, is not based upon any of the things including karma and addictions in terms of its ultimate objective condition.
When investigating whether or not karma and addictions, etc., are established by intrinsic reality, only the emptiness of intrinsic reality will be realized since these things are not established by intrinsic reality even small as an atom. When investigating how this objective condition of being empty of intrinsic identity exists, it is known as nothing other than the emptiness of intrinsic reality. That is what is meant by the statement "being unchanged by karma and addictions, etc." Therefore this statement means that the emptiness of intrinsic reality cannot be changed even in the impure state into something else by karma and addictions, etc., and does not mean that it cannot become free of defilements caused by antidotes. These [statements] have an emphasis on the naturally pure ultimate reality that is emptiness of intrinsic reality, emptiness of intrinsic identity or emptiness by truth-status of the mind, and implicitly establishes that the defilements are coincidental, whereas the nine similes explicitly taught in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra explain with an emphasis on the coincidental-ness of the defilements, and implicitly establishes that the mind is empty by truth, free of reification, as well shall see later.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1.2.1.3.1. Connections between Each Simile and Import

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.2.2.3. The Main Meaning

The aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties, which are included in retribution, should be known as being akin to the earth-\textit{maṇḍala} since these are the results of karma and addictions and serve as the basis for future retribution just as earth serves as the support of four continents, the \textit{Meru}, etc. The karma and addictions of living beings are to be known as akin to water which is the support of earth and is based upon unstable air.
since these serve as the basis for the contaminated aggregates and are based upon irrational thought. The irrational thought by which nothing is established as conceived is known as having resemblance to air which is the support of water and is based upon space; being of no basis conforming to habit-pattern of irrational thought and of no abiding in irrational thought, etc., the nature of the mind, the ultimate reality, is like space.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.2. Specific Explanation of Analogies between Similes and Imports

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.2.1. Distinctive Feature of Irrational Thought

Irrational thought abides within the nature of the mind, which is void of truth and is free of reifications. Through irrational thought, karma and addictions are produced. The former part [of this verse] demonstrates that irrational thought abides within emptiness of true existence and the latter part demonstrates that it is the support of karma and addictions. [Taken together,] this verse establishes that karma and addictions are baseless and rootless.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.2.2. Distinctive Feature of Karma and Addictions

From water-\textit{mandala} of karma and addictions which are respectively the substantial causes and co-operative conditions, the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties of retribution occur, arising and disintegrating by the forces of karma and addictions just like water- \textit{mandala} arises and subsides.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.2.3. Distinctive Feature of Their Basis

The nature of the mind, the ultimate reality, is like the space-element free of arising and disintegrating: it has neither substantial causes nor co-operative conditions, nor these causes and conditions in collection, nor arising, abiding by the force of causes or destruction at the end. This treatise does not explain in detail but briefly demonstrates in summary that [the Element of the Tathāgata] would not be changed by addictive things into something else with the intention that it would be enough for apprehension by doing so and if people understand that [the nature of the mind] cannot be changed by arising and destruction into something else they will easily understand that it also cannot be changed by karma and addictions.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.1. Being Unchangeable by Karma and Addictions

The nature of the mind, the ultimate reality, is luminous and unchanging like space, which does not change into something else by diverse vessels. The nature of mind has never become addicted by attachment and so on, the coincidental defilements which arise from irrational thought, the truth-habit.

If you claim that the mind would not be changed by addictions because it is void of intrinsic reality, this is an argument that does not differentiate between categorical
differential\textsuperscript{841} and ground differential.\textsuperscript{842} Addictions do not abide differently from the mind in terms of sharing the same object with it. Although the nature of the mind is to apprehend an object and reality is the ultimate of an object, the mind contaminated by obscuring addictions cannot perceive it. However, addictions cannot always cause contamination since they are incapable of staying as the concomitant of the wisdom that realizes emptiness and are incapable of perceiving reality in the slightest. If you then claim that reality would also not be obscured by addictions, [you should know that] addictions cause obstacles for the mind of one's own continuum, [for the mind's ability] to perceive and realize its own continuum's reality; hence, [reality] is mingled with defilements. Although [defilements] also obscure the perception of reality of a buddha's continuum, which has the same characteristic as reality of ours, a buddha's reality does not become mingled with defilements, for obscuring addictions do not belong to a buddha's continuum as well as for reality to be obscured abides within our own continua. Suppose there is a person with bad vision who cannot perceive a thing far away, this problem exclusively belongs to this person but not to that thing. Otherwise, a person who has clear vision in front of a thing would also not perceive it. In light of this, we should understand as well the meaning of the \textit{Abhisamayālāṃkāra}, starting with "pure fruition including matter, etc."

\textit{3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.2.} \textit{Being Unchangeable by Arising and Disintegration}

\textit{3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.2.1.} \textit{Prelude}

\textsuperscript{841} \textit{rang ldog.}
\textsuperscript{842} \textit{gzhi ldog.}
How is this Buddha-essence in the impure state unchangeable in its nature, [and how is it] demonstrated by this simile of space, which is unaffected by the producing and destroying forces for world environments?

Although the nature of reality will not change because of being permanent and uncompounded, the mode of unchangeability should be known here, as explained above, for the purpose of educating those people who wish to eliminate addictions and to perceive the meaning of the ultimate reality on all things' ultimate objective condition which does not go beyond [the meaning of] the emptiness of intrinsic reality, and cannot be changed by anyone into something else. Although liberation nirvāṇa is also permanent, we do not have to resort to heterodox traditions that accept [liberation] as a positive, independent, permanent entity without understanding the arrangement of the "permanence" as known to the Buddhist scholars.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.1.3.2.2. The Śāstra

This reality mingled with defilements cannot be produced by karma and addictions which are akin to the collection of water-\textit{mandala}, etc., for it is unaffected by things which are produced. Even the fierce fires of death, sickness and aging which cause severe sufferings cannot consume it, for it is unaffected by things which disintegrate. The former part and the latter part of this verse demonstrate that [reality] is free of arising and disintegration, respectively.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.1. Brief Statement
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.1.1. Being Unaffected by Arising

The arising of the retribution that consists of aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties is based upon the water of karma and addictions, which is, in turn, produced by the wind- *maniḍala* of irrational thought. This evolution, however, does not cause arising and formation of nature of the mind which is akin to space.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.1.2. Being Unaffected by Disintegration

In the same way, the group of fires which are death, sickness, and aging, arises and causes the destruction of the retribution that consists of the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties. [This] is produced by air-like irrational thought and water-like karma and addictions. It should be known, however, that even by these arising fires of death, etc., this nature of the mind cannot be destroyed.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.1.3. Conclusion

Thus, in the impure state, though all the defilements of karma, addictions, and birth arise and disintegrate like world environments, the uncompounded Buddha-essence is, like space, of no arising and cessation. Therefore, it is demonstrated as an absolutely unchangeable noumenon.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.2. Scriptural Reference

And this space simile which refers to the means of [actualizing] the distinguished Dharma of luminosity with regard to the natural purity is to be understood in detail
according to the *Gaganagājānbodhisattvavākaprāchā-sūtra*. Here, "Dharma" refers to the natural purity and "means" refers to actualizing techniques.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1. Being Unaffected by Addictive Things

Great seer,^{843} addictions are the dark, since it obscures the perception of reality; purity is the luminosity since the perception of reality illuminates all things. Addictions are weak because they are not sustainable when antidotes are present; transcendental analysis is powerful. Addictions are coincidental; natural purity is the root of all things. Addictions are of the imagination for there is nowhere for them to adhere; nature is free of imagination for it is the own objective condition of all things.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2. Being Unaffected by Arising and Destruction

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.1. Similes

Great seer, this great earth is supported by water. Water is supported by air, and air is supported by space. But space, in turn, is not supported by anything. Thus, among these four elements, space is more powerful than any of the other three elements of earth, water and air. It is also firm and immovable. It has no decrease and no increase. It is not produced and does not cease. It is supported by its own essence. [On the contrary], other three elements are possessed of arising and disintegration, being unstable. These are perceived as changeable, but space is not in the slightest.

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^{843} A title of the Buddha addressed by his disciples. According to another version, it is replaced with "friends" addressed by the Buddha.
Likewise, the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties have their support in karma and addiction. Karma and addiction have their support in irrational thought and the latter, in turn, have its support in the natural purity. Therefore, it is said: the mind is naturally luminous, but it is defiled by coincidental addictions. In this regard, all these things of irrational thought, karma, addiction, aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties are produced by the conglomeration of causes and conditions. When these causes and conditions are separate, they will cease. [On the contrary], the nature of the mind has no cause and no condition. Consequently, it has no conglomeration of causes and conditions or no conglomeration by nature. It is thus not produced and does not cease.

In this regard, nature is akin to space, irrational thought to air, karma and addiction to water, and the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties to earth.

Therefore, it is said that all things are completely devoid of any root of intrinsic reality-status. They have an essence-free root; there is not the slightest essence which is sustained when under investigation by reason which analyzes the ultimate. They have a root of non-abiding by intrinsic reality when they still exist. They have a root of purity of intrinsic reality in either past, present or future. And for this reason they have a root which is free of the root of intrinsic reality-status. The first statement indicates that [all things] do not have a root which is established in ultimate terms, and the last four indicate that they have roots in superficial terms.

The nature of the mind in the impure state has been explained as analogous to space on account of its unchangeable characteristic; irrational thought, karma and addictions as
analogous to air and water respectively, on account of their characteristic of cause; and
the aggregates, elements, and sense-faculties which are produced from the former two as
analogous to earth element on account of their characteristic of the retribution of karma.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.1.2.2. Being Unchanged by Aging, etc., Akin to Fires
and So on Which Cause the Aggregates, etc., to Disintegrate

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.1.2.2.1. Prelude

The fires of death, sickness and aging which cause the disintegration of the
retribution of karma has not yet been explained as being analogous to the fire element on
account of their characteristic of headaches for living beings who stay in saṁsāra. So I
shall explain.

It will be also acceptable if the former statements starting with "the nature of the
mind in the impure state..." is included in the prelude here in order to remind us what
have been already explained.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.1.2.2.2. The Śāstra

Three fires of death, of sickness, and aging are to be known respectively as being
analogous to the fire at the end of the world by which all world environments are
incinerated: to the fire of hell by which the bodies in the hells are incinerated, and to the
ordinary fire by which firewood is incinerated. These three fires [of death and so on]
destroy the body forever, health, and youth, respectively.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.2.3. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.2.3.1. The Reasons Why Aging, etc., are Analogous to Three Similes of Fires

Death, sickness, and aging analogous to the fires and should be known for three reasons, respectively. [They are namely]: (1) because [death] permanently causes the six sense-faculties to be not possessed by a person; (2) [sickness] causes various kinds of sufferings to be experienced; and (3) [aging] causes the compounded retribution of karma and addictions to develop. Even by these fires, the Element of the Tathāgata in the impure state cannot be changed at all. These statements should be known as the demonstration of the techniques for cultivating the will to liberation by contemplating the faults of samsāra and feeling it repulsive.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.1.2.2.3.2. Scriptural Reference

With reference to this point, it is stated in the Śrīmālā-sūtra:

Lord, this so-called "death" and this so-called "birth" are merely worldly relative terms. Lord, this so-called "death" causes the continua of sense-faculties which are produced by karma and addictions to cease, and this so-called "birth" causes other sense-faculties of the same type to be obtained. Lord, Buddha-essence, the ultimate reality, however, is never born, never ages, never dies, and never born [again]. Why? Because, Lord, Buddha-essence is beyond the sphere characterized as compounded, being eternal, firm, peaceful, and everlasting, as explicated above.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2. Unchangeability in Pure and Impure State

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.1. Prelude

Now there comes one verse with respect to unchangeability in the [both] pure and impure state. The "pure and impure state" does not mean that a demarcation between pure
and impure can be clearly drawn. Rather, it demonstrates that the pure and impure aspects of the state of the noble bodhisattvas are decided with respect to different points of view. Their state is pure for the noble bodhisattvas are free of birth, etc., by the force of karma and addiction and is impure for their manifestations of birth, etc., by the force of compassion, or in terms of the extinction of birth under the influence of karma and addiction, it is pure when compared with naive people and it is impure when compared with the Buddha.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.2. Brie/Statement

Free of birth, death, sickness, and aging under the influence of karma and addiction, the intelligent noble bodhisattvas have directly realized the nature of the Element as it is and this realization has a distinction of extensive deeds. Through this cause of the direct realization of nature of the Element, and by cultivating compassion for beings, though separated from the poverty of birth, and so on, under the influence of karma and addiction, the intelligent ones take birth in saṃsāra. Alternatively, they are free of birth in saṃsāra under the influence of karma and addiction, through the cause of perceiving other being's suffering of birth; the intelligent ones depend on birth in saṃsāra owing to their compassion. Thus, the first three lines [of this verse] show the distinction of [this state being] pure and the last line shows the distinction of being impure.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.1. Question

What is shown by this verse?
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2. \textit{Answer}

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1. \textit{The Unchangeability in the Pure and Impure State Explained with Respect to the Distinction of Birth}

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.1. \textit{The Distinction of Being Pure}

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.1.1. \textit{The Sāstra}

The noble bodhisattvas have completely eliminated by the very root, the suffering of death, sickness, and aging under the influence of karma and addictions. The suffering of samsāra does not apply to them because their birth is not under the influence of karma and addictions. While having realized the meaning of emptiness, the noble śrāvakas of the Hinayāna still take rebirth under the influence of karma and addictions owing to lack of the influence distinguished by liberative techniques. But it does not hold true for the noble bodhisattvas.

\textit{Rejection:} The explanation above that [the noble bodhisattvas] take rebirth in samsāra of their own volition contradicts the explanation as found in the \textit{Commentary on the Abhisamayālaṃkāra} stating that "they are eliminating the instinct for misknowledge and [wrong] views but not the defilement of desire\textsuperscript{844} and defilement of existence\textsuperscript{845} for they still take rebirth of their own volition."\textsuperscript{846} The \textit{Commentary} makes it clear that the defilements of desire and existence are the causes of their taking rebirth [in samsāra].

\textit{Answer:} The connotation of this \textit{Commentary} is as follows: There is absolutely no need for addictive misknowledge and the futile views, extreme views, etc., [no need] for

\textsuperscript{844} \textit{dod pa' zag pa.}
\textsuperscript{845} \textit{srid pa' zag pa.}
\textsuperscript{846} Source unidentified.
involvement with the accomplishment of self-aims and other-aims. So these should be specifically eliminated by [the noble] bodhisattvas. The defilements of desire and existence are not necessarily the causes for them to take rebirth because the noble bodhisattvas are born by the force of compassion and prayer and, when dying, they do not crave the contaminated aggregates owing to the fear of losing "I." Born as a cakravartin, etc., by the force of compassion and prayer, when begetting a royal child, they have the active defilement of desire. Born in the form-world and so on, by the force of prayer, they have the active defilement of existence. However, the defilements [in these cases] are harmless just as the effect of poison is lessened by special mantra and medicine. [Moreover,] addiction is defined as something that causes the mental continuum to be agitated. Absolute peace of the mental continuum is declared as nirvāṇa. Agitation, being the opposite of nirvāṇa, is the truth of suffering and addiction is its cause. Nevertheless, the addiction which exists in the mental continua of the noble bodhisattvas is a [mere] verbal expression, not fitting the definition of addiction.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.1.2. The Commentary

In the impure state, as explained above, the substantial cause of the fires of death, sickness and aging is the fuel-like birth included in [the link of] name-matter, bridging the gap between lives based upon the irrational thought, which is the adherence to truth, karma and addictions, such as attachment, etc. The commentary then demonstrates that [for bodhisattvas] there is no death, and so forth, because there are no causes for these things. In the [both] pure and impure state, however, for bodhisattvas who have obtained the mind-made body, there are no fruitional three fires of suffering that we know of
because there is no appearance of birth whatsoever. [This] bridges the gap between lives based upon karma and addictions, owing to the direct realization of emptiness distinguished by extensive liberative techniques.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2. The Nature of Impurities [and] the Distinction of Cause of Connecting Purity with Impurities

Because of directly perceiving immaculate reality distinguished by extensive liberative techniques, they have passed beyond birth, and so on, based upon karma and the addictions. Still, the compassionate-natured ones display birth, death, aging, and sickness by [the force of] prayer. The former part of this verse demonstrates the cause of connecting purity with impurities. The latter part demonstrates the nature of impurities.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2. Explanation

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.1. Brief Statement

Indeed, because of their all-engagement in three worlds by the force of compassion and prayer through the virtuous root, bodhisattvas properly engage with the three worlds out of compassion on the basis of their power of controlling the birth by their will. They make the appearance of birth, of aging, of sickness, and of death. These statements demonstrate the nature of impurity. The commentary then demonstrates the cause of connecting [purity] with these impurities as follows: But there are, in reality, no such things [such as] birth, etc., by the force of karma and addictions among them. Because, of
course, they have correctly perceived that the Element, included in [the category of] the ultimate reality, has no birth and no arising, as it is.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.1. The Way of Taking Rebirth by the Force of Compassion and Prayer

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1. Scriptural Reference

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.1. Identifying the Causes for Taking Rebirth in Saṁsāra

And this state of bodhisattvas should be understood in detail according to the [Sāgaramatipariprcchā-] sūtra as follows:

Which are the addictions associated with the virtuous roots that serve as the cause of saṁsāra for those [bodhisattvas]? They are namely: Non-satisfaction in searching for the store of merits, taking rebirth in order to complete the store; taking rebirth in worldly existence out of their own volition for the purpose of taking other beings under their care; earnest wish to meet with the buddhas in other [forms of] body motivated by faith in them; unweariness towards the perfect development of living beings, taking disciples under their care; making efforts for the thoroughly apprehension of the Holy Dharma of the buddhas; making efforts to fulfill all kinds of need of living beings; non-separation from passionate thought for Dharma, aspiring for the deeds and the basis of deeds, the spirit of enlightenment; non-abandonment of thorough engagement with transcendences motivated by that thought. Sāgaramati, these are addictions associated with the virtuous roots by which bodhisattvas join themselves [to saṁsāra] but they are never affected by the fault of addictions . . .

Most of these are the causes for taking rebirth [of these bodhisattvas].
Refuting Virtuous Roots Being Addictions as Defined

The Reason for Designating Virtuous Roots as Addictions

[Then, Sagaramati asked:] Why then, Lord, are the virtuous roots called addictions? [The Lord answered:] Sagaramati, it is in the sense that bodhisattvas join themselves to the three worlds by these addictions in such nature; for the three worlds are originated from addictions.

Just as the addictions cause the naives to join themselves to the three worlds, the virtuous roots cause the noble bodhisattvas to take rebirth in three worlds. Thus, the virtuous roots are designated as "addictions" inasmuch as their similar function.

Someone quotes the Sāgaramatipariprcchā-sūtra and equates [the "addictions"] with the addictions that are not to be eliminated by the wisdom of path as identified in the Abhisamayālanākāra when demonstrating the nature of the wisdom of path. This is incorrect. The virtuous roots associated with compassion and prayer as demonstrated in the Abhisamayālanākāra are explicated from the viewpoint of liberative techniques as part of the wisdom of path because here it has nothing to do with the question of whether these are to be eliminated by the wisdom of path or not. The Abhisamayālanākāra, at this point, demonstrates [that the wisdom of path of] bodhisattvas transcends in terms of their entities, [the wisdom of] śrāvakas which takes addictions as the chief [obscuration] to be eliminated.

847 lam shes.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.2. Refuting Those [Virtuous Roots]

Being Addictions as Defined

In this regard, bodhisattvas join themselves to the three worlds out of their own volition by their art of liberative techniques and the cultivation of the power of virtuous roots. Therefore, these are called "the addictions associated with virtuous roots." [These are called so] inasmuch as these cause bodhisattvas to join themselves to the three worlds, but not because of [actual] addictions on the mind.

