Rong-zom-pa's Discourses on Buddhohogy

A Study of Various Conceptions of Buddhahood in Indian Sources with Special Reference to the Controversy Surrounding the Existence of Gnosis (jñāna: ye shes) as Presented by the Eleventh-Century Tibetan Scholar Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po

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To my parents
Rina and Issachar Almogi
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Preface

The question surrounding the nature of Buddhahood is central to all Buddhist traditions, and has been answered by them in different ways, depending on their doctrinal and philosophical presuppositions. It appears that from the eighth or ninth century onwards this issue received heightened attention. Theoretical reflections generated by it stirred up additional controversies—some heated—particularly among later Indian Madhyamaka scholars. Two related questions that concerned them most were whether gnosis (jñāna: ye shes) exists at the stage of a buddha and how a buddha is able to act in the world for the sake of sentient beings. The debates on the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha seem to have reached their peak during the eleventh century and to have continued to occupy Indian Buddhist scholars up until the destruction of institutionalized Buddhism in India. Tibetan authors inherited this controversy and engaged in it themselves with great interest. Indeed one finds related polemic in works as late as the twentieth century, but most discussions are confined to works of the eleventh to fourteenth century, from which point onwards there has been a clear decline in both the amount and scope of such disputation.

The present study looks into the investigation of buddhology—that is, conceptions of Buddhahood found in various traditional Buddhist systems and scriptures—by the eleventh-century rNying-ma author and translator Rong-zom Choskyi-bzang-po (henceforth Rong-zom-pa). The bulk of attention will be devoted to his work titled *Sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo* (henceforth *Sangs sa chen mo*) (An Extended [Exposition on] the Stage of a Buddha). This treatise—the only known Tibetan (and, as far as I am aware, indeed pan-Indian) work of its kind on buddhology—discusses its subject at length, focusing on the controversy about whether gnosis exists—on the conventional level—at the stage of a buddha. My attention was first drawn to this

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1 Following Paul Harrison, I employ the term ‘buddhology’ (written in lower case) to refer to theories on and conceptions of the nature of a buddha (i.e. Buddhahood), while reserving ‘Buddhology’ (capitalized) for an alternative designation for Buddhist Studies. See Harrison 1995, p. 24, n. 4.

2 In the present study I differentiate between a buddha (i.e. written in lower case and italicized), a title referring to any unspecified awakened person, and Buddha (i.e. written in roman and capitalized), a title referring to Sākyamuni Buddha or any other particular awakened person. (The same convention has been employed in the case of other titles: for example, bodhisattva versus...
controversy when I was working on my Master’s thesis, titled “The Life and Works of Rong-zom Paṇḍita,” for which I critically edited and translated Mi-pham-rgya-mtsho’s (1846–1912) Rong zom gsung ’bum dkar chag me tog phreng ba (Garland of Flowers: A Catalogue to Rong-zom’s Collected Works), and prepared a detailed catalogue of Rong-zom-pa’s three-volume collected works. In his catalogue, Mi-pham devotes an entire passage to this issue, with the aim of refuting what he believed to be the wrongly held view that Rong-zom-pa denied the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha. Any denial of the existence of gnosis had obviously been difficult to digest by most Tibetan scholars, and the prevailing position in Tibet was and still is that a buddha does possess gnosis. Mi-pham attempts to interpret Rong-zom-pa’s statements in which he unquestionably maintains that gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha as only referring to gnosis that had been generated on the path but not to gnosis as such, for Rong-zom-pa, Mi-pham argues, is an expounder of rDzogs-chen, a system in which what is called ‘self-occurring gnosis’ (rang byung gi ye shes: svayambhujñāna) features prominently. Nonetheless, from my examination of Rong-zom-pa’s discussions of the whole issue, it has become evident that he did indeed deny the existence of any cognitive element whatsoever at the stage of a buddha, the sole constituent of Buddhahood being for him the purified dharmadhātu. Although he alludes to self-occurring gnosis on numerous occasions in his works, there is a salient difference between his and Mi-pham’s understanding of the term: for Mi-pham self-occurring gnosis is something cognitive, whereas for Rong-zom-pa, who equates it with the dharmadhātu, it is not. Rong-zom-pa, however, does not deny that a buddha’s gnosis, as mere appearance, manifests to those who have not yet attained release and thus have not yet eliminated all their delusions. A buddha, on the other hand, whose delusions have been completely exhausted, does not possess such gnosis. This position of Rong-zom-pa’s does not seem to be an exceptional case. It can be shown in fact that numerous, if not the majority, of Indian Madhyamaka scholars of the eleventh century took a position similar to that of Rong-zom-pa. Furthermore, several works of early bKa’-gdams scholars that have come to light recently show that Rong-zom-pa was not the only Tibetan of his time to hold such a view. It thus appears that while the latter was indeed current among Tibetan scholars of the eleventh century, for a variety of reasons it was soon superseded by the less radical position which allows for the existence of some kind of cognitive element.

The study consists of three parts. Part one, a lengthy introduction, has four chapters. In chapter one, “Rong-zom-pa’s Discussion of the Controversy surrounding the Constituents of Buddhahood: An Overview,” I first present the main positions discussed by Rong-zom-pa in the Sangs sa chen mo and then contrast them with the positions named in the dKon cog ’grel, his lengthy commentary on the *Guhyagarbhatantra. In the following section I outline the conceptions of Buddhahood contained in various scriptural

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3 A considerably revised and enlarged version of the thesis is currently under preparation for publication in the near future.
systems, as presented by Rong-zom-pa in both the *Sangs sa chen mo* and the *dKon cог 'grel*. Then I present the Buddhist doxographical systems and schools, namely, the subdivisions of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and their theories of knowledge, which serve as the basis for the various positions described by Rong-zom-pa in his *dKon cог 'grel*. Finally I provide a summary of Rong-zom-pa’s discussions of the issue in other works, particularly his *Ita ba'i brjed byang*, and briefly outline his partitioning of Madhyamaka in this connection.

In both the *Sangs sa chen mo* and the *dKon cог 'grel*, Rong-zom-pa identifies a multiplicity of buddhological concepts employed in various scriptural systems. He does so, however, very briefly, merely mentioning the general features of each of the buddhological concepts, such as the number of *buddha*-Bodies and gnoses posited, and specifies the scriptural systems in which the concepts occur. In chapter two, “Buddhology in Its Historical and Philosophical Context: An Overview,” I survey independently the major conceptions of Buddhahood found in individual scriptural systems, more or less following the schemata presented by Rong-zom-pa. No in-depth treatment of any constituent of Buddhahood posited by the scriptural systems has been attempted, and some themes will certainly require further study. What I have done is to provide an overview of the main buddhological concepts and to sketch the key features of each constituent of Buddhahood mentioned by Rong-zom-pa. I discuss the principal conceptions of Buddhahood under three rubrics: (i) conservative or non-Mahāyāna buddhology, including the notions of nirvāṇa without remains and of transcendent and multiple *buddhas* of the Mahāsāṃghika/Lokottaravāda school, (ii) non-Tantric Mahāyāna buddhology, including the notions of the true nature of the world being nirvāṇa; Buddhahood as defined by its qualities and what is called unfixed nirvāṇa; the theories of the three Bodies and four gnoses; and the notion of bliss, and (iii) Vajrayāna or Tantric buddhology, including the notions of *mantras*, *vidyās*, *dhāraṇīs*, and *mudrās*; manifold expressions of Buddhahood (namely, multiple Bodies, gnoses, and *buddha*-families); and the notions of Ādibuddha, wrathful manifestations, *mandalas*, and great bliss.

Chapter three, “The Controversy surrounding the Existence of Gnosis at the Stage of a Buddha,” is devoted to the controversy over whether a *buddha* possesses gnosis, which is the focus of Rong-zom-pa’s discourses on the conceptions of Buddhahood. Here I first provide some background to the controversy, especially as it relates to the problem of ascribing a mental or cognitive element to the absolute. I further discuss in brief the main subdivisions of Yogācāra and their respective theories of knowledge, which, as pointed out by Rong-zom-pa, ultimately led to the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* in the first place. In this context, the controversy between the Sākāravādins and Nirākāravādins is particularly relevant. I then go on to discuss the key terms employed in the controversy, including the Tibetan term *ye shes* and the terms non-conceptual gnosis (*rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes: nirvikalpajñāna*) and pure mundane gnosis (*dag pa'jig rten pa'i ye shes: śuddhālaṅkajñāna*). There follows a discussion of the problem of the absolute and its activity in the world, in the context of the doctrine of unfixed nirvāṇa. Finally, I provide an overview of the various Indian positions (and their proponents) considered in this study, along with the positions of three early Tibetan authors. I have limited myself to Indian and Tibetan sources which I thought Rong-zom-pa could have been aware of, or else those that propound one of the positions he himself discussed. These citations of relevant passages by Indian and early Tibetan authors are intended, on the one hand, to put Rong-zom-pa’s discussion in its
historical context and, on the other, to determine his sources and identify proponents of the positions he mentions.

In chapter four, "Rong-zom-pa’s Position on Whether Gnosis Exists at the Stage of a Buddha," I first identify Tibetan scholars who claimed that Rong-zom-pa denied the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, and then discuss Mi-pham’s treatment of the issue in his catalogue to Rong-zom-pa’s collected works, while also providing a translation of the pertinent text. Next I examine the notion of self-occurring gnosis as it occurs in Indian sources and as it is understood by Rong-zom-pa. I then move on to Rong-zom-pa’s view on how buddhas act in the world for the benefit of sentient beings, and lastly I focus on the question of which Madhyamaka subschool Rong-zom-pa was actually affiliated to. I argue that he was a follower of the branch known as Sarvadharmapratisthānavāda, which later came to be equated by some later Tibetan scholars with Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka.

Part two consists of four sections containing annotated translations of (i) Rong-zom-pa’s *Sangs sa chen mo,* (ii) the pertinent passage from his *dKon cog 'grel,* and passages dealing with the debate over the existence of gnosis as reflected in (iii) Indian and (iv) Tibetan sources up until the eleventh or early twelfth century (by authors, that is, who lived prior to or contemporary with Rong-zom-pa). Part three comprises critical editions of the texts translated in part two and of longer passages cited in chapters two and four of part one (the Tibetan texts of short passages cited in part one are found in footnotes). The philological methods employed in the editions of the Tibetan text are described in introductory remarks to them. Finally, as an appendix, I have included a short discussion and a translation of a passage from Klong-chen-pa’s *Yid kyi mun sel,* a general outline of the *Guhyagarbhatantra,* which contains a presentation of various buddhological concepts, obviously inspired by Rong-zom-pa.

A few words may be said about my selection of primary and secondary sources: On the whole, I have attempted to explain key terms found in Rong-zom-pa’s discussions on the basis of his other works, and where possible, to clarify ideas put forward by him on the basis of parallel passages found elsewhere in his corpus. In a few cases, where Rong-zom-pa’s intent is not wholly transparent, I allude to other Tibetan authors, most of them from the rNying-ma school, particularly Klong-chen-pa (1308-1364) and Mi-pham-rgya-mtsho (1846-1912). For the general discussion of buddhology, I refer to both the Tibetan text and the English translation of bDud-'joms Rin-po-che’s *bsTan pa’i rnam gzhag* on several occasions. The only two cases in which I refer to works by authors of other schools are in my discussions of the subclassifications of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra, for which several doxographies have been consulted.

For the discussion of non-Mahāyāna and non-Tantric Mahāyāna buddhology, I have mainly availed myself of secondary sources, whereas for Tantric buddhology I for the most part make use of primary ones. As just stated, I draw preferentially on Rong-zom-pa’s own works, in which most of these topics are explained in one or the other context, but when deemed necessary I also resort to Indian Tantric sources (in Tibetan translation). Specific conceptions of Buddhahood have been studied over the years by a number of scholars. Only a few scholars, though, have attempted to examine the overall concept of Buddhahood. The main publication on this issue remains Paul J. Griffiths’s *On Being Buddha: The Classical Doctrine of Buddhahood.* The first two chapters of his book are devoted, respectively, to theoretical discussions of the study of doctrine in general and to Buddhist doctrine in particular. In the next chapter Griffiths considers the buddhological (or, as he terms it, “Buddhalogical”) doctrine in general, referring to what
he calls “maximal greatness,” the various epithets of a buddha, and the properties of a buddha, resorting thereby to various non-Mahāyāna and non-Tantric Mahāyāna “digests.” In the three chapters that follow he focuses on the scheme of the three buddha-Bodies: chapter four (“Buddha in the World”) discusses a buddha’s appearance in the form of a nirmāṇakāya and his salvific activities in the world; chapter five (“Buddha in Heaven”), his appearance in the form of a sambhogakāya in pure realms; and chapter six (“Buddha in Eternity”), a buddha in the sense of the dharmakāya, with special reference to his knowledge (jñāna) and to “metaphysical predicates” of Buddhahood, such as tathātā and dharmadātu. The last chapter (“Doctrinal Criticism”) subjects the buddhological doctrine to systematic analysis. The main shortcoming of this study is that it attempts to present the theme as if there were a uniform conception of Buddhahood, thereby disregarding any historical development or divergence resulting from varying philosophical systems. This is in contradistinction to the present study, which presupposes a historical development, as already suggested by Rong-zom-pa himself. Given Griffiths’s non-historical approach and, again in contrast to the present study, the restriction of source material to mainly non-Mahāyāna and non-Tantric Mahāyāna works, this publication proved to be of little benefit and has been referred to only on a few occasions.

The subject was dealt with from a historical perspective by Lambert Schmithausen in a lecture, “Zur Entwicklung der Gestalt des Buddha,” given in the year 2000 within the continuing education programme “Buddhismus in Geschichte und Gegenwart” at the University of Hamburg.4 In it Schmithausen discussed reasons for the development of the conception of Buddhahood, and provided a brief description of various individual ones, starting with those found in the Pāli canon, namely, the one portraying the Buddha as a charismatic human being who attained awakening and another one tending to depict him as being endowed with supernatural abilities; and thence to the various conceptions found in Mahāyāna sources, including non-Tantric and Tantric ones. This lecture, despite its briefness, has proved to be of great usefulness for the present study.

The 1988 publication Wer ist Buddha?, edited by Perry Schmidt-Leukel, does not attempt to present the topic within a thematically coherent framework. The first part includes articles by various authors on the concept of a buddha found in several Buddhist traditions and scriptural systems (including one on the historical Buddha, one on the concept of the Buddha found in Theravāda Buddhism, one on the development of the image of the Buddha, one on the Buddha as conceived in the Lotus Sūtra, one on the concept of Buddhahood in later Mahāyāna, and one on the traits of the Buddha according to Shinran Shōnin). The second part includes several articles in which the issue is discussed from modern and non-Buddhist perspectives. As this publication approaches and treats the issue in a manner entirely different from the one employed in the present study, I have not been able to make use of it. Apart from the three studies just mentioned, there are several articles that focus on conceptions of Buddhahood in general, but I unfortunately had no access to them while preparing this study.5

4 The text is printed in Buddhismus in Geschichte und Gegenwart 4, and since recently also available on line at http://www.buddhismuskunde.uni-hamburg.de/.
There are, moreover, numerous studies devoted to different aspects of Buddhahood, particularly non-Tantric ones. Here I may point out a few publications that have been consulted in the present study to different degrees: The conception of Buddhahood in non-Mahāyāna Buddhism has been studied by Claudia Weber in her *Wesen und Eigenschaften des Buddha in der Tradition des Hīnayāna-Buddhismus*, published in 1994. Several studies have been devoted to how Mahāsāṃghika/Lokottaravāda viewed Buddhahood (e.g. Harrison 1982; Harrison 1995). Lambert Schmithausen studied the concept of Buddhahood in the Yogācāra context in his 1969 study *Der Nirvāṇa-Abschnitt in der Viniscayasamgrahani der Yogācārābhinīhīma* and has discussed various aspects of Buddhahood in several other articles. The *Bodhipiṭakala* of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* was studied by Ayako Nakamura for her Master’s thesis (2004). The problem of ascribing a mental element to the absolute was discussed by Erich Frauwallner in an article that appeared in 1951. In the context of non-Tantric Mahāyāna, special attention has been paid to the three kāyas, but the publications on the topic are too numerous to be mentioned here. I have mainly availed myself of the contributions made by Paul Harrison (the above-mentioned ones and his 1992 article) and John Makransky’s *Buddhahood Embodied*, which focuses on the controversy surrounding the interpretation of *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* concerning the number of Bodies. Regarding the controversy between the Sākāravādins and Nirākāravādins, which is closely connected with that surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, I have mainly relied on the studies by Yuichi Kajiyama (1965 and 1966) and Seitetsu Moriyama (1984a and 1984b). The Tantric conceptions of Buddhahood have received far less attention. For general discussions regarding some of the constituents of Buddhahood typical of Tantric Buddhism, I have resorted to several studies by André Padoux, which, in spite of the fact that they focus on non-Buddhist forms of Tantrism, have been very useful. As stated above, for my discussion of the various constituents of Buddhahood as conceived in this form of Buddhism, I have mainly utilized primary sources.

Given the wealth of material on conceptions of Buddhahood and the diversity of such notions, this study has in many respects barely scratched the surface. Nonetheless, I hope that I have at least accurately presented the various buddhological concepts referred to by Rong-zom-pa and that this study will give impetus to further studies on the issue, particularly in the Tantric context. My treatment of several points, especially Tantric notions of Buddhahood, is merely a preliminary overview, so as to place them within a general context. In many cases these topics proved to be more complex than I initially thought. I have therefore limited myself to trying to understand Rong-zom-pa’s discourses on buddhology by scrutinizing the structure manifested by and themes found in Rong-zom-pa’s presentations. Since the controversy regarding the existence of gnosis has been engaged in by numerous later Tibetan authors with great interest (even if, as far as I can tell at this point, they never surpass Rong-zom-pa’s discourses in scale or complexity), the amount of Tibetan material on the issue has turned out to be greater than anticipated. Moreover, the *bKa’ gdamgs gsung ‘bum*, which contains numerous works by early *bKa’-gdamgs masters that had until recently been inaccessible, includes several discussions of the issue; these will certainly shed some light on Rong-zom-pa’s

Preface

In closing I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all those who, in one way or another, assisted me in completing this study. As hinted at above, this study is the result and, in a way, the culmination of a long period of immersing myself in the rNying-ma school of Tibetan Buddhism in general, and the writings and doctrines of Rong-zom-pa in particular. It all began in 1994, when I had the opportunity to stay in the rNying-ma monastery rNam-grol-gling in Bylakuppe (South India) and to study several works of the rNying-ma tradition with various mKhan-pos. I would therefore like to take this occasion to express my thanks to Padma-nor-bu (Pad-nor) Rin-po-che and mKhan-chen Padmashes-rab who made my stay in rNam-grol-gling possible and who supported my studies under several scholars at the Ngagyur Nyingma Institute. These introduced me to various emblematic doctrines of the rNying-ma school and to the literature of a number of important rNying-ma scholars including Rong-zom-pa, Klong-chen-pa, and Mi-pham. Particular thanks are due to the late mKhan-po dBang-phyug-bsod-nams, who in the summer of 1995 read with me Mi-pham’s catalogue of Rong-zom-pa’s collected works, which, as alluded to above, contains a passage dealing with the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha and was the one in fact to draw my interest to the issue in the first place.

Special thanks are due to my husband Dr. Dorji Wangchuk (University of Hamburg), with whom, since 1994, I have been studying various topics within selected areas of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism—especially, but not exclusively, from the perspective of the rNying-ma school of Tibetan Buddhism—and who has all along supported my study on the historical and doctrinal traditions that go back to Rong-zom-pa. I am particularly grateful for the many hours of discussions we have had over the years on the whole complex of subjects—from which I have tremendously profited. His help in clarifying problems (both textual and doctrinal), his suggestions and comments, support, and advice during the process of preparing this study have been invaluable. I would also like to express my thanks to Prof. David Jackson for accepting this work as a Ph.D. thesis, even though the topic lies outside his specialized field of interest, and for his insightful remarks and suggestions. I am greatly thankful to Prof. Lambert Schmithausen, who very kindly agreed to be my second supervisor even after his retirement, and carefully went through my thesis, making suggestions on how to improve parts of it, particularly ones concerning corrupt passages from Indian texts in Tibetan translation, and others concerning conceptions of Buddhahood in Indian Buddhist sources in general. I am also indebted to Prof. Harunaga Isaacson for his very helpful suggestions and comments, and for his broader support over the past few years; to Prof. Tatiana Oranskaia for agreeing to be a member of the examining committee; and to Dr. Martin Delhey for his useful comments regarding Sanskrit usage.

My sincere thanks are also due to Prof. Franz-Karl Ehrhard (University of Munich) for drawing my attention to Mi-pham’s catalogue to Rong-zom-pa’s collected works in the first place and for providing me a copy of the work back in 1994; PD Dr. Felix Erb (University of Hamburg), who has always been ready to help locate untraceable publications; and Mr. Burkhard Quessel (British Library, London) for providing access to numerous sources otherwise unavailable to me. I would like to take this opportunity to
also thank Prof. Albrecht Wezler (University of Hamburg, professor emeritus) under whom I worked for several years at the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) and later the Nepalese German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP), and to Prof. Michael Friedrich and Prof. Michael Zimmerman (both University of Hamburg) for rendering their help in different ways. My heartfelt thanks also go to Prof. Junkichi Imanishi, Prof. Florin Deleanu, Prof. Hubert Durt, and Mr. Shin’ichiro Hori (all of the International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo) for approving the publication of the present book in the Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series and for their support in various other ways.

I am also indebted to numerous other individuals: Dr. Anne MacDonald (University of Vienna) for her advice on different matters, and support and encouragement over the years; Dr. Diwakar Acharya (now at the University of Kyoto) and Ms. Anja Mohrdiek (University of Hamburg), two of my colleagues in the NGMPP/NGMCP, for their help in questions of Sanskrit; Dr. Mudagamuwe Maithirimurthi (now at the University of Heidelberg) for his support and friendship; Dr. Kazuo Kano (now at Koyasan University) and Ms. Ayako Nakamura (Ph.D. candidate, University of Hamburg) for their help in obtaining several Japanese publications to which I had no access; and Mr. Peter Radenberg for his constant help in IT matters. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Philip Pierce (Nepal Research Centre, Kathmandu), who, while proofreading my English, not only made suggestions in matters of grammar and style but also numerous useful comments that made me reconsider and improve my thoughts and formulations in several occasions. I am greatly thankful for his painstaking reading of the manuscript more than once and for his patiently bearing with my last-minute changes. Finally my gratitude also goes to my parents Rina and Issachar Almogi for their loving care, concern, and support. Last but not least, I would also like to thank my friends Klaus Brücken (who sadly did not live to see this book in print) and Inga Brücken for assisting me in many ways from the first day I arrived in Hamburg and all through the years of my studies.

Orna Almogi

August 2008, Hamburg
Part One

Introduction
Chapter One

Rong-zom-pa’s Discussion of the Controversy Surrounding the Constituents of Buddhahood: An Overview

1. Introductory Remarks

A number of Tibetan scholars who have in one way or another discussed the different conceptions of Buddhahood found in the scriptures have asserted variously that the eleventh-century scholar and translator Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po maintained that gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha (buddhabhūmi)—that is, on the conventional level. Such assertions must have been mainly based on his work Sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo (henceforth Sangs sa chen mo), but probably these scholars also took into account short discussions of the issue found in other works of his. The Sangs sa chen mo, in which different positions regarding the stage of a buddha are presented, is one of the most systematic works on the subject ever written by an Indian or Tibetan author. In the bsTan-'gyur there is one work devoted to the stage of a buddha, namely, Śīlabhadra’s Buddhabhūmivākhyāna, a commentary on the Buddhabhūmisūtra, a work in which the stage of a buddha is explained in terms of the purified dharmaṅdhamūtu and the four gnoses.¹ The ’Phang thang ma catalogue notes three works on the topic in the list of commentaries on various sūtras (mdo sde sna tshogs kyi ‘grel pa), namely, the Sangs rgyas sa'i bsdus pa'i don (consisting of one hundred verses), Sangs rgyas sa'i bshad pa (consisting of three bam pos), and Sangs rgyas kyi sa las tshig gi don bsdus pa (consisting of eighty verses).² The identity of these works is, however, uncertain, and it is unclear, too, whether these works are commentaries on the Buddhabhūmisūtra or general

¹ Keenan regards the Buddhabhūmivākhyāna as a ‘parallel’ version of, and the basis for, the Buddhabhūmyupadesa extant in Chinese translation, where it is attributed to *Bandhuprabha (Keenan 1980, pp. 363–364). As I have been informed by Prof. Schmithausen, however, the Chinese colophon of this work reads “*Bandhuprabha, etc.,” which means that this work was probably compiled (and perhaps supplemented) by Hsūan-tsang from more than one Indian commentary.

² ’Phang thang ma (p. 36.10–12).
Rong-zom-pa's Discourses on Buddhology

treatises on the topic. I am not aware of any autochthonous Tibetan work besides Rong-
zom-pa's *Sangs sa chen mo* that is exclusively devoted to the topic.

Rong-pa Me-dpung, in his list of works composed by Rong-zom-pa entitled *rJe dharma bha dras mdzad pa'i chos kyi rnam grangs kyi tho yig* (henceforth *Tho yig*), states that Rong-zom-pa composed seven treatises, both long and short, on the stage of a *buddha*, which he classifies under the category of works on the 'result' ('bras bu). He does not, however, provide the titles or any other details on these works. ³ The *Sangs sa chen mo* is apparently the only work by Rong-zom-pa on this topic that has survived. As Rong-zom-pa himself declares in the opening statement of his *Sangs sa chen mo*, his objective in composing this work was to present the various positions regarding the teachings on the diverse constituents of Buddhahood for the sake of those who speculate whether these teachings are to be understood as definitive or provisional—in other words, whether the various constituents of Buddhahood taught in scriptures indeed exist (i.e. on the conventional level). Rong-zom-pa, who clearly holds these teachings to be provisional, resorts to scriptures considered by him to be of definitive meaning (including the *Vajracchedikā*, *Ratnakūta*, and *Jñānālokālaṁkāra*) to support his view and cites several passages in which a *buddha* is described as being nothing but the true reality, the mere purified *dharmadhātu*. He solves the problem as to how a *buddha* can act in the world for the sake of others if he is devoid of a mental element by arguing that there is no need for a substratum (i.e. gnosis) in order for a *buddha* to act in the world, for this occurs spontaneously in the wake of previous resolutions.⁴ In his concluding remarks, Rong-zom-pa states that although such a presentation and analysis of the differences regarding the theories concerning the stage of a *buddha* are certainly beyond the scope of ordinary people, he has taken upon himself the task of writing the work in the form of a 'memorandum' (*brjed byang*) for the benefit of those who engage in such discussions on the basis of the 'mere words' of the Buddha's teachings (*bka'i tshig tsam*, i.e. instead of their meaning), and who, depending on certain persons as authority, hold to inferior views as being superior and, not being able to resort to logical reasoning, engage in the activities of 'false imputation and depreciation' (*sgro skur*); and, in addition, for the benefit of his own students.⁵ His remarks make it evident that his discussions in this and other works belong to a wider discussion of the topic, which, as I shall show below, began in India and was continued with great interest in Tibet.

This chapter aims at providing an overview of Rong-zom-pa's discussions of the issue, particularly in his *Sangs sa chen mo* and *dKon cog 'grel*, but also in other works. In it I will present the main points regarding the various doctrinal positions discussed by him, the different scriptural systems named by him and their respective conceptions of Buddhahood, and the philosophical or doxographical systems upon which he says the various positions are based.

³ See Almogi 1997, appendix A, no. 6.3.1.

⁴ A summary of his standpoint and approach, including critiques brought forward by adherents of the various positions and responses to them, as presented in the *Sangs sa chen mo*, is found in chapter three, §5. A further treatment of Rong-zom-pa's own stance on the issue is found in chapter four, §4.

⁵ An English translation and critical edition of the Tibetan text of the *Sangs sa chen mo*, including the opening and concluding passages referred to here, are provided below in part two and part three, respectively.
2. Various Positions regarding the Constituents of Buddhahood

In his *Sangs sa chen mo*, Rong-zom-pa presents six different doctrinal positions regarding the constituents of Buddhahood:

**Position 1:** Only one constituent is posited, namely, the purified *dharmadhātu* (*chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa: dharmadhātuviśuddhi*).

**Position 2:** Two constituents are posited, namely, (i) the purified *dharmadhātu* and (ii) non-conceptual gnosis (*rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes: nirvikalpajñāna*).

**Position 3:** Three constituents are posited, namely, the two mentioned above and (iii) pure mundane gnosis (*dag pa’i jig rten pa’i ye shes: sūdhalaukikajñāna*).

**Position 4:** Four constituents are posited, namely, the three mentioned above and (iv) the bliss consisting in the realization of the unconditioned [state of] tranquillity (*dus ma byas zhi ba thugs su chud pa’i bde ba*).

**Position 5:** Here no number of constituents is specified, but Rong-zom-pa clearly lists six constituents, namely, the first three mentioned above and (iv) material Bodies (*gzugs kyi sku: rūpakāya*), (v) the bliss of the Mind, or Mental bliss (*thugs kyi bde ba*) consisting in the realization of the unconditioned [reality] (the fourth constituent of position 4), and (vi) the bliss of the Body, or Physical bliss (*sku yi bde ba*). The existence of sexual bliss is, however, rejected. The difference vis-à-vis position 4 is thus the addition of material Bodies and Physical bliss.

**Position 6:** Here, too, no number of constituents is specified. It seems, however, that this position maintains the existence of numerous constituents. According to it, a *buddha* possesses the first three constituents mentioned above and, in addition, (iv) the Body of great enjoyment in the form of (the Ādibuddha) Vajradhara (which is clearly to be subsumed under the fourth constituent of position 5, namely, material Bodies), and (v) *buddha-fields* (*zhing: kṣetra*). Further, various kinds of bliss are posited, including (vi) the extraordinary bliss of indulging in uncommon objects of desire (*’dod pa’i yon tan*), that is, sexual bliss, (vii) the bliss given rise to by the indulgence in external objects of desire (i.e. non-sexual), (viii) the bliss of the *svabhāvikakāya* (*rang bzhin gyi sku*) (which corresponds to the sixth constituent named under position 5, namely, the bliss of the Body or Physical bliss, the *svabhāvikakāya* referred to here being the one in the Tantric four-śāyā scheme, where it is the personification of reality in the form of the Ādibuddha), and (ix) the bliss of the Mind (already mentioned as the fifth constituent of position 5, which in turn corresponds to the fourth constituent of position 4). The difference vis-à-vis position 5 can be thus reduced to the postulation of the existence of both abodes and perceptible objects, and of two additional types of bliss (i.e. sexual and non-sexual) resulting from engagement with agreeable objects—both being typical Tantric elements, particularly of the Yoganiruttara system.

This initial presentation is followed by a relatively long discussion in the form of a debate in which Rong-zom-pa presents the critiques offered by the different positions of each other and the respective responses to them. Although he does not explicitly state which position is his own, he obviously supports the first, according to which the purified

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6 On my rendering of the term *dharmadhātuviśuddhi* as ‘the purified *dharmadhātu,*’ see below the translation of the *Sangs sa chen mo*, n. 5.
dharmadhātu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood, and thus no other constituent, including non-conceptual and pure mundane gnoses, is held by him to exist at that stage. It is interesting to note here that while in Buddhist doctrinal works the opponents’ positions are usually presented and negated first and one’s own position is presented and established last, the presentation in the *Sangs sa chen mo* is the reverse, that is, the position most favoured by the author comes first, a somewhat less acceptable one second, and so forth, with the sixth position being the least acceptable.

Rong-zom-pa’s *Sangs sa chen mo* deals with the question regarding the constituents of a buddha as a whole, the question regarding the existence of gnosis being only one part of the discussion. Nevertheless, the latter is the most important issue in the treatise, and thus an essential part of it. Most of Rong-zom-pa’s *Sangs sa chen mo* is devoted to a philosophical debate in which he sets forth the arguments and counter-arguments of each party. He progressively negates all positions considered by him to be false and establishes the one considered by him to be correct, all the while concentrating on the question of whether a buddha possesses gnosis. Dismissing the last three positions as completely unacceptable and thus discussing them only briefly, he devotes most of his work to the first three, namely, (1) that the purified dharmadhātu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood, (2) that non-conceptual gnosis is a second constituent, and (3) that both non-conceptual and pure mundane gnoses are additional constituents. The interpretation of Rong-zom-pa’s own position will be discussed below separately (chapter four). It should perhaps merely be noted here that although he favours the first position, he is obviously somewhat more restrained in his rejection of the two kinds of gnosis, especially non-conceptual gnosis, than in that of the other constituents posited by the last three positions.

In the *dKong cog 'grel*, Rong-zom-pa once again touches upon the question regarding the constituents of Buddhahood in general and the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha in particular. There he presents ‘four [positions regarding] the substratum’ (gzhi rnam pa bzhi) of the manifestations of a buddha’s Body, Speech, and Mind. The first three positions (gzhung) regarding the substratum are discussed from two angles, namely, ‘disputed’ (rtsod gzhi dang bcas pa) positions and ‘undisputed’ (rtsod gzhi med pa) positions, all of which will be presented below. Here, as opposed to his presentation in the *Sangs sa chen mo*, he does not enter into a philosophical debate or present any arguments for or against any of the positions. Rather, he provides an extensive and precise description of the various conceptions of Buddhahood and the scriptural systems upon which they are based, and identifies the Indian schools and subschools associated with each of the positions (to which I shall return below).