[The noble bodhisattvas] have mastery over taking bodies in accordance with their wishes instead of taking rebirth by the force of addictions against their wishes. Thus, how can the addictions be the causes of taking rebirth for them?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.3. The Necessity of Displaying Birth, etc., in Three Worlds

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.1.1.2.3.1.Simile

Sāgaramati, suppose there were an only son of some merchant or householder. Suppose he were beloved, handsome, cherished, and attractive. Suppose this boy, being a child, would fall into a filthy pit while playing. The mother and relatives of this boy would see him fall into the filthy pit. Upon seeing this they would cry, distressed and would scream. They could not, however, take the boy out by entering into the pit. Then the boy's father would come to that place, and would see his only son fallen in the filthy pit. Upon seeing this and complying with the fervent wish to pull out his only son, he would jump into the filthy pit in a hurry without any feeling of disgust, and would take out his only son.
Sāgaramati, this analogy is made in order to understand a special meaning. What meaning is suggested by this analogy? Sāgaramati, "filthy pit" is a synonym of three worlds. "Only son" is a synonym of living beings for bodhisattvas have a notion of the only son towards all living beings. "Mother and relatives" is a synonym of those people who belong to the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddha-yāna since they, having seen living beings fallen into saṃsāra, are distressed and cry out, but have no ability to rescue them. "Great merchant or householder" is a synonym of bodhisattvas who are pure, undefiled, of undefiled mind, have directly realized attained the uncompounded Dharma, but still take rebirths in three worlds out of their own violation for the sake of living being's development.

Although noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas frequently have great compassion towards all beings in saṃsāra, thinking "may all beings be free of sufferings," just as a compassionate mother, having seen her only son fallen into a filthy pit, would do, they would not actually take responsibilities by thinking "I shall make this happen." Therefore, they are inferior to Mahāyāna [bodhisattvas]. In order to demonstrate that great compassion is distinguished in terms of its function of realizing living being's aims, the sūtra states as follows:

Sāgaramati, such is the great compassion of bodhisattvas that, being thoroughly free from all rebirths by the force of karma and addictions, they still take rebirths in worldly existence. Embraced by the art of liberative techniques and wisdom, they are never harmed by defilements; and, in order to liberate living beings from all the bondage of addictions, they teach the Dharma.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.1.2. Summarized Meaning of the Scripture

By this scriptural passage, [both] the pure and impure state is demonstrated in a sense that powerful bodhisattvas engage with rebirths out of their own violation for the sake of others, by the powers of their virtuous roots and compassion, but, at the same time, they are not defiled owing to the powers of their art of liberative techniques and wisdom.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2. Detailed Exposition of the Reason of Not Taking Rebirth by the Force of Karma and Addictions

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1. Prelude

In this regard, when bodhisattvas have obtained the direct correct perception of this naturally pure Element of the Tathāgata as of non-production and non-origination, then they automatically become such bodhisattvas who do not take rebirth by the force of karma and addictions. This point should be understood in detail according to the sūtra as follows:

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2. Scriptural Reference

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1. Quoting Scripture

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1. The Way of Perceiving the Actuality

Sāgaramati, perceive that things are of no real essence of intrinsic identifiability - the objective selflessness - and there is no creator of retribution
which has intrinsic identifiability, no owner, no living being, no life, no person, and no self - the subjective selflessness. Indeed, these things are established according to [the bodhisattva's] wish for they, having directly realized selflessness, have power to transform objects. Thus, do not think or imagine!

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2. The Cause of Taking Rebirth

While Perceiving the Actuality

Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas who believe this unchangeable noumenon (dharma) never cultivate the feeling of resistance towards any thing. They will be possessed of the pure intuitive perception that there is nothing which causes benefit or harm. Thus, they know correctly the noumenon of things and thus they will never cast off the armor of great compassion.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3. Proof

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.1. Simile

Sāgaramati, suppose there were an invaluable vaidūrya stone, well purified, well cleaned and stainless. Suppose it would be left in mud and would remain there for a thousand years. Then, this stone would be taken out from mud and would be cleaned by wash and purification. As cleaned well, however, it would never abandon its nature of jewel, pure and stainless.
Purification and cleansing, etc., have been explicated as above [in the section of the Dhāranirāja-sūtra].

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.2. Interpret

In the same way, Sāgaramati, bodhisattvas know the minds of living beings as naturally luminous. But they also perceive that the same mind is defiled by the coincidental addictions.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.3. Summarized Meanings of Purity and Impurity

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.3.1. Summarized Meaning of Purity

Then the bodhisattva think as follows: These addictions would never penetrate into the naturally luminous mind of living beings. Being incidental, these addictions are the production of incorrect imaginations. We can teach these living beings the Dharma in order to heal their addictions. Thus, they never have their minds discouraged. Instead, they cultivate the spirit of engaging with living beings many times. Again, they think as follows: These addictions have no power and strength. These are powerless, weak, and have no real support at all. These addictions are [produced] by incorrect imaginations. We will never feel angry with addictions if we investigate them with correct and rational mentation. We shall never connect ourselves with addictions so we shall investigate them in detail. We would do better not to connect with addictions. It is not good to connect with addictions. If we connected ourselves with addictions, how could I teach the Dharma to living beings who are bound by the bondages of addictions in order to eliminate these bondages of addictions? In any case, we shall never connect ourselves with addictions, and then we shall teach the Dharma to living beings in order to eliminate their bondages of addictions.
[This passage demonstrates the bodhisattva's] distinguished wisdom that discerns addictions. Having realized that the minds of living beings are naturally luminous and addictions are coincidental, bodhisattvas commit themselves to destroying living being's addictions and endeavor to act, based upon this commitment. They have also realized that if they themselves were under the control of addictions, they would be unable to perfect the welfare of living beings. And they teach the Dharma to living beings in order to eliminate their addictions.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.3.2. Summarized Meaning of Impurity

On the other hand, we shall connect ourselves with those addictions associated with virtuous roots which cause samsāra to be connected, in order to develop living beings.

The causes of creating the mind-made bodies are the ground of instinct for misknowledge and uncontaminated karma, as explicated above. Although those bodies are created out of compassion and prayer in the same manner, the bodies discussed here are the ones that can be directly perceived by validating cognition of other naïve people such as the body of a cakravartin, the body of a šakra, etc.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2. Exposition of the Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1. Actual Exposition
Here, the expression "samsāra" is accepted as the threefold mind-made body which is the reflection of the three worlds within the uncontaminated element. It is samsāra because it is compounded by uncontaminated virtuous roots. At the same time, it is nirvāṇa because it is uncompounded by contaminated karma and addictions.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. Scriptural Reference

With regard to this point, the sūtra states:

Therefore, Lord, there is samsāra, compounded as well as uncompounded. There is nirvāṇa, compounded as well as uncompounded.

Nirvāṇa means "transcending the sorrow of addictions." Thus, [those bodhisattvas] transmigrate in samsāra by the force of the class of cognitive obscurations. The meaning of the scripture is given as follows: Being possessed with all-engagements of subtle reification of the sign\textsuperscript{848} arisen from the mind that is a mixture of compounded and uncompounded, this state is called the "[both] pure and impure state."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.3.1. General Statement

\textsuperscript{848} mtshan ma.
This state is chiefly established for the Confronting\textsuperscript{849} Stage of the bodhisattva because, \[in this stage\], bodhisattvas, proceeding to the attainment of knowledge of the termination of defilement,\textsuperscript{850} directly knowing the elimination of addictions, through their meditations of transcendence of unobstructed wisdom and great compassion, still do not actualize that attainment in order to protect all living beings. That is to say, although bodhisattvas have attained the termination of defilements by the power of wisdom, they do not actualize that attainment, due to [their] great compassion. [This thought,] not actualizing that attainment, is not posited as the chief attainment [for the noble bodhisattvas] until they have obtained the Sixth Stage, despite the fact that they have obtained the liberation from samsāra by the force of karma and addictions through wisdom since the First Stage. This indicates that the perfection of the wisdom transcendence depends upon the perfection of the meditation transcendence in the Fifth Stage. The meaning of the sameness between samsāra and nirvāṇa is directly realized by the power of the wisdom transcendence in the Sixth Stage; however, it is not actualized by the power of compassion. This thought [of not actualizing] is [posited as] the chief attainment of the Sixth Stage.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.3.2. Scriptural Reference

With reference to this knowledge of the termination of defilement, there is a simile of a man \[who has just arrived in a city\] in the [Ratnacūḍā-] sūtra.

Suppose there were a huge city millions yojana away and difficult to reach, full of dangers, and no food on the way. However, all kinds of suffering would cease to exist as

\textsuperscript{849} Abhimukhā, mgon par gyur pa.

\textsuperscript{850} āsarvakṣayājñāna, zag pa zad pa'i mgon par shes pa.
soon as one had arrived there. Having heard of the qualities of this city, a man who had
an attractive, beautiful, charming son ignored all difficulties with strength and endeavor
and traveled long distance to the city. While one foot stepped on the doorstep and the
other remained outside the door, he remembered called his son and thought, "Ah! I shall
see the city in the future, after my son is brought here." Therefore, he did not enter, but
returned home to bring his son back to the city.851

Thus, worthy son, bodhisattvas cause the five superknowledges to be cultivated
through the transcendental practices of meditation and wisdom on the basis of great effort,
great exertion and high resolve. Having the mind purified by concentration and the
superknowledges, they confront with termination of defilement. Having the mind purified
by intuition of the termination of defilement through the cultivation of the spirit of great
compassion in order to protect all living beings, again, they confront the termination of
defilement when they have produced unobstructed wisdom in the Sixth Stage. Thus,
bodhisattvas who are in the "confronting" stage of the bodhisattva obtain the power to
actualize the termination of defilements, so their state is explained as "pure."

The "termination of defilement" refers to the attainment of the cessation equipoise852
by which an adept is able to remain in direct equipoise of the actuality, the limit of reality,
as long as he wishes. For a person who is definitely [endowed with] the spiritual genetic
potential of Mahāyāna, he will not obtain the cessation equipoise until the Sixth Stage, in
which the transcendencies of meditation and wisdom have been perfected. In its aftermath
[meditation], while the truth-habit occasionally manifests, but not much, most
appearances of knowable things in their multiplicity arise as the reflected images in the

851 This passage seems to be a paraphrase of the Ratnacūḍā-sūtra made by rGyal-tshab.
852 'gog pa'snyoms 'cung.
All appearances of knowable things in their multiplicity invariably arise as the reflected images in the mirror since the attainment of the practice of sameness between samsāra and nirvāṇa in the Eighth Stage, unlike in the slightest our [novice's] situation in which the perception of truth appearance arises together with the [conviction] of emptiness of true existence.

The meaning of this sūtra is explicated as follows: bodhisattvas at the Sixth Stage having such a nature wish to protect living beings who go astray and remain in samsāra by the force of two kinds of self-habit. With their great compassion, bodhisattvas proclaim: "I shall lead the others to this correct realization." While familiarizing themselves with the techniques for the bliss of peace after the attainment of pacification of all-pervasive compounded suffering, bodhisattvas do not taste it. When looking at living beings who are confronting with samsāra, bodhisattvas are confronting with nirvāṇa, by contrast. In order to perfect aids to the unexcelled enlightenment, they return from the places of meditation where they have obtained cessation equipoise and voluntarily take rebirths in desire-world. Wishing to work for the sake of living beings as quickly as possible, they have obtained the power for manifesting all kinds of bodies of naïve people by taking various rebirths [even] in the form of animals. From this point, their state is explained as "impure." The purity that is demonstrated from the viewpoint that bodhisattvas are unaffected by the faults of ordinary beings in samsāra is explained as "impurity" in comparison with the Buddha. The impurity that is demonstrated from the viewpoint that bodhisattvas take rebirth in samsāra is explained as "purity" in comparison with ordinary being.
There is another meaning of the verse [I.66], which is like the root [verse] of what are explained above, as follows:

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.2.2.1.1. The Excellences of Self-Welfare

The first nine verses are the exposition of the excellences of purity and the tenth is the exposition of the excellences of impurity in comparison with the Buddha.

Those addicted, who are blinded by misknowledge, perceive the Buddha’s child who has directly realized this unchangeable noumenon at the first time by cultivating the transcendent spirit, thereby are liberated from birth and death by the force of karma and addictions, the disadvantages of samsāra, as though they were born, sick, dying, and so on, in the same way themselves. But in reality, bodhisattvas are doing so out of compassion and prayer. This is really wonderful! Moreover, this verse demonstrates the distinguished excellence of great compassion and explicates [this state] to be impure in comparison with the Buddha.
Having obtained the experiential object of noble beings, the absolute elimination of sufferings including birth, death, etc., those at the First Stage are motivated by compassion and show themselves taking rebirth, etc., within the experiential object of the naive; thus, the techniques and compassion of these friends for beings are truly excellent.

Though those bodhisattvas at the second stage up to the Seventh Stage have transcended all worlds of ordinary beings, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, they do not [exist] apart from the way of the world, such as taking rebirth, and so forth. They remain and act within the world for the world, without being affected by worldly defilements. Otherwise, they would be unable to benefit others because they have fallen under addiction's sway and were suppressed by all kinds of suffering.

Just as a lotus born in water is not affected by water; similarly, though who have been born in the world and have engaged in the deeds are never affected by worldly things. Therefore, they are liberated from birth and death by the force of karma and addictions, and take rebirth according to their wishes.
In order to accomplish their deeds of benefiting living beings, the intelligence of the bodhisattvas at the Eighth Stage, who have obtained non-regression\(^{853}\) in all ways, is like a perpetually burning fire – [which symbolizes] the perfection of the welfare with concern for others. At the same time, they are always immersed in the meditation on peace that is free from suffering by the elimination of addictions and exertion because they have obtained power over non-conceptual intuition. Although they are able to actualize nirvāṇa that pacifies all-pervasive suffering, they [do not make it happen but] have obtained the stage of non-regression in all ways. They have effectively destroyed any chance of producing the thought that seeks liberation out of exclusive self-interest.

The mode of appearance of knowable objects in their multiplicity after the attainment of yoga of sameness between samsāra and nirvāṇa is explicated, as above. As to the constant meditation on peace, it does not refer to uninterrupted homogeneous equipoise, because no one other than the Buddha can directly perceive all things and teach the Dharma to living beings, while remaining equipoise in actuality. Therefore, it indicates that [bodhisattvas at this stage] enter into equipoise in actuality without hard effort, due to the pacification of obvious endeavors. All activities in the aftermath are established with the essence of the equipoise that directly realizes actuality. It is intended by implication that [bodhisattvas at this stage] are possessed of the excellences such as the immediate attainment of the Ninth Stage, the Tenth Stage, etc.

\(^{853}\) avaivartika, phyir mi ldog.
Because of the power of [their previous prayers,], the prayer that "may I benefit living beings," and being free from obvious endeavors and all constructive thoughts that habitually insist on truth regarding things, bodhisattvas who are separated from enlightenment by one birth do not make any great effort to motivate themselves to teach, etc. Instead, they engage in spontaneous deeds in order to develop living beings. Although addictive obscurations, the truth-habit regarding things, has been eliminated from the Eighth Stage onward, the obvious endeavors such as the motivation of teaching Dharma has been pacified in this stage. [Bodhisattvas at this stage] engage in other-welfare with effortless grace.

Those bodhisattvas know precisely whatever technique educates disciples and whatever content of teaching, physical form, conduct, and behavior of coming, going, etc., would be most appropriate for disciples. [As to conduct,] e.g., they show the way of taking pleasure in [sexual] desires in order to educate people who have [sexual] attachment.
In this way, those bodhisattvas of intelligence who are unobstructed by adverse conditions properly engage themselves, depending upon those causes, in benefiting beings as limitless as the sky, continually and spontaneously, with effortless grace.

During the aftermath of their meditation, bodhisattvas who are in the last worldly existence, become equal to the Tathāgata on account of the way they benefit living beings. Through their deeds of teaching Dharma, etc., they properly and undeceivingly take action in the world to liberate living beings. The word "aftermath" indicates that [bodhisattvas at this stage] become equal to the Buddha in terms of the number of living beings to whom they teach the Dharma in the aftermath, their performance of deeds that pervades all beings, etc. However, they are not equal to the Buddha in all aspects, because they, unlike the perfectly enlightened the Buddha, cannot teach the Dharma to living beings, etc., while remaining in the actuality of direct equipoise. Furthermore, they must eliminate the defilement that habitually insists on the discrepancy in terms of their entities as two realities. No one other than the Buddha directly perceives knowable objects in their multiplicity by the same mind that direct perceive knowable objects as they are. The equipoise and its aftermath are thus different in terms of their entities for anyone who has not yet become perfectly enlightened.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.2.2.2.2. The Distinction of Impurity

Despite the fact that the number of disciples to whom Dharma is taught by the ultimate bodhisattvas and the perfectly enlightened Buddha is the same, etc., it should be known that [the ultimate bodhisattvas and the perfectly enlightened Buddha] are not the same in all aspects, for there is a great difference between these two, as there is between the atom and the earth, or between [water] in a bull's hoof-print and in the ocean. Thus, the former verse [v.77] demonstrates the sameness of the number of beings to be helped, etc., in the aftermath, and the latter demonstrates the difference in general terms such as the way of performing deeds, etc. There are differences in the conditions: regarding whether or not all efforts in the motivations of the three doors are pacified, and regarding they are able or unable to in perform deeds of teaching the Dharma, etc., while remaining in the actuality of equipoise. It is unacceptable to make the distinction that these two are equal in terms of benefiting naïve people, but are not in terms of helping noble ones. It should be known that there is difference between these two, like there is between [water] in a bull's hoof-print and [water] in the ocean even in the case of placing an ordinary being in the liberation of nirvāṇa.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.2.3. The Commentary
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.2.3.1. General Statement

Of these ten verses taken respectively, [the first] nine verses refer to the "purity" [of the noble bodhisattvas] in comparison to the absolute defilement of naïve people below the Joyous\textsuperscript{854} Stage of the bodhisattva; the tenth verse refers to the "impurity" [of the noble bodhisattvas] in comparison to the supreme purity of the Buddha above the Cloud

\textsuperscript{854} Pramuditya, rab tu dga' ba.
of Dharma Stage. In brief, there is explained the purity and impurity of the four kinds of the bodhisattva in the ten stages of bodhisattva. The four kinds of bodhisattvas are as follows: (1) bodhisattvas who have cultivated the spirit for the first time; (2) bodhisattvas who have engaged with deeds; (3) bodhisattvas who have reached the stage of non-regression; and (4) bodhisattvas who are separated from enlightenment by one birth.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.2.3.2.2.3.2. Specific Expositions

There are five [expositions] in number. (1) On the excellences of bodhisattvas who have cultivated the spirit for the first time: the first and second verses demonstrate the characteristics of pure excellences of bodhisattvas in the first Joyous Stage. These bodhisattvas have perceived the transcendental noumenon which has never been perceived before since beginningless time. These two verses explicitly demonstrate the excellence of the purity by [stating] the realization of "all-pervadingness" of the ultimate element in the First Stage. The aspect of impurity is thus implicit in the verses. (2) On the excellences of bodhisattvas who have engaged with deeds: the third and the fourth verses demonstrate the characteristics of the pure excellences of bodhisattvas in the Immaculate Stage up to the Far-reaching Stage because these bodhisattvas perform unblemished deeds and have obtained the power that eliminates the resistance of the six transcendences, such as the entanglement of stinginess, immorality, etc. respectively.

(3) On the excellences of bodhisattvas who have reached the Stage of Non-regression: the fifth verse demonstrates the characteristics of pure excellences of bodhisattvas in the Immovable Stage because these bodhisattvas constantly remain in the meditation pertaining to the attainment of great enlightenment, which is the practice of

855 Dharmameghâ, chos kyi sprin.
the sameness between samsāra and nirvāṇa, the cause of the Truth Body. (4) On the excellences of bodhisattvas who are separated from enlightenment by one birth: the sixth, seventh and eighth verses demonstrate the characteristics of pure excellences of bodhisattvas in the Could of Dharma Stage, because these bodhisattvas have perfected all the techniques for benefiting themselves and others, have obtained the power to develop living beings, and because this is their last birth prior to the attainment of the stage of the Buddha, the supreme unexcelled perfect enlightenment. (5) On the excellences of ultimate bodhisattvas: the ninth and tenth verses demonstrate the sameness as well as the difference between bodhisattvas who have achieved perfection and the Buddha in terms of the excellences of benefiting themselves and others as explicated above.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.3. Unchangeability in the Absolute Pure State

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.1. Prelude

Now there comes one verse with respect to the unchangeability in the absolute pure state.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.2. Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.2.1. Statement

This is a root-like verse, as explained above. This the Truth Body of the buddhas in the absolute pure state is eternal because this state of the ultimate attainment is uncompounded and its nature is unchangeable, unlike mind-made body which is produced by the ground of the instinct for misknowledge and uncontaminated karma because the previous one has to be abandoned in order to obtain a new one. This is,
because the Truth Body is naturally endowed with inexhaustible ultimate qualities. It is the undeceiving ultimate refuge of beings because the Truth Body is limitless in the future, is not only naturally pure but also is purified from all coincidental defilements. This statement shows the meaning of enduringness, for [the Truth Body] would not be the ultimate refuge if it were previously purified from coincidental defilements but later not purified. Its nature is always free of the two extremes of reification and repudiation because the Truth Body is non-conceptual regarding reality because of the extermination of all errors. This statement shows the meaning of natural peace and the peace of [the purification from] all coincidental defilements. It also has an indestructible character because its nature is not compounded by both contaminated and uncreated karma. This statement shows the meaning of unchangeability.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.3.2.2.2. Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.3.2.2.1. Question

What is demonstrated by this verse?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.3.2.2.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.3.2.2.2.1. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.3.2.2.2.1.1. The Implicit Statement on the Meaning of Negation

[The Truth Body] has no birth, including not only the rebirth by the force of addictions but also taking the mind-made body. It has no death that includes not only the addictive one but also the one of inconceivable transformation. [It is] unharmed by not
only the forces of karma and addictions but also the non-addictive instincts for misknowledge. It has no aging that includes not only the one caused by the forces of addictions and contaminated karma but also the one caused by uncontaminated karma that makes transmutation. Eternity, etc., is by implication a negation excluding its resistance.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.2.2.2.1.2. On the Meaning of Determination

...because this Truth Body of the buddhas is eternal, enduring, peace and unchanging.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.2.2.2.1.3. Detailed Exposition of the Meaning of Negation

This Truth Body of the buddhas does not have birth even with a mind-made body because it is eternal. In this regard, the meaning of eternity is explicated in connection with its negatee that is birth by mind-made body. This Truth Body does not have an inconceivable death of transformation because it is enduring. This the Truth Body is unharmed by the diseases of the subtle instincts for misknowledge because it is peace.

The meanings of enduringness and peace are explicated in connection with the recognition of their negatees as well. They have no aging conditioned by uncontaminated karma because they are unchanged by karma. The meaning of eternity, etc., is explicated in this way. [The Truth Body] is not explained as a permanent entity that is positively established and independent.
While abiding on the stage of the Buddha that is absolutely immaculate, naturally pure, luminous and intrinsic, the Element of the Tathāgata has been purified from all coincidental defilements and thus has no birth even in the form of the mind-made body with regard to its inception because it is eternal. [The Element] has no repeated death even in the manner of inconceivable transformation with regard to its end because it is enduring. The body and mind [of the buddhas] are unharmed by the sickness of producing the ground of instinct for misknowledge, with regard to both its beginning and end, and with regard to its continuum, because it is peace. This the Truth Body has no aging: through the development of the fruition of uncontaminated karma, and through the lack of the factors for birth and death that are included in both categories of addictive obscurations and cognitive obscurations. Thus, [the Element] is unaffected because it is unchanging.

The meanings of eternity, enduringness, peace, and unchangeability are to be known with reference to the uncompounded element and the Tathāgata's the Truth Body by each pair of terms. How? The meaning of eternity, "unchangeable," is a term and, "endowed with inexhaustible qualities" is an explanation. Likewise, "refuge of beings" and "limitless in the future" are respectively the term and explanation for the meaning of
enduringness. "Always free of the two [extremes]" and "non-conceptual" are respectively the term and explanation for the meaning of peace. "Indestructible character" and "uncreated nature" are respectively the term and explanation for the meaning of unchangeability. The Meaning of Eternity, and so on, should be understood according to [Anūnatvāpiṇṇatvanirdeśaparīvatra-] sūtra that will be explicated below.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.2.3.1.2. The Commentary

The distinction of each pair: term and the explanation of the meaning of each term - eternity, enduringness, peace and unchangeability respectively - with respect to the uncompounded element, should be understood according to the scripture.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.2.3.2. Application of Exposition to Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2 2.3.2.3.2.1. The Śāstra

[The unchangeable nature of the Truth Body is the meaning of eternity because the Truth Body is endowed with inexhaustible, infinite qualities of the Buddha. The former part [of this statement] is the term and the latter part is the explanation for the meaning of eternity. Its nature of being an undeceiving refuge at any time is the meaning of enduringness because it exists as far as the farthest limit in the future. The former part [this statement] is the term and the latter part is the explanation for the meaning of enduringness. Being free of the two [extremes] and of all coincidental instincts is the meaning of peace because it is of non-conceptual nature. The former part is the term and the latter part is the explanation for the meaning of peace. Being free of disintegration by death is the meaning of unchangeability because it has the quality of being unaltered by
either contaminated karma or uncontaminated karma. The former part is the term and the
latter part is the explanation for the meaning of unchangeability.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.3.2 2.3.2.3.2.2. Application to Scripture

This unchangeable Truth Body, Śāriputra, is eternal because of its
inexhaustible characteristic. This refuge Truth Body, Śāriputra, is enduring because
it exists as far as the farthest limit. This non-dual Truth Body, Śāriputra, is peace
because of its non-conceptual nature. This indestructible Truth Body, Śāriputra, is
unchanging because it has the characteristic of being unaltered.

The meaning of this passage is summarized as follows: this unchangeable Truth
Body is eternal because it is free of either the twelve links of dependent origination that is
included in addictive obscurations, or the twelve links that is included in cognitive
obscurations; that is to say in brief it has no birth of a mind-made body in actuality. It is
enduring because it is free of the death of the inconceivable transformation. It is peace
because it has eliminated the instincts for misknowledge. It is unchanging because it is
unaltered by uncontaminated karma.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4. Establishing Possession of the Indivisible Excellences of
Liberation at the Time of Being Absolute Pure

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.1. Prelude
There is one verse with reference to this meaning of "the indivisible excellences of intuition and elimination" in connection with this pure state of Buddha-essence that has reached the ultimate point of being absolute pure and free of coincidental defilements without exception.

### 3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2. Exposition

#### 3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.1. Brief Statement

Buddhahood possesses all kinds of excellences, including wisdom, intuition, and the liberation of the Śrāvakayāna, Pratyekabuddhayāna, and Mahāyāna, in an indivisible manner.

[Buddhahood] is the Truth Body that is primordially pure at the ultimate point. It is the Tathāgata possessed of the excellence of ultimate realization of reality. It is the Holy Truth of Cessation included in ultimate reality; it is the ultimate elimination of all coincidental defilements in addition to natural purity. It is non-abiding nirvāṇa. Like the sun and its rays, excellences are indivisible. Therefore, it should be known there is no non-abiding nirvāṇa apart from buddhahood.

These four excellences indicate that they are possessed by the Truth Body in an indivisible manner in terms of being its natural purity, the intuition that is the direct realization of that [purity], the elimination of all coincidental defilements, and the attainment through antidotes to those [defilements], respectively. This statement does not indicate that arhats and pratyekabuddhas lack authentic nirvāṇa. Instead, it is thus taught in order to establish the ultimate unique vehicle because no one other than the Buddha
has the ultimate excellences of liberation, intuition, and wisdom that are not required of further improvement.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.2. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1. The Reasoning about the Indivisibility of the Ultimate Excellences

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.1. Question

In this regard, what is demonstrated by the former half of this verse?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.1. Brief Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.1.1. The Śāstra

It should be known, in brief, that there are four synonyms for the Truth Body, the Tathāgata and so on, because the meaning of this is the immaculate element, which is the natural purity free of all coincidental defilements, and is classified into four aspects to be explained below. This classification does not make a division of the excellences between ultimate and non-ultimate.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.1.2. The Commentary

In short, Buddha-essence as the immaculate element has four synonyms in accordance with these four meanings.
Then which are the four meanings indicated by those four synonyms above?

The ultimate purity [of Buddha-essence] is called "the Truth Body" because the Element, which is distinguished by its natural purity within the continua of living being, makes it possible that all the Buddha qualities can be developed, thereby being indivisible from them. It is called "Tathāgata" because of the attainment of ultimate realization of its genetic potential, reality. It is called "holy truth" because the ultimate reality, which is neither false nor deceptive, has been purified from all defilements. And it is called "non-abiding nirvāṇa" because of being natural peace from primordial time [in the form of] the ultimate the elimination obtained by antidotes.

With reference to [the first meaning that is the Buddha-essence, it is] indivisible from the Buddha qualities. The following statement from the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra states:

Lord, the Buddha-essence is not empty because it is possessed of the Buddha qualities that are indivisible, inseparable, and inconceivable, and are far greater in number than the sands of the Gaṅgā.
[This statement demonstrates that] Buddha-essence primordially has inseparable
[qualities where] all antidotes can be produced [on the basis of Buddha-essence] and all
coincidental defilements can be separated from [Buddha-essence].

With reference to [the second meaning that] its spiritual gene has obtained the
inconceivable form in terms of nature, the [Śaḍāyatana-] sūtra states as follows:

This naturally acquired [spiritual gene], coming down since beginningless time, is
like the distinction of the six sense-media.

The distinction of the six sense-media, such as the eyes, refers to truthlessness [of the six-
media].

With reference to [the third meaning of] being neither false nor deceptive, the
scripture\textsuperscript{856} states as follows:

In this regard, the ultimate reality is nirvāṇa that is not deceptive in terms of
their entities. For what reason? Because this spiritual genetic potential is eternal by
nature being peace.

With reference to [the fourth meaning that] it is always peace, the
[Jñāṇālokaḷaṅkāra-] sūtra states as follows:

\textsuperscript{856} Source unidentified.
Being primordially in nirvāṇa, the Tathāgata, Arhat, the perfectly enlightened ones are neither of origination nor cessation.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2. Application of Statement to Exposition

For these four meanings, there are four synonyms, namely: (1) the Truth Body; (2) the Tathāgata; (3) ultimate reality, and (4) nirvāṇa respectively. For what reason? The scriptures state as follows:

Śāriputra, the so-called the "Buddha-essence" is a synonym of the Truth Body. Lord, the Tathāgata and the Truth Body are not different from each other. Lord, the Truth Body is nothing but the Tathāgata. The so-called "cessation of sufferings," Lord, indicates the Truth Body of the Tathāgata who is endowed with such excellences. The so-called "ultimate element of nirvāṇa," Lord, is a synonym of the Truth Body of the Tathāgata.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.2. The Established Meaning and the Nature of Indivisibility

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.1. Question

Now, what is demonstrated by the latter half of the verse?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.2.1. The Śāstra

Being possessed of the excellence of realizing perfect enlightenment regarding all kinds of things, and the excellence of eliminating defilements along with their instincts in
an indivisible manner, the perfect Buddha and non-abiding nirvāṇa should be known as non-duality in the ultimate sense. More specifically, the totally enlightened the Buddha, the elimination of defilements along with their instincts, and nirvāṇa are [the meanings of] non-duality in the ultimate sense.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.2.2. The Commentary

What is the reason? These four synonyms of the uncontaminated element converge into a single meaning, the Element of the Tathāgata. Therefore, these four are identical in meaning. Hence, in terms of the Dharma of non-duality, the "Buddha" and "nirvāṇa" should be viewed as "indivisible" or "inseparable;" that is to say, they are "non-dual." The former is called this because of his perfect enlightenment regarding all kinds of things; and the latter is called this because of the elimination of defilements along with the instincts. These take place simultaneously with the perfect enlightenment in the immaculate element.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3. The Simile

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1. The Nature of Indivisibility of Excellences

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.1. The Śāstra

The ultimate liberation has the characteristic of being indivisible from the excellences. They are of all kinds with none without exclusion, and of immeasurable varieties: [they are called] extensive excellence with inconceivable numbers and powers; profound excellence with immaculate elimination which is free of defilements and their
instincts. The Tathāgata is such liberation. In light of this, the explanation on ultimate liberation in the continua of śrāvaka arhats and pratyekabuddha arhats should be known as intentional.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.1.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.1.2.1. The Explanation on Three Different Kinds of Ultimate Liberation Being Intentional

This point is made clear in the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra in connection to the nirvāṇa of arhats and pratyekabuddhas:

Lord, this so called "nirvāṇa" is a technique used by the buddhas.

This scriptural passage demonstrates that this nirvāṇa, which is the mere pacification of sufferings in saṃsāra and is stated as the ultimate objective for some disciples who are temporally definite in having the spiritual genetic potential for the Śrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna, is a technique used by perfectly enlightened ones. [These perfectly enlightened ones] are the supreme lords of Dharma who prevent their [disciples'] regression from perfect enlightenment, just as an illusory city in the forest is created by a skillful captain for exhausted travelers headed for the ocean [in the middle of] their long journey.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.1.2.2. The Liberation Indivisible from Four Excellences Being Solely buddhahood
[On the other hand,] the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra states as follows:

Lord, the Tathāgata, Arhat, the perfectly enlightened ones are possessed of the immeasurable, inconceivable, and ultimate pure excellences because of their attainment of nirvāṇa.

This scriptural passage demonstrates that, having obtained nirvāṇa which is characterized as indivisible from the accomplishment of the four kinds of excellence, the perfectly enlightened ones are identified as being this nirvāṇa. Therefore, as both the Buddha and nirvāṇa are possessed of an inseparable quality, no one can obtain nirvāṇa without becoming a Buddha. This statement demonstrates that the ultimate nirvāṇa must be identical to the one indivisible from the four excellences. Thus, it indicates that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not possess the ultimate nirvāṇa. It does not indicate that they do not have the mediocre one.

Objection: It is unnecessary to clear the doubts about whether or not śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have the ultimate nirvāṇa.

Answer: Although it is unnecessary to establish such a point for those who are certain of the ultimate unique vehicle or those who are definite in having the spiritual genetic potential for Mahāyāna, such a point is established for the purpose of introducing the Mahāyāna to some people who are not definite in having the spiritual genetic potential for the Śrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna, and for the purpose of guiding śrāvaka arhats and pratyekabuddha arhats who remain in equipoise in the element of peace to Mahāyāna by the exhortation of the buddhas in the form of emitting light.
Moreover, it should be known that it is uncertain what is going to happen when hearing
the mere words "ultimate unique vehicle."

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2. The Simile of Painters

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.1. Prelude

The buddhas are possessed of all excellences because the emptiness which is
endowed with every supreme form\textsuperscript{857} has been established within the immaculate element.

This statement demonstrates that the emptiness endowed with every supreme form is
the noumenon, free from all defilements, and is the wisdom which directly realizes the
emptiness of all kinds of elimination and realization without exception. It does not
indicate that ultimate reality is empty of everything relative because, if it were true, there
would be no excellences at all.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.2.3.1.2.2. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.2.1. The Simile

Since its ultimate perfection accomplishes the Buddha excellences, the techniques
for the accomplishment of the Buddha's four kinds of excellence is the wisdom included
in the path of learning that realizes emptiness with the complete excellences such as
generosity, etc. How is this so? Compare this to a group of painters who are specialized
in drawing different parts [of the body] such as the head, etc. As an example, whichever
part one [painter] knows, such as the head, the others who are specialized in drawing
hands, etc., can not understand.

\textsuperscript{857} sarvākāravapretaśānyādī, rnam pa thams cad kyi mchog dang idan pa'i stong pa.
The ruling king [of the painters] gives them a canvas, with the following order: "You all must paint my full-length portrait on this!" Having received the command, these painters start their own work of painting. However, one of them engaged in this work leaves for a foreign land.

Because of his absence, through having going to another land, this full-length portrait with its all parts would remain unfinished. This is the simile.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.3.1.2.2.2. The Import

The emptiness endowed with every supreme form is the noumenon of perfect buddhahood obtained from practices based on the stores of merit and intuition, free of all coincidental defilements. In addition, it refers to the Buddha's intuition that always remains in equipoise on ultimate reality which is adorned with the complete set of liberative techniques such as generosity, etc. When in the path phase, it refers to the meditation that is the integration of mental quiescence and transcendental analysis directly realizing emptiness and is adorned with liberative techniques such as generosity, etc.

The stores of merit and intuition illustrated as being these painters are: generosity, including the thoughts of giving one’s body, enjoyments, and the virtual roots for the welfare of all living beings; morality, which includes the common thought that restrains [one] from the resistance to morality, and the distinct thought that eliminates the mentation for seeking self-liberation only; tolerance, which includes the difficult work of understanding each Dharma, the acceptance of suffering, minimizing chances of anger, etc.; creativity, meditation, wisdom and so on. These are the stages of the path on the
basis of conventional reality and the stages of the path on the basis of the ultimate reality, respectively. The intuition, in the mental continua of the perfectly enlightened ones is the accomplishment of these complete stages; [intuition] realizes emptiness endowed with every supreme form of liberative techniques. It is illustrated as the portrait of the king in the scripture. Furthermore, the [Ratnacūḍā-] sūtra states that the so called "emptiness endowed with every supreme form" is emptiness endowed with [every form of] generosity without exception, with [every form of] morality without exception, and so on.

Therefore, to accept that the ultimate reality adorned with all excellences such as the [ten] powers, etc., exists from beginningless time within the continua of all beings would be no different in the slightest from the position of the heterodox Śaivaism that accepts an eternal, self-originated omniscience. Someone accepts the ultimate reality as an eternal entity and the relative as its transformation. This position cannot be differentiated from the Sāmkhya philosophy which accepts primal nature (prakṛti), an eternal entity, as the nature of the transformed such as form, sound, etc., and as the ultimate reality. So please do not injure the impeccable teaching of the Buddha by proclaiming that these misapprehensions which reify what do not exist, are the intended meaning of the Śrīkālacakra-tantra, the ultimate teaching of the Buddha. The arrangement of the two realities according to the great commentary Vimalaprabhā that all functions are reasonable despite the fact that all things - even as small as an atom - are not established by intrinsic reality, and is in agreement by what the Savior Nāgārjuna explicated, by giving examples of vase and space. [This point] should be known in other texts.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.3.1.2.3. The Extensive and Profound Excellences

In regard to the extensive excellence, even each of these six transcendences, such as generosity, etc., should be known as "immeasurable" in emptiness endowed with every supreme form since it is differentiated into limitless varieties in the object of the Buddha. The profound excellence is "inconceivable" and difficult to realize on account of its number and power.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.3.1.2.3. The Excellences of the Elimination

It is "supremely pure" because of the removal without exception of the instinct of its resistance, such as stinginess, etc.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.3.2. The Reasoning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.3.2.1. The Mode of Accomplishment of Excellences in the Three Pure Stages

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.3.2.1.1. The Attainment of Excellence of the Spontaneous Wisdom of Path at the Eighth Stage

Below the Seventh Stage, the [tolerance of] the non-origination noumenon is obtained through the means of concentration on emptiness endowed with every supreme form; [this] is the intuition of direct realization of the emptiness adorned with infinite liberative techniques such as generosity, etc. Because of this attainment, [bodhisattvas] at the Eighth "Immovable" stage accomplish all excellences of the buddhas in the
immaculate element on the basis of their non-conceptual, faultless, uninterrupted, and spontaneously engaging knowledge of path that directly knows the three paths of śrāvaka, etc.

Here [the text indicates that] the attainment during practice of the sameness between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, spontaneously engages with the causes that conform with the Truth Body. The great Lama Lo-tsha-ba bLo-ldan-shes-rab states on this basis that bodhisattvas will not actualize the path of the śrāvaka until the Eighth Stage in which the knowledge of the path is produced in the manner [that all appearances of knowable things in their multiplicity invariably arise as] reflected images. However, as to the position [held by rNgog-lo] that knowledge and the elimination possessed by the "stream enterer"\(^{858}\) up to the pratyekabuddha are identical to the bodhisattva’s tolerance of the non-origination Dharma, is stated in [Ārya Vimuktiśena’s] Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitopadeśa śāstrābhisaṃayālāṃkāra-vṛttī states as follows:

How is this tolerance explained as the tolerance of Dharma-cognition\(^{859}\) regarding sufferings? This is the tolerance included in the path of śrāvaka to be known but not the one that is the knowing knowledge of the path.

It is explained [in detail] in the section called, "Means of Determining Stages of Path" of the Abhisamayālāṃkāra.