As I have already mentioned, Rong-zom-pa, in his presentation of the six positions regarding the constituents of Buddhahood in the *Sangs sa chen mo*, starts from the position he favours the most and ends with the least acceptable. In the *dKong cog 'grel*, he presents only four such positions regarding what he calls the ‘substratum of appearances’ (snang ba'i gzhi) of a buddha’s constituents, having lumped together under one category the last three positions presented in the *Sangs sa chen mo* (i.e. positions 4–6), which are considered by him as completely unacceptable. Here, however, he starts, as is usually done, with the position least acceptable in his view and ends with the one he favours. Thus the six positions presented in the *Sangs sa chen mo* and the four presented in the *dKong cog 'grel* correspond to each other as follows: Position 1 in the *Sangs sa chen mo*, according to which the purified dharmadhātu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood, corresponds to the fourth position presented in the *dKong cog 'grel*; position 2 in the *Sangs
Chapter One: Rong-zom-pa’s Discussion: An Overview

sa chen mo, according to which Buddhahood comprises two constituents, namely, the purified dharmadhātu and non-conceptual gnosis, corresponds to the third position presented in the dKon cog ‘grel; position 3 in the Sangs sa chen mo, according to which Buddhahood comprises three constituents, namely, the two mentioned above and pure mundane gnosis, corresponds to the second position presented in the dKon cog ‘grel; and the last three positions presented in the Sangs sa chen mo (i.e. positions 4–6), which postulate also the existence of constituents other than the three mentioned above, correspond to the first position presented in the dKon cog ‘grel, according to which Buddhahood comprises all the constituents taught in the scriptures, these constituents being not mere appearances perceived by disciples. The following table below provides an overview of Rong-zom-pa’s presentations of the various positions in both works:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sangs sa chen mo</th>
<th>dKon cog ‘grel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Only the purified dharmadhātu</td>
<td>= position 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The above plus non-conceptual gnosis</td>
<td>= position 3, i.e. disputed position (c) (Table 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The above two plus pure mundane gnosis</td>
<td>= position 2, i.e. disputed position (b) (Table 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The above three plus the bliss of realizing the state of tranquillity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The first three plus material Bodies, bliss of the Mind, and bliss of the Body</td>
<td>= position 1, i.e. disputed position (a) (Table 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The first three plus a Body of great enjoyment in the form of Vajradhāra, pure fields, and various kinds of bliss including sexual bliss.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: The various positions presented in the Sangs sa chen mo and the dKon cog ‘grel

3. The Conceptions of Buddhahood Contained in Various Scriptural Systems

In his Sangs sa chen mo, Rong-zom-pa maintains that the different positions regarding the constituents of Buddhahood are based on what seems to be three different notions of Buddhahood found in the various scriptural systems, as follows:

(A) a conception based on a number of common sūtras
(B) a conception based on a number of [uncommon] Sūtra and some Mantra systems
(C) a conception based on a number of Mantra systems.

While Rong-zom-pa presents the various arguments and counter-arguments in his Sangs sa chen mo in great detail, his presentation of the conceptions of Buddhahood and the scriptural or doxographical systems upon which these conceptions are based is brief, and it is often not clear to which system he is exactly referring. Fortunately, he touches upon this topic in several other works of his in different contexts, and thus provides other details that enable one to obtain a more precise and complete picture. In the dKon cog ‘grel, he defines, on the basis of individual scriptural systems, five different modes in which the Three Jewels (the Buddha, Dharma, and Samgha) are perceived by sentient beings (dkon cog gi tshul lnga). He particularly emphasizes the conception of the Jewel
that is the Buddha, which is the one relevant to our discussion. Following the fivefold scheme in his dKon cog 'grel, Rong-zom-pa puts forward two conceptions of Buddhahood that are based on sutras and three that are based on tantras. The first conception presented by him (mode 1) evidently corresponds to the first one mentioned in the Sangs sa chen mo (conception A), the second and the third conceptions in the former (modes 2 & 3) to the second conception in the latter (conception B), and the fourth and fifth in the former (modes 4 & 5) to the third in the latter (conception C), as shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sangs sa chen mo</th>
<th>dKon cog 'grel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. thun mong gi mdo kha cig</td>
<td>1. theg pa thun mong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. mdo sde dang gsang sngags kha cig</td>
<td>2. theg pa chen po thun mong ma yin pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. gsang ba bla na med pa'i theg pa thun mong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. gsang sngags kyi tshul kha cig</td>
<td>4. rnal 'byor gyi rgyud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. rnal 'byor chen po</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The various scriptural systems upon which the different conceptions of Buddhahood presented in the Sangs sa chen mo and dKon cog 'grel are based

The classification of Mantrayāna found in Indian and Tibetan sources cannot be discussed here in detail.7 I shall remain focused on Rong-zom-pa, who dealt with the subclassification of Tantra on several occasions. In his dKon cog 'grel, he adopts a scheme in which Kriyātantra and Caryātantra/Ubhayatantra are considered together, and thus only two main subdivisions are assumed, as follows:

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7 There are several discussions of the classifications of Buddhist Tantra in secondary sources. For a general discussion, see English 2002, pp. 2–6. Cf. Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 147–160, 180–181 & 279–280; Dasgupta 1962, p. 17. See also Eimer 1992, where the classification of the Buddhist Tantra according to the Jñānavajrasamuccaya is discussed, and Mimaki 1994. For the rNying-ma Tantric systems within the nine-Vehicle scheme, see Karmay 1988, pp. 146–149 & 172–174 (diagrams of various nine-Vehicle models); Ehrhard 1990, pp. 8–16; Kapstein 2000, pp. 13–14 & 16 (a table containing the nine-Vehicle model according to the ITa phreng ascribed to Padmasambhava and a Dunhuang document); Wangchuk 2007, pp. 117–118. For a recent comprehensive study on the classification of Tantra in Tibet during the eighth to twelfth centuries, see Dalton 2005.
### Table 3: Rong-zom-pa’s subclassification of Tantra in his dKon cog ’grel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Kriyātantra</th>
<th>1. Kriyātantra [proper], so called due to its emphasis on (external) activities or procedural formalities (bya ba che ba)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(bya ba’i rgyud), also referred to as the class of ‘general Tantra’ (spyi’i rgyud)</td>
<td>2. A distinctive branch of Kriyātantra also known as Ubbayatantra (gnyis ka’i rgyud) or Caryātantra (spyod pa’i rgyud). As to the term Caryātantra, he explains it in three ways: (1) This branch is referred to as Caryātantra in the sense of the verb samñcar, apparently in its meaning of ‘to pass over to’ or ‘to issue from’ (see MW, s.v.), since it goes beyond the basic [Kriyātantra system] and thus is a distinctive branch of it (‘sa na’ [= san] ‘tsa ra’ [= tsar] ste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Yogatantra (rnal ’byor kyi rgyud)</td>
<td>1. Exoteric (lit. ‘outer’) Yoga (rnal ’byor phyi) or simply Yoga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Esoteric (lit. ‘inner’) Yoga (rnal ’byor nang) or Greater Yoga (rnal ’byor chen po)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>subdivision 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. skyed pa’i rim pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. rdzogs pa’i rim pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. rdzogs pa chen po</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elsewhere he adopts the scheme known to him from the ITa phreng, on which he comments extensively and according to which the Vajrayāna system can be subclassified under three headings, as follows:

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8 Compare, however, a few lines earlier where Rong-zom-pa outlines a threefold subdivision of Mantrayāna, with Kriyātantra and Caryātantra as the first two and Yogatantra as the third (dKon cog ’grel, B, fol. 20a1–2; D, p. 47.4–5). As can be seen from the following table, such a partitioning is found elsewhere in his writings.
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

| 1. | Kriyātantra |
| 2. | Udbhayatantra |
| 3. | Yogatantra | \[ \text{r}\text{n}\text{al } '\text{byor phyi pa thub pa'i rgyud}\] | \[ \text{bskyed pa'i tshul}\] | \[ \text{rdzogs pa'i tshul}\] | \[ \text{rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul}\] |

Table 4: The subclassification of Tantra in the *I*Ta *phreng* (P, fol. 415b5–6; S, vol. 43, p. 843.9–10; NyK, p. 163.4–5) and Rong-zom-pa’s *I*Ta *phreng* *'grel pa* (B, fol. 247a3–255bl; D, pp. 329.4–338.15)

A similar scheme is found in his *Theg tshul*, where he employs terms peculiar to the rNying-ma nine-Vehicle scheme, as follows:

| 1. | Kriyātantra |
| 2. | Udbhayatantra |
| 3. | Yogatantra |
| 2. Mahāyoga |
| 3. Anuyoga |
| 4. Atiyoga |

Table 5: Rong-zom-pa’s subclassification of Tantra in his *Theg tshul* (B, fol. 76a1; D, p. 499.5–8)

To sum up, although one finds several, slightly different classifications of the Tantric systems in Rong-zom-pa’s writings, it is clear that he in most cases follows a basic subclassification of three categories, namely, Kriyā, Udbhaya, and Yoga (occasionally, however, subsuming the second under the first). In his *Dam tshig mdo rgyas*, exceptionally, he discusses Tantric themes pertaining to (1) Kriyātantra, (2) Yogatantra, and (3) Greater Yogatantra. These categories, however, do not seem to reflect there a doxographical scheme.

In the following paragraphs, I shall briefly present the various conceptions of Buddhahood and the scriptural systems upon which they are based, as described by Rong-zom-pa. This will involve comparing his expositions in the *Sangs sa chen mo* and the

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9 As noted in Dalton 2005, p. 125, the terms *thub pa'i rgyud* and *thabs kyi rgyud* have also been employed in the *Guhyagarbhatantra* commentary known as *sPar khab* attributed to Vilāsavajra. Note that Dalton understands the *I*Ta *phreng* as subsuming Kriyā-, Udbhaya-, and Yogatantra under the category of ‘exoteric’ (or, as in *ibid.*, p. 133, ‘outward’) Tantra.

10 Compare the similar subdivisions of Tantra recognized by Buddhaguhya and Vilāsavajra, as elucidated in Dalton 2005, pp. 123 & 125.

11 *Dam tshig mdo rgyas* (B, fol. 257b5–259a1; D, pp. 371.15–372.23).
Chapter One: Rong-zom-pa’s Discussion: An Overview

A. The first conception Rong-zom-pa presents in his Sangs sa chen mo is apparently based on some non- or early Mahāyāna sūtras, for he identifies the scriptural system as that of some ‘common sūtras.’ The conception in question is that the appearance of Śākyamuni Buddha in this world as the bodhisattva Siddhārtha in his final existence—including his awakening, his turning the Wheel of the Dharma, and his passing away—was a mere show or demonstration. This model conforms to some non-Mahāyāna scriptural systems including those of the Mahāsāṃghikas, particularly the Lokottaravadins, and some conservative Mahāyāna systems, most of them represented by early Yogācāra scriptures.

In his dKon cog ‘grel, Rong-zom-pa describes the scriptural system of the first mode as the ‘common Vehicle,’ here, too, referring to non- and early Mahāyāna sūtras. He enumerates some of the better known epithets by which the Buddha is typically designated according to this system, such as tathāgata, arhat, and samyaksaṃbuddha, and further specifies some of the features ascribed to the Buddha, such as being a nirvāṇa-kāya, having the form of a renunciant, being a male and a ‘single leader’ (gtso bo gcig pu: eka-nāya)—in contrast to the notion of the simultaneous appearance of multiple buddhas found in Tantric and non-Tantric Mahāyāna—and whose perfected salvific activities are contained in his mental continuum. It is unclear whether he means to include here the Lokottaravadins/Mahāsāṃghikas.

B. As has been already stated, Rong-zom-pa identifies the scriptures upon which the second conception presented by him in his Sangs sa chen mo is based as a number of sūtras (apparently Mahāyāna sūtras considered by him to be ‘uncommon’ as opposed to the non- or early Mahāyāna sūtras upon which the first conception is based) and a number of tantras. This conception corresponds to both the second mode presented in the dKon cog ‘grel, where the system upon which it is based is called the ‘uncommon Great Vehicle,’ and the third mode, where the system upon which it is based is called the ‘common esoteric, unsurpassable Vehicle.’ In the Sangs sa chen mo, Rong-zom-pa states that, according to this conception, the place where buddhas attain awakening is Akaniṣṭha, and he refers to the Lankavatārasūtra as scriptural support. He then turns to the sambhogakāya Buddha Vairocana and to what is known as the ‘five definitenesses’ (nges pa lnga), defined as the attributes of this form of manifestation. This Body of Vairocana is said to be the maturation of the gathering of limitless accumulations of

12 The historical development of buddhology and the central terms connected with it will be systematically discussed in the following chapter. More specific terms are discussed in the notes to my translations of the Sangs sa chen mo and the passage from the dKon cog ‘grel.

13 Since the following fourth mode is said to correspond to the position of the Yogatantra system, the term ‘common esoteric, unsurpassable Vehicle’ evidently takes in the two systems of Kriyā- and Ubhayatantra. (Rong-zom-pa here apparently remains faithful to his twofold subdivision of Tantra, in which Ubhayatantra is subsumed under Kriyātantra.) The term bla na med pa is thus employed here in relation to non-Tantric Mahāyāna, and does not refer to the Yoganiruttaras system. This is also supported by the phrase ‘general esoteric [Vehicle]’ (gsang ba spyi) employed by Rong-zom-pa in his descriptions of the fourth and fifth conceptions in the dKon cog ‘grel (see, below, the translation and the Tibetan text, §§II.4 & II.5) to designate the system of the third mode.
beneficial resources (bsod nams: punya) and gnosis in the past, while Šākyamuni is a nirmānakāya that has been manifested on the basis of a sambhogakāya, his becoming awakened in this world having been a mere show.

In his presentation of the second mode in the dKon cog 'grel, Rong-zom-pa states that according to the system of the ‘uncommon Great Vehicle,’ here apparently referring to Mahāyāna sūtras regarded by him elsewhere as profound, a buddha is designated by the same epithets as in the first mode, is characterized by four kinds of gnosis and the purified dharmapāda, and can manifest in the forms of a sambhogakāya and a nirmānakāya. The former form is said to have the attire of a universal king and the latter that of a renunciant, and both of them are said to be males. Furthermore, a buddha is said to be either a ‘single leader’ or to appear in multiple forms, and his fields are said to be contained within his mental continuum.

In his further presentation in the dKon cog 'grel, Rong-zom-pa states that, according to the third mode, namely, the one based on the system of what he calls the ‘common esoteric, unsurpassable Vehicle,’ which obviously refers to the two lower Tantric systems, a buddha, again designated by the epithets mentioned above, is characterized by five kinds of gnosis and three or four Bodies, assumes three forms of special deities, is comprehended in three ‘families’ (rigs: kula), and can manifest as a sambhogakāya or a nirmānakāya, in both peaceful and wrathful forms. Furthermore, according to this conception a buddha may exist in the form of various mantras and emanate in a single form or in multiple forms, while manifestations of him in the form of deities of utter purity within either large or small mandalas, depending on different factors, are said to be contained within his mental continuum.

C. In his discussion of the third and last scriptural system presented in the Sangs sa chen mo, Rong-zom-pa identifies it as comprising ‘some Tantric systems’—apparently the remaining Tantric systems (i.e. Yoga in its broadest sense)—which, as opposed to the systems included by him in the second category, are regarded by him as uncommon. He does not specify the systems that fall under this category, but merely mentions some of the general ideas common to all of them, as follows: According to these systems, a buddha abides in Akaniśtha as Vajradhara or Vajrasattva, the lord of all buddhas, and is endowed with bliss. He abides amidst countless goddesses, and permanently experiences the bliss of sexual union. Furthermore, according to these systems, a buddha embodies the nature of all phenomena and is the lord who manifests as all phenomena.

Rong-zom-pa concludes with some remarks regarding the mandala of a sugata, which can vary according to the different Tantric systems, as follows: The central figure may take the form of a sambhogakāya or of a nirmānakāya, may have a peaceful or wrathful bearing, may embody magical formulas, and may have either a large or small retinue. These remarks apparently apply to all Tantric systems including the lower ones mentioned by him under conception B. This is evident from Rong-zom-pa’s description of the third mode in his dKon cog 'grel, which corresponds to the Tantric systems mentioned in the Sangs sa chen mo under conception B and features various mandalas.

As has been mentioned above, in his dKon cog 'grel, Rong-zom-pa differentiates between two further Tantric systems, which present two separate modes. The fourth mode presented there is ascribed by him to the scriptures of Yogatantra (rmal 'byor gyi rgyud), according to which a buddha, in addition to being called by the above-mentioned epithets, is characterized by five gnoses, three or four Bodies and four families, takes the form of deities of both a special and non-special nature, can manifest as a sambhogakāya
Chapter One: Rong-zom-pa’s Discussion: An Overview

or a *nirmāṇakāya*, may display both a peaceful and wrathful bearing, may exist as various mantras and *mudrās*, and may be either single or multiple, while his manifestations as deities of utter purity in large and small *mandalas* (again depending on various factors) are said to be contained within his mental continuum.

The fifth mode presented in the *dKon cog ‘grel* is said to be found in the Greater Yoga (*rnal ’byor chen po*) system,14 according to which a *buddha* is called by various epithets, which include, in addition to epithets known from previous systems, ones such as the ‘adamantine nature of the Body, Speech, and Mind of all *tathāgatas* of the four times and the ten directions’ and the ‘great nature.’ A *buddha*, according to this system, is characterized by six great gnoses and five Bodies, and is accompanied by deities, which are phenomena spontaneously and primordially present in the diamond-like *marṇājas* of Body, Speech, and Mind. He is said to be comprehended in five or six families in his *samābhogakāya* form, and he is also said to be able to assume the form of a *nirmāṇakāya* and of peaceful and wrathful deities. He can be single or multiple, and can possess a Body, abode, and perceptible objects. He is further conceived as abiding in the form of ‘great indulgence’ in the indivisibility of method and insight, and as abiding in Ghanavyūha, which is understood as the spontaneously present *buddha*-Body, -Speech, and -Mind in the sphere of what is called the ‘fourth time of equanimity.’

4. The Buddhist Doxographical Systems and Schools as the Basis of the Various Positions

As noted above, in the *dKon cog ‘grel*, Rong-zom-pa names the Buddhist doxographical systems and philosophical schools upon which the various positions are based. There, after first presenting the three positions rejected by him, he divides their various claims into the two main categories of ‘undisputed’ (*rtsod gzhi med pa*) and ‘disputed’ (*rtsod gzhi dang bcas pa*), that is, positions upon which there is consensus and positions upon which there is dissension. He then concludes with the fourth position, which he himself supports. Although Rong-zom-pa does not explain what he exactly means by the terms ‘undisputed’ and ‘disputed,’ it is obvious from the context that he means undisputed or disputed only within a given system. The most interesting aspect of the discussion there is that, according to Rong-zom-pa, the differences in the views concerning the constituents of Buddhahood are based on differences in the theories of knowledge propagated by proponents of the various subdivisions of Yogācāra. Thus an explicit association is posited between the different Buddhist schools or subschools and the various conceptions of Buddhahood. In the following, I shall briefly present these positions as described by Rong-zom-pa in his *dKon cog ‘grel*, starting with those unacceptable in his view—first

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14 The term *rnal ’byor chen po* does not seem to refer here only to Mahāyoga, that is, the first category of what is known in the rNying-ma doxographical system as ‘three esoteric Tantric corpuses’ (*nang rgyud sde gsun*), the other two being Anuyoga and Atiyoga, but rather to all subcategories of the Greater Yogatantra system, also known as Yoganiruttara. A determination of the exact meaning in which the term is employed can be made only by taking the entire context into consideration. This is often crucial for our understanding of a text, though, admittedly, the matter is often complex and at times perhaps is not decidable with absolute certainty. (Compare, for example, Dalton 2005, where this distinction seems not to have been made. It remains to be seen, however, to what extent this has undermined the author’s understanding of the various doxographical presentations of the Tantric systems.)
the undisputed elements in their views and then the disputed ones—and concluding with the fourth position favoured by him.

A. Three Incorrect Positions regarding the Substratum of Appearances

Before commencing with the discussion of the undisputed and disputed positions connected with the first three positions, it is perhaps desirable to provide an overview of the various subdivisions of the Yogācāra school. The later proponents of Yogācāra are commonly subdivided into two main groups, namely, those who maintain the existence of images or modes of apprehension (sākāravāda: rnam pa dang bcas par smra ba) and those who maintain the non-existence of images (nirākāravāda or anākāravāda: rnam pa med par smra ba). Rong-zom-pa, in his lTa ba'i brjed byang, further subdivides those who maintain the existence of images into those who maintain [the existence of] true images (satyākāravāda: rnam pa bden par smra ba, the Tibetan literally meaning 'those who maintain that the images are real') and those who maintain [the existence of] false images (alīkāravāda: rnam pa brdzun par smra ba, the Tibetan literally meaning 'those who maintain that the images are false'). His way of subdividing the Yogācāra school can be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exponents of Vijnaptimātra (rnam par rig pa tsam du smra ba)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sākāravāda (rnam pa dang bcas par smra ba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satyākāravāda (rnam pa bden par smra ba)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: The subclassification of Vijnaptimātra/Yogācāra according to Rong-zom-pa’s lTa ba'i brjed byang (B, fol. 150b4–5; D, p. 15.16–18)

Rong-zom-pa’s partitioning will be discussed in more detail below (chapter three, §3). At this stage it may merely be noted that it is somewhat unconventional, for the division of Yogācāra into Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda is commonly regarded as the same as that into Satyākāravāda and Alīkākāravāda, respectively.

Rong-zom-pa states that there are numerous further subdivisions, and names as examples two of them, namely, rnam pa 'dra gzhi yod par smra ba and [rnam pa] 'dra gzhi med par smra ba. These subdivisions, which appear to be referring to the question whether the ālāyavijñāna has a remote objective support, or an ‘original’ from which images arise (on this, see chapter three, the summarizing section of §3), seem, however, not to be crucial for the discussion, and I therefore do not consider them here.

For references to the subclassification of the Vijnānavāda/Yogācāra into these branches, see Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 123, n. 410. See also below, chapter three, §3.
(i) Undisputed (rtsod gzhi med pa) Positions

Rong-zom-pa presents four undisputed positions, as follows:

(a) The scriptural systems of Hīnayāna maintain the following: The body of a bodhisattva in his final existence is a body of an ordinary person produced by the view of a self (bdag tu lta ba: ātmadrṣṭi) and by thirst (sred pa: tṛṣṇā) [for existence]. The bodhisattva, after becoming fully awakened, performs the salvific activities of a buddha and then passes into parinirvāṇa.

(b) The systems of Mahāyāna that share common features with the system of the Śrāvakas (the reference is apparently to early Mahāyāna sūtras and early Yogācāra scriptures) maintain the following: The body of a bodhisattva in his final existence is a body attained by dint of resolution and is produced by residual impressions (bag chags: vāsanā) of the view of a self and the 'place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance' (gnas kyi sa'i ma rig pa = ma rig pa'i gnas kyi sa: avidyāvāśabhūmi).

(c) The scriptural system of Yogācāra that propagates the existence of images maintains the following: Although there are no external objects (phyi rol gyi don: bāhyārtha) that are separate from mind, the mind itself appears as images resembling various objects. After awakening occurs, gnosis appears in the form of material Bodies, buddha-fields, and the like.

(d) The scriptural system of Yogācāra that propagates the non-existence of images maintains the following: The ordinary mind is devoid of images that appear in the form of external physical objects, appearances being the result of residual impressions. When one has become fully awakened and the residual impressions have been completely purified, a form of gnosis that is devoid of images and is momentary arises uninterruptedly. The qualities of a buddha appear to disciples spontaneously for the benefit of sentient beings as a result of previous resolutions, great compassion, and great gnosis, just as wishes are fulfilled by a wish-fulfilling jewel and similar objects.

Rong-zom-pa’s presentation of the undisputed positions may be summarized in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scriptural Category</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Hīnayāna</td>
<td>The body of a bodhisattva in his last samsāric existence is a body of an ordinary person. Having become fully awakened, he performs the activities of a buddha and then passes into parinirvāṇa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Mahāyāna that has features in common with the system of the Śrāvakas</td>
<td>The body of a bodhisattva in his final existence is a body attained by dint of resolution. This body is produced by residual impressions of the view of a self and the like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Yogācāra: Sākāravāda</td>
<td>Gnosis appears to disciples as qualities, including material Bodies, buddha-fields, and so forth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Yogācāra: Nīrākāravāda</td>
<td>The qualities appear to disciples spontaneously as a result of previous resolutions, great compassion, and great gnosis, like the fulfillment of wishes by a wish-fulfilling jewel and similar objects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Undisputed positions according to the dKon cog ’grel
(ii) Disputed (rtsod gzhi bcas pa) Positions

According to Rong-zom-pa, there is a dispute among the followers of those Madhyamaka and Mantra systems that maintain that on the ultimate level all phenomena are characterized by the cessation of manifoldness, while on the conventional level they appear unceasingly in the form of an illusion, but who, based on their own theories, postulate the mode of existence of a buddha and the substratum of his appearances in different ways. As to the Madhyamaka system, Rong-zom-pa presents here only the disputes found among the followers of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka. He does not analyze the position of the Sautrāntika-Mādhyaṃikas (rda sde [spyad pa'i] dbu ma pa) because, as he argues, they postulate the conventional in agreement with the Sautrāntikas of the Śrāvakas (nyan thos mdo sde pa), who accept the existence of external objects. It may be noted that Rong-zom-pa does not refer here to Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka any more than he does in other works of his, such the Ita ba'i brjed byang. His discussion of the three disputed positions may be summarized as follows:

(a) The first ground of dispute: Some followers of the Mantra scriptural system postulate that a buddha possesses numerous constituents, as has been explained in the context of the five modes of conceiving Buddhahood just presented by him, and thus they maintain that a buddha possesses five or six gnoses; takes the form of the great sambhogakāya, which is the source of all emanations; and eternally abides in the utterly pure buddha realms without undergoing change and in a mandala with a countless retinue of consorts, inseparable from all kinds of bliss. (a.1) Some of them, following the Pāramitā scriptural system, maintain that a buddha is not endowed with sexual bliss, because this is a reproachable matter, but that he is endowed with the bliss of the Body of Maturation, has the great gnosis as a substratum, is accompanied by utterly pure buddha-fields, and abides in the midst of disciples as and when necessary. According to Rong-zom-pa, the followers of both of these positions rely on the scriptures of the adherents of Yogācāra who hold to the true existence of images on the conventional level, as follows: Although there is no duality connected with external objects even on the level of sentient beings, the mind itself arises in a form that seems to be dual, and therefore, even when the transformation has taken place, there are arrays of Bodies and buddha-fields, which are the self-manifestations of gnosis and not actual external objects.

(b) The second ground of dispute: Others claim that a buddha does not possess a material Body (rūpakāya), but that he does possess the two kinds of gnosis, which correspond to the cognitive subjects of the absolute and conventional truths. Some of them maintain that these gnoses undergo experiences that are characterized by samādhi bliss. According to Rong-zom-pa, this position, which maintains the existence of the two kinds of gnosis but rejects the existence of material Bodies, is based on the scriptures of the adherents of Yogācāra who postulate the existence of false images, as follows: Even at the level of sentient beings, the arising of the mind in the form of duality is not true, and thus, although a buddha possesses pure mundane gnosis, the corresponding images are not truly existent.

(c) The third ground of dispute: Others maintain that a buddha is only endowed with non-conceptual gnosis and that all appearances of qualities arise in the mental continuum of disciples in virtue of it. According to Rong-zom-pa, this
position is based on the scriptures of the adherents of Yogācāra who postulate the non-existence of images.

At this point Rong-zom-pa summarizes these three grounds of dispute, stating that all of these positions are the outcome of holding to the implications of the two truths across the board: just as at the level of sentient beings there exist two truths, so it is the case at the level of a buddha. His presentation of the disputed positions may be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scriptural Category Relied Upon for Their Views of the Conventional Level</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Position in the Sangs sa chen mo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Satyākāravāda</td>
<td>Maintains the existence of numerous constituents including the two kinds of gnosis, material Bodies and various kinds of bliss. (a.1) Some proponents, relying on the Pāramitā scriptures, reject the existence of sexual bliss.</td>
<td>= positions 4–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Alikāravāda</td>
<td>Maintains the existence of the two kinds of gnosis. Some proponents also maintain the existence of samādhi bliss.</td>
<td>= position 3, in part also 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Nirākāravāda</td>
<td>Maintains that only non-conceptual gnosis exists and all appearances of qualities arise in the mental continuum of disciples in virtue of this gnosis.</td>
<td>= position 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Disputed positions found among the followers of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and the Mantra system according to the dKon cod 'grel

B. The Fourth and Correct Position regarding the Substratum of Appearances

After presenting the first three positions and discussing the undisputed and disputed positions relating to them, Rong-zom-pa goes on to present the last and fourth position, considered by him to be the correct one. According to this position, the stage of a buddha is nothing but the purified dharmadātu. The array of Bodies and gnoses thus arises in the mental continuum of disciples without a substratum (rten med) and is possible in virtue of (a) previous resolutions and compassion, (b) the purified dharmadātu, and (c) the favourable residual impressions of sentient beings. In this context Rong-zom-pa employs once again the analogy of the wishes made by an accomplished rṣi which come to fulfilment even a long time after the rṣi has died, that is, without a substratum. According to Rong-zom-pa, this position is based on the special philosophical system that maintains the indivisibility of the two truths. He argues that it is not only that there is no substratum for the appearances at the stage of a buddha, but that there is also no substratum for the manifold appearances even at the level of sentient beings, and cites the Vimalakīrtinirdeśāsūtra and Ratnagamasaṃcayagāthā as scriptural support. He then argues further that that which arises without a substratum also lacks all substance, just
like the bluishness and the quivering of the water—o(an optical illusion. Therefore, Rong-zom-pa concludes, the various phenomena of both samsāra and nirvāṇa have neither a substratum nor an own-nature, and thus both sentient beings and buddhas are proclaimed to be of the same nature. This is what he calls the stance of special Mahāyāna.

5. Discussions of the Issue Found in Other Works of Rong-zom-pa

Rong-zom-pa also addresses this issue in other works of his, such as the lTa phreng 'grel pa, Theg tshul, and lTa ba'i brjed byang, where he repeats the idea that proponents of Yogācāra or Yogācāra-Madhyamaka who follow the Satyākāravāda branch maintain the existence of numerous constituents; those of the Alīkāravāda branch the existence of both kinds of gnosis; and those of the Nirākāravāda branch only the existence of non-conceptual gnosis. In explaining the Madhyamaka view in his lTa ba'i brjed byang, he touches upon this issue as a conclusion to his discussion of each of the branches of Madhyamaka. According to this passage, the followers of Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka (mdo sde dbu ma) maintain that a buddha is endowed with eighteen unique qualities (ma 'dres pa bco brya'd), but that the state of Buddhahood after the passing into parinirvāṇa merely consists in 'cessation [obtained] upon reflection' (so sor brtags pa'i 'gog pa: pratisamkhyaṇirodha), extinction (mya ngan las 'das pa: nirvāṇa), and the purified dharmadhatu. As this system presupposes a buddha's temporally limited presence in the world, and since their understanding of Buddhahood as being merely the purified dharmadhatu means total extinction, which allows for neither the presence of qualities nor the action of a buddha for the sake of sentient beings, the issue of the existence of a buddha's qualities is in this case not relevant.

Rong-zom-pa continues his presentation of the views of the subschools of Madhyamaka by discussing the various positions of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka, the adherents of which subscribe to a number of different views found in the Vijnānavāda system. These are identified by Rong-zom-pa as follows: (1) Some claim that a buddha has all phenomena (i.e. clearly in the form of ākāras) consisting in the psychophysical complex (phung po: skandha), elements (khams: dhatu), and sense-bases (skye mched: āyatana) at his disposal and that he sees, knows, and enjoys all simultaneously. (2) Some claim that he does not have a material Body, that he knows everything that is the object of pure mundane gnosis, but that he is not endowed with the enjoyment of these objects. (2.1) Some of those holding the latter position claim that this gnosis is constantly endowed with mental enjoyment (i.e. the enjoyment of realizing true reality). (3) Some claim that he is only endowed with non-conceptual gnosis, and thus devoid of all sensations and appearances. (4) Some, arguing that if one postulated that a buddha has non-conceptual gnosis this would not be different from the Yogācāra position, claim that a buddha is merely the purified dharmadhatu.

17 lTa phreng 'grel pa (B, fol. 246a5–b6; D, p. 328.6–23); lTa ba'i brjed byang (B, fols. 153a1–155a4; D, pp. 18.5–20.21); Theg tshul (B, fols. 44b3–45a4; D, pp. 464.10–465.2), the discussion of the stance of Yogācāra beginning, however, slightly earlier (B, fol. 44a4; D, p. 463.23).