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\(^{858}\) srotipanna, rgyun zhugs.
\(^{859}\) dharmajñānakṣīrt, chos shes pa’i bzod pa.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.4.2.3.1.2.3.2.1.2. The Attainment of Excellence of Upholding All Holy Teachings of the Buddha at the Ninth Stage

Through innumerable ocean-like means of concentration, such as the "space treasure," etc., and incantation of secret mantra, etc., [bodhisattvas] at the ninth "Positively Intelligent" stage accomplish immeasurable excellences on the basis of their knowledge of holding immeasurable qualities of the Buddha without exception.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.4.2.3.1.2.3.2.1.3. The Attainment of Excellence of Realizing All Subtle Secrets at the Tenth Stage

[Bodhisattvas] at the tenth "Cloud of Dharma" stage accomplish inconceivable excellences on the basis of their knowledge of revealing the subtle secret of all the buddhas.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.4.2.3.1.2.3.2.2. The Mode of Accomplishment of Ultimate Excellences

Immediately after [this stage], the supreme pure excellences are accomplished on the basis of knowledge that liberates from the addictive obscurations along with their instincts and the cognitive obscurations because of the attainment of buddhahood. [In other words,] the elimination that extinguishes the two obscurations and their instincts causes the attainment of the prefect, ultimate emptiness endowed with every supreme form.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.3.3. Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Lacking

Those Excellences

As śrāvaka arhats and pratyekabuddhas cannot perceive these four foundations of the intuitions in these stages, the intuitions in these stages are the foundations of the [aforementioned] four kinds of excellence, they are said to be far from the element of nirvāṇa that is characterized as indivisible from the accomplishment of the four kinds of excellence. This statement demonstrates that śrāvakas and pratyeka-buddhas cannot obtain the ultimate nirvāṇa.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2. The Explanation of the Simile

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.1. The Similarity between Simile and Import

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.1.1. The Śāstra

Wisdom is the ultimate realization of the knowable as it is; intuition directly realizes the knowable in its multiplicity, and liberation is included in the elimination that extinguishes all defilements. These are clear in ultimate reality, luminous in their multiplicity of the knowable without exception, and pure in terms of being free from all defilements, respectively. These three factors are inseparable with regard to their entities; therefore they are similar to the indivisibility of the entities of light, rays, and the sun itself.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.3.2.1.2. The Commentary

860 It seems that rGyal-tshab does not agree with rNgog-lo's translation on this point.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.4.2.3.2.1.2.1. General Statement of the Similarity between Simile and Import

Wisdom, intuition, and liberation are the illustrations of the element of nirvāṇa that is characterized as indivisible from the accomplishment of the four kinds of excellence. They are demonstrated to be analogous to the sun in four aspects, namely, by three [respective] aspects, and by one [in general].

Light, rays, and the sun itself are not identical but are the same entity.861

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.4.2.3.2.1.2.2. Specific Explanation

In this regard: (1) The transcendent non-conceptual wisdom in the continuum of the Buddha is analogous to light because it dispels darkness [that hides] the ultimate reality of the knowable object; (2) The omniscient intuition that is obtained subsequently is analogous to the luminosity of the net of rays because it engages with all aspects of knowable things in their entirety; (3) The natural liberation that is the basis of the above two is analogous to the purity of the sun because of being absolutely free from defilements and its being luminous;

The meditative equipoise and aftermath meditation are the same entity in the continua of perfectly enlightened ones. Thus, it should be known that [the Buddha's intuition] perceiving things as they are, perceives things in their multiplicity; and [the Buddha's intuition] perceiving things in their multiplicity, perceives things as they are.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1.2.3. Conclusion

861 ngo bo tha dad med pa rnam pa gcig.
...and (4) As these three are indivisible from the ultimate element in terms of their entities, they are analogous to the three distinctive factors of the sun, i.e. light, etc., which are indivisible [from the sun]; wisdom and so on, represents the nirvāṇa indivisible from the four excellences in terms of these entities being analogous to the sun.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2. Establishing that Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Lacking the Ultimate Liberation and Nirvāṇa

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.1. The Śāstra

The ultimate nirvāṇa must be the collection of excellences in all forms: as innumerable excellences, inconceivability, and as purification from all defilements. Therefore, until perfect buddhahood is obtained, there is no attainment of the ultimate nirvāṇa, just as the sun cannot be seen without its light and rays. In light of this, it should be known that lacking proper understanding of this detailed establishment of the indivisibility of excellences causes the mistake of accepting that śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not reach an authentic nirvāṇa.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.2.1. The Literal Meaning

Possessed of the possibility of origination of pure virtuous qualities as its own nature since beginningless time, this Element is the noumenon that is indivisible from the possibility of origination of all excellences of the buddhas. It would be in direct contradiction to the following statements if [the Element is deemed as] possessed of all excellences in the indivisible manner from the beginning [of time]. Therefore, until the
attainment of the Tathāgata who possesses unobstructed intuitive perception, it is unfeasible to actualize the realization of nirvāṇa that is characterized as the liberation from all obscurations, just as the sun cannot be seen without perceiving its light and rays.

Therefore, the [Śrīmālā-] sūtra states as follows:

Lord, the ultimate realization of nirvāṇa does not exist in an inferior saṃsāra and superior nirvāṇa in terms of taking the mere rebirth in saṃsāra as the negatee. Lord, the realization of nirvāṇa is equal to wisdom. Lord, nirvāṇa is equal to intuition, equal to liberation, and equal to the intuitive perception of liberation. Therefore, Lord, it is said that the element of nirvāṇa is of one taste, of equal taste, that is to say, [it is of one] taste with knowledge and liberation.

This passage demonstrates that the ultimate nirvāṇa must be the collection of the four kinds of excellence in the indivisible manner.

Above, Buddha-essence has been explained through the arrangement of ten points such as nature, etc., likewise the Element is explicated by this arrangement with an emphasis on its natural purity, and the defilements as coincidental by implication. The following text explains [the Element and defilements] in reverse manner. In my opinion,
this [verse] can be regarded as the précis without contradiction, despite the fact that it is also suitable that this explanation is a prelude to the next part.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.1.3.2. The Commentary

Thus, with reference to the existence of the noumenon as being eternal in the way it is analogous to the ultimate limit of the future, the arrangement of this Buddha-essence has been explained by ten points.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2. Proof of the Element Being Obscured by Coincidental Defilements with Nine Similes

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1. Prelude

The minds of living beings are naturally pure. Nevertheless, [this purity] exists under the covering of addictions. The fact that the addictions are coincidental and are unable to penetrate into the nature of the mind should be known by the nine similes. Furthermore, there is no contradiction in taking this section as a brief statement rather than a prelude.

The covering of addictions is essentially unconnected because it is unable to penetrate into the nature of the mind, although it has co-existed since the beginningless time. The naturally pure noumenon likewise existing since the beginningless time, is essentially connected because it penetrates into the nature of the mind. It should be understood by the nine similes in [the Tathāgatagarbha-] sūtra, that Buddha-essence is concealed by the limitless coverings of addictions.  

862 This paragraph is listed as a separate section in currently available Tibetan editions. A proper subtitle might be missing.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2. Explanation

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1. General Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.1. A Definitive Number of Eighteen Similes

*Question:* Why are there exactly two sets of nine similes each for representing the category of addiction and the category of purity?

*Answer:* The reason why there are exactly nine similes used to represent the category of obscuring addictions is because there are exactly nine imports for the nine obscurations, represented by the similes. There are exactly nine obscurations, including (1-3) the seeds of the three poisons; (4) the active, strong forms of these three as one. Or else (1) all three poisons are counted as one in their active forms, and then they are differentiated in terms of being the causal addictions that bring about either (2-3) the two higher worlds or (4) the desire world. [The remaining five] obscurations are those which are (5) based upon the ground of the instinct for misknowledge; (6) eliminated by the Path of Insight; (7) eliminated by the Path of Meditation; (8) based upon the impure stages; and obscuration which are (9) based upon the pure stages.

There is also a reason why there are exactly nine similes used to represent the category of purity, and this is again because there are exactly nine imports represented by the similes. These are three [aspects with respect to Buddha-essence, namely] the Truth Body, reality, and the spiritual genetic potential. The Truth Body is divided into three parts - (1) the Dharma in the form of realization and, among the Dharma in the form of expounding teaching, (2) those scriptures which expound the ultimate reality or (3) those which expound the conventional reality. There are no divisions to (4) reality. The

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863 *riogs pa' chos.*
864 *bstan pa' chos.*
spiritual genetic potential is further divided into two: (5) naturally existing; and (6) developmental. As to these two, the first has the ability to be transformed into (7) the Truth Body; the second has the ability to transformed into (8-9) the two kinds of physical body [-the beatific body and the incarnational body]. The number of imports would be exactly nine through detailed counting. Thus, because there are eighteen different imports to be represented, the similes used to represent them are then exactly eighteen in number.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2. Explaining the Similarity between Similes and Imports

(1) Attachment and a lotus have resembling features because they make us happy immediately after they become active, but later on can cause us to be unhappy.

*Question:* Did you say before that lotus represents attachment in its latent form? Why are you now saying that attachment and a lotus are comparable in terms of their causing us happiness when they are active?

*Answer:* There is no problem. Since attachment makes us happy when it is active, then its latent form can still be represented by the simile given. In addiction, this explanation of similarity should be understood in a broad sense.

(2) Hatred and bees that make us feel ill at ease are comparable. (3) Misknowledge and the husk that acts to obscure us from perceiving the essence within are comparable. These three are established separately because they each have a different ability to produce themselves in a homogeneous outcome over a period of time. (4) These three in their active states, and filth are similar. Both are unbearable to be in. When being active in a strong form, [the three poisons] motivate us to commit bad deeds; and since bad deeds make our lives miserable, they are unbearable just as filth. These three in their
active forms are established as one group of obscurations because they are no different in their ability to produce bad deeds. (5) Instincts for misknowledge and earth are comparable because misknowledge is an obscuration to the attainment of self-arising [intuition] just as earth is to a treasure. (6) Those [obscurations] eliminated by the Path of Insight are comparable to a fruit for they are destroyed immediately after the Path of Insight has originated and the sprout has originated, respectively. (7) Those [obscurations] eliminated by the Path of Meditation are similar to tattered rags because their essence has worn out. (8) Obscurations based upon the Impure Stages are similar to women in that they both are obscurations to self-realization. (9) Obscurations based upon the Pure Stages and being seared slightly with mud are similar in that they both are slightly obscured with something subtle. This is the similarity between similes and imports with respect to obscuration.

Now comes to the explanation of the similarity between similes and imports with respect to what is obscured. (1) The Truth Body and the Buddha are similar in that there is nothing in the world comparable with them. (2) The scriptures that expound ultimate reality are similar to honey in that they give us the single taste of bliss when experienced. (3) The scriptures that expound conventional reality are similar to the essential grain within a husk for they are specifically designed to suit individual needs. (4) Reality is likened to gold because its nature would never turn bad. (5) The naturally existing gene is likened to a treasure because it exists in itself, and is not established with effort. (6) The developmental gene is likened to a cultivated tree because it is established with effort. (7) The Truth Body is likened to a self-arisen image made of precious jewels because it is not a new acquisition bestowed by others and because it is the basis for perfect excellences.
(8) The beatific body is likened to a cakravartin because it enjoys sovereignty over the great Dharma. (9) The incarnational body is likened to an image fashioned in gold because it is no more than a mere reflection.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.3. Dispelling Doubts

Rejection: Since the latent form of attachment is an obscuration to expounding teachings and the two kinds of spiritual genetic potential as well, it is incorrect to present it as an obscuration only to the teachings in the form of realization. Likewise, since the remaining eight kinds of obscuration also obscure the teachings in the form of realization, it is incorrect to present it only as an obscuring attachment in its latent form. Furthermore, since the attachment in its latent form also acts as an obscuration to the remaining eight obscured objects, then it is uncertain that each individual simile and its import of the nine similes such as the lotus, etc., representing the obscurations; and [it is uncertain] that the nine similes such as the Buddha, etc., represent the obscured.

Answer: Yet there is no contradiction here because we assert that the imports [of these two sets] are not definitive in having a connection between what is obscuring and what is obscured, unlike similes that are definitive in having such a connection. Conformities exist between the nine obscurations and the nine similes representing them as well as between the nine obscured objects and the nine similes representing them respectively. Furthermore, the nine obscurations possessed by the four kinds of individual are distinguished by different definitions, not by different substances.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2. The Ramifications
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1. The Similes Representing the Fact That Buddha-essence Is Made Manifest When the Nine Obscurations Have Been Removed

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1. Brief Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.1. The Similes of Obscurations and Their Obscured Objects

Question: Which are the nine similes?

Reply: [They are] like: (1) the body of a Buddha existing within an ugly lotus; (2) the honey amidst bees; (3) the kernels within fruit husks; (4) gold inside filth; (5) a treasure of jewels beneath the floor of a poor man's house; (6) the sprout of a fruit tree, etc. grown from a small fruit, its seed; (7) a Buddha's image in tattered rags; (8) a cakravartin king in a poor woman's womb; and (9) like a statue made of precious gold existing within a clay [mould]. It should be known that this naturally pure Element exists in all living beings, obscured by the defilements of coincidental addictions, just in the way described by these similes. This verse demonstrates the plain fact that, although obscured by coincidental defilements, the Element exists by using a Buddha within a lotus, etc., as examples.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.2. Each Individual Simile

As to analogies, the defilements should be known as analogous to the lotus, the bees, the husks, filth, the floor, the fruit, the tattered rags, the woman severely afflicted by burning misery, and clay. The supreme Element, which is immaculate by nature, should be known as analogous to the body of a Buddha, the honey, the kernel, gold, a treasure, a nyagrodha tree, a precious image, a supreme ruler of the world and a precious statue.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2. Detailed Exposition
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1. The Four Defilements Including Attachment in Its Dormant Form and So on, Proved to Be Coincidental by Using Similes
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1. The Three Poisons in Their Dormant Forms
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.1. Attachment in Its Dormant Form
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.1. Prelude

The addictions are like the petal-sheath of the faded lotus, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a Buddha.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2. The Śāstra
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.1. Brief Statement
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.1.1. Simile

Suppose the body of a Buddha, shining and adorned with a thousand excellent marks, were abiding within a fetid and faded lotus with petals closed. When perceived by a man with the pure divine eye, it would be extracted from the petal-sheath of lotus.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.1. Import

Similarly, the Tathāgata sees with his Buddha-eye his own noumenon even in those who are in the avici hell.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.1.3. Means of Purifying the Element from the Defilements
Who purifies these defilements? The lord buddhas, who are unobstructed owing to their complete elimination of defilements, and who are the masters of compassion, remain till the limit of the future, liberate the naïve from the obscuration of attachment in its dormant form. Alternatively, it would be no contradiction in explaining...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1.1.2.2. Detailed Exposition

...just as a person with divine eye perceives the Tathāgata within the closed faded lotus flower, and cuts away the petals in order to reveal him; the Tathāgata perceives the nature of Buddha-essence within all beings, covered with the sheath of defilements, attachment, hatred, etc., and destroys such obscurations through compassion.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2. Hatred in Its Dormant Form

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.1. Prelude

The addictions are like honey-bees, and Buddha-essence is akin to the honey.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.2. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.1. Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1.2.2.1. Simile

Suppose a clever person, having seen honey surrounded by a swarm of bees, and endeavoring to get it, with technical skill, would separate the swarm of bees completely from it.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.1.2. Import

Similarly, the Great Sage, with his omniscient eye, perceives this honey-like essence of the mind,\textsuperscript{865} the noumenon of living beings' mind, which is all of a single taste of sweetness...

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2. Exposition

Just as a man who endeavors to get honey surrounded by myriad bees, disperses them all and makes use of the honey in making food, etc., as he planned; the noumenon of the uncontaminated wisdom within living beings is like the honey. The defilements that cause obscurations to this [noumenon] are like bees, and the perfectly enlightened Buddha, skillful victor over bee-like obscurations, is like that man who is skilled at dispersing bees.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.3. Ignorance in Its Dormant Form

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.3.1. Prelude

The addictions are like an outer husk, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to the inner kernel.

\textsuperscript{865} \textit{viditam dhiitum}, \textit{rig khams}. 
The kernel of grain is covered by an outer husk, and, if not removed, cannot be consumed by any person - it would never be delicious food for them; those people seeking food and so on must take it out from the husk.

Similarly, the naturally pure Buddha-essence, the Element, in living beings is mixed with the defilements of addictions.

As long as it is not freed from them, it cannot perform the deeds of the Buddha in the three worlds. Hence, the buddhas cleanse living beings from their defilements in order to help them obtain buddhahood. This statement directly demonstrates the fault of obscurations caused by the defilements and indicates the means of cleansing them.

Just as a kernel of grain like rice, wheat, barley, etc., has not been fully threshed by using necessary means and still have beards, and so long as they cannot be enjoyed as delicious food for humans; [likewise], the king of Dharma, being reality mingled with
defilements, is the potential present in living beings for having the body or nature unreleased from the husk of addictions, will not grant the taste of Dharma joy to beings afflicted by the hunger of addictions. Thus, the buddhas work to cleanse living beings from addictions and help them experience the taste of holy Dharma. That is to say, the buddhas are the masters of Dharma teaching; the defilements can only be cleansed by disciples themselves.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2. The Three Poisons in Their Active Forms

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.1. Prelude

The addictions are like a place rotting with filth, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to gold.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1. Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.1. Simile

Suppose, while walking along the road in a hurry, a person's gold fell into a place rotting with filth. This gold, being of indestructible nature without deterioration, would remain there as it was in the filth for many centuries. Then a god with a pure divine eye, seeing it there, would tell a man: "Here is a piece of gold. Cleanse this supreme precious thing, and fashion it into something valuable such as an image of the Tathāgata." Likewise, having taught Dharma, the Tathāgata would cleanse living beings from defilements.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.2. Import

Similarly, the Muni perceives the excellences of living beings, the naturally pure Element, drowned in filth-like addictions...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2.2.1.3. Means of Purifying the Element from the Defilements

...and pours the rain of Holy Dharma over all beings, according to their psychological makeups and thoughts, in order to purify that mire of addictions, to cleanse their obscurations.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2. Exposition

Just as a god, perceiving gold fallen into a place rotting with filth, tells people with great insistence about that gold being the most beautiful of things, so that it might be completely cleansed; perceiving the victor, which is Buddha-essence designated as such, the Essence of the precious perfect buddhahood within all beings has fallen into addiction's great mire, the Victor teaches them Dharma in order to purify it.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2. Instincts for Misknowledge Proved to Be Coincidental by Using Simile

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.1. Prelude

The addictions are like [being] underground, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a treasure of jewels.
Suppose there were an inexhaustible treasure beneath the floor within a poor man's house. This man does not know of it. Also the treasure cannot say to him, "Here I am!"

Similarly, in the minds of living beings, there is a treasure of jewels capable of producing all excellences, the naturally immaculate noumenon that is the two kinds of selflessness, neither newly established nor negated. Without recognizing this noumenon mingled with defilements in their continua, these living beings constantly experience sufferings of poverty of liberation's happiness in various ways. The Buddha would appear in the world in order to eliminate these sufferings.

Just as a jewel treasure in the house of a poor man would not say to him, "I, the jewel treasure, am here," nor would the man know it to be there. All beings, who have the treasure of Dharma capable of producing all the Buddha qualities in the house of their mind, are like the poor man due to ignorance of its existence. To enable those beings to obtain this treasure — the Truth Body endowed with two kinds of purity — the Sage has taken rebirth perfectly, and has revolved the wheel of Dharma for his disciples who have three different kinds of spiritual genetic potential.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3. The Proof That the Addictions to be Eliminated by the Path of Insight and the Path of Meditation Are Coincidental by Using Similes

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1. The Proof That the Addictions to Be Eliminated by the Path of Insight Are Coincidental by Using Simile

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.1. Prelude

The addictions are like the sheath of fruit-skin, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to [the quality of] a sprout contained within a seed.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.2. Exposition of Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.2.1. Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.2.1.1. Simile

The imperishable quality capable of producing a sprout is contained within a seed of the fruit of a mango tree or an orange tree and the like. When in the presence of cooperative conditions, such as ploughed soil, water, manure and so on, the sprout will gradually grow into the nature of a kingly tree.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.2.2. Import

Likewise, enclosed within the skin or sheath of the fruit-like misknowledge, etc., in living beings, the virtuous ultimate element is pure by nature. And so, by depending on this, and by that virtue leading to the Mahāyāna path, the conditions of awakening spiritual genetic potential gradually transforms into the nature of a King of Muni.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.1.2.2. Exposition
Just as a tree grows from a seed within the skin of a banana or mango fruit, and is conditioned by water, sunshine, air, soil, time and space, that makes room for growing plants; the seed of perfect buddhahood, the natural purity from which the sprout of buddhahood is produced. Contained within the skin of fruit-like addictions of living beings, and conditioned by this, and by that virtue with regard to study, contemplation and meditation, the Dharma of the Mahāyāna will first emerge and then increase more and more, thereby obtaining buddhahood.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2. The Proof That the Addictions to Be Eliminated by the Path of Meditation Are Coincidental by Using Simile

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.1. Prelude

The addictions are like the tattered rags, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a precious image.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2. Exposition of Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.1. Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.1. Simile

Suppose a Buddha image made of precious jewels, such as gold, wrapped in tattered, smelly rags, fallen on a desolate road and trampled by travelers, were seen by a god. In order to retrieve it from obscuring rags and trample, he would point it out to travelers about this matter.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.1.2. Import
Likewise, the Buddha who has unobstructed eye perceives, even in animals, the nature of the Tathāgata wrapped in the various forms of addiction, which is reality mingled with defilements...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.1.3. Means of Purifying the Element from the Defilements

...and, for the purpose of liberating living beings, demonstrates the techniques included in the paths of three kinds of spiritual genetic potential.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2. Exposition

Just as a god with divine eye, seeing a Buddha image wrapped in smelly rags and fallen on a road, would point it out to people in order to retrieve it from obscuring rags; the Victor, perceiving even in animals the naturally pure Element fallen on the road of samsāra, wrapped in tattered rags of addictions, teaches the Dharma in order that living beings be liberated from samsāra.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4. Defilements Related to the Impure Stages and the Pure Stages Proved to Be Coincidental by Using Similes

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.1. Defilements Related to the Impure Stages Proved to Be Coincidental by Using Simile

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.1.1. Prelude

The addictions are like a pregnant woman, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a cakravartin contained in the embryonic elements.
Exposition of Meaning

Statement

Simile

Suppose an ugly and poor woman, staying in a shelter for the homeless, bore a glorious king of cakravartin inside her womb, yet did not realize that a ruler existed within her abdomen.

Import

Birth in the saṃsāra of the three worlds is like a shelter for the homeless. Impure living beings with coincidental defilements are like the pregnant woman, bearing a cakravartin. The naturally immaculate Element is like that within the womb; owing to having it, one is ultimately protected in stages.

Exposition

Just as an ugly woman, dressed in dirty clothing, experiences the greatest pain in a shelter for the homeless, the ruler is inside her womb without her knowledge. Even though the protector resides within, living beings believe themselves unprotected, and never find peace of mind by the power of the addictions, so remain in the basis of saṃsāra's suffering. The Buddha expounds the Dharma to living beings in order to eliminate their addictions. Although this cleansing is not mentioned directly, it should be known within the textual context.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2. Defilements Related to the Pure Stages Proved to Be Coincidental by Using Simile

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2.1. Prelude

The addictions are like a clay mould, and the Element of the Tathāgata is akin to a golden image.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2.2. Exposition of Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1. Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.1. Simile

Suppose that inside the clay [mould] there were a Buddha statue of melted gold, complete in all parts and free of defect of gold. But outside is covered with the clay in the nature of earth. By seeing and knowing of it, a person would remove the outer covering to expose gold inside.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.2. Import

Likewise, the one who has attained supreme enlightenment, thoroughly sees the nature [of the mind] as luminosity, and the obscuring defilements are coincidental...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.3. Means of Purifying the Element from the Defilements

...purifies living beings resembling jewel-mines capable of producing limitless Buddha's qualities from obscurations. Therefore, the supreme enlightenment possessed of two kinds of purity is obtained.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.4.2.2.2. Exposition

Just as an expert removes clay, knowing that enclosed within is a beautiful and peaceful statue made of pure shining gold, the omniscient one knows of the peaceful mind, pure by nature like pure gold. [This omniscient one] removes obscurations by means of expounding Dharma that demonstrates the paths and fruition of three vehicles cleansing coincidental defilements, like chipping away the clay covering the precious statue. The entire section above is a detailed exposition of the similes for what is obscured and what obscures. [These similes] demonstrate that defilements are coincidental and can be cleaned away. And they also describe the means of purification and the mode how to remove obscurations and so forth.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.3. Précis

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.3.1. Prelude

The summarized meaning of the similes is as follows:

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.1.3.2. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.2.1. The Similes for What Obscures

Within a lotus, amidst bees, inside the husk, filth, and ground, within the fruit-skin, within tattered rags, in the womb of a woman, and inside clay...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.2.2. The Similes for What is Obscured
...that is like a Buddha, the honey, the grain, gold, a treasure, a tree, a precious image, a cakravartin, and a golden image. [This] explanation is done in pairs; that is, "within a lotus" is connected with "a Buddha" up to "inside clay" is connected with "a golden image."

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.2.3. Defilements Related to the Natural Purity of the Mind Proved to Be Coincidental

Similarly, it is said that Buddha-essence, the truthlessness nature of the mind free of the defilements with intrinsic unreality, is beginningless, and is not bound by the covering of living beings' addictions, though they are beginningless as well. [This is] because they have intrinsic realitylessness and cannot penetrate into the nature of mind, and because the mind has been intrinsic realitylessness from the very beginning.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.3. The Commentary

In brief, these similes given in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra demonstrate the fact that, for all living beings, the defiling factors over their minds without beginning are coincidental for the mind is empty of intrinsic reality-status; the pure qualities are simultaneous with and inseparable from the mind without beginning for [the same reason that] the mind is intrinsic realitylessness. Therefore, the sūtra states as follows:

Living beings are defiled because of the defilements on the mind; they are pure because their mind is pure by nature.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2. The Represented Imports

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1. Divisions of What Obscure the Element

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.1. Prelude

In this regard, what have been demonstrated by nine similes, the sheath of lotus, etc.? Which ones are the defilements on the mind?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.1. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.1. The Division of the Defilements into Nine Groups of Identity

There are nine groups of defilements: (1-3) Attachment, hatred and misknowledge in their latent states existing within the continua of those who are free of attachment to the desires of naïve ordinary people. [These] are the objects destroyed by transcendent intuition and are also the motivation behind karma that causes beings to be reborn in the two higher worlds. (4) [The] intense outbursts [from attachment, hatred and misknowledge] are the motivation behind both virtuous and non-virtuous karma that cause beings to be reborn in the desire world alone. (5) The instincts for misknowledge existing within the continua of arhats cause uncontaminated karma to be done. (6-7) The eliminations of the paths of insight and meditation existing within the continua of both ordinary people and noble beings; (8-9) and those related to the impure and pure stages. These nine groups are not divided in terms of different natures. Instead, these divisions are made from the point of view of different identities. [Moreover,] the latent states of the three poisons should not be taken as the seeds alone because the active addictions that
cause establishment of the two higher worlds are also included herein. However, hatred that causes the establishment of the two higher worlds is not active for it is not in any way the addiction that would cause beings to be reborn in one of the two higher worlds.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.2. Demonstrated by the Similes

These nine defilements that obscure the Element are demonstrated well by the similes of the lotus sheath and so forth, in order to understand that defilements are coincidental.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.1.3. Elaborate Divisions Being Limitless

It should be understood that the coverings of secondary defilements, if elaborately divided, have limitless millions of divisions.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.1. Brief Statement on Defilements as Coincidental

In brief, these nine kinds of addictions cannot penetrate the nature of the mind, and hence, can be separated [from the mind], being coincidental, in connection to the Element of the Tathāgata that is pure by nature just as lotus sheath, etc., to a Buddha's image, etc.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2. Detailed Exposition of Each Nature

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.1. Name Divisions

What are the nine addictions? They are, namely: (1) the addiction characterized as the latent state of attachment; (2) the addiction characterized as the latent state of hatred;
(3) the addiction characterized as the latent state of misknowledge; (4) the addiction characterized as the intense outburst of attachment, hatred, and misknowledge. The term "intense" indicates that this group of defilements also includes the addictions which are the motivation behind killing, etc., causing living beings to be reborn in the miserable realms; (5) the addiction included in the ground of instincts for misknowledge; (6) the addiction to be eliminated by [the Path of] Insight; (7) the addiction to be eliminated by [the Path of] Meditation; (8) the addiction related to the impure stages; and (9) the addiction related to the pure stages.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2. Each Definition

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1. Explaining the Latent and Active Three Poisons

Although all defilements can be included into the addiction to be eliminated by [the path of] insight and the addiction to be eliminated by [the path of] meditation, this division is made in order to understand that the active addictions and their seeds should be eliminated in stages; however much the defilements to be eliminated still remain when one has obtained arhatship of the Hinayāna, etc. In this regard, (1-3) the addictions which exist in the continua of those worldly people who are freed from attachment, and, being the cause of synthetic activity that accumulate immovable karma of which the place of retribution is definite, give rise to the material and the immaterial worlds. [Those] can only be destroyed by transcendent intuition because the addictions included in the ground of the "pinnacle of saṃsāra" cannot be eliminated by the worldly path despite the fact that the subtle and coarse active addictions in the realms below the "nothing
whatever\textsuperscript{867} can be eliminated by such a path. They are called the addictions characterized as the latent state of attachment, hatred and misknowledge. Their seeds can only be eliminated by the transcendent path. (4) Those which exist in the continua of those living beings who indulge in attachment, etc., and which, being the cause of synthetic activity that accumulate merit karma, which causes one to be reborn as a celestial being or a human, and demerit karma, which causes one to be reborn in one of the miserable realms, give rise to the desire world alone, and are to be destroyed by the wisdom of the meditation on impurity, etc., which are the yoga of the pure conduct; that is the active attachment overpowered by the concentration of the meditation on impurity, and the active hatred by the meditation on love, etc. They are called the addictions characterized as the intense outburst of attachment, hatred and misknowledge. For the system that accepts a fundamental consciousness different in nature from the aggregate of the six consciousnesses, the active intellect possessed of the addictions that are included in the ground of the desire world\textsuperscript{868} cannot not be eliminated despite the fact that the people in the desire realm has obtained the first contemplation state,\textsuperscript{869} as indicated in [Vasubandhu's] \textit{Trīṃśikākārikā} stating "connected to the realm where one takes rebirth."

But here we should not think in this way.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2. Explaining the Instincts for Misknowledge

(5) Those which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas possessed of powers, śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats, and, being the cause that produces the uncontaminated karma - the subtle efforts of the motivation behind karma of three doors, give rise to the three

\textsuperscript{867} ci yang med pa.
\textsuperscript{868} 'dod pa'i sa.
\textsuperscript{869} dhyāna, bsam gtan.
kinds of mind-made body free of the defilements of addictions, and which are to be 
destroyed by the Tathāgata's intuition of enlightenment. These are called the addictions 
included in the ground of instincts for misknowledge. Although these saints work for 
living beings' welfare by taking the mind-made bodies that are established through the 
ground of the instincts for misknowledge and the uncontaminated karma, the ability to 
spontaneously, effortlessly accomplish living beings' welfare without need for the 
reliance [on motivation] is one of the distinguishing features of the perfect buddhahood 
alone. Therefore, the commentary states that "[the addictions] are to be destroyed by the 
Tathāgata's intuition of enlightenment." However, it does not indicate that the first 
moment of omniscience on the uninterrupted path\textsuperscript{870} is the direct eliminator of the ground 
of instincts for misknowledge. If so, one would not obtain the ultimate elimination 
because [even the Buddha's omniscience] is still working on the elimination of what is to 
be eliminated on one's continuum. There is no need to mention that the first moment of 
omniscience would not be the uninterrupted path, if there would not the slightest 
defilement during the time of the uninterrupted path of the last continuum\textsuperscript{871} in the Tenth 
Stage.

\textit{Question:} Since the defilements related to the three pure stages are explained below 
as the objects destroyed by the vajra-like concentration, why is this kind said to be the 
object destroyed by the Tathāgata's intuition?

\textit{Reply:} As explained before, although the subtlest ground of instincts for 
misknowledge is directly eliminated by the uninterrupted path of the last continuum in 
the Tenth Stage, [bodhisattvas who have] the last continuum in the Tenth Stage are still in

\textsuperscript{870} \textit{ānantaryāmārga, bar chad med lam.}  
\textsuperscript{871} \textit{rgyun gyi tha ma.}
need of motivation with subtle effort to teach the Dharma to living beings, etc., by taking
the mind-made bodies and so forth. Thus, this statement is made in order to understand
that teaching the Dharma to living beings through the elimination of such bodies and
karma is one of the distinguishing features of the ultimate realization of reality-limit
alone. On the other hand, when remaining in the absorption of the uninterrupted path of
the last continuum, [bodhisattvas] do not directly perceive knowable objects in their
multiplicity, not to mention that they would directly benefit living beings by teaching the
Dharma and so on. There are many related points but I shall leave them for the time being.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.3. Explaining What is to Be Eliminated by the
Paths of Insight and Meditation

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.3.1. General Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.3.1.1. Definitions of the Two Obscurations

Addictive obscuration, by definition, is the kind of obscuration to the attainment of
liberation that is paired with omniscience. Cognitive obscuration, by definition, is the
kind of obscuration to the attainment of omniscience that is paired with liberation.
Furthermore, it is called such because it is an obscuration to the attainment of eternal
absorption into the knowable object; for it is until the end of samsāra and it is also an
obscuration to the attainment of direct perception of all knowable objects in their
multiplicity. Addictive obscuration is explained as mental turbulence. Mental
peacefulness, the opposite of addictive obscuration, is the nirvāṇa from mere liberation
that eases the suffering of samsāra. Mental turbulence is the suffering of samsāra. The
addictions or addictive obscurations is the producer. It should be understood that the truth of the path causes nirvāṇa to be obtained.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.3.1.2. Recognizing Exemplifications

Addictive obscuration is an addictive misknowledge, the intellect of the truth-habit regarding person and aggregates, as well as active attachment, etc., which are produced by the addictive misknowledge, along with their seeds. Cognitive obscurations are an erroneous truth perception toward objects as well as the addictive latency that produces that perception. In this regard, the liberation of the complete elimination of the addictive obscurations has been obtained by śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha arhats as well as bodhisattvas in the Eighth Stage and above. The liberation of the complete elimination of cognitive obscurations has been obtained by the buddhas alone.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.3.1.3. Distinction between What is to Be Eliminated by the Path of Insight and What is to Be Eliminated by the Path of Meditation

The conscious theoretical variety of addictive obscurations, which is to be destroyed by the Path of Insight, includes the thought that "the truth-status of person or aggregates is acceptable" along with its seeds, as well as the assertion of truth-status, which is derived from an analysis of truth-status, along with its seeds. It should be understood that attachment, etc., are also derived from such an imagined addictive obscurations. The unconscious instinctual type of addictive obscurations, which is to be destroyed by the Path of Meditation, includes the innate truth-habit independent of any analysis upon attachment, and so forth, along with their seeds. The unconscious instinctual type of
cognitive obscuration is understood to be obscuration itself. Its conscious theoretical variety is the thought that "this truth perception is not erroneous" with the accompanying perceptive consciousnesses apprehending visual objects, etc., which hold truth perception toward objects, along with its seeds.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.3.1.4. Rough Explanation of the Mode of Eliminating the Seeds

The mode of counteracting what is to be eliminated by the Path of Insight, e.g., is explained as follows: at the time when the uninterrupted path of the Mahāyāna Path of Insight associated with the tolerance of the Dharma of suffering has been produced, its direct target, the seeds of what is to be eliminated by the Path of Insight, started to cease. Therefore, the future production of [the antidote] is simultaneous with the future cessation of [the defilements]. These seeds produced by a homogeneous previous cause become something no longer to be produced [that is] conditioned by the force of this uninterrupted path. Produced by the uninterrupted path, the initial path that has obtained the truth of cessation where these seeds are incapable of being produced because of the impression left as the antidote is called the "path of liberation."

Although the corresponding defilements become something that no longer exists and is no longer produced at the time of the uninterrupted path, since this happens through the lack of favorable conditions, the cessation through discernment is not obtained. In this light, the uninterrupted path of the last continuum in the Tenth Stage still cannot be

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872 sdug bsngal chos ldod.
873 so sor brtags 'gog.
termed as the "complete elimination" despite the fact that at that time there are no
defilements of negative tendencies even small as a single atom. This is so because the
path, by which the [defilements] are incapable of being produced due to an impression
left as the antidote, has not been obtained. If this reason were not established, the fruition
would be simultaneous with the cause.

While accepting there is no direct object to counteract at the time of uninterrupted
path of the Path of Insight, someone asserts that there are subtle defilements of negative
tendencies at the time of uninterrupted path of the last continuum. This is a mixture of
the theory "the elimination through what is to be produced" with the one "the elimination
through what is to be eliminated." The assertion that the first moment of omniscience
directly counteracts these [subtle defilements of negative tendencies] should be known as
being ignorant of the system of the elimination and antidote. Furthermore, someone failed
to ascertain the meaning of the statement in the Abhidharmasamuccaya that "[the
elimination] is not the past because it ceases," thus not fully understanding why the seeds
to be eliminated and their direct antidote, the uninterrupted path, are accepted as
simultaneous despite the fact that the three modes of the elimination of the active
[addictions] [mentioned in the Abhidharmasamuccaya] are unacceptable. If so,
[according to this person], one then must accept that the light of the counteracting force
and the darkness of the direct object to be counteracted are also simultaneous as
illustrated [in the text] by such an example. Thus, neither does this uninterrupted path
eliminate the seeds, its direct object to be counteracted or eliminated after its own time
like destroying a vase by a hammer; nor [does the uninterrupted path eliminate its seeds]

\[874\] chaśthula, gnas ngan len.
before its own time, like pushing away something in the front, nor [does it do so] in its own time by way of ceasing together with [the seeds to be counteracted] like yoked yaks falling from the cliff. But then, what does this "counteraction" mean? It means that the future production of this antidote dependent upon the preceding familiarization is simultaneous with the future cessation of the homogeneous type of seeds to be eliminated, and that the seeds to be eliminated are becoming something no longer to be produced by means of this simultaneous production of antidote and cessation of the seeds.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.3.1.5. Specific Explanation of Tolerance and Knowledge in Connection with the Path of Insight

When the noumenon of the Four Noble Truths has been realized directly by way of water pouring into water, one is no longer frightened of this profound Dharma, which is previously formidable and unfamiliar in samsāra. Thus, [this realization] is called "tolerance of the Dharma." There are four kinds of tolerance from the point of view of specific aspects with respect to determining the noumenon of the four noble truths. Like water pouring into water, the realization of the situation that the mind realizing noumenon does not feel any fear is called "subsequent tolerance." Moreover, there are four kinds of subsequent tolerance in terms of realization [that are] divided from the point of view of specific aspects with respect to the subject [observing] noumenon of the Four Noble Truths. These eight tolerances are of the same nature but not identical. At this time, the truth of cessation free from coincidental defilements has not been obtained. [Subsequent tolerance] is posited on the realization of the [observing] subject, instead of being on the realization of noumenon of the Four Noble Truths. However, [this system]

875 rjes bzod.
does not accept direct apperceptive self-consciousness. The path of liberation that obtains the path of cessation free of coincidental defilements will be produced without arising from this meditative equipoise. At this time, there are four kinds of "knowledge of the Dharma" that realize the noumenon of the four noble truths, as well as four kinds of "subsequent knowledge" realizing the [observing] subject. These eight knowledges are of the same nature but not identical. Thus, a single instant of the direct realization of truth in a single session's meditative equipoise is produced as having the nature of the sixteen instants of tolerance and knowledge. This system does not accept such theories as subsequent tolerance being produced after the production of tolerance of the Dharma, etc.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.3.2. Its Ramifications

There are two kinds of person who enter higher education [on the path]: ordinary people who have entered the path and noble ones. In this regard, (6) those existing in the continua of ordinary people in being educated on the path, and to be destroyed by the wisdom obtained through the first insight into transcendent reality. [These] are called the addictions to be eliminated by [the Path of] Insight. And, (7) those existing in the continua of noble ones in being educated on the path, and to be destroyed by the wisdom of the meditation on transcendent reality, perceiving it as it is, are called the addictions to be eliminated by [the Path of] Meditation.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4. Explaining the Defilements Related to the Impure and Pure Stages

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876 rang rig mgon sum.
877 dharmanātha, cho shes.
878 anujñāna, rjes shes.
(8) Those which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas who have not reached the ultimate perfection of the stages above the Seventh, and are in disagreement to the wisdom obtained on the [first] seven stages, will be destroyed by the wisdom of meditation of the [last] three stages beginning with the Eighth stage are called, the addictions related to the impure stages. (9) Those which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas who have reached the ultimate extinction of addictions, and are in disagreement to the wisdom obtained through the meditation of the [last] three stages beginning with the Eighth, will be destroyed by the wisdom of the "vajra-like" concentration are called the addictions related to the pure stages. Each description of these nine defilements explains the respective possessor,\textsuperscript{879} nature, and antidote, [e.g.,] the description of "those which are in disagreement to the [first] seven stages" indicates that these addictions exist within the continua of bodhisattvas below the Eighth Stage, that these are obscurations to the attainment of the stages above the Seventh, and that their homogenous continua are eliminated by the wisdom of the pure stages. The description "those which exist in the continua of bodhisattvas who have reached the ultimate extinction of addictions" indicates that the elimination [of all defilements] without remaining depends on the uninterrupted path of the "vajra-like" concentration.\textsuperscript{880}

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.3. Précis

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.3.1. The Śāstra

\textsuperscript{879} rten.