18 Cessation [obtained] upon reflection, originally referring to the insight gained by viewing the Four Truths one by one (prati: so sor), is opposed to 'cessation not [obtained] upon reflection' (so sor brtags min gyi 'gog pa: apratisamkhyaṇirodha), that is, cessation that results from hindering the arising of future phenomena. For more on these terms, see de La Vallée Poussin 1988–1990, vol. 1, pp. 59–61.
Interestingly, in the following passage, Rong-zom-pa summarizes the various positions of Madhyamaka regarding the constituents of Buddhahood by dividing them into two main groups, namely, those who maintain that phenomena are like illusions (sgyu ma lta bur ’dod pa) and those who maintain that phenomena have no substratum whatsoever (rab tu mi gnas par ’dod pa). Before I present his summary, a few words should perhaps be said regarding the various schemes of subclassifying Madhyamaka that are found in Tibet, for such an overview will aid in identifying the Madhyamaka systems alluded to by Rong-zom-pa on the basis of the various positions regarding the constituents of Buddhahood, particularly that according to which Buddhahood is nothing but the purified dharmadhatu. The identification of this position is very significant, for, as has been already stated, Rong-zom-pa seems to show a personal predilection for it. In the Sangs sa chen mo, he identifies the proponents of this position as those who follow the sūtras and tantras of definitive meaning (nges pa’i don: nītārtha); in the dKon cog ‘grel, as those who follow the scriptures in which the indivisibility of the two truths is postulated (bden pa rnam pa gnyis dyer med par ’dod pa’i gzhung), referred to by him as special Mahāyāna; and in the lTa ba’i brjed byang, as those who maintain that phenomena have no substratum whatsoever ((chos thams cad) rab tu mi gnas par ’dod pa: sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānāvāda).19

It is generally accepted that Madhyamaka was subdivided during the early propagation of Buddhism in Tibet into the following two major subschools: Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka (mdo sde pa’i dbu ma / mdo sde spyod pa’i dbu ma) and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka (rnal ’byor spyod pa’i dbu ma). This subclassification is made on the basis of what is asserted regarding the existence of external objects on the conventional level, as based, needless to say, on Sautrāntika and Yogācāra theories, respectively.20 The subdivision of Madhyamaka that became known during the later propagation includes Svātantrika-Madhyamaka (dbu ma rang rgyud pa)—under which both Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka, at least from some point onwards, are subsumed—and Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka (dbu ma thal ’gyur pa). Leaving aside the Tibetan controversies surrounding the issue, this subclassification is generally said to hinge on the method employed for establishing emptiness through reasoning.21 There was, however, also a third alternative, a less known subclassification of Madhyamaka, which seems to have existed parallel to the more popular subclassifications, namely, that into Māyopamādavyāvāda (sgyu ma lta bu gnyis su med par smra ba, also known as sgyu ma lta bur ’dod pa: *māyopamamata or sgyu ma rigs grub pa) and Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānāvāda ((chos thams cad) rab tu mi gnas par ’dod pa or simply rab tu mi gnas pa). This subclassification has been regarded by some Tibetan scholars as

19 Klong-chen-pa identifies those who maintain the non-existence of gnosis as belonging to one of two groups, namely, the followers of Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānāvāda, who maintain that gnosis [generated on] the path, or simply gnosis, does not exist, and some followers of rDzogs-chen who maintain that gnosis does not exist in [the state of] primordial purity (i.e. manifoldlessness) (Theg mchog mdzod, vol. 2, p. 327.4–5: lam gyi ye shes sam| ye shes med par ’dod pa dbu ma rab tu mi gnas pa’am| rang re rdsogs chen po ka dag la ye shes med par ’dod pa yod pas| ....).

20 For references to this subclassification in sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs’s lTa ba’i rim pa’i man ngag and Ye-shes-sde’s lTa ba’i khヤad par, see Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 59, n. 176.

21 For more on these two subclassifications, see Mimaki 1983.
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

having been made on the basis of the view concerning the ultimate level, an issue that has yet to be closely examined.22

As shown by Seyfort Ruegg, the division of Madhyamaka into Sarvadharmapraśṭhānāvāda and Māyopamādavayavāda can be traced to Indian sources, such as the Tattvaratnāvali of Advayavajra (tenth/eleventh cent.), the Paramārthabodhicittabhāvanākrama ascribed to Āśvaghoṣa/Sūra,23 and Candrahariṇī’s (eleventh cent.) Ratnamālā; and similar terminology seems to have been employed by sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs (eighth/ninth cent.) in his lTa ba’i rim pa’i bshad pa (= lTa ba’i rim pa’i man ngag snang ba bu dbyun), though with apparently other meanings. Seyfort Ruegg has pointed out that it is not quite clear what the purport of these terms is, a matter that has been discussed by Tibetan scholars since early on. The main issues under discussion were whether this subclassification is at all acceptable, what the actual basis of this distinction is, and whether Māyopamādavayavāda and Sarvadharmapraśṭhānāvāda are equatable with Svātāntrika-Madhyamaka and Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka, respectively.24 The latter question, which is the one most relevant to our discussion, has been answered differently by different scholars, who, in this regard, can be generally divided into two groups. The first one subsumed both Māyopamādavayavāda and Sarvadharmapraśṭhānāvāda under Svātāntrika-Madhyamaka, whereas the second have identified the Sarvadharmapraśṭhānāvāda (or at least a branch of it) with Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka. The understanding of Māyopamādavayavāda and Sarvadharmapraśṭhānāvāda according to the former scheme seems at first glance to be closer to Rong-zom-pa’s own understanding, though he makes no mention of the subdivision into Svātāntrika-Madhyamaka and Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka, having merely regarded Māyopamādavayavāda and Sarvadharmapraśṭhānāvāda as an alternative to the subdivision into Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka, which were later subsumed under Svātāntrika-Madhyamaka (under which category Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka falls is, however, not quite clear).25 Nevertheless, if one assumes that these

22 See, however, Seyfort Ruegg 2000, pp. 31–32, n. 58. Such a subclassification on the basis of the view concerning the ultimate level has not been accepted by all Tibetan scholars. See Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 59, n. 174, where reference is made to rNgog-lo-tsli-ba Blo-Idan-shes-rab and Tsong-kha-pa as examples of scholars who had reservations in this regard. See also Seyfort Ruegg 2000, pp. 33–35, n. 60. Also note that Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka, accepting as it does worldly conventions for transactional purposes, has been designated by Tibetan authors as ‘Madhyamaka that follows worldly conventions’ (jig rten grags sde spyod pa’i dbu ma). See Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 80, n. 259, and id. 2000, p. 58, n. 124, where the term is discussed and further references are provided. See also ibid., p. 56, where Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan’s (1147–1216) fivefold division of Madhyamaka with respect to the conventional truth is outlined.

23 As noted in Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 59, n. 174 & p. 120, n. 395, this work, although it is ascribed to Āśvaghoṣa or (Ārya)-Sūra (third or fourth cent.), is clearly a later composition.

24 For details, see Seyfort Ruegg 1981, pp. 58–59, n. 174, and id. 2000, pp. 33–35, n. 60, where references to works by Indian scholars, sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs’s lTa ba’i rim pa’i man ngag, and several works by later Tibetan scholars (primarily of the dGe-lugs tradition, but also by rNgog-lo-tsā-ba Blo-Ildan-shes-rab, sGam-po-pa, Go-rams-pa, and others) are provided.

25 sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs, in his lTa ba’i rim pa’i bshad pa (P, fol. 140b2; D, fol. 237a5; S, vol. 43, p. 864.20: mdo sde kun rdzob sgyu ma tsam[]), seems to refer to Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka as propounding the view, with respect to the conventional level, that phenomena are mere illusion. It is, however, doubtful that he meant to identify Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka as Māyopamādavayavāda.
subdivisions cover the entire spectrum of Madhyamaka (although the term Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka is not explicitly mentioned by Rong-zom-pa, presumably due to the fact that he may simply not have known the term, which was coined approximately at the same time, or perhaps shortly after, he composed his works), the second scheme may be even closer. An exact determination of the purport of Māyopamādvayavāda and Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvāda would help to clear up how Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvāda was understood by Rong-zom-pa, and this in turn will surely be crucial in assessing Rong-zom-pa’s status as a Mādhyamika. A detailed investigation of the division of Madhyamaka into Māyopamādvayavāda and Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvāda is beyond the scope of the present study (an article on the topic is currently under preparation). It can be said, in any case, that it is quite clear from my study of this partitioning of Madhyamaka so far, and from my study of Rong-zom-pa’s writings, that Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvāda in several respects bears more similarity to Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka than to Yogācāra-Madhyamaka. This matter will be discussed below in broader detail in connection with Rong-zom-pa’s Madhyamaka affiliation (chapter four, §5).

Summarizing the views of Māyopamādvayavāda and Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvāda regarding the constituents of Buddhahood, Rong-zom-pa explicitly states that the Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvādins maintain that the stage of a buddha is nothing but the purified dharmadātu. As to the view of the Māyopamādvayavāda, Rong-zom-pa does not spell out their position concerning the stage of a buddha. Nonetheless, it seems that he would have classified all other positions, namely, those according to which Buddhahood includes constituents other than the purified dharmadātu, under this category. From these parallels, it is obvious that, for Rong-zom-pa, Māyopamādvayavāda falls under Yogācāra-Madhyamaka. Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvāda seems to fall outside it, but this requires further investigation. How this classification relates to Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka remains unclear. Rong-zom-pa’s presentation of the various positions and their relationship to the subdivisions of Madhyamaka found in the lTa ba’i brjed byang can thus be summarized as follows:

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26 Rong-pa Me-dpung, in his Tho yig, states that Rong-zom-pa composed a ‘work on Apratiṣṭhāna’ (rab tu shin tu mi gnas pa’i yi ge) and many other works of a similar nature (Almogi 1997, appendix A, no. 6.1.2.7). Rong-pa Me-dpung names this work as the seventh under the category of works on the ‘foundation of the truth’ (bden gzhi), which together with the category of works on the ‘foundation of appearances’ (snang gzhi) goes to make up the category of works on the ‘foundation’ (gzhi). Unfortunately, no work by Rong-zom-pa devoted to the Sarvadharmapratiṣṭhānāvāda seems to have survived.

27 Compare Klong-chen-pa’s subclassification of Madhyamaka discussed in the appendix, according to which Apratiṣṭhānāvāda falls under Yogācāra- or Śvātantrika-Madhyamaka.
### Table 9: The various positions as presented in the ITa ba'i brjed byang
(B, fols. 153al-155.4; D, pp. 18.5-20.21)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Madhyamaka Subschool</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Yogacāra System Relied Upon for Their Views of the Conventional Level</th>
<th>Alternative Division of Madhyamaka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka</strong></td>
<td>While in the world, a <em>buddha</em> is endowed with eighteen unique qualities. After passing into <em>parinirvāna</em> he is the purified <em>dharmaadhātu</em>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yogacāra-Madhyamaka</strong></td>
<td>1. He has at his disposal all objects and sees, knows, and enjoys all of them simultaneously.</td>
<td>[Satyākāravāda]</td>
<td>Māyopāmadavyāvāda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. He is endowed with pure mundane gnosis of an omniscient nature but is devoid of bliss related to the sense faculties and external objects, since he is beyond material objects.</td>
<td>[Ālikākāravāda]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1. This pure mundane gnosis is permanently accompanied by the enjoyment of mental bliss (<em>yid bde ba</em>).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. He is endowed only with non-conceptual gnosis and thus devoid of all sensations and appearances.</td>
<td>[Nīrākāravāda]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarvadharmāpratisthānāvāda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He is solely the purified <em>dharmaadhātu</em>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rong-zom-pa also touches upon the issue of the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* while presenting the various subschools of Yogacāra proper in both the ITa ba'i brjed byang and ITa phreng 'grel pa. Nonetheless, as the three different views presented there are all from the standpoint of the followers of Yogacāra, all of whom maintain the existence of a mental continuum in its transformed form after the attainment of awakening, the question at issue is not whether gnosis exists at all, but rather what kind of gnosis a *buddha* possesses. Rong-zom-pa’s presentation of their positions can be summarized as follows:
Chapter One: Rong-zom-pa’s Discussion: An Overview

### Table 10: The positions of the various Yogācāra subschools according to the *ITa phreng 'grel pa*  
(B, fol. 246a5–b6; D, p. 328.6–23)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yogācāra Subschool</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nirākāravāda</td>
<td>Only non-conceptual gnosis actually exists at the stage of a <em>buddha</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satyākāravāda</td>
<td>The great gnosis, too, actually exists, appearing in the form of <em>buddha</em>-Bodies and -fields (i.e. pure mundane gnosis) but is not involved in clinging to duality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alikākāravāda</td>
<td><em>A buddha</em> possesses pure mundane gnosis, but this gnosis is not real, and thus only non-conceptual gnosis actually exists.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 11: The positions of the various Yogācāra subschools according to the *ITa ba'i brjed byang*  
(B, fol. 151a4–b6; D, p. 16.6–24)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yogācāra Subschool</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satyākāravāda</td>
<td>All arrays of Bodies and <em>buddha</em>-fields truly exist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alikākāravāda</td>
<td>Pure mundane gnosis exists, but merely in the mode of conventional truth; only non-conceptual gnosis, which is momentary, truly exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nirākāravāda</td>
<td><em>A buddha</em> does not possess pure mundane gnosis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Concluding Remarks**

With the aim of providing a general background for the present study, I have presented in this chapter an overview of Rong-zom-pa’s discussion regarding the development of the conceptions of Buddhahood in general and the controversy on whether gnosis exists at the stage of a *buddha* in particular. We have seen that Rong-zom-pa presents six different positions regarding the constituents of Buddhahood in his *Sangs sa chen mo* and four such positions in his *dKon cog 'grel* (the last three in the former being subsumed under the fourth one in the latter). We have also seen that Rong-zom-pa attempts to explain these different positions in terms of the various conceptions of Buddhahood found in various scriptural systems, on the one hand, and on the other, in terms of the various Buddhist doxographical systems, at which point he clearly links three of the four positions presented in the *dKon cog 'grel* with the different theories of knowledge propounded by the subschools of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka. These two topics have been merely touched upon here and will be discussed in detail in chapters two and three, respectively. Finally, I have referred to some other works of Rong-zom-pa where the issue is discussed, and have focused on his association of the various positions with the various subschools of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and their different theories of knowledge, and on his alternative subdivision of the Madhyamaka school into Māyopamādvayavāda and Sarvadharmāpratisthānavāda. The latter has proved to be crucial for an understanding of Rong-zom-pa’s own view, which will be elaborated in chapter four.
Chapter Two

Buddhology in Its Historical and Philosophical Context: An Overview

1. Introductory Remarks

The conception of Buddhahood has undergone change in the course of time, so that the Buddha (or a buddha) was soon being viewed by different Buddhist traditions in different ways. In the Pali canon the Buddha is described as a human being, though, to be sure, as the 'Awakened One,' someone sui generis, who showed the way of salvation to others; he is conceived as superior to ordinary human beings, and to the gods as well. In addition, already within the canon, and probably from the earliest times, one finds a second strand of thought tending to elevate the Buddha beyond the common human sphere. He is thus portrayed as having supernatural abilities and miraculous powers, as being omniscient and as having special physical characteristics, and his biography was embellished with miraculous events.¹

As Lambert Schmithausen has shown, developments in buddhology, that is, Buddhist conceptions of Buddhahood, are very much linked to the attempt to compensate for the 'loss' of Śākyamuni Buddha, whose presence in the world after his passing into parinirvāṇa has, according to conservative Buddhism, come to an end. Now, after his death, the Buddha can allegedly act only indirectly, through the Doctrine left by him. The Doctrine was supposed to substitute for the loss of the Buddha, for the latter was regarded as embodied in his Doctrine; that is, he has it as his body (dharmakāya). Nevertheless, despite the Buddha’s statement that after his death the Buddhist community should regard the Doctrine as its master, the Doctrine alone was apparently not a satisfactory replacement for the Buddha, either for lay followers or for the ordained community of monks and nuns. The need for a personal guide must have been strong especially among...

¹ Schmithausen 2000a, pp. 8–11. See also Weber 1994, particularly chapters three to seven, which discuss the non-Mahāyāna conceptions of the Buddha as a human being, as an extraordinary human being, as a being bearing comparison with gods, as a special category, and as a supramundane being, respectively.
the lay followers, and was probably responsible for some of the developments within buddhology. Schmithausen mentions six strands in the attempt to maintain or restore a personal connection with the Buddha and to eradicate the dichotomy between the Buddha during his life, where he is in the state of nirvāṇa with remains (sopadhīṣeṣanirvāṇa), and after his death, where he dissolves into nirvāṇa without remains (nirupadhīṣeṣanirvāṇa). These are: (1) the cult of the relics of the Buddha, (2) the meditative practice of visualizing of the Buddha known as buddhānusmṛti, or ‘remembering the Buddha,’ (3) the hope invested in a future buddha, (4) the introduction of an iconic presentation of the Buddha in physical form, (5) the conception of the Buddha, or a buddha, as a supramundane (lokottara) being, and (6) the notion of a simultaneous appearance of different buddhas in different world systems. For the development of buddhology, that is, for the views regarding the nature or essence of a buddha and his ability to act in the world for the salvation of others, three of these strands are particularly important, namely, the cult of the relics, the conception of the Buddha, or a buddha, as a supramundane being, and the notion of a simultaneous appearance of different buddhas in different world systems. Furthermore, as Schmithausen has demonstrated elsewhere, another factor that had much influence on the development of buddhology was differences in the conception of nirvāṇa. In this case, Schmithausen discusses the changes the conception of Buddhahood has undergone during the various stages and within different philosophical systems of Buddhism, focusing on the question whether nirvāṇa is understood as a negative state, that is, as a mere extinction, or as a positive one, and the implications of this for the question whether, in the case of a positive interpretation, a continuity between nirvāṇa and worldly beings is necessary. As Schmithausen shows, the different conceptions of nirvāṇa resulted in different views regarding Buddhahood, or more precisely, the nature of a buddha and his ability to act in the world for the sake of others. As the development of buddhology is central to the discussion surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, and in a way provides the background for it, I shall present in the following a brief sketch of this development, drawing upon previous studies and, particularly in the context of Tantric buddhology, upon various primary sources. In the latter case, I primarily cite Rong-zom-pa’s writings that treat the various

2 On nirvāṇa with and without remains, see, for example, Schmithausen 1969b, pp. 159–160.

3 Schmithausen 2000a, pp. 11–16, and also Bsteh 2000, p. 493 (Schmithausen in “Anfragen und Gesprächsbeiträge” relating to Schmithausen 2000b). See also Wangchuk 2007, pp. 74–77, where the development of the concept of bodhicitta is listed as one of several measures taken to compensate for the loss of the historical Buddha.

4 Schmithausen 1969b; id. 1973; id. 2000c. See also Steinkellner 2000, pp. 259–261, where, in a brief discussion of the change in the notion of Buddhahood, it is noted that one of the major developments was the belief in a buddha’s permanent presence. Steinkellner specifies six strands of this belief: (1) the notion of the animateness of the Buddha’s relics, (2) the notion that the Buddha is in reality a transcendental being, (3) the notion that the Buddha is embodied in his Doctrine, (4) the notion that a buddha or Buddhahood is characterized by numerous wholesome qualities, (5) the notion of numerous buddhas who appear simultaneously in different world systems, and (6) a new form of nirvāṇa, and with it a new form of Buddhahood. These issues will be discussed in more detail below. Cf. Collins 1998, pp. 244–249, where “three forms of ‘continuing existence’” of the Buddha are discussed, namely, the Buddha’s continuing presence in the form of his teachings, in the form of images, and in the form of his relics.
expressions of Buddhahood. I also cite various canonical sources, when this is felt to be necessary. I shall mainly focus on the constituents of Buddhahood according to various scriptural systems, as presented by Rong-zom-pa in his *Sangs sa chen mo* and the pertinent passage from the *dkon cogs gral*, and on the various theories associated with these systems concerning the ability of a *buddha* to act for the sake of sentient beings.

2. Non-Mahāyāna Buddhology

A. *Nirvāṇa* without Remains and the Indirect Activities of the Buddha in the World

As already mentioned, for the followers of conservative Buddhism the Buddha, having dissolved after his death into the state of *nirvāṇa* without remains, disappeared from the world once and for all. The Buddha, therefore, could now act in the world for the salvation of others only indirectly, and in the first place through his Doctrine. Yet the mere Doctrine left by the Buddha, which was supposed to substitute for him, clearly did not meet the needs of sentient beings seeking salvation, and thus various cults, such as those devoted to the relics of the Buddha, and various ideas, such as that the Buddha actually exists indefinitely in a sort of supramundane paradise and that his appearance in the world was a phantom that manifested for the sake of sentient beings were already developing in non-Mahāyāna traditions.

Different questions regarding the relics of the Buddha have been already discussed by scholars on various occasions. The following short passage attempts neither

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5 The conception of *nirvāṇa* was, however, by no means uniform, and the various traditions of conservative Buddhism had different positions. Besides descriptions of *nirvāṇa* as mere extinction or annihilation, like the extinction of a flame when the wick and oil are exhausted, one finds various positive descriptions, such as it being a state of (complete) security (*kṣema*). Often, however, *nirvāṇa* was imagined rather as the passing into another, inconceivable existence. See Schmithausen 2000c, pp. 130–135, where such positions are discussed and sources are provided.

6 For the short treatment of the topic provided here, I have mainly relied on publications by Gregory Schopen, supplemented with several other references. One major recent publication on the issue is clearly John Strong's *Relics of the Buddha* (published in 2004), in which the author focuses on bodily relics (though he also touches upon what is referred to as 'secondary' relics); in summary, he views the Buddha's relics as "expressions and extensions of the Buddha's biographical process." For a further treatment of the cult of the relics, see Snellgrove 1987a, pp.
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to present an overview of these studies nor to discuss all aspects of the issue, but rather to point out the main points regarding the cult of the relics as a substitute for the Buddha after his passing into parinirvāṇa. The relics (dhatu or sarīra: ring bsrel / sku gdung / khams) of Śākyamuni Buddha, which after the cremation were placed in numerous far-flung stūpas, soon (i.e. probably already during the fourth and third centuries BCE) became objects of worship and were credited with special powers. To see the relics was to see the Buddha himself. As has already been pointed out by Schopen, the relics were conceived as containing the Buddha, and thus were regarded as alive. As such, they were thought to be suffused with various qualities. They were, in fact, believed to be endowed with the characteristics of a living buddha, such as morality (śīla), benevolence (maitri), and insight (prajñā); that is, they were characterized by the same spiritual forces and faculties that characterized and actually constituted the living Buddha himself. Further, the shrines containing the relics (together with their immediate surroundings), having become places where the Buddha was thought to be actually present and alive, were also considered sacred. The presence of the relics was felt to offer the same opportunity to gain merit as the presence of the living Buddha, while death in the vicinity of these places was believed to result, through the empowerment of the Buddha, in rebirth in heaven. Relics had also a beneficial impact on worldly matters, for both the devotee and for the land in general. The possession of relics served, for example, to legitimate political power. The relics of the Buddha, however, do not merely consist of bodily vestiges, but include several ‘secondary’ or ‘contact’ relics, that is, things which belonged to the

35–38, and also Lamotte 1988, p. 634, in which latter the question whether offering to stūpas and caityas is considered advantageous or not is addressed. See also Seyfort Ruegg 1977, p. 288, on the passage from the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā that advocates the worship of stūpas containing relics of the Tathāgata (such stūpas are there termed tathāgatadhatūtugarbha). Seyfort Ruegg maintains that this notion of a stūpa as tathāgatadhatūtugarbha could be regarded as a forerunner of the tathāgatagarbha theory in the Prajñāpāramitā literature, although in a stricter sense it explicitly appears for the first time in the apparently later work Adhyāyadhātukā Prajñāpāramitā. See also ibid., p. 306, nn. 34 & 35, for further references to the cult of the relics. An overview of relics and relic-based cults in the Buddhist context in India and East Asia is provided by Brian O. Ruppert in Buswell 2004, s.v. “relics and relics cults.”

7 On the events following the Buddha's passing into parinirvāṇa, including the treatment of his body, the cremation, the collection and distribution of the relics and other related issues, see Strong 2004, chapter four (“The Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha”) and chapter five (“Asoka and the Buddha Relics”), pp. 98–149.

8 See Roth 1987, where early references to the cult of the relics and stūpa worship are provided and discussed. According to Roth (ibid., p. 294), the earliest reference to the cult of the relics is found in the Ahraura version (in Mirzapur District of U.P.) of Asoka’s Minor Rock Edicts.

9 For a forceful example of Buddhist followers’ need for relics as a replacement for the living Buddha, see the conversation between the monk Mahinda and the Sri Lankan king Devānampiyatissa, as cited in Schopen 1997, p. 133. See also Collins 1998, p. 247, and Strong 2004, pp. 116–121.

10 On the problem that arises from conceiving of relics as containing the deceased Buddha (or as being no different from him), on the one hand, and a simultaneous presence of the Buddha and relics of past buddhas, on the other, in apparent contradiction to the conservative notion that only one buddha appears at a time, see Strong 2004, pp. 36–39.
Buddha or with which he had some link, including geographical places he visited during his life, and in which he was considered to be actually present even after his death.17 Furthermore, according to Theravāda Buddhism, the relics of the Buddha will one day come together and perform miracles, as the Buddha did while living. They will take the shape of the Buddha, and teach the Doctrine again, and then will once and for all enter nirvāṇa and disappear from the world. This so-called ‘parinirvāṇa of the relics’ (dhiituparinibbāna) enables the appearance of another buddha, for according to Theravāda tradition buddhas can appear only in linear sequence.12 As we shall see, in the Tantric context, the Buddha’s relics and the stūpas containing them are considered to be mudrās left behind by the Buddha or else to be semblances of the Buddha or expressions of Buddhahood that can assist sentient beings in attaining the spiritual goal.13

The practice of buddhānusmṛti and the figurative presentations of the Buddha had a similar function.14 As Schmithausen has already pointed out, the practice of buddhānusmṛti—which was current already during the life of the Buddha as a substitute for his actual presence in the case of physical separation—was conceived, for example, by Buddhaghosa (Visuddhimagga 7.67) as not only having a salvific effect but even as resulting in the feeling of being in the presence of the Buddha.15 Figurative images (pratimā) of the Buddha, such as statues, were also from a certain time onward (ca. first/second cent. CE) an aid in the attempt to restore the presence of the Buddha, in that they served as objects of worship and also offered a basis for the meditative visualization of the Buddha.16 Later, such statues, when consecrated, were considered to be animate.17

11 Schopen 1997, chapter seven (“Burial Ad Sanctos and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism: A Study in the Archaeology of Religions”), pp. 114–147, and chapter eight (“On the Buddha and His Bones: The Conception of a Relic in the Inscriptions from Nāgarjunikonda”), pp. 148–164. For the different categories of relics found in various Sanskrit and Tibetan sources, see Scherrer-Schaub 1994, pp. 717–718, and also pp. 723–724, n. 97, where the items included under relics of fibres are further discussed. Various lists from Tibetan sources are provided by Dan Martin in his article on relics in the Tibetan context. See Martin 1994, pp. 278–279, and particularly the appendix, pp. 297–305.

12 Collins 1998, pp. 245 & 247–248; Schmithausen 2000a, p. 12; Strong 2004, pp. 221–226. See also Schopen 1997, pp. 155–156, where the primary meaning of the term dhātu in passages concerning the physical remains of Śākyamuni—namely, ‘relic’—is discussed.

13 See below, §4.B.


15 Schmithausen 2000a, p. 12. Makransky, however, argues that, while the viewpoint that devotional practices were primarily an expression of human religious need (such as the need for the presence of the Buddha) has merit, it does not do full justice to many of the texts. These practices, he states, are also “the enactment of a deep intuition about the nature of reality” or “the forms needed to elicit and express basic intuitions concerning the nature of reality itself”; that is, “reality discloses itself as a communicative and transformative power present to anyone whose vision becomes sufficiently purified through practice.” It is also for this reason, he argues, that such practices find expression in many influential systematic treatises ascribed not to what he calls “sentimentalists” but to prominent scholars. See Makransky 1997, p. 333.

16 As is well known, one at first avoided portraying the human features of the historical Buddha, who was instead represented by various symbols such as the bodhi-tree. It is believed in fact that we do not have an image of the Buddha that is earlier than the Christian era. According to Roth
Of these developments, the cult of the relics and the belief in their effectiveness are perhaps the most relevant to our discussion. Although Rong-zom-pa, in the models he presents, does not explicitly refer to the cult of the relics, he does refer to the Tantric notion that a *buddha* can be effective in the world even after his passing into *parinirvāṇa*, having left behind previously empowered objects that can serve as a ‘substratum’ for various powers and abilities, and through which he can indirectly act for the benefit of sentient beings. Nevertheless, Rong-zom-pa was well aware of the fact that the cults involved in venerating objects could also be explained as a historical development, as is evident from the following passage found in his *Rab gnas bshad sbyar*:\(^\text{18}\)

The statues, drawings (*ri mo'i rgyud*), *stūpas*, books, and perfumed chambers (*dri gtsang khang: gandhakūṭī*) pertaining to the sublime Dharma are actually set up as receptacles of the sublime Three Jewels, and thus are counted as the receptacles of divinities. How so? When the Buddha appeared in the world and set the Wheel of the sublime Dharma in motion, and numerous [members of] the noble *Sāmpaṇa* were still living, it was not necessary to construct separate receptacles of veneration, since one venerated the noble beings themselves. Then, after the Buddha passed into *nirvāṇa*, and [the member]s of the noble *Sāmpaṇa*, too, passed into *nirvāṇa*, and thus noble beings no longer lived in the world, the practice of venerating receptacles came into being. [These include objects] such as (1) the *bodhi*-tree and the ‘diamond seat’ (*rdo rje gdan: vajrāsana*), which were sanctified by the Teacher himself; (2) *stūpas* that were constructed after the Teacher’s passing into *nirvāṇa*, which was followed by the division of [his] relics into eight [parts]; (3) a statue of the Exalted One that was erected at the ‘seat of awakening’ (*byang chub kyi snying po: bodhirnalJda*), [that is], the diamond seat, at the behest of a king called Dharmāśoka, who appeared three hundred years after the Teacher’s passing into *nirvāṇa*; (4) and books in which the teachings contained in the three *pitakas*, which until then existed only in the memory of individuals, were written down \(\text{by the council}\)\(^\text{19}\) at the behest of that king in order to guarantee their authenticity and longevity, and which were then placed in the perfumed

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\(^{18}\) *Rab gnas bshad sbyar* (B, fols. 271a6–272a1; D, pp. 140.1–17). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.A.

\(^{19}\) The translation of text included in the glosses on passages from Rong-zom-pa’s works cited by me is given within braces and in smaller script, as in the critical editions. The origin of these glosses is unknown; it is probable, however, that they were inserted by Mi-pham during the compilation of Rong-zom-pa’s collected works, which he proofread. These glosses often include, besides additions and explanations, an identification of the sources cited.
Chapter Two: Buddhology in Its Historical and Philosophical Context: An Overview

chamber. This is the common way of [explaining the existence of] receptacles of veneration.

B. The Notions of Transcendental and Multiple Buddhas and Their Fields

As has been mentioned, already in the Pāli canon there was a tendency to portray the Buddha as an extraordinary being. A further step to enshrine this image was taken by some Buddhist thinkers sometime around the turn of the first millennium, as part of additional attempts to preserve the presence of the Buddha in the world, since the substitutes offered by the cult of the relics and the practice of buddhamusmṛti were no doubt felt to be too limited. In Mahāśāṃghika circles, and especially among the subsect known as Lokottaravāda, there emerged a new strand of thought that portrayed the Buddha as an entirely supramundane being. According to it the Buddha did not pass into complete nirvāṇa beyond this world, but rather is still present in the world, even after his passing into parinirvāṇa, in a kind of paradise or pure field, just as he was before his appearance in the world in the form of a human being. According to this model, the appearance of the Buddha in the world was only a phantom, which he brought forth out of compassion for sentient beings and which he dissolved after accomplishing his task. This idea is found, for example, in the Lokānātvatāsūtra, a sūtra propagating the Lokottaravāda doctrine, and taught upon the request of Mañjuśrī. According to this sūtra, which has been discussed by Paul Harrison on several occasions, the appearance

20 The historicity of the details given here is clearly questionable. Nevertheless, no comprehensive discussion of them is possible within the framework of this study. It may be merely pointed out that the reign of King Asoka has been dated by some scholars to 214–250 according to the era of the Buddha’s nirvāṇa (i.e. 272–236 BCE), while other suggested dates deviate only slightly from the ones just mentioned (for details and further bibliographical references, see Lamotte 1988, pp. 216–217). See also Nakamura H. 1991, where it is argued that Asoka’s enthronement took place in the year of 268 BCE. An erection of a Buddha statue by King Asoka at the seat of awakening in Buddhagaya seems unlikely, since images of the Buddha appear to have been introduced only later. Asoka is, however, said to have made pilgrimages to Buddhagaya several times and to have built an enclosure surrounding the bodhi-tree, and a small caitya on the spot where the Mahābodhi temple stands today (ibid., p. 316; Strong 2004, pp. 61–62). There also exists some documentation that a pillar surmounted by an elephant was erected by him on this spot (see Barua 1934, pp. 9–12). Note that Nyang-ral, in his account of Asoka, also reports that Asoka was responsible for the erection of a Buddha statue in Buddhagayā. According to Nyang-ral, this statue was carved from a kind of sandalwood called ‘essence of snakes’ (tsan dan sbrul gyi snying po: uragasaracandana) by the ‘king of artistry’ Viśvakarman (i.e. the Vedic deity of artistry) and placed in the lower part of a two-story gandola built in front of the bodhi-tree. It is also reported that two further statues, one of Maitreyā and the other of Avalokiteśvara, were placed there on the same occasion (Nyān-ral chos 'byung, pp. 105.16–106.7). There seems to be no clear evidence either for any connection between Asoka and the compilation of the canon. The details regarding the dates (and the place) of the councils to which the compilation is traditionally assigned vary from source to source (as they do in regard to the dating of Asoka). Nevertheless, different traditions associate King Asoka with at least one of the three councils. Various sources attribute extensive literary activity to the council of Vaiśāli, with which Asoka is often linked. For more details on the councils and the compilation of the canon, see Lamotte 1988, pp. 124–140.