\textsuperscript{880} Apparently rGyal-tshab here takes "the ultimate extinction of addictions" as the extinction of addictive obscurations in the Eighth Stage and "the elimination [of all defilements] without remaining" as the elimination of cognitive obscurations just before the attainment of buddhahood.
In short, as explained above, it should be known that these nine addictions, attachment and so on, are respectively demonstrated well by the nine similes of the lotus sheath and so on. Someone in the past asserted that this verse is not appropriate as part of the treatise, that instead it is a commentary on the line "by the similes of the lotus sheath and so forth (v.131)." Nevertheless, according to available books of the Great Lo-ka-sha's translation, I think this must be a summary verse of the treatise.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.3.2. Statement on Elaborate Divisions Being Limitless

And, if taken in detail, these addictions can be differentiated into 84,000 types, and hence, are as infinite as the Tathāgata's intuition. On this point, the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra states that Buddha-essence is covered by the sheath of addictions with limitless divisions.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2. To Whom They Obscure

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1. The Śāstra

It should be understood that by these defilements, the naïve, the Hinayāna arhats, persons being educated including ordinary people who have entered the paths and noble beings of the Hinayāna, and the wise ones who are the noble bodhisattvas, are respectively contaminated by four kinds of defilement including the three poisons in the latent states and their outbursts. [There is] one kind of defilement that is the ground of instincts for misknowledge; two kinds of defilements including what is to be eliminated by the Path of Insight and what is to be eliminated by the Path of Meditation; and two
kinds of defilements including those related to the impure stages and those related to the pure stages.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.3. Explaining the Similarity between Similes and Imports of What is Obscure the Element

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.1. General Prelude

Furthermore, how should the respective similarity between nine addictions obscuring the Element, attachment, etc., and the sheath of lotus, etc., obscuring a Buddha's image, etc., be understood? Does this similarity between these similes and imports exist? The text also questions the reason that there is similarity between similes and imports of the Element: how should the Buddhas-essence be understood to be analogous to a Buddha's image and so forth?
Three Poisons in the Latent States and Their Outbursts

Just as a lotus grown from mud delights the mind when it first appears but later that delight disappears when the lotus has perished, similar to this simile, so is attachment's joy. Just as a swarm of bees sting and cause uneasiness when irritated; likewise, when hated arises, it brings suffering to the heart, thereby causing uneasiness. Just as the kernel of rice and so on are obscured by the external husk; likewise, the direct perception of the meaning of the Essence is obscured by the covering of misknowledge. Therefore, these two are analogous in terms of being obscuring. Just as filth is something unbearable and unpleasant; those having attachment engage in passion - in this way the intense outbursts that motivate unwholesome behaviors are similar to filth for they lead to a pitiable life, thus being unbearable.

The ground of Instincts for Misknowledge

Suppose that a treasure of jewels is obscured by the earth. Not knowing it, that treasure cannot be obtained; likewise, that self-arising [intuition] in living beings, the attainment of Buddha-essence free from all defilements, is obscured by the earth of instincts for misknowledge and cannot be perceived. Therefore, these two are analogous.

Defilements to Be Eliminated by the Paths of Insight

This subtitle is not given in Tibetan original, probably missing.
and Meditation

Just as the sprout and such gradually grow and split, damage the skin of the seed; likewise, direct and fresh perception of reality immediately and quickly overcomes those to be eliminated by [the Path of] Insight. Therefore, these two are analogous. Having cultivated repeatedly with connection to the Noble Path, the essence of the futile views has been destroyed. Their residues, those to be eliminated by the wisdom of the Path of Meditation, are demonstrated to be similar to the tattered rags for they both become depleted of the essence.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.2.1.4. Defilements Related to the Impure and Pure Stages

The defilements related to the seven stages are similar to the impurities of the womb because they both obscure self-awareness. The non-conceptual intuition obtained in the Eighth Stage is like release from that womb without the exertion of force just as retribution that effortlessly came from the previous karma. The defilements related to the three stages are known as like slight stains of mud, the objects to be destroyed by the Lord's vajra-like concentration.

3.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.3.2.2. Précis

It should be understood that, as explained above, the nine defilements, attachment and so on, are analogous to the lotus and the other. Although these [two lines] are suitable to be the prelude of the next section, it is explained as the précis of the section above.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.4. Explaining the Similarity between Similes and Imports of the Element That Is Obscured

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.1. General Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.1.1. The Sastra

Because the Element is included within the threefold nature, i.e. the Truth Body of the Tathāgata diffuses in all living beings, etc., it is similar to the similes of the Buddha image and so on.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.1.2. The Commentary

The analogy between Buddha-essence, being the cause for purifying the mind, and a Buddha's image, etc., should be understood with reference to the threefold nature [of Buddha-essence].

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2. Specific Explanations

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.1. General Connection between Similes and Imports

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.1.1. Question

What is the threefold nature of the Element that is said to be Buddha-essence possessed by all living beings?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.1.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.1.2.1. The Śāstra

The natures of this Element are the Truth Body, reality, and also spiritual genes.
They are respectively known by three, one, and five similes in order to demonstrate that this Element pervades all living beings.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.1.2.2. The Commentary

This Element, as the nature of [living beings'] susceptibility to the deeds of the Truth Body in light of the pervasiveness of the deeds, is understood by the [first] three similes: the Buddha image, honey, and the kernel [of grains]. Its being the nature of reality, which is Buddha-essence identical to the natural purity of the Truth Body without distinction, is understood by one simile: gold. Buddha-essence, as of nature of the spiritual genes from which Buddha's Three Bodies are produced, is understood by [the remaining] five similes: the treasure, the tree, the precious image, the cakravartin, and golden statue.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2. Detailed Exposition of Similarities

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1. The Truth Body

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.1. Divisions

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.1.1. Question

Here, how is the Truth Body understood?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.1.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.1.1. The Śāstra

The reason why Buddha-essence is said to be pervasive in all living beings is: the Truth Body is known in two aspects: the direct realization of the ultimate element, which is naturally pure and free from all coincidental defilements, thus being perfect
immaculate – [this is] the Truth Body with respect to realization; the fruition of the natural outflow from this direct realization of the noumenon of the Buddha's mental continuum, i.e. scriptures that are definitive in meaning teaching the profound ultimate reality, and scriptures that are interpretable in meaning teaching a variety of relative things including person, aggregates, etc., by various means of different words and letters – [this is] the Truth Body with respect to teaching.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.1.2.2.2. The Commentary

The buddhas' Truth Body should be understood in two aspects - the Truth Body with respect to realization and the Truth Body with respect to teaching: (1) perfect immaculate ultimate element that is the object experienced directly by the non-conceptual intuition in meditative equipoise. "Experienced object" and "object" are two different expressions in order to demonstrate the distinction between permanent meditative equipoise [of the buddhas] and [impermanent] meditative equipoise. Moreover, it is known as the Dharma realized by Tathāgatas' individual introspective wisdom in meditative equipoise. It is what is to be realized and the intuitive Truth Body with respect to realization realizes it; (2) the scriptures, the fruition of the natural outflow\(^{882}\) of realization in the perfectly immaculate ultimate element, is the cause for the attainment of the Truth Body. This comes from the objectification of the scriptures and the meditation on their meanings; [then] teaching comes forth for other naïve people who are possessed of the three different kinds of spiritual genetic potential, or are not definite in certain type of genetic potential according to their thoughts. Moreover, this is known as the Dharma to be taught. The teaching is further divided into two, according to the means of arranging either subtle

\(^{882}\text{niṣyanda, rgyu mthun pa.}\)
or extensive Dharma: (a) the teaching expounding ultimate reality—the way of profound Dharma—in the scriptural collection for bodhisattvas; and (b) the aphorisms, the discourses in prose and verse mingled with prophecy, verses, special utterances, narration, etc., expounding conventional reality, a variety of things. As to the twelve scriptural components, some sūtras state there are nine components. This is merely a difference in classification.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.1.2. Actual Explanation of Similarities

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.1. The Sūtra

Because of being ultimately transcendent, there is no conceivable analogy with the intuitive Truth Body with respect to realization in the world. Thus the Tathāgata's image and the Element is in the nature of the Truth Body that is naturally pure, free from all coincidental defilements, and all-pervading in living beings, and are demonstrated as similar. When the teaching on the subtle profound ultimate reality is experienced through the scriptures that are definitive in meaning, one experiences the nature of all things in one taste that grants unlimited joy like the one sweet taste of honey; while scriptures that are interpretable in meaning that teach various aspects of the conventional reality are known as like the kernel within the covering of various grains. This explanation of the two types of scripture, definitive in meaning and interpretable in meaning, and the corresponding similes is an elaborated explanation of the meaning of "diffusion" as mentioned in [verse 1.28 stating that] "all living beings are always possessed of Buddha-essence, by virtue of the diffusion of the buddhas' bodies..." The diffusion of the Truth Body means the pervasion of the buddhas' deeds. The buddhas' deeds enter into all living
beings by means of teaching the Dharma to a variety of disciples through speech. Since
[living beings] are always susceptible to the buddhas' deeds, it is said that "the Truth
Body is all-pervading in them."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.1. Explaining the Literal Meaning Demonstrated
by Three Similes

Thus, the statement that "living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence" is made
with these three similes: the Buddha's image, honey, and the kernel, with reference to the
meaning that without exception, the Tathāgatas' Truth Body is all-pervading in living
beings. Indeed, there is no one among living beings who remains outside of the
possibility of the attainment of the Tathāgata's Truth Body, just as there is no matter that
can exist outside of space, such as the inside of vase ...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2.2.2. Scriptural Reference regarding the Pervasion
of the Truth Body

...since the Sūtrālaṃkāra states as follows: just as space free of any obstructive
tangible objects is always all-pervading in vessels, similarly, this natural pure Truth Body
is accepted as the nature all-pervading in living beings.

Just as space is always pervasive in matter, similarly, this natural pure Truth Body
is pervasive in all living beings.
The former half of this verse is a summary of the meaning of the Sūtrālāṃkāra and the latter half is a quotation. However, these scriptural references are the same in connotation. There is an enormous difference of being subtle and coarse [between the buddhas and living beings] in terms of natural purity.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2. Reality

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.1. The Śāstra

Being unchangeable by nature from excellent to inferior, perfectly granting desirous fruitions, and being virtuous and excellent owing to being free from sins and not penetrated by defilements; hence, this reality pure by nature, the mind's emptiness of intrinsic reality, is therefore said to be like the forms of gold which remains in filth. The nature of the Tathāgata, which is ultimate reality, i.e. the emptiness of intrinsic reality, penetrates the nature of mind in all living beings without the slightest difference in its appearance mode. Intending this, [the Buddha] states that "all living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.1. The Literal Meaning

Being associated with limitless addictions and sufferings notwithstanding, the minds of living beings do not show any change because of naturally luminosity; that is, being empty by intrinsic reality. Therefore, it is called "reality" in the sense of being unchangeable like excellent gold. Furthermore, without difference in nature, all living beings will join the rank of "Tathāgata" whenever they have purified all coincidental

883 rnam par 'char tshul.
addictive and cognitive obscurations, even those who have the causes of definite wrongdoing; hence [they are the] so-called "ones who will not obtain nirvāṇa." This statement should be thought of as a demonstration that the reality of all living beings is the Tathāgata, or that reality purified from all defilements is the Tathāgata. Thus, the statement that "living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence" is made with this simile of gold and refers to the meaning that reality is indivisible and undifferentiated in terms of the appearance made by its nature. This passage explains well the second import of the tripartite Buddha-essence found in the statement that "all living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence." Furthermore, it would reveal a great deficiency in analysis if you accepted [the statement that] all living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence with the intention to demonstrate that the natural purity of the mental continuum of an authentic Tathāgata and that of a living being are indivisible, unlike blue and yellow as two things.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.2.2. Scriptural References
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.2.2.1. Of the Sūtra

Having in view the nature of the mind, the pure and non-dual noumenon, the Lord states in the Jñānālokālaṃkāra-sūtra as follows:

Mañjuśrī, the Tathāgata knows full well there is not the slightest thing to apprehend as the basis of the truth-habit, the cause of production of his own substantial aggregates, and hence, he protects living beings from their self-habits. Through his own purity, he has understood the natural purity of living beings. His
own purity and the natural purity of the living beings are non-dual; they cannot be divided into two.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2.2.2. Of the Śāstra

It is also stated in the Sūtrālamkāra as follows:

Though the natural purity is undifferentiated among all the buddhas and living beings, reality, after purification from all defilements, is buddhahood; therefore, all living beings are possessed of Buddha-essence based on the intended meaning that the reality which exists within living beings is not different from the reality of the buddhas.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3. The Spiritual Genes

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.1. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.1. Similarity between Simile and Import of nature of the Spiritual Genes

Like a treasure remaining from the very outset and a fruit tree grown through effort, the spiritual genetic potential is known to be twofold: the naturally existing gene that remains as the nature of the mind without beginning, and the developmental gene that has been newly produced from study and contemplation. The latter is called "supreme" for it has more important functions.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2. Similarity between Simile and Import of the
Functions of the Spiritual Genes

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.1. Divisions of Function

By this twofold genetic potential, the naturally existing gene and the developmental
gene, a Buddha's Three Bodies are considered to be obtained through, firstly, the
awakening of the genetic potential under appropriate conditions, and then, the cultivation
of the spirit of supreme enlightenment and the deeds: attainment of the first body, the
Truth Body, by the former genetic potential; attainment of the other two physical bodies
by the latter genetic potential. The accomplishment on meditating the store of wisdom
brings about the Truth Body possessed of two kinds of purity including purification of
defilements and the intuition of knowing things just as they are. The accomplishment on
meditating the store of merit brings about two physical bodies and the intuition of
knowing things in their multiplicity. It should be understood that the Buddha's physical
body adorned with marks and signs is the apparent manifestation of intuition in his
mental continuum, thus devoid of the slightest inert substances, the accumulation of
atoms and the like. If you assert that the Buddha's physical body is the mere perceptions
his disciples would have and there is absolutely nothing included within the Buddha's
continuum, it will make your position not different in the slightest from the heterodox
Mīmāṃsaka assertion that it is impossible for a person who has eliminated all
defilements to exist. Similarly, it should be understood that it would be erroneous to
assert that there is not perception of knowable things in their multiplicity within the
Buddha's subjectivity\(^884\) and the like.

\(^{884}\) rang snang.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.1.2.2. Explanation of Similarity between Simile and Import

As to the similarity between simile and import of the beautiful Natural Body,\textsuperscript{885} it is known to be like a precious statue, not created by nature through other causes and conditions, as well as the precious treasure of excellences such as powers, fearlessnesses, etc. As to the perfect Beatific Body, owing to the enjoyment or possession of the kingdom of the great Dharma of the Mahāyāna, it is analogous to the cakravartin. Because of being in the nature of an image when compared to marks and signs of the Beatific Body, the Incarnational Body is like a golden statue.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.1. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2. Possession of Buddha-essence because of the Existence of the Buddha Genetic potential

Thus, the Element of Tathāgata is demonstrated to be the essence of all living beings with these five similes: a treasure, a tree, a precious image, a cakravartin, and a golden statue, with reference to the fact that there exists within all living beings the Buddha genetic potential which produces a Buddha's Three Bodies. Indeed, buddhahood is distinguished by a Buddha's Three Bodies. Therefore, since the Element of Tathāgata, the twofold genetic potential, is the cause of attainment of Three Bodies, the word "Element" is here used in the sense of "cause" despite the fact that the word \textit{dḥātu} can be translated as "cause,"\textsuperscript{886} "ultimate element,"\textsuperscript{887} "element,"\textsuperscript{888} and so forth.

\textsuperscript{885} svabhāvavādiya, ngo bo nyid kyi sku.
\textsuperscript{886} hetu, rgyu.
\textsuperscript{887} dḥātu, dbyings.
\textsuperscript{888} dḥātu, khaams.
The twofold genetic potential is the cause for obtaining the Three Bodies, so it is said that there exists in each living being, the Essence, the Element of the Tathāgata established within their continua. But these living beings do not know about it. If realized, it will bring great benefit to living beings, as will be explained later.

The Buddha states in the *Mahāyānaḥdharma-sūtra* as follows:

The Element, the [twofold] genetic potential, that exists without beginning is the foundation, basis, and support of all things of samsāra and nirvāṇa. Because of its existence, there are samsāra and the attainment of nirvāṇa.

If the nature of the mind were impure, it would be impossible for the defilements to be purified; if the production of excellences were unfeasible, its production would be unacceptable; if the spiritual genetic potential did not exist, samsāra and the attainment of nirvāṇa would be absurd because all is established on the basis of the naturally pure genetic potential. A fundamental consciousness different in nature from the collection of six consciousnesses is not accepted in this commentary. However, the Bodhisattva Noble Master Asanga pioneered the way for Champions of the Yogācāra system in other treatises which establish such consciousness by citing the same *sūtra*. Thus it would not
cause any damage if you [disagree with me] by saying that, if it were the statement on the existence of the twofold genetic potential and were scriptural reference to the existence of the spiritual genetic potential, this verse would no longer prove the existence of fundamental consciousness as it is the statement of the Lord on proving the existence of the genetic potential.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3. Explanation of Its Meaning Relying on Other Sūtra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.3.1. "Without Beginning"

Question: How is it here that "it exists without beginning?"

Answer: It has been taught and ascertained by the Buddha in the Śrīmālā-sūtra, with reference to Buddha-essence, that "the beginning-limit is not to be perceived". It is unacceptable to speculate that [Buddha-essence] came into being at a certain point, and hence, not does not exist before that point.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.3.2. "The Element"

As to the "Element," the Buddha states in the Śrīmālā-sūtra states as follows:

Lord, this Buddha-essence is the essence of transcendent qualities because all transcendent qualities will arise through meditation that objectifies this Buddha-essence, and the essence of naturally pure qualities because of being the ultimate objective condition of these qualities.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.3. "The Foundation of All Things"

As to the statement "the foundation of all things," this sūtra states as follows:

Therefore, Lord, Buddha-essence is the foundation, the basis, and the support of the uncompounded things, which are connected with the possibility of being separated from all defilements, not dissociated with the possibility of cultivating all antidotes, and hence, impossible to be separated from excellences. [At the same time], Lord, this Buddha-essence is also the foundation, the basis, and the support of the compounded things, which are unconnected, dissociated, and thus possible to be separated because [all defilements] cannot penetrate into the nature [of the mind].

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.4. "There Is Samsāra"

As to the statement "because of its existence, there is samsāra," the Śrīmālā-sūtra states as follows:

Owing to the existence of Buddha-essence, Lord, this [essence] is designated as "samsāra."

It is logical for living beings to transmigrate in samsāra because of the existence of the genetic potential. Otherwise, it will be illogical.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.3.2.2.3.5. "There Is Nirvāṇa"

As to the statement "and the attainment of nirvāṇa," the Śrīmālā-sūtra states as follows:
Lord, if there were no Buddha-essence, there would be neither aversion towards suffering nor desire, longing, and prayer towards nirvāṇa.