21 This is followed by an explanation of the existence of the various venerated objects from the point of view of the Mantra system. For a translation of it, see below, §4.B.
and activities of the buddhas in the world, exemplified by the life of Śākyamuni Buddha, are a mere demonstration for the sake of sentient beings. Its first half contains a description of the qualities of the buddhas, working through the major events in Śākyamuni’s life and his day-to-day activities, and claiming that all these were illusionary, that is, a mere show. The buddhas are held there to be supramundane in all respects, transcending all worldly phenomena and the limitations these imply. All events in the Buddha’s life including his birth, renunciation of worldly life, practice of austerities, attainment of awakening, and finally his death were thus simply staged. A similar statement is also found in the Upāyakauśalyasūtra, which is concerned with explaining events in the life of Śākyamuni Buddha in terms of ‘skilful use of stratagems,’ that is, in terms of their benefit for sentient beings. There it is said that “from the time of the conception up until taking up his seat under the bodhi-tree, the bodhisattva really remained in dhyanā in the Tuṣita Heaven, and only appeared to enter his mother’s womb, be born, enjoy the pleasures of the householder’s life, go forth into the religious life, and practise austerities.” Hence, with the Mahāsāṃghikas, a change in the conception of the Buddha, or a buddha, indeed becomes evident. The gap between the Buddha, who gains awakening on his own and helps others, and the arhat, who attains nirvāṇa only with external help and is concerned only with his own salvation, becomes wider. The Buddha becomes transcendent, his human existence being regarded as a set piece presented for the sake of sentient beings. The emphasis is thereby on nirvāṇa with remains, the state in which a buddha acts in the world for others, rather than on nirvāṇa without remains. It seems that it was out of such tendencies that the notion of unfixed nirvāṇa (apratiṣṭhitanirvāṇa) later developed in Mahāyāna circles. This conception of a transcendental buddha, who lives in a transcendental paradise indefinitely, and who occasionally appears in the world in a human form in order to work for the salvation of others, was adopted and further developed by at least some representatives of Mahāyāna, one additional accent being that one should strive to become such a buddha oneself—upon which emphasis was now laid. This notion of a transcendental buddha who only

22 Several scholars have drawn explicit or implicit comparisons between this buddhological conception and docetism of early Christianity. See, for example, Kapstein 2001, p. 235.

23 For parallels to the Lokānuttarakāśāstra (especially the first half) found in the Mahāvastu and other early works, see Harrison 1982.


25 Harrison 1995, pp. 9–10. According to Harrison, while in Pāli sources, such as the Apadāna, the events in the Buddha’s life are used to illustrate the law of karma, the Lokānuttarakāśāstra uses them to glorify the Buddha (or buddhas) and to emphasize his (or their) transcendence of all limitations. The Upāyakauśalyasūtra combines, according to him, the two approaches.

26 Makransky identifies four Mahāyāna notions that, according to him, “pushed up against” the Third Noble Truth of nirvāṇa and so led to the development of the doctrine of unfixed nirvāṇa. For Makransky’s attempt to explain the emergence of the notion of unfixed nirvāṇa and the solutions to the problems connected with it in terms of the Four Noble Truths, see Makransky 1997, chapter thirteen.

manifested himself in the world in a human form for the sake of sentient beings is referred to by Rong-zom-pa in the first model presented by him in both the Sangs sa chen mo and the dKon cog ‘grel, where he ascribes it to ‘some common sūtras’ or the ‘common Vehicle,’ respectively.

A further development was the notion of the simultaneous appearance of multiple buddhas in different world systems, as opposed to the idea found in conservative Buddhism that only one buddha appears in the world (which was conceived as limited) at a time. This notion, which possibly arose under the influence of the multitude of Hindu gods, also emerged around the beginning of the first millennium, together with the idea of a huge cosmos that includes innumerable world systems. As already pointed out by Harrison, there is certainly a connection between the belief in the simultaneous appearance of multiple buddhas and the practice of buddhanusmṛti, since this practice offered the possibility of ‘meeting’ buddhas from other world systems, both the buddhas and the worlds in which they are active being conceived as supramundane. With the increase in the number of buddhas, the number of bodhisattvas also grew, a development that has become one of the main characteristics of Mahāyāna and thus actually brings us into the terrain of Mahāyāna buddhology, which will be discussed in detail in the following section. In a way, the bodhisattvas had initially served as a substitute for the buddhas, for they were capable not only of aiding sentient beings in need as far as worldly matters are concerned but, just like the buddhas, also of carrying out salvific activities for their sake. As suggested by Dorji Wangchuk, the psychological need to make up for the loss of the historical Buddha together with the wish to guarantee the durability of the Three Jewels is also one of the most likely internal factors to have influenced the development of the bodhicitta concept so central to the bodhisattva ideal. The notion of multiple buddhas and bodhisattvas is featured in four of the five models presented by Rong-zom-pa in his dKon cog ‘grel (Table 2), namely, all but the first one.

3. Non-Tantric Mahāyāna Buddhology

With the emergence of Mahāyāna, the focus of the spiritual practice changed. One no longer strove primarily for Arhatship, that is, only for one’s own salvation, but for Buddhahood, which involves not only the endeavour to attain salvation oneself but also to work for the salvation of others. A bodhisattva is thus ready to take pains and tread this

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31 As has been shown by Schmithausen, those who strive for the salvation of both self and others are, even in the old canon, considered superior to those who only strive for their own salvation. Nonetheless, while the legitimacy of restricting one’s efforts to one’s own salvation was not questioned in the old canon, such a tendency is apparent in Mahāyāna. To be sure, although some Mahāyāna systems, especially Yogācāra, consider the path of conservative Buddhism as an inferior alternative, they do not deny the possibility of attaining the goal by treading it. Other Mahāyāna systems, though, such as the one propagating the theory of tathāgatagarbha, take the old path to be ineffective, or at the most as an intermediate stage, and the path of the bodhisattva,
strenuous and long path, and even to postpone his own attainment of Buddhahood, for the sake of others. The motive for this is often said to be compassion. Yet as soon as a bodhisattva attains Buddhahood, all factors that bind him to samsāra disappear, and once he dies, he enters the state of nirvāṇa without remains. This implies that the stay of the buddhas in the world is temporally restricted, as are their direct activities for the sake of sentient beings. Nonetheless, as compassion and the salvific activities for the sake of others connected with it came to the forefront of Mahāyāna’s goal of salvation, and became the focal point of its spiritual path and ethics, the notion of a buddha’s passing into nirvāṇa without remains, and thus disappearing from the world forever became problematic more than ever before. It was but natural that Mahāyāna theorists sought for ways to prolong a buddha’s stay in the world and for solutions that would guarantee his

which leads to Buddhahood, as the only path (ekayāna) to salvation. See Schmithausen 2000b, p. 439, and id. 2004, where Aṅguttaranikāya 7.64, which contradicts the cliché that a Śrāvaka is solely concerned with striving for his own salvation, has been looked at closely. See also Wangchuk 2007, pp. 82–86, where the altruism of the historical Buddha and altruism in early Buddhism is discussed.

The model of postponement presupposes, however, the total disappearance of a buddha from the world after his entering parinirvāṇa. But with the introduction of the doctrine of unfixed nirvāṇa, which ultimately prevailed in Mahāyāna, there was no longer any need to propound such a model. Makransky adds in this connection that the fact that the postponement model continued to be promulgated in Mahāyāna circles long after unfixed nirvāṇa became the normative doctrine has caused confusion among some modern scholars, who have defined bodhisattva on the basis of the postponement model (which is indeed at odds with the notion of unfixed nirvāṇa) and thus have failed to take a sufficiently historical perspective. See Makransky 1997, pp. 336–337, where Paul Williams is cited as one example. For instances of works which contain elements of both the postponement model and the unfixed nirvāṇa doctrine, thereby at times creating tension that could only be resolved by the commentators, see ibid., pp. 339ff. In his conclusion to this section (ibid., pp. 344–345), Makransky adds that cults centring on advanced bodhisattvas arose in connection with this development, which took place prior to the emergence of the doctrine of unfixed nirvāṇa, and thus were somewhat at variance with it.

The problem of prolonging a buddha’s as well as a bodhisattva’s stay in the world is connected with what Schmithausen calls the “tension between compassion and emptiness.” This tension already manifests itself in a bodhisattva’s practice, since when he enters into the samādhis of abiding in emptiness (śūnyatā), a state devoid of signs (ānimitta), his own attainment of Buddhahood is endangered, for in this state one is detached from the world, which has thus dissolved. A bodhisattva therefore best avoids—as long as he has not attained the qualities of a buddha—an intensive experience of these samādhis, through which all fetters binding him to the world disappear, lest he enter the state of nirvāṇa prematurely. Hence a bodhisattva must draw a balance between compassion, which induces him to stay in samsāra (or rather not to enter nirvāṇa prematurely), and emptiness, which keeps his stay in samsāra from leading to attachment. In this way, a bodhisattva is confined neither to nirvāṇa nor to samsāra. For a longer discussion of this problem and attempted solutions, see Schmithausen 2000b, pp. 442–446. See also Wangchuk 2007, pp. 235–246, where the concept of bodhicitta as a fusion of emptiness—or, alternatively, discerning insight (prajñā)—and compassion—or, alternatively, efficient strategy (upāya)—and the tension between these two poles, is discussed.

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salvific activities in the world even after he entered the state of nirvāṇa without
remains.\textsuperscript{34}

As Schmithausen has shown, two different attempts to solve this problem can be
found in Mahāyāna scriptures, namely, (1) attributing to (advanced) bodhisattvas
the ability to work for the salvation of others in the same way as a buddha, while at the same
time extending the period of the activities of bodhisattvas, and (2) introducing the idea of
either a transcendental buddha with an unlimited life span\textsuperscript{35} or the ability of a buddha to
act for the sake of sentient beings even after entering the state of nirvāṇa without
remains.\textsuperscript{36} It is the second attempt, and the two possibilities under it involving a buddha,
that is of direct relevance to our discussion. As to the second possibility, according to
which a buddha is able to act for the sake of sentient beings even after entering the state
of nirvāṇa without remains, more than one explanation is found for it. Some early
Yogācāra works postulate that a buddha leaves behind phantom Bodies, which outlast his
death and by means of which he can, at least for some time, continue his activities, or that
on account of previous resolutions (i.e. resolutions made before the attainment of
Buddhahood—or at least before entering the state of nirvāṇa without remains—to strive
not only for one’s own salvation but also for that of others\textsuperscript{37}), he rises from the state of
nirvāṇa without remains, just as one rises from meditative absorption.\textsuperscript{38} Some other
works postulate that the qualities that define the activities of a bodhisattva for the sake of
others are not exhausted even after he enters the state of nirvāṇa without remains. As
stated by Schmithausen, this comes close to a synthesis of the two phases of extinction,
that is, nirvāṇa with and without remains. Both of these approaches converge in theories

\textsuperscript{34} See Frauwallner 1956, p. 144, where three factors that determined and dominated the
development of Mahāyāna are given, namely, (1) a newly defined salvific goal, (2) a new
philosophical doctrine concerning the absolute (\textit{das höchste Sein}), on the one hand, and the
external world, which is now understood as mere appearance, on the other, and (3) a new
buddhological conception.

\textsuperscript{35} As pointed out by Schmithausen, postulating the existence of a transcendental buddha with an
unlimited life span can be found, for example, in chapter fifteen (\textit{Tathāgatayuspramāṇaparivarta}) of
the \textit{Saddharmapundarikakāśīśūtra}, or in the thirteenth vow of the bodhisattva Dharmākara, the
future buddha Amitābha, in the longer \textit{Sukhāvatiyūhāsūtra} (H. Inagaki, \textit{The Three Pure Land

\textsuperscript{36} For example, the \textit{Viniścayasamgrahānī} of the \textit{Yogācārabhūmi} states that all buddhas tirelessly
act everywhere for the salvation of sentient beings, and compares these activities to those of a
magician, caravan leader, and a boatman described in the \textit{Śūramgamasmadhisūtra}, though the
latter is actually referring to an accomplished bodhisattva and not a buddha. (For the Tibetan
text and a translation of it, see Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 66–67.) The idea of a bodhisattva who has not
(yet) entered into nirvāṇa without remains, but abides in the Śūramgamasmadhi, and acts for the
sake of sentient beings was thus applied in the \textit{Viniścayasamgrahānī} to a buddha, who, despite
having entered the state of nirvāṇa without remains, is not completely dissolved into it, but rather
continues to act for the salvation of others. For the translation of the passage from the
\textit{Śūramgamasmadhisūtra}, see \textit{ibid.}, pp. 178–179, n. 259. For other references, see Schmithausen
2000b, p. 452, n. 87.

\textsuperscript{37} Schmithausen 1969a, p. 159, n. 155.

\textsuperscript{38} For more on this analogy, see below, n. 53.
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that merge both phases of nirvāṇa into one unlimited state designated as ‘unfixed nirvāṇa,’ a topic to which I shall come back later.39

A. The True Nature of the World as Nirvāṇa and the Inconceivability of Buddhahood

One observes a tendency in different schools to maintain the uniform nature of the world, namely, as unarisen, as an absolute. This uniform nature of the world, also designated tathatā, in the first instance rests upon ‘dependent origination’ (pratīyāsamutpāda). For the Mādhyamikas, who, too, consider dependent origination as defining the uniform nature of the world, this term means that things actually do not originate, since real existence implies existence independent of other things. Therefore, for them, it means non-origination or, in other words, emptiness (śūnyatā), which is the true nature of all phenomena. Emptiness does not mean absolute nothingness but rather the coming to rest (upāsama) of all manifoldness, and since the coming to rest of all manifoldness also means the cessation of all worldly phenomena, emptiness is nirvāṇa. Hence, for the Mādhyamikas, nirvāṇa as a metaphysical dimension is not beyond the world but within it, and it can be experienced as a spiritual event by gaining a direct cognitive insight into it.41 The Madhyamaka philosophical system avoids any verbal assertion, be it negative or positive, and explains the silence of the Buddha regarding certain questions as being an expression of the inconceivability of true reality. Their main concern is, therefore, to impart insight into this inconceivability. As Schmithausen has pointed out, such a conception of reality does not automatically lead to a positive ethic in the sense of specific salvific activities on the part of the buddhas (i.e. the realization of emptiness eliminates egoistic motives and thus may pave the way for an altruistic ethic, but it does not motivate one to undertake such activities, and it can even cause any altruistic ethic to appear superfluous, and therefore requires additional impulses), and it is likely that this difficulty in postulating a positive ethic within the Madhyamaka philosophical system led to the development of the tathāgata-garbha doctrine, according to which all sentient

39 As already noted, this state can be ascribed also to (advanced) bodhisattvas. For some references, see Schmithausen 2000b, p. 453, n. 88.

40 The word tathatā is an abstract form of the Pāli word tatha, which means ‘true,’ but was later linked with the Sanskrit word tathā, ‘so.’ It is thus often rendered as ‘suchness’ in English (or ‘Soheit’ in German), and denotes unchanging reality (Schmithausen 1969b, p. 165).

41 See Schmithausen 1973, pp. 180–185, where it is demonstrated that the ‘illusionism’ of Mahāyāna, which, according to Schmithausen, has its roots in spiritual practice rather than in theoretical considerations, was used as a foundation for Mahāyāna spirituality, with activities for the salvation of others at its core. This, at least in some strands, calls for a bodhisattva to postpone or even relinquish his own salvation. The ‘illusionism’ is, again according to Schmithausen, the ontological counterpart of the meditative state of cessation (nirodhasamāpatti), which is no longer considered to be a mere anticipation of the experience of nirvāṇa, but the mystical experience of the true nature of phenomena, that is, their primordially peaceful state, or, in other words, the mystical experience of nirvāṇa as the true nature of the world.
beings possess a 'buddha embryo' or Buddha Nature, that is, a potential or latent Buddhahood, or a buddha in a hidden form.42

**B. Buddhahood as Defined by Qualities and the Notion of Unfixed Nirvāṇa**

Another development in Mahāyāna buddhology was the notion that a buddha, or Buddhahood, is bound up with numerous good qualities. The conception of these qualities, however, was not uniform, and two main strands can be determined in this regard, namely, that of the Tathāgatagarbha tradition, which maintains that the qualities are inseparable from true reality, and thus to be simply discovered, and that of the mainstream Yogācāra school, according to which these qualities must be generated. The latter goes back to the early Buddhist notion of nirvāṇa with remains.

As opposed to Madhyamaka, the Tathāgatagarbha system conceives true reality positively. True reality—which inherently exists, in a non-purified form, in all sentient beings and which is tantamount to nirvāṇa—is considered to be Buddhahood. According to this system, although true reality, as it exists in all sentient beings, is stained by defilements, it is by nature pure, permanent, blissful and primordially tranquil, and therefore, here, just as in the Madhyamaka system, nirvāṇa is not beyond the world but is present in all sentient beings, and can be revealed through the removal of defilements.43

42 Schmithausen 1969b, pp. 165ff. On the tathāgatagarbha theory, see Zimmermann 2002, especially pp. 75–77, where the possible motives for its development are discussed. According to Zimmermann, one motive may have been to widen the circle of Mahāyāna followers by announcing that all sentient beings, including non-Buddhists, possess the Buddha Nature. He emphasizes, however, that the authors of the Tathāgatagarbhasūtra did not draw ethical conclusions from the tathāgatagarbha theory based on this notion—that the (early) tathāgatagarbha theory did not formally establish a doctrinal basis for ethical behaviour. Another possible motive behind the creation of the Tathāgatagarbhasūtra pointed out by him was the need to explain the theory that all sentient beings can attain Buddhahood, a theory propagated in various Mahāyāna sūtras, particularly in the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra and other sūtras that evince elements of the tathāgatagarbha theory.

43 As already mentioned, the tathāgatagarbha theory presupposes the notion of 'one gotra' or ekayāna, that is, 'one spiritual disposition' or 'one Vehicle.' Since, according to the Tathāgatagarbha tradition, the qualities of a buddha are inseparable from true reality, one cannot realize true reality without these qualities, namely, without becoming a buddha, which means that (ultimate) nirvāṇa is only possible as Buddhahood. Therefore, since all sentient beings have the Buddha Nature within them, as that which ensures that they can become a buddha, all should tread the path of a bodhisattva. This implies that for this system Mahāyāna is the only path to salvation, and that the liberation of an arhat is not the ultimate soteriological goal. See Schmithausen 1969b, p. 167; id. 2000b, p. 439. See also Wangchuk 2007, pp. 36–38 & 111–112.

As these qualities are conceived as inseparable from the nature of true reality, the term 'emptiness' is employed in this system in a different sense, namely, that the tathāgatagarbha is not empty of an inherent nature but rather empty of defilements, or of extraneous stains. The Ratnagotrabhāṣa, for example, postulates that the dharmakāya of a buddha is pure, permanent, and blissful, and even a 'self' (atman), and that the tathāgatagarbha in sentient beings has always been endowed with all qualities of a buddha. For more on this positive interpretation in the Tathāgatagarbha tradition, see Seyfort Ruegg 1989, pp. 19–26, where passages from the Mahāyāna version of the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra are cited which discuss the nature of these qualities and distinguish the term atman as a designation for the absolute from the same term as used by non-Buddhist traditions.
Given such a positive conception of true reality, it is much easier to postulate a positive ethic in the Tathāgatagarba tradition than in that of Madhyamaka, since the absolute is conceived as endowed with numerous qualities that allow it to have an effect on and be active in the world. A buddha is thus imagined here in terms of the unfixed nirvāṇa, in which both phases of nirvāṇa are merged into one. Nevertheless, since these qualities, which lay the foundation for and guarantee a buddha’s salvific activities in the world, are taken to be an integral part of reality itself, they, too, are unconditioned, and thus everlasting and unchanging, and as such they cannot be active in the sense of generating controlled, goal-directed activity, but only permanently and automatically so, in that they unceasingly radiate their influence upon all sentient beings, just as the sun radiates its light without the need for a specific impulse, and those who are open to such influence can benefit from it. In other words, the absolute is viewed in this tradition as a metaphysical reality that has a certain richness which gives forth of itself spontaneously and eternally. This implies that a buddha’s salvific activities in their various forms—being a spontaneous, natural product of true reality—are everlasting.

Another solution which merges both phases of nirvāṇa into an ‘unfixed nirvāṇa’ is found in later Yogacāra works in which Buddhahood is again conceived as endowed with numerous qualities. However, given its different philosophical presuppositions (including the gotra theory, according to which sentient beings have different spiritual dispositions, and thus do not necessarily become buddhas, but can become arhats or pratyekabuddhas, or else are not liberated at all), Yogacāra, in its postulation of nirvāṇa, and thus of Buddhahood, sets itself off from the Tathāgatagarbha tradition. Unlike in the latter, the qualities are not an integral part of reality (tathāta) or nirvāṇa but rather must be generated.

Later Yogacāra works introduce a conception of a buddha’s nirvāṇa that is different from that of a Śrāvaka saint. In the case of the latter, nirvāṇa is simply true reality, once realized and experienced—experienced, that is, from the ‘emptiness of the person,’ which results in the extinction of one’s existence, true reality being what remains. In order to attain Buddhahood, however, a profounder experience of true reality that includes the realizing of the ‘emptiness of all phenomena’ along with a complex of generated mental qualities is necessary. In other words, in addition to realizing the true nature of reality, a bodhisattva’s mind undergoes a purification process, which not only frees his mind from defilements but also transforms the common forms of his mind into

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44 For references to Indian works that discuss unfixed nirvāṇa, see Makransky 1997, p. 388, n. 3.
45 This notion is found, for example, in the Ratnagotravibhāga, according to which a buddha, like the dharmakāya, is completely in nirvāṇa, but in spite of the fact that there is no manifoldness, he acts for the sake of sentient beings automatically, while the ‘receptors’ in the world, namely, sentient beings, ‘pick up,’ or respond to, these salvific activities according to their abilities.
47 Therefore, unlike the proponents of the tathāgatagarbha theory, the Yogacāra system accepts the liberation of arhats as one of three possible soteriological goals, though as an inferior form; in the case of an arhat no qualities have been generated, and thus what remains after his death is only the absolute, that is, the tathāta. For a recent discussion of the ‘revelation’ (or ‘nature’) model vs. the ‘generation’ (or ‘nurture’) model, see Wangchuk 2007, pp. 38–41.
completely pure forms. The state of Buddhahood is not, therefore, defined only by tathatā, as is the case with the liberation of an arhat, but is supplemented by qualities, which have to be generated as aspects of a buddha’s mental factors, namely, as the four types of a buddha’s knowledge or gnosis (jñāna). As these pure forms of mind are generated and not inherently present in the absolute, it is legitimate for the proponents of Yogācāra to postulate that the qualities associated with Buddhahood are not an integral part of the absolute, that is, nivāṇa as a metaphysical dimension, and that the latter, therefore, cannot serve as the foundation for a buddha’s salvific activities in the world. Hence, as opposed to the dynamic absolute of the Tathāgatagarbha tradition, the absolute of the Yogācāra system is static. These four types of gnosis, which are the result of the transformation of the complex of impure mental factors into a complex of pure ones, are not substantial units, but consist of momentary phases, that is, chains of conditioned mental factors that have been generated, and thus are impermanent. These pure mental factors, qualities such as omniscience and great compassion, which exist for an indefinite time, serve as the foundation for a buddha’s salvific activities in the world. Yet at the same time, due to their purity, they are dissociated from entanglement in the world and from its sufferings and passion, and are in fact a source of indescribable sublime bliss. Although these qualities are merely chains of momentary mental factors, as chains they are of indefinite duration, and in some sense unceasing, and thus a buddha’s activities are secured forever.

These gnoses cognitively apprehend both the absolute and the world, and this makes a conscious state of liberation and at the same time a conscious exercise of compassion possible. Here the emphasis is on ‘conscious,’ unlike in the Tathāgatagarbha system, where a buddha’s activities are a spontaneous outflow that is motivated by an earlier resolution. Thus the fact that the four types of gnosis cognitively apprehend both nivāṇa and samsāra makes for the so-called ‘unfixed nivāṇa.’ The nivāṇa of a buddha combines, according to the Yogācāra system, the irrevocability and the complete liberation of nivāṇa without remains, on the one hand, with the bliss and the salvific activities for the sake of others pertaining to nivāṇa with remains, on the other. This conception allows for an active or dynamic nivāṇa, in which one is neither affected by samsāra nor dissolved into nivāṇa beyond the world, but is rather completely freed from samsāra and at the same time active in the world.

48 Note that in some early Yogācāra works the notion of indefinite activities on the part of buddhas, which was adopted from Mahāsāṃghika thought, has not yet ripened, and a distinction is still made between nivāṇa with and without remains. A buddha in nivāṇa without remains can at best act in the world indirectly. See Schmithausen 1998, p. 199.

49 On the four gnoses, see below, §3.D.

50 Schmithausen 1969a, p. 169.

51 Since this complex of pure mental factors generates an inconceivable bliss within a buddha himself, activities for the sake of others, which result from these mental factors, go hand in hand, in this system, with his own salvation, which is thus of a higher sort than ‘simple’ nivāṇa. See Schmithausen 2000b, p. 454.

In sum, experiencing *nirvāṇa* (as a spiritual event) is the realization that *nirvāṇa* (as the state of cessation of all manifoldness) is ontologically immanent in all phenomena. This means that manifold appearances are only seemingly existent, for their true nature is emptiness and tranquillity, and hence a *buddha* can find complete *nirvāṇa* in the world and so in one way or another be active in it. According to the Tathāgatagarbha strand of thought, the true nature of the world, that is, *nirvāṇa*, is by nature also Buddhahood, and a *buddha*, or the absolute, spontaneously and automatically gives rise to salvific activities for the sake of others. A *buddha*, therefore, exists only on the level of true reality, but he is automatically active on the level of manifoldness without having to emerge from the state of *nirvāṇa*, as postulated in some Yogācāra treatises. According to mainstream Yogācāra, the true nature of the world is merely *nirvāṇa* in the sense of all manifoldness coming to rest, and thus it is only release that is attained with the realization of the true nature of the world. The further activities of a *buddha* in the world are only possible by supplementing this state of *nirvāṇa* with an existence at the level of manifoldness, which means that a *buddha* can simultaneously abide in the depths of true reality and still...

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53 In the *nirvāṇa* section of the *Viṇīcayamgrahani* of the Yogācārabhūmi, for example, it is maintained that a *tathāgata* comes out of the state of *nirvāṇa* without remains for the sake of other sentient beings, analogously to one's rising from the meditative state of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*). (For the Tibetan text and a translation of it, see Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 56–59.) This rising involves exerting influence on worldly factors, such as physical appearances—that is, the production of material Bodies for the sake of sentient beings. This production is probably to be understood as issuing from a certain state of consciousness, whose reappearance forms the actual analogy to the rising from the meditative state of cessation. As Schmithausen has already noted, it is difficult to determine whether this rising is of a temporary or a permanent nature. He suggests that it may be interpreted as a never-ending alternation between entering the state of *nirvāṇa* without remains and rising from it, although he adds that such an interpretation does not absolutely impose itself (ibid., pp. 159–160, n. 159). As just stated, the production of physical appearances of a *buddha* requires a certain state of consciousness, namely, a *nirmāṇacitta*. Such a state is commonly generated by an impulse (*abhisamkāra/abhogā*). But as such an impulse implies mental unrest, and thus manifoldness, and as Buddhahood is free from manifoldness and therefore resistant to such an impulse, there arises the question how it is possible for a *buddha* to produce such a state without an impulse. The answer given by the text is that it is possible in virtue of an earlier impulse, as is the case with rising from the meditative state of cessation (ibid., p. 162–163, n. 174).

As Schmithausen has already pointed out, this and similar analogies are found in other sources as well. According to *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* 10.9 (pp. 161.25–162.4), a *buddha* rises from *nirvāṇa* like one rising from unconscious sleep on account of an earlier impulse, namely, an impulse from the time prior to his falling asleep, or like one rising from the meditative state of cessation on account of a previous impulse. The same analogies are found in the *Buddhabhūmiśākyāhya*, where the *Sāgaramatinirdeśasūtra* is cited for the analogy of the rising from the meditative state of cessation, and where the resolution to rise upon the ringing of a bell—although the sound of the bell does not penetrate the meditator's ears—is given as an example of a previous impulse in this case (P, fol. 305a8–b3; D, fols. 251b6–252a1; S, vol. 66, pp. 1376.19–1377.5). Thus the ability to rise from the state of *nirvāṇa* results from a previous impulse generated by an intensive practice of the path, comprising the exercise of method and insight (Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 164–165, n. 180). This analogy has been employed by Nāgāmitra in his *Kāyatrayāvatāramukha* (v. 16) and commented upon by Jñānacandra in his *Kāyatrayavṛtti*. See below, the section “Works by Indian Authors,” §2.A.
actively see to the concerns of sentient beings. As we shall see below, these two strands are evident in the arguments and counter-arguments brought forward by the various parties to the debate regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, in connection with a buddha’s ability to act for the benefit of others. The core of this debate is the issue regarding the relation between transcendence and immanence, or in Makransky’s words, the “paradox of unfixed nirvāna.” Some of the most important questions relevant to our discussion have been how the unconditioned absolute can serve as a basis for the conditioned manifestations of a buddha, and how, from a gnoseological point of view, it can relate to and perceive the conventional world characterized by manifoldness.

C. The Theory of the Three Kāyas

The development of the theory of three (or more) buddha-Bodies (kāya: sku) must have been the result of an attempt to devise a scheme into which the different levels on which buddhas exist or appear would fit. The scheme commonly taught in non-Tantric Mahāyāna sources is that of the theory of the three kāyas, which was developed in Yogācāra circles. This theory, which can be treated here only briefly and in a somewhat simplified manner, postulates the following three Bodies: (1) The svābhāvikakāya (ngo bo nyid kyi sku) or Essential Body, that is, the unchangeable true reality which is the actual essence of a buddha. This Body is also called dharmakāya, in which case the

54 Note Makransky’s remark, in regard to the treatment by Yogācāra works of a buddha’s ability to act, that although the question how a buddha can act in the world if he is free from conceptualizations is raised in Yogācāra commentaries, it seems to be “subsumed, at least in part, under Buddhaahood’s inconceivability (acintyālakṣaṇa).” These works, he states, instead of analyzing the “content and mechanism of a buddha’s awareness,” “address the problem with a very broad, metaphorical discussion,” two such metaphors being the sound of celestial musical instruments or the glitter of jewels; in each case which occurs does so automatically and effortlessly. He also adds that “Yogācāra texts are not embarrassed by their inability to present a more detailed answer.” As examples of these Yogācāra works, Makransky names the Mahāyānasūtraśāmānlakāra, Mahāyānasamgraha and its commentary by *Asvabhāva, and the Ratnagotravibhāga and Ratnagotravibhāgaavyākhyā (Makransky 1997, pp. 94–96). It seems to me, however, that this conclusion has resulted from not differentiating between the various works belonging to the so-called Maitreya-Asaṅga complex, not all of which obviously follow the same model. This shortcoming is unfortunately apparent in connection with other issues discussed by him in his otherwise very informative and useful study.

55 See also Makransky 1997, pp. 18–20.

56 For references to Yogācāra literature in which the theory of the three kāyas was first formalized and further discussed, see Makransky 1997, pp. 42 & 383, n. 52. See also the discussion of the theory of the three kāyas in Keenan 1980, pp. 227–242.

57 The Tibetan forms rang bzhin gyi sku or bdag nyid kyi sku are also found, especially in earlier works such as those by Rong-zom-pa.

58 Both designations are found in the non-Tantric literature. For example, in Mahāyānasūtraśāmānlakāra 9.59 & 9.60 one finds svābhāvikakāya (note, however, the compound dharmasambhoga in 9.59); Madhyāntavibhāgaabhāsyā (p. 56.18, ad 4.14) has dharmakāya; Mahāyānasamgraha 10.§1.1 names both, clearly as synonyms; Ratnagotravibhāga 2.44 has svābhāvikakāya (see also Johnston 1950, p. 85.9), but Ratnagotravibhāga 2.53 has dharmakāya;
term dharma is understood in the sense of dharmatā, the dharmakāya thus being the ‘body which represents [the true nature of] phenomena’ or the Body of Reality.\(^{59}\) (2) The both are also named in Abhisamayālamkāra 8.1, which, however, has led to a controversy surrounding the number of kūyas actually referred to there.

\(^{59}\) The term dharmakāya can basically be understood in three different ways. Schmithausen has summarized the three meanings of the term as follows: (1) In the sense of the Buddha ‘having the Dharma as his body.’ Here the Buddha’s Doctrine is emphasized rather than his physical body. In this case the term does not denote any metaphysical entity. (2) As an adjective or noun designating the ‘aggregate’ of [mental] qualities [of a buddha] or the ‘body of the Doctrine,’ of which the human body is only a manifestation. (3) With the component dharma being understood in the sense of dharmatā, as denoting the form that is the actual essence of the buddhas and is identified with true reality, that is, the essence of all phenomena. In this meaning, the dharmakāya is on the one hand transcendent, for it cannot be experienced in daily life, and on the other immanent, for it is the true nature of all phenomena (see Schmithausen’s remark in “Anfrage und Gesprächsbeiträge” with reference to Steinkellner 2000, in Bsteh 2000, pp. 263–265). See also Harrison 1992 (a study devoted to the early development of the term dharmakāya), in which the main concern is to demonstrate that the term dharmakāya is employed in the sūtras translated into Chinese by Lokakṣema (collectively designated by Harrison as the Lokakṣema corpus) in a “non-substantivist” way, in conformance with what he considers mainstream Buddhist teachings—that is, either as a bāhuvrīhi adjective in the sense of ‘Dharma-bodied’/‘having the Dharma as a body’/‘embodied in the Dharma’ (like Pāli dhammakāya) or as a tatpurusa substantive in the sense of “body of dharmas,” denoting the collections of teachings, qualities, principles of existence, or truths—and not a kind of absolute reality that brings about all other manifestations of Buddhahood, as in the Yogācāra theory of three kūyas. Harrison refers to the specific meaning of the term in Sarvāstivāda sources as ‘body of [undefiled] dharmas,’ and argues that the employment of the term in early and middle Mahāyāna sources is consistent with the meaning ‘body/collection of qualities/truths/teachings.’ These he designates as “mainstream interpretations,” as opposed to Body of Reality, expressing the absolute true nature of a buddha along the lines of the doctrine of the three kūyas—the meaning assumed by most scholars. Harrison questions the employment of the term dharmakāya in this latter sense even in later Mahāyāna sources, but nonetheless admits at this point to having arrived at the limits of his own competence, but suggests that in the light of his findings even the Yogācāra discussions of the subject may need to be reconsidered. This is an issue which cannot be discussed here in detail. See, however, the note on the citation from the Vajracchedikā in my translation of Rong-zom-pa’s Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.1.B.i, where Harrison’s thesis is once again touched upon.

Compare also Steinkellner 2000, p. 260, where the two conceptions expressed by the term dharmakāya are connected, namely, the Buddha embodied in his teachings and the Body of Reality: the Buddha is conceived as embodied in his Doctrine, that is, has it for his body, and since the Doctrine is the truth that leads to the realization of true reality, the Buddha is himself the essence of reality, that is, true reality. For further discussions of the term dharmakāya and its various possible meanings, and on the difference between the terms dharmakāya and svabhāvikakāya, see Makransky 1997, pp. 4–6. See also ibid., pp. 60–62, where Makransky argues that the term dharmakāya is employed in two meanings, namely, in an exclusive sense denoting the first of the three kūyas (i.e. in the sense of the svabhāvikakāya) and in an inclusive sense as the state of Buddhahood in its entirety (including all three kūyas). For a discussion of the notion of dharmakāya from the viewpoint of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, as the ‘body of [attained mental] qualities (dharmas),’ and from that of the Prajñāpāramitā literature, as the ‘body (or embodiment) of reality (dharmatā),’ [i.e., emptiness],’ see ibid., chapters two and three, respectively. For a discussion of the conceptions found in Yogācāra literature relating to the terms svabhāvikakāya
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sambhogakāyā/sāmbhogikakāyā (longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku) or Body of Enjoyment, that is, the body in which buddhas appear to advanced bodhisattvas in pure fields and share with them their enjoyment of the Doctrine. And (3) the nirmanakāyā/nairmanikakāyā (sprul pa'i sku) or Apparitional Body, that is, the worldly appearances of buddhas in the form of a body that artificially manifests through supernatural powers and thus acts for the benefit of sentient beings. The dharmakāya or svabhāvikakāyā, which is epistemically accessible only to buddhas, is conceived of as homogeneous, that is, undivided and undifferentiated, whereas the last two Bodies, which are respectively accessible to advanced bodhisattvas and ordinary beings, and which together are designated rūpakāyas (gzugs kyi sku), that is, 'material Bodies,' are said to be limitless in number and to take various forms. Likewise, the svabhāvikakāya or dharmakāya, being true reality, is regarded as unconditioned and unchanging, whereas the rūpakāyas, being the manifestations that carry out salvific activities for the benefit of sentient beings, are viewed as undergoing change and thus conditioned. In other words, the former is considered to be actual (mtshan nyid pa / yang dag pa), and thus the basis for the latter two, which are nominal (btags pa).

and dharmakāya (i.e. non-dual awareness—that is, gnosis—of purified reality), see ibid., chapter four.

Note that one finds the translation rdzogs par longs spyod pa'i sku in Sthiramati's *Mahāyāna-sūtra-lamkārayākyā 9 (p. 116.13 and passim).

The Tibetans have understood the prefix sam in this connection as ‘complete(ly)’ or ‘perfect(ly)’ (rdzogs pa), as in MW, s.v. sambhoga, which has ‘complete enjoyment.’ This is also evident from the explanation of the term in various sources. See, for example, the sGra sbyor (A, no. 25; B, p. 86), s.v. sambhogakāyā, which has “experiencing completely the enjoyment and great happiness associated with the Doctrine” (... 'chos kyi' [B om.] longs spyod dang skyid pa chen po ma lus par [B pa] myong bar mdzad pa...); ibid. (A, no. 392; B, p. 197), s.v. mahāmāheśvarāyatana, which has “a place in which the enjoyment associated with the Doctrine is demonstrated and experienced completely” (... chos kyi longs spyod rdzogs par bstan zhiing [B cing] myong bar gyur pa'i gnas...). Makransky, in his discussion of the etymology of the term sambhogakāya/sāmbhogikakāya, argues, however, that the meaning of the prefix sam here is ‘together with,’ ‘mutual’ or, in this context, more appropriately ‘communal’ (hence his translation “embodiment [of Buddhadhood] in/for communal enjoyment of dharma”), and that the Tibetan translation of it as rdzogs pa (i.e. ‘complete’ or ‘perfect’) is thus a mistranslation (Makransky 1997, pp. 105–106).

For Makransky’s discussion of the meanings of the names of the three kāyas from a morphological point of view and his explanation of why he chose to translate the word kāya as ‘embodiment’ rather than ‘body’ in the context of the theory of the three kāyas (under the influence of Harrison’s article of 1992), see Makransky 1997, pp. 54–60.

For more details on the svabhāvikakāya or dharmakāya as the ontological basis of the two material Bodies, see Makransky 1997, pp. 87–90; for a discussion of the two rūpakāyas, see ibid., pp. 104–108. For a general discussion of the three kāyas, see Williams 1989, pp. 167–184, especially pp. 175ff., containing a description of the dGe-lugs four-kāya theory, which follows Haribhadra’s *Abhisamayālaṃkāra commentary. For a treatment of the three kāyas in traditional sources, see the tenth chapter of the *Mahāyānasangraha, which is devoted to the result and in which non-conceptual gnosis is explained in terms of the three Bodies (the Tibetan text is found in Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, pp. 83–99; an annotated translation into French is found in ibid., vol. 2, pp. 266–345; a translation into English based on the Chinese translation by Paramārtha is found in Keenan 1992, pp. 105–120; and an English translation along with the respective portions in the
Before briefly discussing the background of the theory of the three kāyas, I would like to cite here Rong-zom-pa’s definitions of them. In his Rab gnas bshad sbyar, Rong-zom-pa briefly provides some (speculative) etymologies of the terms dharma-kāya and rūpa-kāya, as follows:

As for the term dharma-kāya, in most cases [it is] said to refer to non-dual gnosis. Because this gnosis is the ‘body’ (lus: kāya) that consists of the total accumulation and perfection of all phenomena (chos: dharma) that go to make up the path and result, it is called the dharma-kāya. This great gnosis is [also] called the rūpa-kīya, for it has been empowered for [the sake of] disciples by previous resolutions and great compassion [in such a way that it] has the physical characteristics of the Enjoyment and Manifestation [Bodies], so that [it] can be an object of the senses. When [these] two, the dharma-kāya and rūpa-kāya, are each expressed as ‘what is indicated’ by and ‘the indicator’ of the other, then on some occasions the rūpa-kāya is expressed as a symbol (rtags) of the dharma-kāya, [in, the following manner]: the constituents of the qualities of the dharma-kāya are empowered in the form of signs (mishan ma). On other occasions, the rūpa-kāya is expressed as analogous [to the dharma-kāya]: the dharma-kāya possesses constituents of qualities of the kind resembling the signs of the rūpa-kāya.

In the discussion of the three kāyas in his Grub mtha’i brjed byang, Rong-zom-pa first speaks of what he calls the three kāyas of the Śrāvaka saints and the three kāyas of the pratyekabuddhas, clearly retrospectively imposing the Mahāyāna theory of the three kāyas on non-Mahāyāna systems, and then goes on to explain the commonly known

Chinese and Tibetan translations of Vasubandhu’s Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya, the Chinese and Tibetan translations of *Asvabhāva’s Mahāyānasamgrahapanibandhana and relevant passages from other works is found in Griffiths & Hakamaya 1989). A detailed discussion is found in chapter three of the lengthy version of the Suvannaprabhāsāsūtra, which is entirely devoted to the three kāyas (the Tibetan text translated from the Sanskrit is found in Nobel 1944, pp. 201–214; that translated from the Chinese in Nobel 1958, vol. 2, pp. 42–57; a translation of the latter into German is found in Nobel 1958, vol. 1, pp. 41–79). See also Mahāyānasūtraśāmakāra 9.59–66, verses often cited by traditional authors. Also worth mentioning is Bhavya’s discussion in his Tarkajñāna (P, fols. 140b6–141a7; D, fols. 129b4–132b3; S, vol. 58, pp. 317.8–319.10). For further references to the topic, see Harrison 1992 and Makransky 1997.

64 Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fols. 290b4–291a3; D, p.160.6–15). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.B.

65 According to Rong-zom-pa, for the Śrāvaka saints, the state of coming to rest of all manifoldness, which is the meditative state of cessation (niruddhasamāpatti), is the dharma-kāya, the manifestation of Śākyamuni when he became awakened as the lord of the Śrāvakas is the saṃbhogakāya, and Śākyamuni who teaches sentient beings by way of removing doubts among disciples such as Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana is the nirmāṇakāya. For the pratyekabuddhas, the realization of awakening on one’s own and the actualization of true reality—that is, the result—by contemplating (or meditating on) profound reality—that is, dependent origination—somewhere where there are no spiritual friends, is the dharma-kāya, the cessation of suffering and the abiding in a stream of bliss is the saṃbhogakāya, and the activities for the sake of sentient beings in their immediate vicinity, with the use of insight and miraculous bodily powers, such as swiftness, after attaining the result is the nirmāṇakāya (Grub mtha’i brjed byang, B, fol. 341b2–6; D, pp. 218.22–219.9: de la nyan thos kyi sku gsun ni ‘gog pa’i snyoms par ’jug pa ni zhi ba gya nom pa ste nyan thos kyi chos kyi sku’o|| shākya thub pa rab tu byung ba’i tshul du mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa na] nyan thos kyi dbang phyug chen por bstan pas longs sphyod rdzogs pa’i sku’o|| shā ri’i bu dang mo’u ’gal gyi bu la sogs pas] bcom ldan ’das la la tshom rgel zhing lan ldon pas

64
three kāyas, which are designated by him as the three kāyas of the bodhisattvas.66 There he etymologizes the term dharmakāya along the lines of the Tathāgatagarbha (or perhaps the Guhyagarbha) tradition, as follows:67

Regarding the term dharmakāya: Dharma means that which is characterized by the essence of primordial awakening, being from beginningless time the spiritual disposition (rigs: gotra) [of all sentient beings], and that which exists as naturally pure. Subsequently, conceptual thoughts are adventitious (glo bur ba: āgantuka). Regarding these adventitious conceptual thoughts, they are similar, for example, to [the case in which] the arising of light naturally clears away darkness. When conceptual thoughts are cleared away within the expanse of true reality, it is not that something extremely bad becomes good, but rather that true reality, which has naturally existed from a primordial time, assumes [its] natural state. The term kāya: the existence of qualities without increase and decrease is also called kāya; the cause of the arising of the two [rūpa]kāyas is also referred to as kāya. In this way [it is called] dharmakāya.

Rong-zom-pa does not provide lengthy (speculative) etymologies for the names of the two rūpakāyas, only a brief explanation of the terms: namely, that the sambhogakāya is endowed with two types of enjoyment, that of the pure realms (zhing dag pa la longs spyod pa) and that of the spiritually matured retinues ('khor smin pa la longs spyod pa), and that the nirmāṇakāya displays manifestations inconceivably (sprul pa bsam gyis mkhyab par ston).68 As for the dharmakāya, he discusses the term in his Sāttstsha gdab pa,

66 This somewhat elaborate discussion of the result in the form of the three kāyas is found in Rong-zom-pa’s Grub mtha’i brjed byang (B, fols. 341a6–346a6; D, pp. 218.19–224.3). He first discusses each kāya separately in terms of the four gnoses and goes into the etymologies of the terms designating the three kāyas, and then discusses whether the three kāyas are permanent or impermanent, existent or non-existent, and whether they are homogeneous or heterogeneous. Here I shall only present his basic understanding of the terms designating the three kāyas.

67 Grub mtha’i brjed byang (B, fols. 342b4–343a2; D, p. 220.7–14). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” § 1.C.

68 Rong-zom-pa’s discussion of the sambhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya is found in the Grub mtha’i brjed byang (B, fols. 343a2–344b2; D, pp. 220.15–222.6). For the idea that a buddha can bring forth inconceivable manifestations, see the Appendix, n. 7, where what is referred to as the ‘three nirmāṇakāyas’ (sprul pa’i sku gsum) is discussed. See also the section on Tantric buddhology below, §4.
in the context of different methods of casting a miniature caitya or stūpa, and there gives three meanings for it: (1) the essencelessness of phenomena (chos kyi btags med pa: dharmanairatmya), (2) true reality (de bzhin ngyid: tathātā), and (3) non-dual gnosis (gnyis su med pa'i ye shes: advayajñāna).⁶⁹

As Harrison has already shown, the raw material of the Mahāyāna doctrine of the three kāyas may be found in the Lokānuvartanāsūtra and other works translated into Chinese by Lokakṣema. The Lokānuvartanāsūtra describes two kinds of material Bodies, namely, the human body of the Buddha, said to be a mere demonstration or show, and seemingly corresponding to the nirmānakāya, and another material superhuman body endowed with fantastic characteristics, such as a golden hue, lotus feet and extraordinary strength; it is sometimes referred to as the vajrakāya, and seems to correspond to the sambhogakāya. Once the Buddha is identified with the Dharma, though, these two material Bodies are annulled.⁷⁰

Harrison sees in the sambhogakāya the creation of a figure with the necessary ideal features of a superhuman for capturing the imagination—a purpose which cannot be fulfilled by the two other Bodies, for the nirmānakāya is a manifestation in the familiar form of a human body and the dharmakāya is a formless abstraction. Thus, unlike the other two Bodies, the sambhogakāya represents the visible fruition of wholesome deeds carried out by practitioners and offers them the enjoyment of seeing the result, in the form of numerous qualities and powers.⁷¹ Steinkellner suggests that the tension between homogeneity and heterogeneity—that is, between the tathātā as the unity in all buddhas, on the one hand, and the beneficial resources, the insight and salvific activities, which define their individuality, on the other—is probably the reason for the development of the doctrine of the three kāyas, according to which there is, besides the impermanent human body and the eternal body, also a body of enjoyment, which presents the visible fruit of a buddha's beneficial resources.⁷² Makransky speculates that the reason for the Yogācāra reformulation of earlier two-kāya descriptions (the dharmakāya and rūpakāya⁷³) was to

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⁶⁹ For a translation of this passage, see the discussion of mudrās as expressions of Buddhahood found below, §4.B. Note that the general characteristics of the three Bodies and their relation to the four gnoses has been already formulated in the sGra sbyor (A, nos. 24–26; B, p. 86).
⁷⁰ Harrison 1995, pp. 14–17. Harrison, however, notes that while the Lokānuvartanāsūtra generally portrays the Buddha in a non-substantalist way, the whole Lokakṣema corpus tends to stress the magnificent aspects of the Buddha as a person (ibid., p. 20).
⁷³ Makransky is referring here to the two-kāya scheme found in some non-Mahāyāna works, and in early and middle Mahāyāna sūtras (particularly the Prajñāpāramitā corpus) as well. But see Harrison 1992 for an argument against the theory of a “one-body/two-body/three-body progression, in terms of which a single personality is divided into a material and a ‘spiritual’ body, and then the material body is further split in two, yielding the final complement of three” postulated by various modern scholars. Note, however, that later Indian and Tibetan sources continued to employ this two-kāya scheme, apparently for reasons of convenience, and that, too, in the sense against which Harrison is arguing. The Ratnagotravibhāga presents a similar two-kāya scheme, though it uses a different terminology, namely, the ultimate Body (paramārthakāya: don dam sku) for one's own benefit and the conventional Body (samvrtikāya: kun rdzob sku) for others' benefit, the latter being a mere reflection of the former (see Takasaki 1966, pp. 336–337).
accommodate the various forms of buddhas found in Mahāyāna sūtras, namely, the new forms of exalted buddhas in contrast with the limitless forms in which these buddhas appear in the world.\(^{74}\) In sum, it may be said that the two-kāya formulation reflects the physical-concrete versus spiritual-abstract aspects of the Buddha already being featured in the traditional sources from early on, and which later became universally accepted for buddhas in general. Of particular interest is the concept of the accessibility or inaccessibility of these two Bodies to humans, alluded to above. Worth noting, too, here is the assumed causal relation between the two accumulations, namely, the accumulations of beneficial resources (punyasambhāra: bsod nams kyi tshogs) and gnosis (jñānasambhāra: ye shes kyi tshogs), with the two kāyas, that is, with the rūpakāya and dharma-kāya, respectively.\(^{75}\)

The mental factors (dharma) of a buddha, that is, his omniscience and the like, were commonly associated with the dharmakāya, but occasionally also with the sambhogakāya. As we shall see, the problem of associating the mental factors with the absolute or dissociating them from it was crucial to the traditional conception of Buddhahood, for this problem is directly connected with the ability of a buddha to act in the world, and as such it led to numerous controversies including the controversy over whether a buddha has gnosis, which is Rong-zom-pa’s main concern in his discussion of the various conceptions of Buddhahood.\(^{76}\)

\(^{74}\) Makransky 1997, pp. 41–42.

\(^{75}\) As noted in Lindtner 1997, p. 262, an allusion to this causal relation is found in Nāgārjuna’s Yuktisāṅkikā 60, which states:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{dge ba 'di yis skye bo kun} & \text{||}\n\text{bsod nams ye shes tshogs bsags te} & \text{||}\n\text{bsod nams ye shes las byung ba 't} & \text{||}\n\text{dam pa gnyis ni thob par shog} & \text{||}.
\end{align*}\]

It is, however, explicitly formulated in Ratnāvalī 3.12–13, which states:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{sangs rgyas rnams kyi gzugs sku ni} & \text{||}\n\text{bsod nams tshogs las byung ba ste} & \text{||}\n\text{chos kyi sku ni mdor bsdu na} & \text{||}\n\text{rgyal po ye shes tshogs las 'krungs'} & \text{12}\n\text{de lta bas na tshogs 'di gnyis} & \text{||}\n\text{sangs rgyas nyid ni thob pa'i rgyu} & \text{||}\n\text{de lta mdor na bsod nams dang} & \text{||}\n\text{ye shes 'di ni rtag brten mdzod} & \text{13.}\n\end{align*}\]

See also Candrakīrti’s Madhyamakāvatāra (pp. 62.15–63.4): sangs rgyas nyid kyi rgyu yi tshogs ni gnyis yin te| gang 'di bsod nams kyi tshogs dang ye shes kyi tshogs so| de la bsod nams kyi tshogs ni pha rol tu phrin la gsum po de dag nyid yin la ye shes kyi tshogs ni bsam gan dang shes rab bo| brtson 'grus ni gnyis ka'i rgyu yin no zhes bya bar rnam par bzhag go|| de la bsod nams kyi tshogs gang yin pa de ni rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rnams kyi gzugs kyi sku bsod nams brgya'i mtshan nyid can rnam du byung zhih bsam gyis ni khyab pa'i gngags sni tshogs dang ldan pa'i rgyu yin no|| cho kyi btag nyid can gyi sku skye ba med pa'i mtshan nyid can gyi rgyu ni ye shes kyi tshogs yin no||.

\(^{76}\) According to Makransky, it is precisely this problem that was behind the controversy over whether the Abhisamayālaṃkāra taught three or four kāyas and led Haribhadra to advocate a four-
D. The Four Gnoses

As has been noted above, the proponents of Yogācāra affirm that Buddhahood is supplemented by certain aspects of a buddha’s mental factors, which latter are the result of the transformation of the complex of impure mental factors into a complex of pure ones. These pure mental factors, which are not inherently present in the absolute and which are conceived as being constituted in momentary phases, and thus conditioned and impermanent, are the so-called four gnoses: (1) ‘mirror-like gnosis’ (ādarśajñāna: me long lta bu’i ye shes), a kind of all-embracing memory which constitutes the omniscience of a buddha, (2) ‘gnosis of equality’ (samatājñāna: mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes), which serves as the foundation for universal benevolence and compassion, (3) ‘discerning gnosis’ (pratyāveksanajñāna: so sor rtog pa’i ye shes), which is concentrated on individual cases and has the means of salvation ready at hand, and (4) ‘gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities’ (kṛtyānusthānajñāna: bya ba sgrub pa’i ye shes), in accordance with which the proper salvific activities are executed. There are several formal discussions of the four gnoses, but they cannot be presented here in detail. It may be merely stated that the four gnoses are also interpreted in terms of the Yogācāra’s threefold transformation theory, with each transformation connected with one of the three kāyas (i.e. provided non-conceptual gnosis is included in the dharma- or svabhāvikakāya). According to this interpretation, the mirror-like gnosis, which is connected with the dharma- or svabhāvikakāya, is the result of the transformation of the ‘fundamental mind’ (ālayavijñāna); the gnosis of equality and the discerning gnosis, connected with the sambhogakāya, are the results respectively of the transformation of the ‘defiled mind’ (kliṣṭamanas) and mental perception (manovijñāna); and the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities, connected with the nirmānakāya, is the result of the transformation of the five sense perceptions. Here, I would like to simply present a

kāya scheme in which the svabhāvikakāya and the dhammakāya are conceived as different Bodies, the former being the body of true reality and the latter the body consisting in a buddha’s gnoses.


78 See, for example, the annotated translation of the section in the Buddhabhūmyupadesa that deals with the five constituents of Buddhahood, which include, apart from the purified dharma-dhātu, the four gnoses; Keenan 1980, pp. 541–781. See also Mahāyānasūtraśāstra 9.67–76, which is apparently based on the Buddhabhūmisūtra. For an annotated English translation of these verses along with Vasubandhu’s Bhāṣya, see Jamspal et al. 2004, pp. 98–101. See also Makransky 1997, pp. 100–103.

79 For this theory, see, for example, Vijñaptimāratāsiddhi (de La Vallée Poussin 1928–1929, pp. 706–707). For a summary of Buddhajñāna’s presentation of the four gnoses in line with this interpretation, see Makransky 1997, pp. 260–262. In this connection, see also the above-mentioned discussion of the theory of the three kāyas in Keenan 1980, pp. 227–242. Compare the Vijñaptimāratāsiddhi (de La Vallée Poussin 1928–1929, pp. 707–708), where a second theory is described according to which the dharma- or svabhāvikakāya solely constitutes the purified dharma-dhātu, the svasambhogakāya comprises the four gnoses, while the paraśambhogakāya and the nirmānakāya are physical manifestations. See also, below, §4.C.2, the discussion of the fivefold gnoses (under which scheme all four above gnoses are often linked with the rūpakāyas), and the discussion of the non-conceptual and pure mundane gnoses found in chapter three, §4.B.
The four gnoses are taught under eight points: (1) the cause (rgyu) of the gnoses, (2) the favourable associate (grogs pa) [of the gnoses], (3) the function (las) of the gnoses, (4) the object (yul) of the gnoses, (5) the nature (rang bzhin) of the gnoses, (6) the characteristic (mtshan nyid) of the gnoses, (7) the number (grangs) of the gnoses, and (8) the result ('bras bu) of the gnoses. Of these, (1) the cause of the gnoses is the set of eight [vijnānas]: The transformed alaya[vijnāna], which exists as the foundation or cause of all phenomena, is the mirror-like gnosis. The [transformed] defiled mind (nyon mongs pa can gyi yid: kliṣṭamanas) is the gnosis of equality, because after eliminating the grasping at a self (bdag tu 'dzin pa: ātmagrāha), [one perceives] oneself and others as equal. The transformed mental perception (yid kyi rnam par shes pa: manovijnāna), [by which] [one] cognizes an object and identifies [it by means of exclusion or inclusion], is discerning gnosis. [What results from the transformation of] the [perceptions of] the five [sensory] apertures, which come about on the basis of their various respective objects, is the gnosis of earnestly performing [beneficial] activities. Just as [the perceptions of] the five [sensory] apertures determine the respective objects, so too does the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities cause all sentient beings who [share] the same resolution to mature and be liberated. (2) The favourable associate is a mind that is directed towards the noble path. It is, for example, like a thorough rubbing (bskyod, lit. ‘moving’); that is, it is like the removal of stains from a mirror when [it] is rubbed with felt (phying bu). If the mind is directed towards the noble path, the impurities of one’s alaya[vijnāna] are removed. Once one has directed the mind towards the noble path, the seeds—that is, the latent tendencies—[sown by] wholesome [factors] will prevail (gnas pa) in the alaya[vijnāna]. (3) The function is the elimination of the two obscurations (sgrib pa: āvarana). (4) As to the object, there are the shared and unshared objects. Of these, the shared object is the dharmadhatu. [As to] the unshared objects, [these are] the clear and unobscured, ([known by means of the] mirror-like gnosis), the equal and unmixed, ([known by means of the] gnosis of equality), the continuum of sentient beings, known ([by means of the] discerning [gnosis]), and the various disciples. ([Known by means of the] gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities). (5) The nature is the knowledge of all phenomena [as they actually are and] to the full extent. As to [knowing phenomena] as [they actually] are, [one] knows that [their] ‘universal characteristic’ (spyi'i mtshan nyid: sāmānyalaksana) is that [they] are unarisen; as to [knowing phenomena] to the full extent, one knows in an unobscured manner all phenomena, that is, all [their] ‘particular characteristics’ (rang gi mtshan nyid: svalaksana). (6) The characteristic [of the gnoses themselves] is momentariness. It is stated.
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[One] repeatedly refers to ‘gnosis,’
[But] even that which is referred to as gnos is hollow.
The inexpressible gnos
Is the absolute gnos.

(7) As for the number, [it] is four. (8) The result is the three Bodies. [The result of] the
mirror-like gnos, which is indivisible from the true reality of phenomena, is the
dharmakāya; [that of] the [next] two, the gnos of equality, which causes great compassion
to emerge, and the discerning gnos, which is the foundation of retention, samādhi and so
forth, is the sambhogakāya; [that of] the gnos of earnestly [performing beneficial]
activities, which does not fail (chud mi za ba) the disciples, is the nirmanakāya.

E. The Notion of Bliss

Bliss (sukha: bde ba), being an expression of the mental satisfaction attained as one
proceeds on the path, is an important component of Buddhist spirituality, and nirvāṇa, the
spiritual goal, is often described as a blissful state, the bliss of realizing the unconditioned
state, that is, the annihilation of all suffering or the coming to rest of all manifoldness. As
noted by various scholars, bliss as a defining feature of nirvāṇa is found already in early
Buddhism, in spite of the fact that nirvāṇa has been often conceived negatively, that is, as
total extinction.84 One could say, however, that it is perhaps precisely because it is
conceived thus that it is held to be a blissful state. The notion of bliss is expressed, for
example, in the term nirvṛti, which is employed as synonymous with nirvāṇa and which
combines the meaning of both ‘extinction’ and ‘bliss.’85 Thus, although the state of a
released arhat is said to be blissful, Mahāyāna sources point out that this bliss, which is
the result of the complete coming to rest of manifoldness, cannot be consciously and
positively experienced, and is in fact to be understood only metaphorically.86 It should be
noted here, however, that the conception of liberation in early Buddhism calls for
differentiating between nirvāṇa with remains, that is, the state of nirvāṇa experienced
while still alive, and nirvāṇa without remains, that is, the final nirvāṇa or nirvāṇa after
death. While the state of a saint before death is often clearly described in the canon as a
state of peace and happiness resulting from being liberated or from an anticipation of the
final nirvāṇa, such a characterization of final nirvāṇa, although occasionally found in the
canon, seems to have been on the whole rather avoided, probably due to its connotation
of a temporary psychic state. It is thus described rather as freedom from suffering and
death or as a state of security or welfare (kṣema, Pāli: khema).87 In the Mahāyāna context,

84 For references in Pāli literature to nirvāṇa as, among other things, ‘supreme bliss’ (paramānī sukham) or ‘unchanging bliss’ (acalānu sukham), see Dasgupta 1958, pp. 129–131. See also Dasgupta 1962, pp. 32–33; Schmithausen 2000d, p. 36, n. 49.
86 Schmithausen 1969b, p. 169.
87 See Schmithausen 2000d, pp. 36–40, where numerous references are provided.
one notices a growing tendency to conceive of nirvāṇa or Buddhahood as a blissful state. This idea, while elaborated in non-Tantric Mahāyāna sources, becomes even more conspicuous in the various Tantric systems, particularly those of the Yoganiruttara. So numerous are sources where nirvāṇa is described as blissful that not all of them can be studied here. In the following, I shall thus refer only to a few representative passages from non-Tantric Mahāyāna sources and discuss the matter particularly with respect to Rong-zom-pa’s presentation. The Viṇīcayasaṁgrahani, for example, states the following:

[Question]: Is [the ‘transformation of the basis’ of one who has attained nirvāṇa without remains] blissful (sukha) or is it not blissful? Reply: It is blissful insofar as [it is] bliss in its ultimate sense (don dam pa’i bde ba: pāramārthikam sukham), but not insofar as it is bliss in the sense of sensation (tshor ba’i bde ba: vedanāsukha). Why? Because it is beyond all defilements and all suffering resulting therefrom.

Thus, as noted by Schmithausen, the blissful nature of nirvāṇa is conceived here as consisting in the elimination of the entire sphere defined by the Truth of Suffering including its causes. The sources refer to this bliss in various ways. It is designated, among other things, simply as the ‘bliss of nirvāṇa’ (nirvāṇasukha), ‘bliss of coming to rest’ (vyuapaśamasukha) and ‘bliss [resulting from] the interruption of [all] sensations’ (veditopacchedasukha). This ‘coming to rest of suffering in its ultimate sense’ is based on the coming to rest of ‘suffering in its ultimate sense’ (pāramārthikam duḥkham). This ‘suffering in its ultimate sense’ comprises all sensations, including bliss in the form of sensual bliss (vedanāsukha: tshor ba bde ba) and neutral sensations, and is identical with the character of suffering associated with all conditioned phenomena (saṃskāraduḥkhatā).

The Mahāyānasamgraha, too, describes Buddhahood (in the Mahāyānasamgraha-bhāṣya and Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana, explicitly in contrast to the nirvāṇa of Śrāvaka saints) as a joyful state:

88 The notion of bliss as expounded in Tantric sources will be discussed separately below, §4.G.
89 This is my English rendering of the German translation found in Schmithausen 1969a, p. 53. The Tibetan text as edited by Schmithausen reads as follows (ibid., p. 52.13–17): cf. ‘[i] bde bar brjod par bya ‘am bde ba ma yin par brjod par bya zhe na smras pa don dam pa’i bde ba bde bar brjod par bya i tshor ba’i bde bas ni ma yin no de ci’i phiyir zhe na nyon mongs pa thams cad dang de las byung ba’i sdug bsngal thams cad las yang dag par ‘das pa nyid kyi phiyir ro]].
90 Schmithausen has noted, however, that this ‘coming to rest of suffering in its ultimate sense,’ mentioned in the Bodhisattvabhūmi, does not refer to nirvāṇa but to a temporary ‘coming to rest in the meditative state of cessation of notions (or: ideation) and sensations’ (samjñāveditanirodhahasamāpatti), and that this meditative state is often regarded as similar to the state of nirvāṇa and as a temporary anticipation of it. See Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 151–152, nn. 127 & 128, where references to passages in Yogācāra literature in which nirvāṇa is described as blissful are also given. For the sensation of bliss as suffering, see Nāgārjuna’s Ratnāvalī 4.47–48 (the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts are found in pp. 110–111).

gang phiyir snyas rgyas rang gi dbyings bnyes nas||
rram pa lnga yi bdag nijid gtues bnyes la||
dema thob pas dga’ dang bral gyur pa||
de phiyir de ‘dod pas ni de thob byos]].

71
A *buddha* had found his own 'sphere' (*a*bys*ngs: *dḥatu*),
And consequently found a fivefold joy.
If he did not attain that [sphere], [he] would be devoid of joy;
Therefore, he who desires that [joy] should [strive to] attain that [sphere].