The renunciation of samsāra and the aspiration for liberation would not arise if the spiritual genetic potential did not exist. These are the actions of the spiritual genetic potential as explained above. To sum up what have been explained so far, the single reality can be divided into three in terms of the means of explanation; that is, it is the spiritual genetic potential from the viewpoint of being the pure object in the casual state, it is reality from the viewpoint of being pervasive and the nature; and it is the Truth Body's diffusion from the viewpoint of being the fruition.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3. The Subjects That Realize the Element
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1. Demonstrating that Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas Realize the Element through Faith
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.1. Connection with the Previous Section
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.1.1. Demonstrating that All Beings Are Possessed of Buddha-essence

Furthermore, by what kind of valid evidence should this Buddha-essence, which exists the whole time among all [living beings] without distinction, be perceived? It should be perceived by the valid evidence of the noumenon which proves that things would reasonably become such and not otherwise. What is this Essence like? It is vast as the Truth Body for it is pervasive in all living beings, as demonstrated in the line "in
virtue of the diffusion of the buddhas' bodies." It has the characteristic indivisible from
the Tathāgata in terms of nature and entity, as demonstrated in the line "in virtue of the
indivisible ultimate reality." And it is of the nature of the definitive genetic potential
beyond doubt, as demonstrated in the line "in virtue of the existence of the spiritual
genetic potential."

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.1.2. Scriptural Reference

The Buddha states [in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra] as follows:

Worthy son, this is the noumenon of things. Whether the Tathāgata appears in the
world or not, these living beings are always possessed of Buddha-essence.

The emptiness of intrinsic reality of living being's mind was not established
newly by the Tathāgata, nor will be eliminated after he is gone - it remains at all times.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.1.1.3. Explanation of the Meaning

The reasoning of the noumenon here refers to the proving reasoning,\textsuperscript{889} syllogism,\textsuperscript{890}
or the means\textsuperscript{891} which realizes that the nature of living beings' mind would reasonably be
empty by intrinsic reality alone and not otherwise. To summarize, one should not
conceive of the ascertainment or the proper understanding itself, which is the reasoning
that ascertains and examines reality. The realization, or the reasoning of the noumenon, is
because of being the mode of realization [arrived at] through mere intellectualism. This

\textsuperscript{889} yukti, rtogs pa.
\textsuperscript{890} yoga, rigs pa.
\textsuperscript{891} upāya, thabs.
[noumenon] is not accessible to constructive thought [that is] dependent upon others' word either. It is accessible only through faith. [The noumenon] realized by permanent meditative equipoise is the object experienced by the Buddha alone. In this regard, someone asserts that the noumenon, ultimate reality, can only be realized dependent upon the Tathāgata's scriptures. This reveals that this person does not master the Buddha's teaching thoroughly and does not understand the sequence of realizations of hidden objects of comprehension and extreme hidden objects of comprehension.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.1.2. The Śāstra

On the occasion of the last saṃsāra of existence, bodhisattvas will become buddhas independent of others, thus being self-arisen ones. For śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, naïve people, and those who have just entered the Mahāyāna, the buddhas' ultimate reality is the emptiness of intrinsic reality and can be understood only by faith but not by the means of following the Dharma ...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2. Demonstrating that There Is No Other Mode of Realization for Four Kinds of People

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.1. The Śāstra

...just as the radiating sun cannot be perceived by the blind. It means that these four kinds of people cannot realize ultimate reality by their power just as one can barely see the sun by narrowed eyes. According to someone's explanation, the former half of this verse teaches that ultimate reality can be only realized through following scriptures even for those who are possessed of the spiritual genetic potential for the Mahāyāna, and the
latter half teaches that there is absolutely no realization for these four kinds of people.
This explanation is incorrect as will be explained later.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2. The Commentary

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1. Brief Statement

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.1. The Literal Meaning

In brief, there are four kinds of individuals who are classified as blind to Buddha-essence. Who are these four? They are: (1) naïve people; (2) srāvakas; (3) pratyekabuddhas; and (4) bodhisattvas who have just entered the vehicle...

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.1.2. Scriptural Reference

...the Buddha states in the Śrīmālā-sūtra as follows:

Lord, for those who have fallen into the futile view, for those who attach to misconceptions, for those whose minds have deviated from emptiness, Buddha-essence is not their object of experience.

This passage means that naïve people do not understand the meaning of the subtle emptiness due to their habitual insistence on a personal self and their possessiveness and do not actually enter into the respective paths for the three kinds of spiritual genetic potential. Likewise, srāvakas and pratyekabuddhas understand merely coarse emptiness in the form of the sixteen aspects [of the four noble Truths], such as impermanence and so forth, but not subtle selflessness. It is also clearly evident, as will be explained later, that
bodhisattvas who have newly entered the vehicle cannot understand the meaning of subtle emptiness either.

Someone asserts that such people who are possessed of the spiritual genetic potential for the Śrāvakayāna or the Pratyekabuddhayāna are naïve ones because [the treatise] has taught that naïve people cannot perceive Buddha-essence, and hence, it demonstrates that even noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not directly realize the noumenon. If so, it would be pointless to mention separately that it also holds true for bodhisattvas who have just entered the vehicle because they are naïve people too. Furthermore, it is a general statement that these four kinds of people do not realize Buddha-essence, which is reality free of reifications. Since a few naïve people have fully realized the meaning of emptiness, it would be incorrect to take this statement as showing that no naïve people can understand [emptiness]. If it is thus mentioned because the text teaches [that those bodhisattvas] do not directly realize emptiness, it would be, again, pointless to make a distinction by stating [those] "who have just entered the vehicle," because ordinary bodhisattvas at the "Tolerance" and "Supreme Dharma" levels of the Path of Application after many great eons' cultivation still do not realize emptiness directly because they have entered the Mahāyāna path. Therefore, it should be understood that, when the text states that there are people who do not realize reality mingled with defilements, i.e. Buddha-essence, it refers to the three distinct types of people who have different spiritual genetic potential as well as naïve people. It would be a contradiction of the statement of the treatise that "it is accessible to faith" if we take the text as showing that noble śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do not realize the noumenon even in the slightest.
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2. Detailed Exposition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.1. Those of No Understanding Because of Being Fallen into the Futile Views

In this regard, "those who have fallen into the futile view" refer to (1) naïve people. Indeed, they cannot believe in the uncontaminated element or the ultimate reality that naturally stops the futile view, because of their habitual adherence to egoism and possessiveness; that is the non-understanding of selflessness by accepting a personal self and property in connection with contaminated things such as the aggregates, etc. That being so, how could they be expected to cognize Buddha-essence that is the object of the omniscient [Buddha]? This is impossible. [Realizing] Buddha-essence in permanent meditative equipoise is one of the distinguishing features of the omniscient [Buddha] alone.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2. Those of No Understanding Because of Attachment to Misconceptions

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.1. Explanation of Misconceptions

[Next,] "those who attach to misconceptions" refer to people who are possessed of the spiritual genetic potential to be (2) śrāvakas or (3) pratyekabuddhas. They temporarily do not believe and understand the meaning of emptiness. Why? This is because, although Buddha-essence should be mediated upon as eternal, they indulge in the meditation on the notion of impermanence instead of meditating upon the notion of eternity. Likewise, although Buddha-essence should be meditated upon as blissful, they indulge in the meditation on the notion of suffering instead of meditating upon the notion of bliss.
Although Buddha-essence should be mediated upon as being regarded as self, they nevertheless indulge in the meditation on the notion of selflessness instead of meditating upon the notion of self. And, though Buddha-essence should be meditated upon as pure, they indulge in the meditation on the notion of impurity instead of meditating upon the notion of purity.

Buddha-essence should be meditated upon as eternity, bliss, self, and purity with the understanding of its distinctive basis that is reality free of reifications. It would be pointless to meditate on it in the opposite way as suffering, selfless, and impure. Although Buddha-essence is the ultimate reality of phenomena such as aggregates, etc., [śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas] indulge in the meditation on impermanence, suffering, selflessness in its coarse forms, and impurity as the ultimate reality of phenomena such as contaminated aggregates, etc., instead of having the notions of eternity, bliss, self, and purity and meditating on them. Because of their non-belief, they are not interested in seeking and meditating on the techniques for the attainment of the transcendental eternity, which is the ultimate realization of the sameness between samsāra and nirvāṇa without deterioration; the transcendental bliss, which is the elimination of even the mind-made body and its cause, uncontaminated karma; the transcendental self, which is absolute pacification of all reifications of self-habit and truth-habit regarding selflessness; and the transcendental purity, which is the complete the elimination of the ground of instincts for misknowledge.

If you become attached to mere literalness and do not even care for a detailed explanation of the literal meaning like someone did, should you contemplate which
sravaka or pratyekabuddha would meditate on Buddha-essence as impermanent, suffering, and impure?

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2.2.2.2. Being Misunderstanding of reality

Thus, this enumeration explains that this Element, which is characterized as the supreme eternity, the supreme bliss, the supreme self, and the supreme purity, is also not the object experienced by any sravaka and pratyekabuddha because they indulge in the path which is involved with the mental habit of holding to truth-status in impermanence, etc., and is in direct contradiction to the attainment of the Truth Body.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3. Proof
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.2.3.1. Prelude

As to this fact that [the Element] is not the object experienced by those who indulge in misconceptions with the notions of impermanence, suffering, selflessness, and impurity, the Lord has explicated in detail in the Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra with the example of a jewel in the pond. It runs as follows:

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.2.3.2. Scriptural Reference
3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.1. The Simile

Bhikṣus, suppose that in the hot season, people put on their swimsuits and were playing in the water with various ornaments and enjoyments. Suppose then, someone would lose a valuable vaidūrya jewel in the water. Thus, in order to retrieve this vaidūrya jewel, all the people, leaving aside their ornaments, would dive into the water. They would mistake pebbles or gravel in the pond for the real jewel, take them out, thinking: "I have got the jewel!" Looking at them from the bank of the pond, they would notice: "It is not the jewel at all!" Meantime, the water of that pond would
seem to shine by the power of that jewel. Such perception would make them realize its quality and proclaim: "How wonderful!" Then, a skillful and intelligent person would get the real jewel out.

The statement "in order to retrieve this vaidūrya jewel, all the people, leaving aside their ornaments, would dive into the water" is used as an analogy for [śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas'] turning away from worldly distractions and their engagement in pursuit of the meaning of the ultimate reality. "They would mistake pebbles or gravel in the pond for the real jewel" is for their misconceptions about the ultimate reality of all things as impermanence and the refutation of the subjective self in coarse forms. "Looking at them from the bank of the pond, they would notice: It is not the jewel at all" is for an awareness of their own previous mistakes after realizing the meaning of emptiness. "The water of that pond would seem to shine by the power of that jewel" is for their misconceptions about the ultimate reality of all things as the refutation of the subjective self in coarse forms. "A skillful and intelligent person would get the real jewel out" is for people who have understood the meaning of emptiness.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2.2. The Import

Likewise, bhikṣus, you who are ignorant of the ultimate reality of things, meditate with all perceptual habits, maintaining that all things are impermanent, that all things are suffering, that all things are selfless, and all things are impure, and meditate repeatedly and increasingly. But all these attempts are useless. Therefore, bhikṣus, you should become skilful, not taking those like the pebbles or gravel in the pond. Bhikṣus, these things upon which you meditate with all perceptual habits, maintaining that all things are impermanent, that all things are suffering, that all things are selfless, and all things are impure, and meditate repeatedly and increasingly, are [actually] eternal, blissful, pure, and possessed of self.
These [perceptual habits] should be understood in detail, according to the scripture, as misconceptions with regard to the arrangement of the ultimate reality of things.

These statements mean the same thing as taught in the *Yogācārācatuḥśataka* and the *Yuktisāstikā*: that the path to the realization of the sixteen [aspects of the Four Noble Truths] including impermanence, etc. is the path that brings [śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas] to maturity in obtaining their respective enlightenment. Here, in order to establish the unique vehicle, this path is demonstrated clearly by the commentary to be the one that brings [śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas] to maturity in obtaining the four kinds of transcendence.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.3. Those of No Understanding Because of Deviation from Emptiness

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.1. General Statement

[Lastly,] "those whose minds have deviated from emptiness" refer to (4) bodhisattvas who have just entered the vehicle and are deprived of the understanding of Buddha-essence with regard to emptiness of intrinsic reality.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2.3.2. Specific Explanation

Although these bodhisattvas have cultivated the spirit of supreme enlightenment, they do not understand the meaning of emptiness. They are the Mahāyāna people who accept emptiness of the subjective self in the coarse form as the door to liberation because it newly destroys previous phenomena with truth-status, thinking that nirvāṇa means annihilation and destruction of the real existence of the addictions, attachment, etc.
by the force of meditating on antidotes. This statement indicates that there are certain bodhisattvas who do not really understand the meaning of emptiness except the view accepted by Sautrāntika śrāvakas as explained in the Abhidharmakosā and its commentary as well as in [Dharmakirti's] Seven Logical Treatises.

Furthermore, great bodhisattvas who are Yogācāryas or Vījñānavādins have the apprehension of emptiness with truth-status that is devoid of substantial subject-object dichotomy, negating that material, etc., are included in external things. That is what we should realize by the rational cognition of ultimate deeds, and upon which we should meditate. This statement should be understood to be a strong negation of the assertion that the import of this Mahāyānottaratantra does not go beyond the Vījñānavādin system.

As to someone's assertion that the former position accepts nihilism and the latter accepts eternalism, it should be understood that both positions fall into extremes of nihilism and eternalism.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4. Recognizing the Nature of the Element

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.1. Question

How then, is this Buddha-essence, which is not the object for those mentally deviated, expressed with regard to emptiness?

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2. Answer

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.1. The Śāstra

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.1.1. The Main Meaning

\[892 \text{mtha' thug spyod pa' rigs shes.}\]
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.1.1.1. The Basis: The ultimate reality of Things

From this naturally pure Element, there are no pre-existing addictions with intrinsic reality-status or the conceptual objects of the subjective and objective self-habits to be newly removed, since they never came into existence from the beginning. This statement teaches that adherence to the truth-status of anything is a reification deviating from the meaning of the ultimate reality and the conceptual objects of such adherence could never be established from the beginning. Although the habit of intrinsic reality-status of the addictions is included in the objective self-habit, it is explained separately on purpose. The twofold selflessness is absolutely nothing original to be newly added upon the Element, since emptiness of the subjective and objective selves is the nature of the Element. This statement teaches that the assertion of non-existence of the twofold selflessness is a repudiation mistakenly applied in the meaning of ultimate reality, and that the negation of the conceptual objects [of self-habit] is not newly presented. If the statement that "there is no defilement to be removed; there is no antidote to be produced" were explained in a general sense without qualification, it would be a repudiation of both what is to be eliminated and its antidote. 893 Moreover, these first two lines can again be explained in a positive way: if the addictions with truth-status could be established as not being previously existent and newly removable, then emptiness of true existence of the addictions would be established as not being previously non-existent and newly posited. This is an explanation in terms of being the elucidation of the categorical differential. 894 If explained in terms of exemplification: ultimate reality is established on the basis of the fact that there is no recent removal in the slightest of previous truth-status of person and

893 spang gnyen.
894 rang ldog dngos bstan.
aggregates; conventional reality, in which all deeds and agents are possible by virtue of emptiness of intrinsic identifiability, is also established on the basis of the fact that there is no recent establishment in the slightest of previous non-existent magic-like relativity that is empty of truth [-status]. In summary, this verse teaches the integration between ultimate reality which is the emptiness of true existence, devoid of anything involved in the object of the truth-habit, and conventional reality of which all arrangements of deed and agent are accepted by the same [philosophical] system [that accepts emptiness], and thus, are possible.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.1.1.2. The View which Realizes Reality

Reality that is emptiness of intrinsic identifiability of person and aggregates should be perceived correctly by the wisdom that realizes intrinsic realitylessness. This is the view that realizes the meaning of the ultimate reality.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.1.1.3. Fruition Coming from Habitual Affinity for This View

...and conjoined with extensive techniques, the deeds, correct perception comes into liberation, the attainment of the perfect buddhahood, from habitual affinity for this view.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.1.2. Proof

From this Element, the addictions with intrinsic reality-status are absolutely nothing obsolete to be newly removed. The Element is primordially empty of intrinsic reality-status of coincidental [defilements], which have a character of being separable from it by habitual affinity for antidotes. This teaches the objective condition of the twofold truth;
that is, it is possible to separate the addictions by the habitual affinity for antidotes and the addictions have never partaken of intrinsic reality-status from the beginning.

The emptiness of intrinsic reality-status of the addictions is absolutely nothing original to be newly added upon this Element. The Element is not empty from the beginning of emptiness of intrinsic reality-status of the addictions, the object [of the wisdom of emptiness] which makes possible the production of the unexcelled Buddha qualities such as the powers, etc., of character indivisible from it. This teaches that the ultimate reality, the object of the wisdom that directly realizes selflessness which is the cause of producing the Buddha qualities such as the powers, etc., exists from the very beginning. These expositions teach: the basis, which is the twofold relative and ultimate truths; the path, which is the wisdom that directly realizes selflessness; and its capacity to obtain fruition, perfect buddhahood, and so forth. The assertion that these [expositions] teach self-emptiness of the relative -- e.g., vase is empty by vase itself, and other-emptiness of the ultimate that is the truth-status in the ultimate reality -- should be understood to be the ultimate reification and repudiation, far from what is accepted [by the Master].

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2. Explaining that Emptiness Is Not the Object for Those Mentally Deviated after Its Recognition

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.1. Explanation of the Ultimate reality

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.1.1. The Main Meaning

What is demonstrated by this statement? There are absolutely not two kinds of self, the objects of the subjective and objective truth-habits. In turn, the causes of the
defilements are newly removed from this naturally pure Element of Tathāgata, since this Element is by nature devoid of intrinsic identifiability of coincidental defilements. This teaches ultimate reality as the emptiness of intrinsic identifiability, and the emptiness of own essence. In light of this, the arrangement of the two realities [of this treatise] should be understood to be equal to what is accepted by the Savior Nagarjuna. Also, there is no twofold selflessness in the slightest. The object of the wisdom that directly realizes selflessness and is the cause of purification, being newly added, since its nature is emptiness of intrinsic reality, the noumenon indivisible from the pure qualities by antidotes, and so forth.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.2. Scriptural Reference

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.2.1. Regarding the Proof

Therefore, the Buddha states in the śrīmālā-sūtra as follows:

Buddha-essence is empty of the truth-status of all the sheaths of addictions that can be definitely differentiated and separated from the nature of the mind by the force of antidotes. Buddha-essence is not empty of Buddha's qualities that are inconceivable, far beyond the sand grains of the Gaṅgā in number and cannot be differentiated and inseparable [from the Essence].

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.4.2.2.1.2.2. Regarding the Realization Mode of the Truth of the Path
Thus, the [fact] that something which has intrinsic reality-status does not exist is correctly observed as "emptiness of something" by the wisdom that directly realizes selflessness. The [fact] that something remains is correctly known as "rational existence."

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.1.3. Précis

These two verses demonstrate the exact definition of "emptiness" because they teach about emptiness as free of two extremes of reification of the truth and repudiation of the relative.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.2. Teaching That It Is Not the Object for Those Mentally Deviated and Who Attach to Errors

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.2.1. Emptiness Being Not the Object for Those Mentally Deviated and the Others

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.2.1.1. The Main Meaning

Those whose minds have deviated from emptiness because of falling into the extremes of reification and repudiation and are distracted in those speculations, neither doing meditation nor concentration upon it, are called by this reason "those whose minds have deviated from emptiness." Indeed, lacking intuition of ultimate emptiness, no one would be able to realize and obtain the pure reality, the ultimate element, which is free of constructive thought. This demonstrates that the naturally pure Element is ultimate reality.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.2.1.2. Scriptural Reference

Intending this point, the Buddha states [in the Śrīmālā-sūtra] as follows:
The intuition of Buddha-essence is nothing but the buddhas' intuition of emptiness. This Buddha-essence has never been perceived and has never been realized by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.

This teaches that the intuition of Buddha-essence is buddhas' intuition intending buddhas' permanent meditative equipoise. The statement that it is not the object experienced by śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas indicates that they cannot realize it by their own power.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.2.2 Logical Proof

This section is divided into three parts.

Firstly, this Buddha-essence of the ultimate element is said to be an object not experienced by those who have fallen into the futile view, since the intuition of the ultimate element is an antidote to the view of the extreme-habit.

Secondly, Buddha-essence in terms of being the Truth Body, the essence of transcendent qualities, is said to be an object not experienced by those who indulge in misconceptions, since the Truth Body is demonstrated as an antidote to the truth-conviction of the worldly things, such as impermanence, etc.