Likewise, in the following verse, *buddhas* are described as ones who have attained a supreme, irreproachable joy on account of their inexhaustible and immeasurable powers and abilities:

Having seen that [their] power, [their] performance of [beneficial] activities, the taste of the Doctrine,
And the immeasurable affluence of [their] properties and qualities
Are inexhaustible, the *buddhas*
Attained a supreme, irreproachable joy.

The *Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra* describes Buddhahood as an inexhaustible source of supreme bliss. Sthiramati comments this line as follows:

> Regarding [the line (*Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra* 9.86c)] “Because it is a source of supreme wholesomeness and inexhaustible bliss”: Although ordinary people, Sakra, Brahma, and others possess bliss, it is a stained bliss, and thus it [can]not be called supreme well-being. Yet, once [one] is completely awakened, [one] is endowed with an unstained bliss, and thus [Buddhahood] is called a source of supreme well-being. Although the noble Śrāvaka [saints] and the like do possess unstained bliss, once they enter [the state of] nirvāṇa where all remaining aggregates have been eliminated, [this bliss] vanishes, and therefore [it] is called exhaustible bliss. But at the stage of a *buddha*, whatever bliss that exists will never

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*mthu dang bya ba grub dangchos ro dang|
don dang yon tan 'byor pa dpag med dang|
rtag tu mi zad gzigs pas sangs rgyas rnams|
dgyes mchog kha na ma tho med pa brnyes*.  


93 *Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra* 9.86c:

> subhaparamasukhākṣayākaratvāt.

A French translation of this line is found in Lévi 1911, p. 92; an English translation in Jamspal et al. 2004, p. 104.

94 The Tibetan text, as edited in *(*Mahāyāna)sūtrālāṃkārayākyā* 9 (pp. 159.17–160.10), reads as follows: *dge mchog bde ba mi zad 'byung gnas phyir| zhes bya ba la| so so'i skye bo brgya byin dang tshangs pa la sogs pa la bde ba yod kyang zag pa dang bcas pa'i bde ba yin pas dge ba'i mchog ces mi bya'la| mong par sangs rgyas pa na zag pa med pa'i bde ba dang Idan pas dge ba'i mchog gi 'byung gnas zhes bya'o| 'phags pa nyan thos la sogs pa la zag pa med pa'i bde ba yod kyang phung po'i lhag ma laus par spangs pa'i mya ngan las 'das par zhung pa'i tshel med par gyur pas na bde ba zad pa zhes bya ba la| sangs rgyas kyi sa'i dus na bde ba ji snyed pa thams cad 'khor ba'i mtha'i bar du yang med par mi 'gyur ba'i phyir bde ba mi zad pa'i 'byung gnas zhes bya s-te| 'dis bde ba'i 'byung gnas su 'gyur ba bstan to*].
be exhausted until the end of samsāra, and therefore [Buddhahood] is called a source of inexhaustible bliss. This is the explanation of why Buddhahood is a source of bliss.95

Furthermore, Sthiramati states in his Trīṃśikābhāṣya—on verse 30, in which nirvāṇa is again described, among other things, as bliss—that whatever is impermanent is associated with suffering, and therefore [Buddhahood] is called a source of bliss. This is the explanation of why Buddhahood is a source of bliss.95

The Ratnagotravibhāga names four ‘perfections’ (pāramitā: pha rol tu phyin pa) of the Absolute Body of a tathāgata: the perfections of ‘purity’ (subha: gtsang ba), ‘self’ (ātman: bdag), ‘bliss’ (sukha: bde ba), and ‘permanence’ (nityatva: rtag pa nyid). With regard to the perfection of bliss, it states that in contrast to the happiness caused by the mere cessation of suffering which is experienced by Śrāvaka saints, the acquisition of the perfection of bliss in the case of Buddhahood, the result of cultivating samādhis (such as the so-called Gaganagafija), is the attainment of supreme bliss concerning both mundane and supramundane matters. The text names two causes of this, namely, (1) the elimination of the root of all suffering by annihilating the continuous presence of residual impressions and (2) the realization of the cessation of all kinds of suffering by realizing the cessation of [even] the ‘mind-made’ aggregates [of arhats who still have to move on towards Buddhahood] (manomayaśandha: yid kyi rang bzhin gyi phung po).97

The Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtra also refers to these four perfections, and explicitly links bliss with samādhi.98

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95 See also Sthiramati’s concluding remarks to his comments on Mahāyānasūtrałamkāra 9.85 (ibid., pp. 158–60), where he states that the teaching regarding a buddha can be summarized under three points, namely, the excellence of one’s own benefit (bdag gi don phun sum tshogs pa), the excellence of others’ benefit (gzhan gyi don phun sum tshogs pa), and being a source of bliss (bde ba’i ‘byung gnas su gyur pa).

96 Trīṃśikābhāṣya (Lévi 1925, p. 44.23–24): sukho nityatvād eva yad anityam tad duḥkham ayaṃ ca nitya iti | asmāt sukhaḥ |; Tib. (P, fol. 201b3–4; D, fol. 171b3–4; S, vol. 77, p. 450.10–12): bde ba ni rtog pa nyid kyi phyir te gang mi rtog pa de ni sād bsgang ba’o| ’di ni rtog pa ste| de’i phyir bde ba’o|. A German translation is found in Jacobi 1932, p. 62. Note that the Trīṃśikāṅkāṭā by Vīnītadeva has a similar formulation (Jaini 1985, p. 491.40–41): katham sukha īty āha | sukha ītyādi | yasmaṁ nityas tasmāt sukhaḥ | tathā hi yad anityam tad duḥkham, ayaṃ tu nityah, tasmāt sukhaḥ |; Tib. (P, fol. 68a6–7; D, fol. 62b3; S, vol. 78, pp. 147.21–148.3): ji ltar bde zhe na de’i phyir ‘bde ba’ [P illegible] ni zhes bya ba la sogs pa smras te| gang gi phyir rtog pa de’i phyir bde ba’o| ’di ltar gang mi rtog pa de ni sād bsngal ba’o| ’di ni rtog [P rtog] pa ste de’i phyir bde ba’o|.

97 Ratnagotravibhāga (pp. 30.4–31.6; 31.16–32.2; 34.8–35.2). For an English translation, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 207–210, 212 & 218–219. According to Takasaki, the four perfections are peculiar to the tathāgataagarbha theory, and probably appear for the first time in the Śrīmāladeviśūtra (ibid., p. 209, n. 77).

98 The Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtra, as translated by Ye-shes-sde, reads (Nobel 1944, p. 207.24–29): chos kyi sku ’di ni rang gi ngo bo nyid la brten pas rtog pa zhes bya’o| bdag ces bya’o| ting nge ’dzin chen po la brten pas na bde ba zhes bya’o| ye shes chen po la brten pas na rnam par dag pa zhes bya ste| de’i phyir de bzhin gshegs pa rtog par bde ba dang rnam par dag pa la mnga’ brnyes shing bzhugs pa’o|. Compare the Tibetan translation from the Chinese, which reads somewhat differently (Nobel 1958, vol. 2, p. 50.7–13): chos kyi sku ’di lta bu ’di ni rang gi ngo bo nyid la gnas pas rtog pa zhes kyang bstan to| nga zhes kyang bstan to| ting nge ’dzin chen po la gnas pa’i phyir skyid pa zhes kyang bstan to| ye shes chen po la gnas pa’i phyir yongs su gtsang ba zhes.
This dharmakāya, since it is grounded in its own essence, is said to be permanent [and] is said to be 'self.' Since it rests on the great samādhi, it is said to be bliss. Since it rests on the great gnosis, it is said to be pure. Therefore, a tathāgata has attained mastery over bliss and purity and abides in them constantly.

Jitārī, in his 'letter' entitled Cittaratnaviśodhanakramalekha, gives as the cause of bliss the elimination of conceptual thoughts, as follows:99

[He who] is fixed in such [a state of] non-fixation is endowed with gnosis and constant bliss.
The Muni clearly taught that he who is devoid of conceptual thoughts is blissful.
The Noble One described [both] the realm of gods, which captivates with [its] sense pleasures,
And the riches of a cakravartin, [both of which] lack this [bliss], to be like the harm [posed by] thorns.

As we have seen, the bliss at the stage of a buddha is, unlike saṃsāric bliss, said to be non-sensual and unstained. This is so in the case of the bliss resulting from the realization of the truth (referred to in both early Buddhist sources and in non-Tantric Mahāyāna sources, but commonly also in the case of the various kinds of bliss that Tantric sources say exist at the stage of a buddha). This point is repeatedly emphasized, and any attempt to link this bliss with the sensation of bliss experienced in saṃsāra, which is associated with suffering, is categorically rejected. This is particularly true in the context of Mantrayāna, where the notion of bliss or 'great bliss' (mahāsukha: bde ba chen po) is given great prominence. An example of such an argument will be given below in the section dealing with bliss in the Tantric context.

Rong-zom-pa mentions several kinds of bliss in his presentation of the various positions. The bliss posited by the proponents of position 4, namely, the 'bliss of realizing the unconditioned [state of] cessation' ('dus ma byas zhi ba thugs su chud pa'i bde ba), clearly refers to the bliss generally ascribed in non-Tantric Mahāyāna sources to the state of Buddhahood. The two kinds of bliss mentioned by the proponents of position 5, namely, the 'bliss of the Mind' or 'Mental bliss' (thugs kyi bde ba) and the 'bliss of the Body' or 'Physical bliss' (sku yi bde ba), are also to be understood in accordance with non-Tantric Mahāyāna. They seem, unlike the last two kinds of bliss propounded by the proponents of position 6, namely, 'bliss [based on] external [non-sexual] objects' (phyi rol gyi bde ba) and 'bliss [based on sexual] enjoyment' (rol pa'i bde ba), to relate exclusively to the bliss that has resulted from a direct realization of true reality, for no

99 The Tibetan text, as edited in Dietz 1984, p. 196, reads as follows:
de 'dra'i gnas med 'dir gnas ye shes can te rtag bde ldan||
gang la rnam riog med 'di bde zhes thub pas gsal bar gsungs||
'di spangs lha yul 'dod pas rab tu yid 'phrog byed pa dang||
'khor los sgyur ba'i 'byor pa' ang dam pas tsher ma'i gnod 'drar gsungs||

For Dietz's German translation, see ibid., pp. 197–199.
particular external object of desire seems to be involved. The bliss of the Mind appears to be identical with the bliss highlighted by the proponents of position 4, that is, the bliss of realizing true reality without using a physical support. The bliss of the Body is said to be the great bliss experienced by the rūpakāryas, whose existence is acknowledged by the proponents of this position. This great bliss is centred on the essence of the gnosia of samādhi and continues without interruption. The accumulations of beneficial resources and gnosia are given as its cause.

The two kinds of bliss expressed by the terms thugs kyi bde ba and sku’i bde ba, which are the honorific forms of the terms yid kyi bde ba and lus kyi bde ba, are found already in the Abhidharma tradition, and conceived of analogously to the notion of sensation, which includes bliss. Although all sensations are associated by their very nature with the mind, the sources specify those sensations that have the five physical sensory organs as their support, and are thus associated with the five sense perceptions, as ‘physical sensations’ (kāyikā vedanā: lus kyi tshor ba), in contrast to those sensations that have the mental faculty as their support, and are thus associated with mental perception, and are accordingly referred to as ‘mental sensations’ (caitasikā vedanā: sems kyi tshor ba). This distinction is also applied in the case of the ‘sensation of bliss’ (vedanāskhā: tshor ba bde ba), which is generally defined as ‘gratification’ (śīta: sim pa). Sensual bliss thus takes the form of either ‘physical bliss’ (kāyasukha / kāyikam sukham: lus kyi bde ba), that is, bliss associated with the sense perceptions, or ‘mental bliss’ (manahskhā/ saumanasya: yid kyi bde ba), that is, bliss associated with mental perception.100 Hence, the bliss of the Mind and the bliss of the Body associated with the state of nirvāṇa or Buddhahood—though they are said not to be classifiable under the defiled psychophysiological complex of sensation (vedanāskandha: tshor ba’i phung po), commonly associated with suffering, and thus are regarded as unstained (anāsra: zag pa med pa), permanent (nitya: rtag pa), and non-sensual—seem to correspond to the kinds of sensual bliss associated with mental perception and sense perceptions, respectively. In the case of the bliss of the Body, this term is applied to a bliss that is independent of external objects, whence, it seems, it can be experienced only in association with the tactile organ (kāyendriya: lus kyi dbang po), and that too only in association with ‘tangibles’ (sparsāvya: reg bya) that can be experienced ‘internally.’101 The four kinds of bliss

100 See, for example, the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (pp. 41.9–42.4); for the Tibetan translation, see ibid. (P, fol. 61a–b4; D, fols. 55b3–56a2; S vol. 79, pp. 138.2–139.4); and for an annotated English translation of this passage from the Chinese, see de La Vallée Poussin 1988–1990, vol. 1, pp. 160–162. See also ibid., vol. 4, pp. 1231–1236, for a discussion regarding the bliss experienced in the four dhyānas, and whether this bliss is physical or mental, or neither of the two. Note that whereas mental bliss is always explicitly referred to as such, that is, as caitasikā vedanā (sems kyi tshor ba), physical bliss is often referred to simply as bliss.

101 Dharmasaṃgraha 38 lists eleven ‘tangibles,’ as follows: (1) earth (prthvī: sa), (2) water (āpas: chu), (3) fire (tejas: me), (4) wind (vāyu: rtung), (5) smoothness (ślaksṇatva: ’jam pa), (6) roughness (karkaśatva: rtsub pa), (7) lightness (lāghatva: yang ba), (8) heaviness (gurutva: lci ba), (9) coldness (śīta: grang ba), (10) hunger (jighatā: bkres pa), and (11) thirst (pipāśa: skom pa). Mi-pham, in his mKhas ’jug (p. 6.3–5), lists the above as ‘tangibles that are associated with the body externally’ (lus kyi phyi’i reg pa). In contrast, he names nine ‘tangibles that are associated with the body internally’ (lus kyi nang gi reg pa), as follows: (1) softness (mnyen pa: mārgdava/mrduṭa/snigdhaḥ), (2) relaxation (lhod pa: ślatha(tva)), (3) firmness (dam pa: gādha(tā)/drdha(tā)), (4) satisfaction (tshim pa: trpti), (5) ailment (na ba: vyādhi), (6) old age (rnga
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associated with Buddhahood among the various positions may be thus summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bliss Attributed to a Buddha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bliss induced by the realization of true reality (hypothesized by some in both Tantric and non-Tantric contexts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bliss of the Mind (thugs kyi bde ba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bliss [based on] external [non-sexual] objects (phyi rol gyi bde ba)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: The various kinds of bliss attributed to a buddha according to the various positions presented by Rong-zom-pa

Or alternatively, taking the mental and physical types of bliss as the point of departure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bliss Attributed to a Buddha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bliss of the Mind (thugs kyi bde ba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bliss induced by the realization of true reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bliss [based on] external [non-sexual] objects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: An alternative presentation of the various kinds of bliss attributed to a buddha according to the various positions presented by Rong-zom-pa

4. Tantric Buddhology

The emergence of Tantric Buddhism (or Buddhist Tantrism) brought with it a number of fundamental changes, including the way in which a buddha is conceived. The issue concerning the distinction between the Sūtra and Tantra systems is clearly beyond the scope of this study. It may be said generally, however, that Mantrayāna (or Vajrayāna) 

ba: jarā), (7) death (‘chi ba: maraṇa), (8) calmness (ngal sos pa: viśrāma/viśrāma), and (9) fearlessness (mi’jigs pa: viśārada(tvai)).

102 As pointed out by Padoux, although one finds the word tantrāśāstra (the word tantra, lit. ‘warp’ or ‘loom,’ refers in this case to a doctrine or a work that teaches a doctrine) or the adjective tāntrika (i.e. ‘Tantric’) employed in contrast to vaidikā (i.e. ‘Vedic’), the term Tantrism as such was coined in the nineteenth century by Western scholars to designate that aspect of Indian religion which contained elements foreign to Brahmanism and classical Hinduism, and to both conservative Buddhism and Mahāyāna philosophy. See Padoux 1987a, pp. 272–273, where—against the opinion of some Western scholars—it is argued that Tantrism (both Hindu and Buddhist) should indeed be regarded as a separate category, which the author defines as “a practical path to supernatural powers and to liberation, consisting in the use of specific practices and techniques—ritual, bodily, mental—that are always associated with a particular doctrine,” adding that it is particularly the fusion of elements of doctrine and practices into a practical worldview which defines Tantrism.

103 What tells Tantric and non-Tantric Mahāyāna apart doctrinally is a bone of contention among Tibetan (and also Indian) scholars. The most important issue is whether there is a qualitative
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differs from other forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism mainly by reason of its ritual character and the exploitation of various means said to enhance efficiency and speed in attaining Buddhahood—hence the designation ‘Vehicle of means’ (thabs kyi theg pa)—and less so because of its doctrines, for which it by and large resorts to existing thought. Thus, although the various Tantric systems do indeed introduce their own theories and employ diverse additional methods—such as visualization of the worshipped deity (which culminates in the practitioner’s identification with it) and various new rituals and symbolic objects—they have mainly built upon the common Mahāyāna doctrines and adopted the central thought of the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka schools and the Tathāgatagarbha tradition, along with the corresponding terminologies. Most importantly, the ultimate soteriological goal remains the same, namely, Buddhahood. The bodhisattva ideal of striving for Buddhahood in order to help others to attain liberation, as expressed in the notion of bodhicitta in its conservative sense, remains in the foreground, and thus the idea that salvific activities for the sake of others is a prerequisite for one’s attainment of the awakening is presupposed also in the Tantric systems. Nonetheless, as far as the buddhological conception is concerned, numerous new ideas have emerged, including various new expressions or manifestations of Buddhahood. One finds mantras and mudrās regarded not only as efficient means of attaining Buddhahood, but also as expressions of Buddhahood itself. One also finds the concepts of a supreme lord, often designated as Ādibuddha, and of wrathful deities. Moreover, various maṇḍalas are

difference in the philosophical view (ita ba) between the two. Most gSar-ma scholars seem to deny such a difference, whereas rNying-ma scholars, including Rong-zom-pa, make a case for the Tantric view being not only different but also superior to that of the non-Tantric systems. For Rong-zom-pa’s stance on the matter, see his ITa ba’i brjed byang (B, fols. 155a4–157b3; D, pp. 20.22–23.14); Theg pa’i bye brag (B, fols. 166b1–182a2; D, pp. 34.13–50.18); dKon cog ‘grei (B, fols. 20b3–22b4; D, pp. 47.22–50.5). For a recent discussion by the rNying-ma master bDud-’joms Rin-po-che, see his bsTan pa’i rnam gzhag (pp. 282.4–283.3), where he cites and comments a passage from Tripitakamāla’s Nayatrayaprāṇipāda (Ótani 4530; Tōhoku 3707). In the latter, four distinctive features of the Mantra system (sngags kyi khyad par bzhi), mainly relating to its methods, are mentioned: (1) It is not disoriented regarding stratagems (thabs kyi cha la rmongs pa); (2) it has numerous stratagems (thabs mang ba); (3) it is devoid of difficulties (dka’ ba med pa); and (4) it is intended for those possessed of sharp faculties (dbang po rnon po’i dbang byas pa). For an English translation of this passage, see NSTB, vol. 1, p. 246. For bDud-’joms Rin-po-che’s explanation of the superiority of the Mantra system in general, see op. cit. (pp. 277.5–299.4). An English translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 243–256. See also the chapter on “Pāramitāyāna and Mantrayāna” in Guenther 1969, pp. 51–73.

104 For a discussion of Tantra in general and Buddhist Tantra in particular, see Newman 1987, pp. 4–26.

105 This is evident, for example, in Śākyamitra’s interpretation of the first abhisambodhi in his Kosalālaṃkāra, a commentary on the Tattvasamgrahāsūtra, the main tantra of the Yoga class, which is summarized by Skorupski as follows: “Siddhārtha had difficulties in becoming a Buddha by means of the four dhyānas, says Śākyamitra, because the āśpānaka meditation [āśpānaka/āśpānakasamādhi: mkha’ khyab kyi ting nge ‘dzin] is a state of a total isolation in which the bodily and mental activities are suspended. By entering such a meditation he became completely isolated and consequently unable to pursue the activities for the benefit of other sentient beings; and this was the chief reason why Siddhārtha failed in his efforts and was awakened from his meditation.” Skorupski 1985, p. 90.
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introduced as the sacred abodes of these manifestations. One witnesses, too, an increase in the number of buddha 'families' and in the number of buddha-Bodies and gno~es—all expressions of the absolute, which is now often presented in schemata of four, five, or six elements. And finally, as already stated, one finds the notion of bliss induced by external objects—including sexual bliss.

The Tantric traditions, then, adopted multiple methods consisting in different rites and practices pertaining to the 'subtle body' (sūkṣmadeha/sūkṣmaśārītra: phra mo 'i lus), with the aim of speeding up attainment of both mundane and supramundane benefits. Such rites (or practices) and the changes in the buddhological conceptual framework seem to be, at least in part, connected with each other. One of the peculiar traits of Tantric Buddhism is the introduction of practices involving intellectual-emotional defilements (kleśa: nyon mongs pa)—for example, anger or desire, which are normally considered unwholesome—for soteriological purposes, with which the growing number of wrathful deities may possibly be connected. Related to this are the sexual practices employed by some Tantric systems, where passion and the sensual bliss associated with it are again utilized for the same purposes. The attainment of the goal is made easier by a process which often involves the enjoyment of the five kinds of objects of desire; ascetic penance is to be avoided.106 Sexual bliss is in one way or another connected with the concept of the 'union' (yuganaddha: zung 'jug) of two aspects, masculine and feminine, as an expression of non-duality (advaya: gnyis su med pa). This is commonly explained as the union of two poles—such as samsāra and nirvāna, grāhya and grāhaka, prajñā and karunā, samyrti and paramārtha—often described as a sexual union (mithuna/maithuna: 'khrig pa).107 The question as to the exact relation between these new practices and buddhological conceptions, that is, whether and to what extent one has been influenced by the other, cannot, however, be addressed here.

As we have seen, according to Rong-zom-pa, one can identify either two or three buddhological models in Vajrayāna. The first in his twofold classification is a model that includes ideas found already in some sūtras. One of these notions is that the awakening takes place in Akaniṣṭha, an idea found as early as the Lankāvatārasūtra108 and adopted by most of the Tantric systems. It occurs, for example, in the Tattvasamgrahasūtra, where it is taught that Śākyamuni, while still a bodhisattra of the tenth stage, went in his mind-made conglomerate (manomayakāya)109 to Akaniṣṭha, the abode of Vairocana, who there rules as the supreme of the Five Tathāgatas, and which is the place where Śākyamuni then attained the perfect awakening in five stages called the five

106 For some references to passages emphasizing an easy, convenient practice, see Dasgupta 1962, pp. 75–76.
107 See, for example, Dasgupta 1962, pp. 29–30, where a passage from the Pañcakrama expounding the notion of union is cited and paraphrased.
108 Rong-zom-pa, in his Sangs sa chen mo, cites Lankāvatārasūtra 10.774. For a translation and a discussion of this verse, see the translation of Rong-zom-pa’s Sangs sa chen mo below, §II.2.B.
109 A detailed study of the concept of manomayakāya is beyond the scope of the present monograph. For some remarks on it, however, see below, the section “Works by Indian Authors,” n. 58.
Chapter Two: Buddhology in Its Historical and Philosophical Context: An Overview

The abode of Akaniṣṭha, which initially was simply thought of as the fifth of the five pure abodes (śuddhiiviśa: gtsang ma'i gnas), and so as the highest realm of the Rūpadhātu, came in the course of time to be conceived of in different ways in different systems and by different authors, but these cannot be discussed here. In the following paragraphs I shall attempt to discuss some of the central elements of Tantric Buddhism as they pertain to the various buddhological conceptions in Tantric systems. No attempt will be made to provide a comprehensive treatment of these conceptions and the terminologies associated with them. Issues such as the origin of and the reasons for the development of these conceptions and the significance of the various rites and practices employed by a given system will not be discussed here either, but will only be referred to briefly when they are relevant to the conceptions. As it is generally accepted that many of the notions and practices found in Tantric Buddhism have their origin in non-Buddhist Tantric traditions, a consideration of the history and doctrines of these traditions can greatly contribute to the understanding of Tantric Buddhism. I have therefore considered in my discussion several publications which, although they deal exclusively with ‘Hindu Tantrism,’ proved to be very helpful. What is perhaps noteworthy here is that while many of the notions and practices found in Tantric Buddhism have their origin in non-Buddhist Tantric traditions, some of the elements regarded as typical of Tantrism, such as the employment of (magical) formulas, are already found in non-Tantric Buddhist sources, including Pāli sources and such early Yogaçāra works as the Bodhisattvabhumi (mantras are in fact a pan-Indian phenomenon). There is no doubt that some of these elements have been integrated into

110 For a discussion of Śākyamuni’s awakening in Akaniṣṭha during the five abhisambodhis, as expounded in the Tattvasamgrahasūtra and its commentaries, see Skorupski 1985.

111 See, for example, the table of Buddhist cosmology (including the Kāmadhātu and the Rūpadhātu) in Grönbold 1984, s.v. Kosmologie und Kosmographie, where further bibliographical references are provided; and NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 14–15. Cf. Mvy, no. 3106, where it is listed as the fifth of seven such pure abodes (Mvy, nos. 3101–3108).

112 A discussion of the various conceptions of Akaniṣṭha has been omitted from the current study since Akaniṣṭha is, strictly speaking, not an expression of Buddhahood. A separate study of this issue will be attempted elsewhere.

113 Compare, however, Seyfort Ruegg 2001; id. 2008.

114 A brief and general discussion of both the history and the doctrines and practices of Hindu Tantrism is found in Padoux 1987b.

115 For a discussion of the passage from the Bodhisattvabhumi (Wogihara, pp. 272.12–274.15; Dutt, pp. 185.5–186.14) where four kinds of dhāraṇīs (i.e. the dharma-, artha-, and mantradhāraṇīs and the dhāraṇī for the attainment of intellectual receptivity (kṣānti)) are discussed and where it is explained that the essencelessness of phenomena can be realized by realizing the meaninglessness of mantras, see Dasgupta 1962, pp. 21–22; Braarvig 1988, pp. 19–20; id. 1997, pp. 32–33; Kapstein 2001, pp. 237–238. Another passage in the Bodhisattvabhumi where reference is made to mantrapadas and vidyāpadas is reproduced in Wangchuk 2007, p. 164, Šīv (English translation) and pp. 374 & 388, §4.6.0.iv (Sanskrit and Tibetan editions). For further references to formulas in non-Tantric sources, see Wangchuk 2007, p. 164, n. 331. See also Matsunaga’s introduction to his edition of the Guhyasamājatantra, where the history of Indian Buddhism in India is discussed, with particular reference to Chinese translations, and where note is
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later Tantric systems. Some scholars have in fact argued that these elements paved the way for the propagation of some of the typical Tantric practices, and have even gone so far as to regard them as proto-Tantric. Nonetheless, as has already been pointed out by several scholars, the existence and employment of formulas (and other elements that are commonly regarded as typical of Tantrism) in non-Tantric forms of Buddhism need not necessarily imply the existence or inception of Tantric practices in these systems. An important distinction is that while in non-Tantric Buddhism these magical tools and techniques are primarily employed for worldly purposes, in the case of Tantric Buddhism they are additionally employed for the attainment of soteriological goals.

taken of the steady increase in the various kinds of spells in the Buddhist tradition (both non-Mahāyāna and non-Tantric and Tantric Mahāyāna), including rituals and the pantheon (Matsunaga 1978, pp. vii–xix).

116 See, for example, Schmithausen 1997, pp. 18–19 & 46, where it is stated that ‘many elements of the Snake Charm tradition found in early sources have been integrated into the early Tantric work entitled Mahāmāyūrī Vidyārājī, and that the fact that in the Mūlasarvāstivādin’s parallel to the Khandhaparītta (according to Schmithausen, ibid., p. 18, n. 24, perhaps meaning ‘Protective Formula [taken from the] Khandha(ka) [Section of the Vinaya]’) the invocation for the sake of protection has assumed the typical form of a spell (dhāraṇī) addressing, after a short homage to the Three Jewels, a female deity or power may be taken as foreshadowing the later emergence of Mahāmāyūrī as a deity. Schmithausen also notes that Buddhist monks and nuns (particularly of both Tantric and non-Tantric Mahāyāna but to a certain extent also of conservative Buddhism) increasingly developed their own averting rituals and texts, and that some of these texts, which would seem to prefigure aspects of Tantric Buddhism, resemble to the point of literalness the Snake Charm and related material (ibid., p. 51).

117 See, for example, Dasgupta 1962, particularly pp. 14–26, where it is argued that some elements in early Buddhism—such as mantras or dhāraṇīs, the reverence shown to the ‘seat of awakening’ (bodhimaṇḍa), and the ‘hand gestures’ (mudrā) found in iconographic representations of the Buddha (the latter, however, were introduced only sometime around the turn of the first millennium with the emergence of Mahāyāna)—paved the way for the propagation of Tantric practices centred on mantras, mandalas, mudrās, and the like. See also Pathak 1986, where it is argued, unconvincingly, that a ‘nucleus of Tantra’ is found in the Pāli Vinayapitaka.

118 See, for example, Schopen 2005, chapter eleven (“The Text on the ‘Dhāraṇī Stones from Abhayagiriya’: A Minor Contribution to the Study of Mahāyāna Literature in Ceylon”), pp. 306–313, where it is argued in several instances that the presence of dhāraṇīs should not be interpreted as evidence of Tantrism; and particularly p. 310, where Schopen reinforces his position by arguing that the typical characteristics of Tantrism cannot be traced in cases such as the Sarvatathāgatādhisthānahrdaya (on which he focuses in his discussion based on his definition of Tantric Buddhism as “that phase of Buddhist doctrinal development that is characterized by an emphasis on the central function of the guru as religious preceptor; by sets—usually graded—of specific initiations; by esotericism of doctrine, language, and organization; and by a strong emphasis on the realization of the goal through highly structured ritual and meditative techniques”). Compare Kapstein 2001, chapter nine (“Scholastic Buddhism and Mantrayāna”), pp. 233–255, where the author, although he prefers to leave the question open at this stage, is inclined to believe that there may be some tenuous connection between the presence in non-Tantric Mahāyāna of elements (such as mantras) that from a certain point onwards have been considered typical of Tantric Mahāyāna soteriology and the eventual emergence of Tantric Buddhism; he puts forward the hypothesis that “some forms of ‘incantation and ritual’ belonging to the mantranaya were indeed sometimes devoted to Buddhism’s ultimate ends [i.e. in non-Tantric Mahāyāna], and
A. Mantras, Vidyās, and Dhāraṇīs

Mantras[^119] are magical formulas consisting of syllables or words arranged in a certain fixed manner and regarded as endowed with power and efficacy. As Padoux states in his discussion of mantras in the Hindu context,[^120] the belief in the power and efficacy of the mantra has survived in India from the Vedas down to the present. The employment of mantras as a religious instrument or procedure is common to diverse Indian traditions, particularly the Tantric ones.[^121] The centrality of mantras to the Tantric traditions is expressed by the fact that the *tantrasūtras* are often referred to as *mantrasūtras*, while Buddhist Tantrism is often referred to as Mantryāna, Mantranaya, or simply Mantra. Nevertheless, as made clear by Padoux, the utterance of a mantra is considered efficient only within the given context of a strictly controlled ritual procedure, which is in turn embedded within a culture that presupposes the mantra’s efficacy. To guarantee their efficacy, mantras must be accurately pronounced, just as the *mudrās*, which often accompany them, must be accurately performed.[^122] According to Padoux, mantras can be

[^119]: In the following section (as in fact in the entire study), I employ, in accordance with the Indo-Tibetan tradition, the term mantra as a generic term referring to the various types of formulas. In this case, the word mantra will not be italicized. When, however, it is used to designate a particular type of formula as opposed, for example, to *dhāraṇīs* or *vidyās*, the word *mantra* is italicized. (Note that in the cited passages from Rong-zom-pa’s works found below, Rong-zom-pa, when wishing to differentiate between the two usages of the term, has *sngags* for mantra as a generic term and *gsangs sngags* for mantra as a specific kind of formula.) Moreover, I have made no attempt to translate the various designations for the various formulas found in the Indo-Tibetan tradition and rather opted for keeping the Sanskrit terms. In their first occurrence, however, I provide the Tibetan rendering of terms and their basic literal meaning. Cf. Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 143–144, where the author argues for translating all these terms as ‘spell.’

[^120]: For the following general discussion of mantras, I have drawn upon Padoux 1989, the concluding article of a book entitled *Mantra*, which contains several contributions on the subject. Although Padoux explicitly states that his discussion of mantras applies only in the Hindu context, his general observations on mantras and their roots in Indian culture are undoubtedly also applicable to the Buddhist context.

[^121]: Mantras, given their supposed magical effects, are also used for attaining worldly goals, such as supernatural powers. As this employment of mantras, however, has no direct relevance to our discussion, I shall not go into it here. On the employment of mantras for protection from snakebites in the Buddhist context, see Schmithausen 1997.