Thirdly, Buddha-essence in terms of being the Truth Body, the essence of the perfectly pure qualities, is said to be an object not experienced by those whose minds have mentally deviated from emptiness, since the transcendent Truth Body, from which the pure excellences are indivisible, is by nature empty of coincidental defilements which
are separable. The Element is naturally pure because of being emptiness free of the extremes of reification and repudiation. The statement "the pure excellences are indivisible from it" teaches that the Element is devoid of the object of repudiation, and the statement "it is empty of coincidental defilements" teaches that the Element is devoid of the object of reification.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.3. Teaching That It Is the Object Experienced by Bodhisattvas in the Ten Stages

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.3.1. The Main Meaning

If the direct realization of [the Element] with reference to the unique intuition that is undifferentiated from the ultimate element is the ultimate, then it will render a variety of vehicles in three different systems non-ultimate. While the natural purity of the transcendent Truth Body, i.e. the ultimate reality, is realized by intended disciples of the Mahāyānotratantra with respect to objective universal\(^{895}\) during the paths of accumulation and application, its direct perception is here accepted as the "slight" observation of Buddha-essence in short period of meditative equipoise by bodhisattvas who are abiding on the ten stages, unlike the Buddha's perception by permanent meditative equipoise, since they have to stay in meditative equipoise and aftermath alternately...

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.4.2.2.3.2. Scriptural Reference

...as stated [in the Astasāhasrikāprājñāpāramitā-sūtra]:

\(^{895}\) don spyī.
Even noble bodhisattvas in the great stages with pure vision of wisdom cannot perceive you, ultimate reality, at all times because their perception of ultimate reality is in meditative equipoise alone; thus their intellects are still partial, just as the sun in the sky [is seen] through a gap in clouds. Lord, your Truth Body can be only perceived by those with limitless intellect, which pervades the space of ultimate reality of infinite knowables through permanent meditative equipoise.

Someone asserts that the "slight" observation refers to the scope of the direct realization of the noumenon instead of being a short period of perception owing to alternate meditative equipoise and aftermath experienced by the noble bodhisattvas. This should be known as the message that is unable to formulate the arrangement.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3. Demonstrating the Need of Proclaiming That Living Beings Are Possessed of Buddha-essence

This part includes the arrangement of disputes and the disputation and refutation about the uselessness [of this teaching on Buddha-essence]. Although it is also correct to explain this following section as the exposition of the prior section starting with "being the realization of [the Element] with reference to the unique intuition" along with the verses as proof, this would not contradict the explanation just mentioned above.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1. Disputes and Summary as Prelude

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.1. Disputes
Question: If this Buddha-essence is thus so difficult to cognize inasmuch as it is not always the object even for supreme noble ones who are abiding on the pure stages characterized as ultimately free of attachment, then what is the use of this teaching to the naïve? It is useless to teach them because they would not be able to understand.

Although the disputes about uselessness and contradiction are both presented in the treatise, while the latter dispute is extremely clear, the former is a bit unclear and is palpable only in reply that refutes the dispute. Thus, the commentary adds a supplement to the treatise.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.1.2. Summary

Reply: There are two verses summarizing the purpose of this teaching on the Element: the first is a qualm, and the second is the response.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2. Brief Statement on Disputes and Replies

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1. General Meaning

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1.1. Disproving Improper Perspective

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1.1.1. The Explanation of the Treatise Teaching the Need of Proclaiming the Element as Permanent Entity Being Nonsense

Assertion: In the second wheel [of the Dharma] all things are said to be similar to clouds, dreams, and illusions. In this final wheel it is said there exists Buddha-essence, a permanent entity. As to the refutation of the arguments of contradiction between these two wheels and the uselessness of the teaching on [Buddha-essence]: the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra teaches that all relative things are emptiness of their own
essence, inert emptiness, nihilistic emptiness, and partial emptiness; that is, they are self-emptiness, e.g., the vase is empty of the vase itself; the final wheel teaches that within the continua of all living beings there exists Buddha-essence, a permanent entity, endowed with all excellences such as the powers, etc. [This] is to say that ultimate reality is the profound other-emptiness devoid of all relative things. This is the necessity of the teaching on the Element. The verses starting with "it has been said that the reality-limit is forever empty of a compounded thing" is the refutation of the argument about contradiction. Moreover, it shows that ultimate reality is empty by all relative things.

Reply: Such an explanation is absolutely irrelevant, since an understanding of a permanent entity existing within one's continuum would not be conducive in the slightest to cultivation of the spirit of enlightenment. According to your explanation, since an "ultimate" living being is a permanent entity, he or she would not have an aspiration to become a buddha. In addition, there would be no need for this being to become a buddha again because he or she has been a buddha from the beginning. As to a "relative" living being, since it is empty by itself just as child of a barren woman not existent among knowable things; which discouraged living being would be inspired by such a teaching on the existence of Buddha-essence as a permanent entity? There is not a Buddhist who would not be an opponent of this view that falls into the extremes of both eternalism and nihilism! Furthermore, listen! Since you claim that the reality-limit is empty by suffering and its origin comprised of karma, addictions, and the aggregates of retribution, is it devoid of the relative holy truth of the path as well? If you are still not convinced,
then wipe your eyes and read carefully! Although this system should be refuted in detail, since it is an obvious erroneous constructive thought, I think that this much refutation is enough to serve the purpose, and is therefore not in need of further elaborations.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.2.1.1.2. The Explanation of the Treatise Teaching the Reason Why the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra Is Said to Be Interpretable in Meaning Being Irrelevant

Someone explained the meaning of self-emptiness similar to the assertion above. [According to this philosophical position,] no identification of anything can be made in the slightest, and hence, no distinction between being correct and incorrect can be drawn in the slightest. This position renders earnest determinations of action-abstention useless. In such a system, the arrangement of all relative things cannot be established by validating cognition. The refutation that depends on the mistaken perspective alone is a completely contradictory act, since even the perspective on which the relative things are based cannot be proved to be mistaken in this system. In addition, it is a repudiation of ultimate reality to accept it as not existent and not non-existent. Therefore, no distinction can be made between the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra that is interpretable in meaning [according to this person] and the other scriptures that are definitive in meaning. If the import of the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra were accepted according to the assertion above, to explain that this sūtra is not literally intended indicates that this person does not clearly understand what is taught in the sūtra and how Venerable [Maitreya] explains it in this treatise.

**Question:** But then, what is the import of the passage from the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra in which the Buddha states the following?

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901 hidepādeya, blang dor.
This poor householder thinks of himself as poor and wanders above [a treasure] without hearing of, knowing, and perceiving it. Likewise, worthy son, underneath all living beings' insistently reifying minds there exists Buddha-essence, a great treasure of all qualities of the Buddha such as the ten powers, fearlessnesses, and unique qualities. However, these beings have grown attached to form, sound, smell, taste, and contact, hence transmigrating within samsāra. Not hearing of this great Dharma treasure, they will not obtain it and will not make an effort to cleanse it [from defilements].

This passage does not demonstrate that a buddha endowed with the twofold purity exists within the continua of living beings, since it states literally that Buddha-essence is a treasure from which the powers, etc., will come about. It does not state that Buddha-essence is the excellences such as the powers, etc., in and of themselves, since earlier the sūtra states:

Within addicted beings possessing all addictions there exists the noumenon of the Tathāgata that is immovable and is not affected by any state of existence. Perceiving this, the Buddha proclaims: "They are all like me!"

Intending living beings' possession of reality as the mind's nature which is not different from the noumenon of the Tathāgata and is never penetrated by the defilements, the Buddha proclaims: "They are all like me!" This is the import of this scripture.
statement just as the explanation offered in this treatise. The śūtra does not advocate even literally that a buddha exists within a living being because this [second] statement clearly explains the intention of the [first] statement. If this meaning of the word as stated in the śūtra were unacceptable, since in this śūtra the Buddha also states "perceiving all livings being, Buddha-essence," you have to accept living beings themselves as Buddha-essence.

In order to avoid the misunderstanding that there exists within the continuum of a living being a buddha's Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity, the śūtra clearly states the existence of the noumenon, not the Truth Body endowed with the twofold purity as fabricated in someone's system. The intelligent ones should thus understand this matter through careful analysis. Even explained according to the assertion of certain Madhyamakas who treats truth-habit as part of cognitive obscuration, it would be hard for this person to think that the statement on clouds, etc., means that the nature of the mind is simply empty of suffering and its origin. Since the establishment of the Tathāgatagarbha-śūtra as interpretable in meaning does not correspond with what is explicated in this treatise, this śūtra must be accepted as definitive in meaning. If it had to be considered interpretable because it cannot to be taken literally but through explanation of the meaning of the word, then the statement from the Prajñāpāramitā-śūtra that "there is no form, no sound..." must be also accepted as intentional and unsuitable to be taken literally, because they are both under the same situation.

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3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1.1.3. Explanation That This Treatise Belongs to the Vijñānavādin System in Which the Second Wheel Is Established as Interpretable in Meaning Being Not Its Intention
The explanation for [this section of] disputations and refutations accepting the assertion of Yogācāryas as one's own system is not the import of this treatise. The *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* is established by Yogācāryas as interpretable in meaning through a process of showing the intimated basis, the need, and the refutation of literalness; the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* is considered definitive in meaning; and the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* is considered definitive in meaning in this treatise. Moreover, it would be insufficient to explain the import of the message from the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* that all things are empty; for example, the defilements are empty of suffering and its origin, because Yogācāryas accept the objective self-habit as the misapprehension of substantial difference of subject and object. But such emptiness is not taught in this treatise.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1.2. Adopting a Proper Perspective

*Dispute about a contradiction:* It has been taught in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* of the second wheel that all things are coincidental, like clouds, dreams, and illusions. This teaching contradicts the statement in the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* that the nature of the mind is immutable for eternity.

*Reply:* There is no difference in terms of being definitive in meaning between the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* of the second wheel and the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* of the final wheel. Since the truth-habit is established as coincidental, included in the addictions, and unable to penetrate the nature of the mind, that effortlessly proves all things to be empty in truth, free of reifications. I shall explain this point in the section on the meaning of the word.
Dispute about uselessness: Being difficult to cognize, it is useless to teach the naïve the Element.

Reply: It is thus taught in order to dispel five faults.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.1.3. Refutation of Disputes

Question: If the truth-habit is accepted as an addictive obscuration, then why an imagination about truth regarding three focal points is explained below as a cognitive obscuration?

Answer: There are instincts for the conviction about truth in three focal points; not in the truth-habit itself. [Furthermore,] there is no contradiction in taking truth-habit as a cognitive obscuration, since such an arrangement of what is to be eliminated and its antidote is explicated for disciples for whom it is temporarily inappropriate to teach subtle selflessness.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2. Its Ramifications

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.2.2.1. Disputes

Dispute about the contradiction: It has been taught in this and that Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, such as Prajñāpāramitāśādaśa-sāhasrikā-sūtra, Prajñāpāramitāśata-sāhasrikā-sūtra, that all knowables are forever empty of intrinsic identifiability - like clouds, dreams, and illusions. Why has Buddha declared here in the Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra, and also in the Śrīmālā-sūtra, etc., the final wheel of Dharma, that Buddha-essence, which penetrates the nature of mind, exists in living beings? Being coincidental is in direct contradiction to penetration into the nature [of mind].
Dispute about the uselessness: Since the naïve would not be able to cognize [Buddha-essence], what is the use of this teaching to them?

There are respectively two replies to the disputes of contradiction and uselessness. It is stated in the prelude to this section that "there are two verses summarizing the purpose of this teaching: the first is the qualm, and the second is the response."

Rejection: Although the second verse is a reply to the dispute of uselessness, there is no reply to the disputes of contradiction.

Answer: There is no problem. The explanation of the necessity of proclaiming the existence of the naturally pure Element also serves as a reply to the disputes of contradiction, since its meaning is summarized in this verse and will be clearly stated below.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.2.2.2. Replies

There is a need [for the Buddha] to state that there exists within all living beings the naturally pure Element which is the foundation for possible production of all buddha qualities. It has been taught for the purpose of dispelling five faults as follows: (1) the fault of being disheartened, which is an obscuration to cultivation of the spirit of supreme enlightenment, thinking "I will not be able to attain unexcelled enlightenment because I do not have the Buddha-gene," hence cultivating the spirit; (2) the fault of contempt for inferior beings when one has cultivated the spirit but has not realized that all beings have the Buddha-gene, which is an obscuration to perform the bodhisattva deeds, thinking "I can attain enlightenment but not the others;" hence performing the deeds with wish to direct all living beings onto the perfect enlightenment; (3) the fault of reification
apprehending things established in unreality as in reality, which is an obscuration to the realization of meaning of the ultimate reality; (4) the fault of repudiation, denying reality, the naturally pure Element which makes all buddha qualities possible, hence unmistakably understanding the two realities; and (5) the fault of excessive attachment to oneself of self-cherishing, which is an obscuration to the realization of equal exchange between self and other that is the cause of producing the spirit of supreme enlightenment, hence producing the spirit on the basis of equal exchange. This teaching on the existence of the Element has been taught for the purpose of dispelling these five faults, thereby cultivating the spirit of supreme enlightenment and learning the deeds in general, and the last transcendences in particular, in order to realize the Element. Having realized that the naturally pure Element taught in the final wheel is equivalent to emptiness explicated in the middle wheel, we shall come to understand that the former and later teachings are not mutually contradictory.

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3. **Detailed Exposition**

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.1. **Prelude**

The meaning of these two verses should be known briefly by the following ten verses:

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2. **The Śāstra**

3.1.2.1.2.2.1.2.3.3.2.1. **Explaining No Contradiction between the Former and Latter Teachings**
In the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* all things are said to be coincidental and empty of reality; in this final wheel, reality that penetrates into the nature of the mind has been taught. These two statements are not mutually contradictory, since the teaching of this [final wheel] that the reality-limit, Buddha-essence as the natural purity of living beings' mind, is forever empty of compounded things including suffering and its origin, which are coincidental things that cannot penetrate into the nature of the mind, is also the import of the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. We shall understand this import in the following way: the mere emptiness of suffering and its origin stated in this [final wheel] is taught within the context of the teaching on emptiness of reality of all things. The foremost addiction is the truth-habit that is the conviction in the truth of things. This [truth-habit] is coincidental, unable to penetrate into the nature of the mind. This refers to the fact that nothing can be established on the mind as what is apprehended by this [truth-habit], since no other techniques except the negation of the supposed object of the truth-habit can be used to establish the emptiness of reality of all things. If the addictions are proved to be coincidental, then karma and retribution, which are produced by the addictions, are coincidental, as well. Since the addictions, karma and retribution, which are produced by the addictions, are said in the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* to be coincidental, [the position that] all things are empty of reality should be established as the import of the *sūtra*.

[Furthermore,] since this emptiness of reality of living beings' mind is stated in the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra* to be the existence of the Element, these two teaching procedures of the middle and final wheels are proved to be not only compatible but also equivalent. If explained according to the Madhyamaka system that accepts the truth-habit as a cognitive obscuration, this reply would also appear to be a bit inappropriate. Thus, this treatise and its
commentary should be explained according to the Savior Nāgārjuna's assertion as explicated by the Master Candrakīrti. This way of explanation has been proved by many lines of reasoning that stop any possible limitation that it perfectly fits [the treatise's] meaning of the word. Therefore, the Omniscient Je Rinpoche (Tsong-kha-pa) bLo-bzang-grags-pa's eloquent elucidation of this treatise and its commentary should be known as a complete explanation for the intention of these treatises and to be truly outstanding.

Since the occurrence of addictions is coincidental to the mind, they are like clouds. Karma and retribution are like a dream, an illusion, and so forth. These should be understood in the following way: the addictions are likened to the clouds because the occurring of addictions is coincidental to the mind; karma, motivated and produced by the addictions, is like the experience in dreams because it is produced by delusion and is not established by what is experienced; and the contaminated aggregates, the retribution of addictions and karma, are likened to illusions made by magic because they are not established in reality, despite appearing in such way. However, if these statements were the proof of the teaching on emptiness of all things, it would be irrelevant to the teaching on emptiness of suffering and its origin alone. The assertion that ultimate reality is empty of all relative things reveals this person's poor understanding; for this treatise never teaches emptiness of the relative Truth of the Path directly and indirectly!

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2. Explaining the Need of Proclaiming Existence of the Element

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.1. Brief Statement

So the emptiness of intrinsic identity of all things, arranged previously in the second wheel, and again, in this Uttaratantra of the final wheel, in order to dispel these five
faults and to cultivate the five excellences, the existence of Buddha-essence within all living beings, along with the need of this teaching, has been taught.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2. Detailed Expositions
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1. Specific Expositions
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.1. Obscuration to Cultivation of the Spirit of Supreme Enlightenment

The need for living beings to realize the existence of the Buddha-gene within each of them is described as follows: firstly, not learning about this naturally pure Element, which makes all buddha qualities possible to come about, some of them feel disheartened. [They] think, "I will not be able to obtain buddhahood," because of the fault of self-contempt, [and they think they] will never cultivate the spirit of enlightenment. Thus, this teaching has been taught for the purpose of cultivating the spirit through the elimination of such faults.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.2. Obscuration to Performance of the Deeds

Secondly, some disciples have cultivated this spirit but have not realized the existence of the Buddha-gene within all living beings. Through pride, they think: "I can obtain buddhahood so I am superior!" They insistently accept the notion that those who have not cultivated this spirit are inferior. Thus, this teaching has been taught for the purpose of performing the deeds for living beings' welfare with the understanding that all beings are capable of obtaining buddhahood.
3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.3. Obscuration to the Distinctive Deed - Realization of the Import of the Ultimate Reality

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.3.1. Becoming under the Sway of Faults If Not Realized

Correct understanding of the ultimate reality for living beings' welfare will never arise in those who think in this way. Thus, since they are apprehending intrinsic reality-status of the unreal through the faults, they will not cognize reality, the emptiness of intrinsic identifiability of the faults.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.3.2. The Means of Realizing It

These faults of living beings, attachment, etc., are not real as they are newly fabricated by conditions and are coincidental; that is, dependently originated. In reality, these faults do not have a self of intrinsic identifiability, while the excellences are pure by nature.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.4. Obscuration to Cultivation of Love and Compassion That Are Causes for Cultivating the Spirit

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.3.3.2.2.2.1.4.1. Explaining From the Reversed Perspective

If one apprehends the unreal faults as established in intrinsic reality, and repudiates the emptiness of intrinsic reality which makes the real excellences, the buddha qualities possible to come about, one will not obtain loving-kindness, which is the wish for all beings to be filled with happiness, and compassion, which is the wish for all beings to be free from suffering, through practice of other-cherishing, by which the wise sees the
equality between oneself and other living beings in terms of the existence of the Buddha-
gene and the capacity for obtaining buddhahood.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.1.3.2.2.1.4.2. Explaining From the Positive Perspective

On the contrary, through learning this teaching on the existence of the Buddha-gene
within all living beings, there arises in the mind of these disciples enthusiasm for: that
attainment of buddhahood, respect other living beings as for the Teacher, wisdom which
realizes that the faults are not established by means of any intrinsic reality, intuition
which realizes that all buddha qualities are possible to come about, as well as great love,
as explicated above.

3.1.2.1.2.1.2.2.2.2. Brief Statement on Benefits of being Free of Five Faults

Because of production in the continua of these disciples of these five qualities, in
which the stages of the Mahāyāna path is included, the fault of self-contempt will be
absent and the equality between oneself and others in terms of the capacity for obtaining
buddhahood will be perceived. Recognizing that the faults are not established by means
of any intrinsic reality, possession of excellences that are possible to come about,
the equality between oneself and living beings in terms of the capacity for obtaining
buddhahood, one will swiftly obtain the perfect buddhahood by mediating on the stages
of the Mahāyāna path.

3.1.2.1.2.1.3. Title of Chapter
This concludes a clear exposition of Buddha-essence encapsulated in the first summary verse, starting from the line, "Buddhas' wisdom enters into the multitudes of living beings," in the *Ratnagotravibhāgāmahāyānottaratantra*. Although it seems appropriate to take the "first verse" as the verse on the arrangement of the whole treatise, I think the explanation just mentioned is correct. This concludes the exposition of reality which is mingled with defilements, as well.

Based on my venerable teacher's personal instructions,

I have clearly elucidated with simple words

The import of the scriptures such as the *Śrīmālā* and the *Tathāgatagarbha,*

As explicated by the Father and Son Bodhisattvas⁹⁰².

Thus, the exposition of the first chapter of the commentary of the treatise elucidating the intention of the Mahāyāna scriptures definitive in meaning is completed.

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⁹⁰² Maitreya and Asaṅga.