[^122]: On how mantras should be recited in the case of audible recitation, see the *Subāhupariprcchātantra* (T, fol. 401a; D, fol. 126b2–3), where it is stated that the recitation should not be fast, slow, loud, or too quiet, be undertaken while conversing or otherwise distracted, or performed with incorrect pronunciation:

```plaintext
bzlas brjod byed tshe mi myur mi dal zhing||
sgra cher [T chen] mi dbyung [T 'byung] ha cang chung ba'ang [T ma'ang] min||
smra bzhin ma yin gzhan du g.yengs bzhin min||
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properly explained only within an Indian tradition that has a corresponding metaphysical and mythical understanding of ‘speech’ (vāc), or within the traditions which inherited such understanding from India. This is a culture, he says, where speech “has always been considered as essential, as of divine origin, as playing a fundamental role in creation.” Nevertheless, the silent (tūsnīm) or mental (mānasa) utterance, he says, was always rated higher than the audible one, and the fact that, from the Vedic to the Tantric period, mantras become more repetitive, increasingly levelling linguistic content and phonetic variety, shows a general tendency towards silence. Padoux cites the ancient belief that thought or consciousness is identical with the highest, silent level of speech not only as one of the reasons for the superiority of silence over actual speech in mantric practice, but also as explaining why the function of the mantra is considered inseparable from the mind of its user. As already mentioned, mantras do not always have an obvious meaning, and Padoux points out that it is their inner organization and phonetic structure that are more important. Furthermore, they are significant or meaningful only within a particular ritual activity where they are considered active. In the case where mantras seem to ‘name’ a deity, Padoux notes, they are in fact an audible expression (vācaka) of the deity; to utter the deity’s mantra is to evoke or conjure its power. In other words, when the mantra is focused on, “the attention of the user may pass on to another plane, be it a postulated inner nature or essence of the mantra or some higher, transcendent reality of which the mantra is the expression (vācaka) and which would be intuited nondiscursively by the user through an intense and concentrated mental effort (dhārana or bhāvanā).”

As has been already alluded to, there are various types of formulas, of which the most common ones are (1) mantra ((gsang) sngags; lit. ‘speech’), (2) dhāranī (gzungs (sngags); lit. ‘holding,’ ‘keeping (in remembrance),’ ‘retention’), often understood as a kind of mnemonic formula, (3) vidyā (rig sngags; lit. ‘knowledge’), a formula which,

gug kyed [D skyed] klad kor tsheg rnams nyams par min]].

This verse is cited in Rong-zom-pa’s Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 191b3; D, p. 294.6–7) with some variations in the reading.

123 Cf. Braarvig 1985, pp. 20–22, where the notion that formulas contain the Word of the Buddha in the sense that they are summaries of his teachings is briefly discussed, and id. 1997, pp. 35–37, expanding on this same notion, as found in Bhavya’s Tarkajvālā, along with the argument that such formulas are in a supramundane language (lokottaravākya).

124 For more on the significance of speech in Indian culture, see Padoux 1989, pp. 297–298.

125 Ibid., p. 301.

126 Padoux remarks that this employment of the linguistic or acoustic resources of language is “nothing but a particular application of the symbolizing capacity of language: that is, its capacity to represent something other than itself; to point towards something, to make one grasp something; to turn and focus the attention on something, whether an external referent or some inner meaning supposed inherent or to be identical with its phonetic substances or to be some higher reality into which this substance eventually is supposed to dissolve” (ibid., pp. 303–304).

127 For further etymologies, see below.

128 For a discussion of dhāranīs as mnemonic formulas or aides-mémoire in the context of Mahāyāna Buddhism, see Braarvig 1985. See also Braarvig 1997, pp. 32–33, where it is argued that the dhāranīs at a certain point almost lose their mnemonic function and, like other formulas,
as is evident from its designation, is associated with the acquirement of knowledge, (4) hrdaya (snying po; lit. ‘heart,’ ‘quintessence’), which is conceived as the ‘personal spell’ of a deity, and (5) bīja (sa bon; lit. ‘[phonic] seed’ or ‘germ’), a single syllable conceived of as comprehending the essence of a particular deity. These terms are often used interchangeably to denote more or less the same thing. What is important for our discussion is the conception of these formulas, whatever they are called, as a verbal expression of the deity or the absolute. According to Rong-zom-pa, the mantra, as a generic term for the various kinds of magical formulas, expresses the union of insight and stratagem, which union in turn is conceived as an expression of Buddhahood in some of the Tantric systems. The signs of these formulas, which are employed as means of attaining Buddhahood, are viewed by him as the various manifestations of the buddhas, with mantras being the manifestations of male deities, and vidyās and dhāraṇīs of female ones.

The mantra’s function as a symbol or even embodiment of the power of the deity—in other words, as a verbal expression of reality or the absolute—is exemplified in the Tattvasamgrhasūtra, where in each of the five abhisambodhis described in the tantra Siddhārtha receives a particular mantra with the help of which he further perfects his awakening. As made clear by Skorupski in his summary of the five abhisambodhis, the mantra, or more precisely the hrdaya, given to Siddhārtha in the second abhisambodhi is conceived as the essence of the Mind of all tathāgatas. It is stated that on this occasion Siddhārtha was taught by the tathāgatas the generation of the thought of awakening by means of the hrdaya OM BODHICITTAM UTPĀDAYĀMI, which he had to comprehend as ‘bodhicitta par excellence’ (samantabhadra bodhicittam). As a result, Siddhārtha perceived this hrdaya as the primary cause of all the perfect thoughts of all sentient beings, and the essence of the Mind of all tathāgatas as well. In this regard, Skorupski adds that, according to Buddhaguhya, bodhicitta expressed in the form of

are employed for quick and easy attainment of both worldly and spiritual gain (in the latter case, particularly as an aid for cultivating meditative states, such as concentration).

Note, however, Snellgrove’s translation of vidyā as ‘magical lore or power’ or ‘miraculous power’ (Snellgrove 1987a, passim). Also note that vidyā, like mudrā, refers to the female partner of the deity and to the practitioner’s as well (also referred to as prajñā). In this case, the term vidyā is commonly rendered into Tibetan as rig ma.

The hrdayas may consist of several syllables but also, like the bījas, of only one syllable.

According to Padoux 1989, p. 304, from a psychological point of view, the bījas and similar forms of mantras “answer the deeply ingrained urge to emit sounds that are both arbitrary (i.e. not part of language or of ordinary linguistic use) and not innocent (i.e. having a ‘meaning’ or evoking something).”

For examples of the virtually synonymous use of these terms, see the paragraph on formulas in Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 141–144, where it is similarly stated that the terms samaya and mudrā, too, may be employed to designate mantras in the sense of ‘symbolic representations’ of a divinity. See also Matsunaga 1978, p. x, where it is stated that in course of time the distinguishing features of mantras, vidyās, and dhāraṇīs were lost sight of, and the terms became interchangeable.

The expression samantabhadra bodhicittam is briefly mentioned in Wangchuk 2007, pp. 143, 313 & 323–324, where some references to its occurrence in primary sources are provided.
hrdaya is the tathāgatas’ Mind, which contains the knowledge of all the Omniscient Ones.134

Another example is dhāraṇīs which, when written down and placed into stūpas, are employed as ‘dharma relics’ (chos kyi sku’i ring brel). Particularly notable is a phrase contained in the Bodhimanḍalakṣadhāraṇī, which runs—as translated by Christina Scherrer-Schaub—as follows: “Quality (guna), endowed with qualities, making manifest all the Buddha qualities.”135 Of relevance is also Scherrer-Schaub’s remark on the ye dharma-formula, the hrdaya of the pratītyasamutpāda: “This stanza, which concisely summarizes the essential of Buddha’s teaching, functions also as a ‘memorial,’ since it recollects the historical topic of Buddha’s enlightenment and the succeeding acknowledgement of the dharma as his Teacher.” Further, it “is the body of the dharma of the Tathāgatas … [it] is the [stanza on the] true nature of dharma, which consists in the principle of pratītyasamutpāda being in its turn coessential with the Tathāgata.”136 In this regard, Scherrer-Schaub cites the Pratītyasamutpādahṛdaya, which states the following: “This [hrdaya of] pratītyasamutpāda, Avalokiteśvara, is the body of dharma of [all] the Tathāgatas.”137

In the following, I provide a translation of Rong-zom-pa’s general discussion of mantras found in his rGyud spyi’i dngos po, which expounds the nine general topics of Tantra, with mantra as the seventh:138

The term ‘mantra’ (sngags, i.e., here as a generic term for formulas in general) is applied to [that which has] the nature of the union of stratagem (thabs: upiṣṭa) and insight (shes rab: prajñā).139 [Mantras] are classified into mantras (gsang sngags), vidyās (rig sngags), and dhāraṇīs (gzungs sngags). Of these, the essence of vidyā is of the [combined] nature of insight and gnosis. Likewise, dhāraṇī is of the [combined] nature of recollection (draṇ pa: smṛti) and insight.

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134 Skorupski 1985, p. 91.
135 Scherrer-Schaub 1994, p. 713.
136 Ibid., p. 721, n. 58 & p. 723, n. 92. For a translation of the ye dharma-formula, see ibid., p. 714.
137 See ibid., p. 717, where mKhas-grub-rje is cited as naming three kinds of relics to be put in a stūpa, among them the relics of the dhammakāya of the Tathāgata (de bzhin gshegs pa’i chos sku’i ring brel), which are identified by him as dhāraṇīs. In this article, Scherrer-Schaub also refers to other uses of dhāraṇīs and their potential benefits, which I shall not go into here.

Rong-zom-pa’s Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 208a6–b1; D, p. 313.19–22) states that the pratītyasamutpāda is known in all teachings of the Buddha and that it is regarded as a mudrā and is employed by all Buddhist systems (de bas na chos rten cing ’brel te ’byung ba’i rang bzhin gyi gتان tshigs [D tshig] ’di ni rigyel ba’i bka’ thams cad du’ang grags pa yin la phyag rgyar bzlag pa’ang yin no| nang pa sangs rgyas pa’i rigs pa thams cad kyi lugs su’ang ’di nyid bzhag pa yin no|).138

138 rGyud spyi’i dngos po (A, pp. 514.2–518.1; B, fols. 233a6–235a2; D, pp. 98.4–99.21). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.E. Note that Rong-zom-pa discusses mantras in other contexts as well. See, for example, his discussion in the dKon cog ’grel (B, fols. 39b1–41a2; D, pp. 68.8–69.24).

139 Compare the definition of dhāraṇī provided in the sGra sbyor (A, no. 195; B, p. 140) during its discussion of terms in the Sūtra context; see below, n. 143.
Their functions: The mantra protects the mind ([Irnam par] shes pa: [vi]jñāna)\(^{140}\) from false conceptual thoughts and delusions.\(^{141}\) The vidyā makes [one] cognize the [true] meaning of things in that it destroys and eliminates non-realization.\(^{142}\) The dhāraṇī eliminates the loss (or: failure) of memory and causes [one] to retain instructions, that is, precisely [those] heard from sublime beings and endowed with meaning and qualities.\(^{143}\) These [functions] also express [the] opposite [meanings] ([mi] mithun pa’i phyogs) and [the corresponding] antidotes [to them].\(^{144}\)

Their symbols are either [all] those [manifestations] that appear like the whole [of one of] the rūpākāyas of the Victorious Ones or those that appear like parts [of them]. Of the [three], [the symbols of] mantras are those [manifestations] that appear like the shapes, colours, and mudrās of male deities. [The symbols of] the remaining two (i.e. vidyā and dhāraṇī) are those [manifestations] that appear like the shapes, colours, and mudrās of female deities. These [semblances] are symbolically said to be vidyās, mantras, and dhāraṇīs.

Their means of access (lit. ‘door’) are what appears as syllables and sounds. These are taught as mantras, for [they] are the means of access to the [true] meaning.

As for the common properties of these [three], [they are] explained as (1) the essence of common and uncommon siddhis, (2) the causes of these [siddhis], (3) [a means of] arousing [deities to] action, and (4) ‘words of truth’ (bden pa’i tshig: satyavacana). (1) Because mantras are explained as the deities to be attained and realized, [they] refer to the dharmakāya and the salvific activities [of a buddha], and hence are the essence of siddhis.

\(^{140}\) Compare the passage on (speculative) etymologies below, where it is evident that Rong-zom-pa employs the term shes pa as a synonym of yid.

\(^{141}\) Compare the explanation of mantra found in the sGra sbyor (A, no. 295; B, p. 172), where it is defined as a formula used to summon deities and as being uttered secretly (mantra shes bya ba ‘matri guptabhāsane’\(^a\) zhes ‘byung ste] sngags kyi [= kyis] lha la sogs pa dgug cing gsang ste brjod pa yin pas na gsang sngags zhes bya). \(^a\) The text reads mantra guptibhāsane; emended according to Dḥātupātha 10.140: matri guptabhāsane, “the root matri (= mantra) [is employed] in [the sense of] ‘secret speech’.” See also the passage on dhāraṇī from the sGra sbyor cited below in n. 143. See, too, the etymologies of the word mantra given below.

\(^{142}\) Compare the explanation of vidyā found in the sGra sbyor (A, no. 296; B, p. 172), where it is defined as an antidote to ignorance and said to exist in the form of a female deity (vidyā zhes bya ba vida jhāne zhes bya ste] ma rig pa’i gnyen por gyur pa lha mo’i [B mo] gzugs su bzhugs pa’i ming ste rig sngags shes [B shes] bya]. See also the etymologies of the word vidyā given below.

\(^{143}\) Compare the explanation of dhāraṇī found in the sGra sbyor (A, no. 297; B, p. 172), where it is defined as a formula by means of which the meanings and the words of the Doctrine are retained and as that which leads to the attainment of progress (dhāraṇī zhes bya ba arthagrañtan dhārayati[ti] dhāraṇī zhes bya ste] sngags kyis [A kyi] chos kyi don dang tshig mi brjod par ‘dzin zhing [A cing] khyad par gyi rim pa’i thob par ’gyur ba’i ming ste gzungs sngags zhes [A shes] bya]. See also the sGra sbyor (A, no. 195; B, p. 140), where a similar explanation of dhāraṇī is found in the Śūtra context: dhāraṇī zhes bya ba gzungs yin te] dran pa dang shes ‘rab kyis’ [B bzhin gyis] chos kyi tshig dang don mi rjed [B brjed] par ‘dzin pas na gzungs zhes [B shes] bya]. See also the etymology of the word dhāraṇī given below.

\(^{144}\) On Bhavya’s defence of the employment of these three types of formulas in Mahāyāna Buddhism as a response to a critique by the Śrāvakas that they are not the Word of the Buddha, see Braaarvīg 1997, where also the various functions of these formulas as aids for attaining spiritual advantages is discussed. See also Kapstein 2001, pp. 240–243 (discussion) & 246–251 (translation and Tibetan text).
Likewise, the Kriyātantra teaches that the essence of *vidyās* and *mantras* are six deities, and the Yogatantra teaches that *mantras* are deities and *siddhis*. (2) As for the explanation [of mantras] as the cause of [*siddhis*], [this is so] because [they] are taught, on the basis of etymological interpretations, as being the Dharma of the path and—given that they are a means of access [to the goal]—as being the explanatory Dharma. (3) As for the explanation [of mantras] as [a means of] arousing [deities to] action, the following is stated (in the *Jig rten snang byed*):

It is a *vidyā* that arouses [deities to their]
Respective actions, [namely,] peaceful and so forth.

And it is stated (in the *Guhyasamājatantra*):

Having exhorted [the deity] by means of mantras,
and so forth. (4) As for the explanation [of mantras] as words of truth, [it is] as stated (in the *Tattvasamgrahā*).

145 The six deities (*lha drug*) according to the Kriyātantra are: (1) the deity of emptiness (*stong pa’i lha*), (2) the deity of syllables (*yi ge’i lha*), (3) the deity of sound (*sgra’i lha*), (4) the deity of (visible) matter, or perhaps of physical [representation] (*gzugs kyi lha*), (5) the deity of mudrās (*phyag rgya’i lha*), and (6) the deity of signs (*mtshan ma’i lha*). See the *gsang bdag zhal lung* (vol. gt, p. 79.4–6): ... kri ya don gyi lha drug gi sgo nas dam tshig pa bskyed par bya ste de ‘ang stong pa nyid kyi lha dang| yi ge’i lha dang| sgra’i lha dang| gzugs kyi lha dang| phyag rgya’i lha dang| mtshan ma’i lha’o|] de ltar yang| stong pa yi ge sgra gzugs dang|| phyag rgya mtshan ma drug yin te|| zhes rnam ’joms kyi rgyud rgyas pa las gsungs so||; see also NSTB, vol. 2, p. 152, s.v. Six modes of the deity. Cf. Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.v. *lha drug*, which has: (1) *don dam pa’i lha* (= *stong pa’i lha*), (2) *sgra’i lha*, (3) *mtshan ma’i lha*, (4) *gzugs kyi lha*, (5) *bsgom pa’i lha*, and (6) *rnam par dag pa’i lha*. See also the *Theg tshul* (B, fol. 125b2–4; D, p. 553.9–12).

146 This is a reference to the two aspects of the Dharma commonly known as ‘realization’ (adhipam: *rtogs pa*) and ‘scriptures’ (āgama: *lung*) or ‘teachings’ (dešanā: *bstan pa*). See *Abhidharmakosā* 8.39ab; and also *TSD*, s.v. *rtogs pa’i chos*. For a recent explanation of these two aspects, see bDud’-’joms Rin-po-che’s *bsTan pa’i rnam gzhag* (pp. 62.4–63.5). For an English translation, see *NSTB*, vol. 1, pp. 71–72.

147 This is clearly a reference to the *rNying-ma* Tantric scripture entitled *rGyud kyi rgyal po chen po dpal ’jig rten snang byed* (Tb 667). I have not been able, however, to locate the given citation in this work.

148 Since I have not been able to locate this citation, and given that the context and the reading of these two lines of verse remain uncertain, the translation should be regarded as tentative. Compare, however, the definition of *mantra* provided in the *sGra sbyor* (A, no. 295; B, p. 172), which is cited and translated above, n. 141.

149 See *Guhyasamājatantra* 16.63b:

\[
\text{mantracodanabhāṣṭitaḥ}.
\]

Tib. (T, fol. 64b2; D, fol. 135a4):

\[
\text{sngags kyi skul ba smras pa yis [D yi]}\]..

150 *Tattvasamgrahāsūtra* (vol. 2, p. 360, v. 3ab):

\[
\text{loko ’yan satyavibhraśto mantrasiddhir na iṣyate }\]..
The inhabitants of this world who have fallen away from the truth will not acquire the supernatural attainments (dngos grub: siddhi) of a mantra. And so forth.

Etymologies [of these terms]: 151 (1) The [Tibetan] term gsang sngags (i) refers to (i.e. it is applied to the following, on the basis of the [Sanskrit] term mantra: [what is] ‘secret,’ ‘efficient,’ ‘supreme,’ and ‘true.’ (ii) Alternatively (rnam pa geig tu), [it] also refers to that which is uttered secretly. (iii) Or, [starting from the Sanskrit] term mantra, man is ‘mind’ (yid: manas or [rnam par] shes pa: [viśjñāna], [and] tra is ‘protector’ or ‘defender,’152 and hence, in being designated the ‘protector of the mind,’ [it conveys] the meaning of that which is endowed with a mind ([rnam par] shes pa) and [is] a defender [of it]. 153 (2) [The term] rig sngags [is the Tibetan rendering of the Sanskrit] viāyā, [which is associated with the words] (i) vidiṭṭa,154 which means ‘destroying’ and ‘eliminating,’ and hence [viśyā] is explained as that which destroys and eliminates the defilements consisting in ignorance, (ii) vindati,155

The Tibetan canonical text (T, fol. 473b7; D, fol. 134a4) reads identically. The entire verse is cited by Rong-zom-pa in his Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.2.A.iv.

151 The (speculative) etymologies of the terms mantra, viśyā, and dhāranī provided here, and those of the terms mudrā and manḍala provided below, can be understood in various ways. Often these etymologies do indeed present an attempt to analyze the term in question, in its entirety or in parts, by identifying its cognates, that is, roots, verbs or other words to which the term is related by derivation. In these cases we have attempted to identify the Sanskrit roots, verbs, or other words provided, though not always with success. In many other instances the etymologies provided seem to be based on rather freely associated links, particularly between a single syllable in the term in question and other words, most of which also contain the same syllable. Free associations of this kind are very frequently found in lexicographic works known as mantramāhāna. But while several such etymologies provided by Rong-zom-pa can be traced to such abhidhāna works, others have had to remain unresolved.

152 See MW, s.vv. tra: ‘protecting,’ and trā: ‘a protector, defender.’

153 In his dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 39b1-40a5; D, pp. 68.8-69.6), Rong-zom-pa discusses only this third etymology of mantra as a protector of the mind. There, however, he discusses it in detail and provides several citations from authoritative scriptures. In addition, he explains mantra in its ontological, gnoseological, and symbolical senses. See also Kāṇha’s Yogaaratnāmālā (p. 109.15): mantra eva tattvam | mananāṭirānānāc ca mantrah |; Tib. (P, fol. 9a7–8; D, fol. 8a2; S, vol. 2, p. 18.3–4): sngags kyil de kho na nyid ni yid la bya ba yin zhing skyob pa yin pas sngags tel. See also the bsTan pa’i rnam gzhag (pp. 300.1–302.2), where bDud’-joms Rin-po-che provides a detailed explanation of the etymology of mantra as that which protects the mind, and particularly that which does so easily and swiftly—for which he cites several tantras in scriptural support (an English translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 257–258). Also note the similar etymologization of the term tantra as protector of the mind—for which bDud’-joms Rin-po-che (ibid., p. 306.1–3) cites the Śrībuddhakapāla tantraparāmyikājñānavatī in scriptural support (an English translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, p. 261).

154 The Tibetan reads biddhu dha or biddhum dha. This is possibly a reference to the Sanskrit viśṭhā. See MW, s.v.: ‘to shake off, drive away, scatter, disperse, remove, destroy,’ and ‘relinquish, abandon, give up.’ Here the perfect form has been apparently employed (see MW, s.v. viḍṭhāta).

155 The Tibetan reads viddhu ma dhi or virddhu ma dhi. This must be a transliteration of some verb form (probably the present 3rd person singular vindati) of Sanskrit viṇḍ. See MW, s.v.: ‘to find, discover, meet or fall in with, obtain, get, acquire, partake of, possess.’
which conveys [the meaning of] ‘attainment,’ and hence [vidyā] refers to the attainment of excellences or to the attainment of speech cognition, or (iii) vidyāsvabhāva, where ‘essence’ (ngo bo nyid: svabhāva) refers to knowledge, and in general expresses the meaning of the realized truth as well, and therefore [it] is called rig sngags. (3) [The word] gzungs sngags [is the Tibetan rendering of the Sanskrit word] dhāranī, which [has] the meaning of ‘mnemonic device’ or ‘retention.’ [It] thus means the retaining of words, meanings, and qualities, and in general expresses the attainment of words of truth as well, and therefore [it] is called gzungs sngags. Of these [three], the term mantra additionally expresses the meaning of ‘not revealing to others’ and the meaning of ‘truth.’ In [the case of] the other two, [these meanings] are expressed [only] obliquely.

[The mantra] has been explained in terms of its actual nature, subclasses, Functions, symbols and means of access, [Its] opposites along with [their] antidotes, Common attributes, distinguishing attributes, Explanations of all existing applications [of the terms], And etymologies.

B. Mudrās

Mudrās, often expressed as hand or bodily gestures, play an important role in religious rituals, both Hindu and Buddhist. The term mudrā literally means ‘seal,’ ‘stamp’ or the ‘impression or mark left by a seal,’ and thus also ‘image,’ ‘sign,’ or ‘token.’ In the context of religious rituals, prescribed gestures often accompany mantras, and thereby function as a support for the mantric power or as a guarantee of their efficacy. These mudrās or gestures may have their origin in mnemonic techniques employed by reciters of the Veda, and so readily serve as a means of evoking an idea in the mind as well as symbolizing various things, such as certain powers or deities. The term mudrā, like vidyā (rig ma), is also used with reference to the female partner of a deity or a practitioner. Padoux, in his discussion of mudrās in the Śaiva context, has noted that mudrās employed in religious rituals may be regarded as expressions of the spiritual attitudes of the officiant or the practitioner. Employing terminology used by Beyer in his study on the cult of Tārā in Tibet, he adds that in this case the mudrās function as

156 See Braarvig 1985, p. 19, where the etymology of the word dhāranī is briefly discussed.
157 As is well known, mudrās play a significant role in the classical Indian arts of acting and dance as well. This use is, however, irrelevant to our discussion and therefore will not be treated here.
159 According to Snellgrove 1987a, p. 139, n. 46, however, mudrā can also refer to the male partner. As mentioned above, according to him it can also mean ‘mantra’ (ibid., p. 142). Further, the term is employed to designate various other things—for example, sect emblems. In the context of the initiation ritual in the Yoginītantra, Sanderson specifies six such sect emblems (mudrā): five of human bones—a chaplet (cakrā), earrings, a necklace, bracelets (rucakā), and a girdle (mekhalā)—and one, received only by men, of ashes, with which they smear their bodies (Sanderson 1994, p. 90). As one of the five elements (pañcatattva) employed in Tantric practices (the other four being alcohol, meat, fish, and sexual intercourse), the mudrā is usually parched grains (Padoux 1987b, p. 279). In the context of Hathayoga, it denotes such practices as the control of limbs, muscles, nerves, and the vital breath process (Dasgupta 1962, p. 22, n. 2).
“mimetic representations,” that is, as external gestures that imitatively express inner attitudes and thus, both physically and mentally, the practitioner’s inner movement towards the deity, and finally his identification with it. Furthermore, *mudrās* are often regarded as symbolizing the deities or as being the deities themselves. It is where bodily and mental elements are combined as an expression of a spiritual attitude or of metaphysical import that *mudrās* as prescribed gestures are of greatest significance in the religious context, and this is true in both the Hindu and Buddhist setting. The complex and ambiguous conception of the nature of *mudrās* has been discussed by Padoux in the context of Śaiva Tantric practice, and I believe that his observations are by and large also applicable in the context of Buddhist Tantric practices:

They (i.e. *mudrās*) are at the same time deities, spiritual experiences linked to the structure of the subtle body (and thus forms of *kundalinīyoga*), aspects or stages in the ritual, and finally hand-gestures symbolizing all this—symbolizing in the strongest sense of the term, since the spiritual experience which the *mudrā* expresses, and its cosmic symbolism, must, at least in theory, be shared by the performer of the ritual.

It is needless to say that, as an expression of the deity and of the spiritual attitude of the practitioner, the *mudrās* must be performed accurately, just as the mantras they accompany must be recited accurately. And again, just like mantras, *mudrās* are meaningful and significant only within the particular context within which they are employed.

In the Buddhist context, *mudrās* are, on the one hand, employed as a means of gaining access to Buddhahood, and, on the other, as a signifier (*mtshon par byed pa*) of the latter and even as the signified (*mtshon par bya ba*) itself. According to Rong-zom-pa, as signifiers of Buddhahood, *mudrās* are of two types, namely, with signs (*mtshan ma*)

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160 See Padoux 1985, pp. 72–73, and Beyer 1973, p. 146. Beyer differentiates between *mudrās* as ‘stereotyped gestures’ (i.e. gestures of reverence, threat, etc.) and *mudrās* as ‘mimetic representations’ which accompany the presentation of an offering and represent the object being offered. The latter, he states, are representations or semblances that monitor the transmission of worship to the deities, just as mantras enjoin the acceptance of an offering and a response to it. See also Padoux 1985, pp. 73 & 78, n. 4, and the reference there to Abhinavagupta (eleventh century), who, in the context of Tantric Śaivism, states that the *mudrās* that consist in hand or bodily gestures (which are merely symbolic gestures and thus of no relevance to one’s spiritual progress) may be considered to be of an inferior sort. Cf. Padoux 1990, pp. 72–73, with reference to Abhinavagupta’s division of *mudrās* into two types, namely, *sakala* (i.e. ‘with parts’) and *niskala* (i.e. ‘without parts,’ ‘undivided,’ and also a name of Śiva). The former type is described by him as “mere contortions of the body”; the latter, the more important one, as that which “identifies the adept with the highest aspect of the deity and bestows liberation.” Compare also Saunders 1987, p. 134, where *mudrās* are divided into those that are used by the officiant in esoteric ceremonies (they are taken to be the key to tapping into cosmic forces and to be multitudinous and mobile) and those that appear in the iconography of esoteric Buddhist sculptures and pictorial art (taken to be markers for identifying the deity and to be relatively restricted and immobile). For examples of *mudrās* employed in the sense of ‘mimetic representations’ in the Śaiva context, see Padoux 1985, pp. 74–77. For a discussion of the metaphysical aspect of *mudrās* in Śaiva works, see Padoux 1990.

161 Padoux 1990, pp. 69–70.

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dang bcas pa) or without signs (mtshan ma med pa). The signless mudrā is the mahāmudrā, which is regarded as signifying the dharmanāma, which, in turn, transcends all signs. All other mudrās are, according to him, made up of signs expressing manifestations and activities of the buddhas. In the following, I provide a translation of Rong-zom-pa’s general discussion of mudrās, the eighth topic expounded in his rGyud spyi’i dngos po. For this discussion, Rong-zom-pa seems to have relied on the Tantrārthāvatāra by Buddhaguhya as one of his principal sources. Although the shape of his discussion and some of its content differ from those of Buddhaguhya, the parallel citations of authoritative scriptures are remarkable.163 Rong-zom-pa states:164

Mudrā refers to pictorial representations (gzugs: bimba)165 [containing] the signs of great beings, but it [can] also be of the nature of signlessness. As for those mudrās that are pictorial representations [containing] signs, [they] are endowed with the following characteristics: (a) their pictorial representation is indelible, (b) [they] are infrangible in regard to [one’s] objectives, (c) [they] are capable of signifying great beings, (d) [they] are the mudrā (i.e. seal or signet) of a Dharma king alone and are not possessed by others, and (e) [they] are capable of performing all activities of a king.166 It has thus been taught:167

163 For Buddhaguhya’s discussion of mudrās, see the Tantrārthāvatāra (P, fols. 5b3–10a3; D, fols. 4b4–8a6; S, vol. 27, pp. 992.1–1000.17).

164 rGyud spyi’i dngos po (A, fols. 518.1–525.1; B, fols. 235a2–238a2; D, pp. 99.21–103.1). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.F. Note that Rong-zom-pa provides a similar explanation of mudrā in his dKon cog ‘grel (B, fols. 41a2–43a3; D, pp. 69.24–72.7). For his discussion of mudrās in the context of the *Guhyagarbhatantra, see ibid. (B, fols. 127a4–131b1; D, pp. 161.8–165.21).

165 Rong-zom-pa obviously employs the term gzugs here in the sense of the image and not the original itself. Compare, however, n. 171 below, where the terms bimba (gzugs) and pratibimba (gzugs brnyan) as employed in the context of mudrās are discussed.

166 Note that in his dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 41a2–6; D, pp. 69.24–70.8) Rong-zom-pa explicitly specifies the characteristics of mudrās as four in number. (The total four and not five, unlike the case here, is the result of regarding ‘being infrangible’ and ‘being indelible’ as one.) There, too, he goes on to list three alternative characteristics of the signifying mudrā, namely, (1) being reflections (gzugs brnyan) of the purified dharmanāma and great gnosis, (2) being a signifier (mtshon pa’i gnas) of numerous means of release (rnam par thar pa), and (3) being [endowed with the ability to perform] all activities (las) and [to bring forth] supernatural attainments (dngos grub).

167 This verse is found in the Tattvasamgrahasūtra (vol. 2, p. 372, §2918, v. 29):

duratikramo yathā bhedyo rājamudrā graśāsanāḥ |
mahāmacchabhimbas tu tathā mudre ‘tī kūrtītā ||

Note that while we have here yathā in the first line, the text used by Rong-zom-pa seems to have read tathā (de bzhin). The Tibetan canonical version reads differently (T, fol. 476a4; D, fol. 136a1–2):

ji ltar rgyal po ’i phyag rgya mchog||
khris ni ’da’ dka’ [T kha, D ka] mi phyed bzhin||
bdag nyid chen po gzugs brnyan gyis||
mtshan ma phyag rgya zhes par grags||.
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It is (1=b) infrangible ('da' dka': duratikrama), and is likewise (2=a) indelible, (3=d) the sign of the supreme seal of the Victorious One, [And] is (4=c) a pictorial representation [containing] the signs of great beings; Therefore, [it] is called a mudrā.

And elsewhere ([i.e. in the Bodhicittabhāvanānīrdeśa]) it is stated: ¹⁶⁸ (5=e) Just as all activities of a king are carried out with the aid of a seal, so are all salvific activities of a buddha performed with the aid of a mudrā.

In this regard, (1) being infrangible [refers to its characteristic of] not being in the least frangible in regard to accomplishing [one's] objectives. (2) Being indelible [means that] nothing else is able to delete a pictorial representation [that contains] its own signs. These [first] two [characteristics] mark mudrās out with the meaning of tenacity (brtsan pa'i don). (3) [The characteristic of] "being a symbol of the supreme seal (or: signet) of a king,"¹⁷⁰ shows that it is not possessed by others, and thus [it has] the meaning of being exclusive. (4) [The characteristic of] "being a pictorial representation [containing] the signs of great beings" [refers to] the symbols [themselves], which are capable of signifying. (5) [The characteristic of being able to] "perform all activities" shows that [it] is no different from a

¹⁶⁸ Note that this gloss has been erroneously integrated (within the following passage) into the main text, a phenomenon described by the tradition as mchan gzhung la shor ba (lit. 'the gloss has been lost in the treatise'). For details, see the pertinent note in the critical edition.

¹⁶⁹ The canonical version reads slightly differently. The Bodhicittabhāvanānīrdeśa (P, fol. 69b3–4; D, fol. 56b3; S, vol. 33, p. 210.13–15; Bg, p. 302.4–5): rgyal po'i las thams cad ni phyag rgyas byed pa dang 'dra bar sangs rgyas kyi rtags kyi phyag rgyas ni sangs rgyas kyi phrin [Bg 'phrin] las thams cad byed de. Here we have the additional particle ni after rgyal po'i las thams cad. More importantly, the phrase rtags kyi phyag rgyas ni sangs rgyas kyi is missing in the available versions of Rong-zom-pa's rGyud spyi'i dngos po, apparently due to aberratio oculi. It is, however, unclear whether this went missing in the course of the transmission or whether it was already absent in the original manuscript. Finally, the word phyag rgyas in the phrase phrin las thams cad phyag rgyas byed de in the rGyud spyi'i dngos po is missing in the canonical version.

¹⁷⁰ Note that the citation by Rong-zom-pa reads rgyal ba'i and not rgyal po'i. Note also the reading rgyal po'i in D.
Dharma king [when it comes] to accomplishing necessary activities and that [these can] be carried out by simple means and with little difficulty.

Subclassifications of it: (1) It [falls into] two categories on the basis of the distinction between featuring signs and not featuring signs. Alternatively, (2) [it can be subdivided into] two categories in terms of [the means of] gaining access to [that which has] the nature of insight, on the basis of the distinction between the means of signifying and that which is to be signified or is signified.171 Of these, (a) [a classification] in terms of the means [of signifying] is known to be of four [types], on the basis of the distinction between mahāmudrā and samaya-, dharma-, and karmamudrās, while (b) [a classification] in terms of that which is to be signified is known to be of three [types, namely], the naturally present mudrā (rang byin gyis grub pa'i phyag rgya), gnosis-mudrā (ye shes kyi phyag rgya: jñānamudrā), and mahāmudrā. (3) [A classification] in terms of the non-duality of all [phenomena] is known from some [sources]: the spontaneously present mudrā (lha'gyis grub pa'i phyag rgya). This, however, is [not a subdivision but] a contraction of subdivisions.172

[An explanation of mudrā] on the basis of etymology: (1) [The word] mudrā [has] the meaning of 'sign,' and thus, because it signifies or seals, [it is called] a' mudrā.173 Or, (2)

171 Compare Padoux 1985, p. 73, where it is stated that the Śaiva author Abhinavagupta, in his Tantrāloka, remarks that mudrā can mean both an image or imprint and that which imprints or causes the image to appear, that is, both an object (bimba) and its image or reflection (pratibimba): “... this is to say that a mudrā brings about or causes a particular state of the body and mind, and also, since it implies a particular bodily and mental or spiritual attitude, that it also is this same state.” Compare also Padoux 1990, pp. 71-72, where reference is again made to the same work, and where Abhinavagupta’s interpretation of the term pratibimba, or more precisely pratibimbodaya, is discussed. According to him, Padoux states, pratibimbodaya means: (1) That which arises from an original image. In this case, the mudrā is that which arises from the deity and is thus its reflection, that is, a reproduction of the deity by the practitioner. (2) That from which the original arises. In this case, the mudrā is the means by which the deity arises. Thus, on the one hand, the mudrā reflects reality and, on the other, being a means used by a practitioner to visualize a deity and to assume its postures and so forth, it causes reality to arise, in that it brings about an identification of the practitioner with the deity. Padoux adds that this interpretation is consistent with the ancient ritual tradition of the bhairavāgamas, where the practitioner must assume for ritual purposes the physical appearance of the worshipped deity; he further refers to the employment of mudrās in tantras, such as the Jayadrathayāmala, as a means of inducing possession by a deity.

Note that Buddhaguhya, too, in his Tantrārthatāvatāra (P, fols. 6b2-7a5; D, fols. 5a7-6a1; S, vol. 27, pp. 993.18-995.3) speaks of mahāmudrā, which is said by him to be the great cause of a deity being recollected in terms of an object and its reflection or image, though these terms are employed by him in a different sense: both of them refer to a pictorial representation and not to the original; that is, the bimba type is taken as a pictorial depiction of the deity and is thus external, whereas the pratibimba type is its visualized form (yi'gyis bsams pa) and is thus internal.

172 There are further enumerations of mudrās, none of which can be mentioned here.

173 In his dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 41b3-4; D, p. 70.15-18), Rong-zom-pa adds: “Why does it seal? The Esoteric (lit. ‘inner’) Tantric systems maintain that it seals for the sake of attaining a great power and a great bliss, that is, bodhicitta, which abides in the hearts of sugatas and all living beings, since [both these latter] are indistinguishable, and for the sake of those striving for salvific benefits for living beings” (rgyu ci'i phyir 'debs pa ni? bde bar gshegs pa dang 'gro ba thams cad dbyer med pas byang chub kyi sems bde ba chen po snying la gnas pa dang mnga' dbang chen po brnyes pa'i phyir dang 'gro [add. ba'!?] don 'dus la' [= du? or la?]) brtson pa rnams kyi phyir
"moda" is a word [meaning] 'to make happy,'\textsuperscript{174} and thus [mudrā has] the meaning of generating happiness.\textsuperscript{175} Or, (3) \textit{mu} [means] liberating,\textsuperscript{176} [and] \textit{dara} means bound,\textsuperscript{177} and

\textit{‘debs par byed do zhes nang pa’i tshul las bzhed do||}. \textsuperscript{4} The text seems to be corrupt here. It could be that at some point, due to scribal error, the text had two terminatives successively, reading du la, which was later ‘corrected’ to dus la.

The \textit{Tantrārthāvatāra} (P, fol. 5b4–6; D, fol. 4b5–6; S, vol. 27, p. 992.5–9) gives the terms \textit{phyag rgya, mtshan ma, rtags, and nye ba’i mtshan nyid} as synonyms, and goes on to explain why. I have not, however, been able to make proper sense of Buddhaguhya’s explanation (\textit{phyag rgya dang mtshan ma dang| rtags dang| nye ba’i mtshan nyid ces bya ba rnams ni don tha dad par ma yin te| ji lta zhe na| lha’i ngo bo nyid dam| de’i cha shas kyis bye brag med par brtags te sgrub pa pos lha gan rjes su dran par ‘dod pa de la dmigs nas dran pa ‘skye bar’ [P skyes par ‘gyur te| de’i phyir ‘di de’i nye ba’i mtshan nyid do||]).

\textsuperscript{174} Cf. \textit{MW, s.v. moda}: ‘joy, delight, gladness, pleasure,’ and s.v. \textit{mud}: ‘to be merry or glad or happy, rejoice, delight in,’ and s.v. \textit{mudrā}: ‘joyous, glad.’ See also Padoux 1985, p. 73, where a passage from the Śāiva work \textit{Tantrārākya} by Abhinavagupta is cited in which the same etymology is given; and Padoux 1990, p. 72, where reference to the same passage is made. Note, however, that it is quite possible that the text originally read \textit{mo da na ni} and not \textit{mo da ni}, since Rong-zom-pa has \textit{dga’ bar byed do pa’i tshig} (see the following note).

\textsuperscript{175} Compare the \textit{Tantrārthāvatārā} (P, fol. 9b1–2; D, fol. 7b6–7; S, vol. 27, p. 999.13–15): “As for \textit{mudrā, modanād mudrā} (\textit{mo da na da} is apparently a corruption of the ablative form \textit{modanād}), that is, ‘because it is gladdening it is called \textit{mudrā}; or else \textit{modrāna} [= \textit{modranād} \textit{mudrā}, that is, ‘because it seals it is expressed by the term \textit{mudrā}’’ (\textit{phyag rgya yang mo da [D da] na da mu drā [P dra] ste| mgu bas na phyag rgya’am| mu dra [D drā] na mu drā [P dra] ste| phyag rgyas ‘debs pas na phyag rgya bas de skad ces bshad do||}). Compare also Padoux 1990, p. 68, where the Śāiva work \textit{Yoginīrdaya} of the Kaula tradition is cited as follows: ‘\textit{Kriyāśakti ... is called mudrā because it gladdens} the universe and causes it to flow or expand: \textit{kriyāśaktiṣtu viśvasya modanād drāvanat tathā | mudrākhyāyā...}.’ Note that the \textit{dKon cog} ‘grel, which also provides these two etymologies, gives the word \textit{mu dra na da} as the basis in both cases. As there is no doubt that Rong-zom-pa relied on the \textit{Tantrārthāvatārā}, there seems to have been a corruption of the text in the process of transmission.

In his \textit{dKon cog} ‘grel (B, fols. 41b5–42a2; D, pp. 70.19–71.2), Rong-zom-pa comments: “It is explained, according to the Kriyā and Exoteric Yoga systems, that a \textit{mudrā}, being feminine in gender, is a Body in which female deities are concealed, and that in virtue of the nature of [the corresponding] pledges pleasure is generated within one to whom it is shown. According to the Greater Yoga systems, a female is called a \textit{mudrā}, and similarly a \textit{mudrā} is called a female, and thus these two do not in [their] nature differ with regard to their characteristic of generating pleasure. Nonetheless, [divine and worldly females] are, to be sure, shown in the world as [respectively] abiding above and on the earth, and as engaging in the subtle or refined and in the gross or crude” (\textit{bya ba dang rnal ‘byor phyi pa’i tshul ltar na yang| phyag rgya ni mo ‘i rtags dang yang ldan pa yin pas| lha mo rnams sbas pa’i sku ste| gang zhig la ‘di bstan [B bsten] par gyur na dam tshig gi ngo bo nyid kyis dgyes pa bskyed par bshad do|| rnal ‘byor chen po’i tshul ltar na yang bud med nyid la phyag rgya’i sgrag bshad de| de ltar na phyag rgya bud med kyi sgrag bshad pa dang| ‘di gnyis la dgyes pa bskyed pa’i mtshan nyid du rang bzhiin bye brag tu gyur pa med de| ‘on kyang ‘jig rten na sa bla dang sa steng na gnas pa’i tshul bzung nas| phra ba dang dwangs ma la spyod pa dang| rags pa dang snyigs ma la spyod pa’i tshul bzung nas bstan pa tsam du zad do||).”

\textsuperscript{176} Rong-zom-pa is clearly referring here to the Sanskrit root \textit{muc} (see \textit{MW, s.v.}). See, however, the following note.
thus because [it] performs the function of binding and liberating, or because it liberates [one] from [the state of] being bound, [it is called] a mudrā.\(^{178}\) Or, (4) \(mu\) [means] big.\(^{179}\)

\(^{177}\) It is unclear to what Sanskrit word Rong-zom-pa is referring here. It may be, however, related to the word \(drdhā\). See \(MW\), s.v.: ‘firmly fastened, shut fast, tight, close,’ and ‘bonds, fetters, chains.’ The \(Abhidhānānāminimālā\) assigns to \(da\) and \(ra\) the meaning of ‘binding.’ Under the syllable \(da\), it provides the word \(andu\), which means \((MW,\) s.v.) ‘the chain for an elephant’s feet’ (cf. \(MW,\) s.v. \(and\) ‘to bind’; this meaning is, to be sure, marked as \(L\) (= lexicographers, which means that during the compilation of the dictionary this meaning could be only found in native lexicons). The Tibetan equivalent given is ‘ching bar byed pa’i thugs po (P, fol. 214b6-7; D, fol. 195a5; S, vol. 120, p. 1461.19-20). Under the syllable \(ra\), it provides two words with a similar meaning: (1) \(jathara\) (\(dza\ \tha\ \ram\)), which means \((MW,\) s.v.) ‘hard, firm,’ which means, among other things, \((MW,\) s.v.) ‘bound, tied, fixed, chained, fettered.’ The Tibetan equivalent given is \(bcings\ \pa\) (P, fol. 241a4-5; D, fol. 219a4; S, vol. 120, p. 1519.16-17). (2) \(bandhura\) (\(bandhu\ \ra\), with the Tibetan equivalents ‘ching ba and so sor ‘ching ba (P, fol. 242a8; D, fol. 220a5; S, vol. 120, p. 1522.9-10). \(MW\) does not provide the meaning ‘to bind’ for \(bandhura\,\) but it seems that in our case it is in one way or another related to \(bandh\). Several other Sanskrit words are provided in the \(Abhidhānānāminimālā\) under \(ra\), each with the Tibetan equivalent ‘ching ba, but since they could not be properly identified I have not noted them here.

Although the text clearly associates \(mu\) with liberating and \(dara\) with binding, one wonders whether a mistake has been made here (either by Rong-zom-pa or by a later scribe or editor), for one also finds in \(abhidhāna\) works similar associations but the other way around, that is, the syllable \(ma\) is connected with ‘binding’ and \(ra\) with ‘liberating.’ The \(Mantrābhidhāna\) (Sanskrit, p. 28; English, p. 27) provides, under the syllable \(ma\), the word \(bandhana\). Similarly, the \(Ekākṣararākṣa\) (Sanskrit, p. 36; English, p. 37) also provides—here, however, under the syllable \(mu\)—the word \(bandhana\). Interestingly, the \(Abhidhānānāminimālā\) gives under the syllable \(ra\) the word \(tāra\ (tā\ \ra\) with the Tibetan equivalent \(sgröl\ (ba)\) and \(grol\ \ba\) (P, fol. 237b7-8; D, fol. 216a5; S, vol. 120, p. 1512.19-20), and one wonders whether \(dara\) is in our case being freely associated with \(tāra\). Note also that the explanation of this etymology provided by Rong-zom-pa runs ‘ching ba dang ‘grol ba’i las byed pa ‘am| bcings pa las ‘grol ba’i phyir phyag rgya’o|’\(\), that is, in the first alternative mentioning first ‘ching ba and then ‘grol ba (as in the \(Tantrārtha\bhavātāra\), cited in the following note), and in the second having \(bcings\ \pa\ \las\ ‘grol\ \ba\). This may support the hypothesis that originally \(mu\) was associated with ‘binding’ and \(dara\ with ‘liberating.’

\(^{178}\) Compare the \(Tantrārtha\bhavātāra\) (P, fol. 9b8–10a1; D, fol. 8a5; S, vol. 27, p. 1000.11-13): “Or, because [it] binds one to [\(sāṃśārī\) existence or liberates one into \(nirvāṇa\), or because [it] frightens demons that create obstacles to great objectives, [it] is called a mudrā” (yang na srid pa dang| mya ngan las ‘das par so sor bcings pa ‘am grol ba ‘am| don chen po la bar chad byed pa’i bgegs rnam ‘jigs par byed pas na phyag rgya zhes bya’o\(|\)). Buddhaguhya adds that other treatises provide a different explanation and cites the verse, also cited by Rong-zom-pa, in which the binding function of the mudrā is likened to the binding of a head ribbon during an initiation ritual. For a translation of this verse and for variant readings in the \(Tantrārtha\bhavātāra\), see below. Also note Abhinavagupta’s explanation of the mudrā in the Śaiva context as rendered by Padoux 1990, p. 72: “Mudrēs ... are in fact energies (\(sāktayā\) which are so called because they liberate the adept from all states of existence and destroy all his fetters.” The second etymology provided in the \(Tantrārtha\bhavātāra\)—that because it frightens demons that create obstacles to great objectives it is called a mudrā—can be understood as parallel to the fourth etymology provided by Rong-zom-pa, who, however, has the verb ‘to destroy’ (\(joms\ \pa\) instead of ‘to frighten’ (\(jigs\ \pa\). The \(Abhidhānānāminimālā\) provides under the syllable \(da\) the word \(darada\ (da\ \ra\ \da\), and so standing for ‘fear’ (\(MW\,\) s.v., marked as \(L\)), for which the Tibetan equivalent ‘jigs is given (P, fol. 215b5; D, fol. 196a3; S, vol. 120, p. 1463.20), and under the syllable \(ra\) it gives \(sa\, ra\) and \(a\) as examples for syllables standing for various words, including ones meaning ‘fear’ and rendered into Tibetan

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*dara* [means] destroying, and therefore [it is called] a *muḍrā.* Or, (5) if [it] is explained by splitting [it] into three separate syllables, namely, *mu, da,* [and] *ra,* *mu* [in the sense of *mūla*] [means] root, and *da* [in the sense of *hein*] [means] cause, and *ra* [in the sense of *thira*] [means]

as *'jigs* (P, fol. 239b5; D, fol. 218b6; S, vol. 120, p. 1516.14–15). As for the association of the syllable *mu* with the word ‘big,’ see the following note.

It is unclear which root Rong-zom-pa is referring to here. In any case, it is possibly being freely associated with the root *mah* and related forms (see *MW,* s.v. ‘great, strong, powerful, mighty, abundant’).

See *MW,* s.v. *dara:* ‘cleaving, breaking’; s.v. *dr: ‘to cause to burst, tear, rend, divide.’ Cf. *MW,* s.v. *dala,* which offers, among other definitions, ‘dividing, splitting’ (see also s.v. *dal,* where \( \mathrm{d} \) is said to be identical with \( \mathrm{d} \)). For the use of the root *dala* in this sense, see Abhinavagupta’s explanation, as rendered in Padoux 1990, p. 73, that *muḍrās* “produce, together with the entrance into one’s true nature (svarūpagati), the destruction of doubt (sāṅkaḍālanām).” One may recall Abhinavagupta’s explanation of *muḍrās* as what destroys all the adept’s fetters; see above, n. 178. Note also that the *Mantrāḥiḍhāna* (Sanskrit, p. 24; English, p. 23), under the syllable *da,* gives the word *dala,* and the *Ekaṅṣarakoṣa* (Sanskrit, p. 36; English, p. 37), under the syllable *da,* provides the word *cheda,* which means, among other things (*MW,* s.v.), ‘cutting off, tearing off, dividing.’ The *Abhidhānaṃanīmālā* provides, under the syllable *da,* the prefixed root *vidā* (bidā), which can mean (*MW,* s.v.) ‘to destroy’ (but also ‘to untie, release, deliver from’), for which the Tibetan equivalent *'joms* is provided (P, fol. 215a2–3; D, fol. 195b1; S, vol. 120, p. 1462.11).

In his dKöng cogs *'grel* (B, fol. 42a3–4; D, p. 71.5–7), Rong-zom-pa explains this alternative as follows: “It destroys obstacles to great objectives, or it destroys big ‘towns’ of great, indestructible obstacles, and therefore, because it destroys, it is called a *muḍrā*” (don chen po la gdes byed pa rnam s 'joms pa'i'am bgegs chen por gyur pa mi shigs pa'i grong khyer chen po 'joms par byed pas 'joms [B 'ngoms] pas na phyag rgya zhes bya'ol]). Perhaps *'joms par byed pas 'joms pas na* should read *'joms par byed pa'am 'joms pas na,* that is, *'causes to be destroyed or destroys.’

Compare the mNyam sbyor *'grel pa* (B, fol. 140a3–4; D, p. 613.6–10), where the four etymologies specified above are referred to briefly (*mu dra zhes bya ba'i yi ge'i sgra las 'debs par byed pas phyag rgya zhes bya'ol*). Perhaps *'joms par byed pas 'joms pas na* should read *'joms par byed pa'am 'joms pas na,* that is, *'causes to be destroyed or destroys.’

The connection between the syllable *da* and the word *hetu* is unclear. It may be that this etymology is based on a semantical rather then a syllabic association. One meaning of the syllable *da,* as ‘effecting, producing’ (*MW,* s.v.), could supply the reason for the association with the word *hetu,* that is, ‘cause.’ In his dKöng cogs *'grel* (B, fol. 42a5; D, p. 71.8–10) Rong-zom-pa provides the following explanation: “*Da* [means] *hetu.* If [something] is sealed with such *muḍrās* as a head ribbon, it becomes endowed with power (or: authorized). Therefore, [*muḍrā*] is said to be the cause of empowerment” (*da ni he du ste dbu rgyan la sogs pa'i rgyas btab na dbang dang Idan par 'gyur bas dbang bskur ba'i rgyu zhes bshad do'ol*).
stable. As to the meaning of 'root' in this regard, a mudrā is taught as being the root of pledges (dam tshig: samaya), as stated in the following:

The pledges of all buddhas
Are consecrated as this mudrā.

And hence he who is involved in maintaining a mudrā is also involved in maintaining pledges. As to its meaning of 'cause,' a mudrā is one cause of initiations being bestowed, as stated in the Buddhist samayoga tantra in the context of bestowing an initiation by means of a mudrā.185

Having bound one's head with the ribbon, [One] should playfully (gying: salila) take it off, [holding] the end of it.

Letting the silk ribbon hang [by its] end, [One] should clap [one's] hands.

'Stable' [means] empowered, as taught in the same tantra: 186

\[ Ra ni sthir ra sthir ra ni sthir ra ste brtan pa'i don la 'jug pas phya drung byin gyes brlabs na lus brtan zhing bgegs la sogs pas mi phyed par gyur bas lus brtan par byed pa'i phyir phya drung rgya zhes bya'o\] (\. See also the Abhidhanamgimala, where, under the syllable ra, the word sthira (sthira) is provided with the Tibetan equivalent gyo med, which semantically overlaps brtan pa (P, fol. 239b4; D, fol. 218b5; S, vol. 120, p. 1516.12).

185 This verse occurs three times in the Buddhadasamayogatantra, with some variations. The first occurrence is most similar to our reading (T, fol. 279b4–5; D, fol. 181a2; Tb, p. 211.1–2):


The second occurrence reads (T, fol. 280a2–3; D, fol. 181a5–6; Tb, pp. 211.7–212.1):

\[ dbu rgyan 'beings pas' [T being bas, Tb being pa] 'beings nas ni| 'gying ba'i' [Tb 'gi bzhi] mtha' nas dgrol bar bya| dar gyi mtha' ma [Tb las] 'spyangs pa' [Tb spyang ba, D dpyangs pa] ltar| byas nas thal mo brdab [Tb bstan] par bya|.

The third occurrence varies the most (T, fol. 290a6–7; D, fol. 189a5; Tb, pp. 236.7–237.1):


186 This verse occurs twice in the Buddhadasamayogatantra, with some variations. The first occurrence is the closest to our reading (T, fol. 243a1–2; D, fol. 152b7–153a1; Tb, p. 119.2–3):

\[ rgya [Tb rgyu] 'di bsgrubs [D bsgrub] pa tsam gyes ni| thugs ’gyas thams cad byin gyes rlob|]
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The mere binding by this mudrā
Will cause [one to be] empowered [by] all buddhas;
If [one] is fully empowered,
All buddhas will gather.

A summary of these [three meanings] has been taught as follows ([this] is [also] cited in the [Tantrārthavatāra].)\(^{187}\)

This is the root of pledges;
The head ribbon binding is the supreme cause.
Through it all bodies become stabilized.
Therefore, [it] is called a mudrā.

Such are the meanings assigned to mudrā, for [a mudrā] seals and signifies, as stated ([in the
sGyu ‘phrin brgyad cu pa]).\(^{188}\)

\[
\text{shin tu byin gyis brlabs na [Tb nas ni]}
\text{sangs rgyas thams cad ‘du bar [Tb ‘grub par ‘gyur].}
\]

The second occurrence reads (T, fol. 294a7–b1; D, fol. 192b1–2; Tb, p. 247.2–3):

\[
\text{phyag rgya ‘di yis btab na [Tb nas ni]}
\text{sangs rgyas thams cad byin ‘gyis rlob [Tb rlob so]}
\text{legs par byin gyis brlabs na [Tb nas ni]}
\text{sangs rgyas ‘thams cad ‘dus par [Tb kun dang ‘phrad par ‘gyur].}
\]

A similar notion is expressed in the following two lines of verse found in the Trailokyavijaya (T, fol. 238b5; D, fol. 47b7):

\[
\text{sangs rgyas kun gyis byin brlabs pas}
\text{nges par sangs rgyas nyid du ‘gyur].}
\]

\(^{187}\) As indicated in the gloss, this citation is duplicated in the Tantrārthavatāra (P, fol. 10a2; D, fol. 8a7; S, vol. 27, p. 1000.15–16). The reading found there is the closest to our reading, except for the fourth line, which reads de bas phyag rgyar rab tu bsgrags instead of our phyag rgya zhes ni bya ba yin. This verse is in fact from the Trailokyavijaya. The canonical version, however, reads differently (T, fols. 235b7–236a1; D, fol. 45b5):

\[
\text{de dag dam tshig rtsa ba ste[}
\text{rtsa byung bcing ba rgyu yi mchog[}
\text{gang gis thams cad lus brtan ‘gyur[}
\text{de phyir phyag rgya brjod pa yin][.}
\]

While in most cases the different readings involve no semantical difference, the reading rtsa byung instead of our dbu rgyan in the second line does. The Tibetan dbu rgyan seems to be a translation of the word mauli, which means, among other things, ‘crown.’ It is the term used in the translation of the Tantrārthavatāra. The canonical reading rtsa byung is likely a translation of maula (‘derived from roots’), which makes little sense here.

\(^{188}\) This verse, too, is found in the Tattvasamgrahasūtra (vol. 2, p. 303, §2552, v. 74):

\[
yathā rājñām svamudrābhīr mudryate rājaśāsanam |
mahātmanāṁ svamudrābhīr āmudrāyante tathā janāḥ .
\]

The Tibetan canonical version is clearly a different translation, the most striking difference being that the third line is more or less a combination of parts of our third and fourth lines, while the
remaining parts appear in a line found after the first two lines of the following verse (T, fol. 457b3&4; D, fol. 122a2&3):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ji ltar rgyal po nyid phyag rgya}\| \\
rgyal po khrims la 'debs pa ltar}\| \\
bdag nyid chen po skye bo rnams}\| \\
nyid kyi phyag rgya ttab pa [T na] ni].
\end{align*}
\]

The verse is also cited in the *Tantrārthāvatāra* (P, fol. 9b3; D, fol. 8a1; S, vol. 27, p. 999.17–19). The reading there, however, varies in several instances: in the second line it reads *rgyal po'i gtsigs* instead of our *rgyal po rtsigs*; the third line reads altogether differently, having *bdag'chen nyid kyi phyag rgyas kyang* (i.e. “through the mudrā of the great beings”), which better reflects the Sanskrit original, instead of our *bdag nyid chen po mtshan ma'i gzugs*; and in the fourth line *skye bo rnams* instead of our *thams cad kun*, and *ttab* instead of our *'debs*. The third line of our reading is probably the result of a contamination with the third line of the first verse cited in the present section, since these two lines are similarly worded; compare *bdag nyid chen po...* and *bdag chen nyid kyi*... (as found in the *Tantrārthāvatāra*). On this line see the discussion of the passage from the *sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa* below. The gloss that elsewhere the text reads *skye bo rnams* instead of *thams cad kun* probably refers to the reading in the *Tantrārthāvatāra*, since, as we have seen, the source of the glosses was well aware of the discussion in the *Tantrārthāvatāra*, which he refers to in one of them. The reading *skye bo rnams*, significantly, is found also in the canonical version.

As indicated in the gloss, the verse is also found in the *sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa*, the longer version of the *Guhyagarbhatantra*. As both the condensed and the long versions are entitled *gsang ba'i snying po de kho nyid nges pa*, the latter is referred to traditionally by the title *sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa*, reflecting the number of its chapters. In fact, this version contains eighty-two chapters, not the eighty the title suggests (the short version contains only twenty-two chapters). Our four lines of verse, however, like those in the *Tattvasaṃgrahaśūtra* (in the Sanskrit original) and *Tantrārthāvatāra*, do not appear there successively, and so do not form one complete verse. Of interest to us are the following nine lines of verse from the *sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa* (pp. 49.7–50.2): (1) *ji ltar rgyal po rang gis rgyas*|| (2) *rgyal po'i gtsigs la ttab pa ltar*|| (3) *bdde chen snying la gnas pa dang*|| (4) *dbang chen dus la brtson pa yis*|| (5) *thams cad kun la de ltar 'debs*|| (6) *'da' dka' ji bzhin mi shig pas*|| (7) *rgyal po rgyal mchog gis ni gnas*|| (8) *bdag nyid chen po mtshan ma'i gzugs*|| (9) *phyag rgya zhes ni bsgrags pa yin*]. Lines 1 and 2 are, except for slight variations, identical with the first two lines of our verse. Line 8 is the third line in our verse, and line 5, with a slight variation, is our fourth line. Moreover, the three lines cited in the following gloss fill in some of the gap: the first two lines cited there are lines 3 and 4 in the *sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa*, while the third line is identical with our fourth line, which, as we have already seen, is line 5 in the *sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa*. Lines 6–9, are, with some variations, the first verse cited by Rong-zom-pa in the current section. Major variations occur in the reading of lines 7 and 9. Note that these nine lines, like other lines in the passage containing them, are repeated four more times (*ibid.*, pp. 51.1–3, 52.2–4, 53.3–5, 54.4–6) with some variations, some of which bear more similarity to our readings (particularly line 7, which in the repeated passages *rgyal po phyag rgya mchog gi gnas*). Also note the nine lines of verse found in the following passage (*ibid.*, p. 55.5–7), which, although they occasionally differ in content, all in all closely resemble the above nine lines.

189 Hischke 1881, s.v. *gtsigs*, referring to Mi-la-ras-pa’s songs, suggests according to the context the following meaning: *gtsigs la 'bebs pa* ‘to subdue, to force, compel,’ or with the supine *'bang bgyid par [gtsigs pa] ‘to compel to obey.’ See also the *brDa dkrol gser gyi me long*, s.v. *gtsigs bcas pa, gtsigs pa bzung ba*, and *gtsigs bzung*. Regarding the reading *rtsigs*, see the pertinent note in the critical edition.
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By means of his royal seal, So are all [sentient beings] sealed By the pictorial representation [containing] the signs of a great being.  

(Elsewhere ‘all sentient beings’ occurs instead of ‘all,’ and the sGyur ‘phrul brgyad cu pa reads in fact as follows):

It is because of the abiding of great bliss in the heart, And on the occasion of a great initiation and the like, That all [sentient beings] are thus sealed.)

[The etymology of] the signless mudrā: [It is taught as [having] the meaning of mudrā because [it] seals. This is in accord with statements such as that in the sGyur ‘phrul le’i’u (also le lhag).]

By means of the mudrā, which is [characterized by] Essencelessness, characteristiclessness and great equanimity, All supramundane qualities and mundane faults Of the ten directions and four times [Are sealed as] having no origination and no cessation.

It is also referred to as mudrā on account of [its] meaning that which is to be signified or which is signified, as stated (in the Hevajra[amra]).

190 The Trai/okyavijaya (T, fol. 235b5; D, fol. 45b3) expresses the same idea:

    ji ltar jo bo ‘i rgya mthong na|
    bran rnam ‘gal bar mi byed pa|
    de bzhi ngyal ba nyid rnam kyang|
    phyag rgya ‘da bar yong mi mdsad|

191 See the discussion of the citation in the Tantrārthāvatārā above, n. 188.

192 The reference to the different readings is clearly based on Rong-zom-pa’s dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 41a6–b3; D, p. 70.10–15), where he first cites this verse according to the system of the Exoteric Yoga (rnal ‘byor phyi pa’i tshul), which has skye bo kun, and then remarks that according to the Greater Yoga system (rnal ‘byor chen po’i tshul), the reading is thams cad kun. He then adds that according to the latter system the various kinds of mudrās, designated by him ‘extra mudrās,’ are merely manifestations of the spontaneously present mudrā (i.e. the ontologically actual mudrā). See also the discussion of this citation in the note to the preceding cited verse.

193 The sGyur ‘phrul brgyad cu pa actually reads dus la brtson pa (i.e. “the exertion during a great initiation”) and not dus la stsoogs pa, as in our gloss.

194 This verse is found in the sGyur ‘phrul le lhag (p. 497.4–5). Except for one instance where it has phyogs bzhi instead of our phyogs bcu, the readings are identical.

195 On the notion of a fourth dimension of time, see the corresponding note in the translation of the passage from the dKon cog ‘grel below, §I.

196 The last two lines seem to correspond to Hevajratantra I.v.4cd (p. 16):

    vajrena mudryate ‘nena mudrā tenābhidhīyate ||.

The Tibetan text reads (p. 17):

    rdo rje ‘dis ni gdab ma nyid||
    des na phyag rgyar brjod par bya||.
Because [it] is sealed and signified,
[It] is called a mudrā,
And [also] because [it] is sealed by a vajra-seal.

And as follows:

Because [it] is sealed by the gnosis-seal.

These are the general etymologies.

Of the mudras taught individually, (1) the samayamudrā [comprises] the signs of the gnosis of a buddha's secret Mind (thugs gsang ba: cittaguhya). Because it invokes and realizes the pledges, or signifies [them], [it] involves pledges, and therefore [it] is called a samayamudrā. Or it is a samayamudrā because [it] is infrangible.197 (2) The dharmamudrā is the sign of the Doctrine taught by the Victorious Ones, and just like the preceding one, it, too, is called dharmamudrā because [it has] the meaning of involving and being [the Dharma]. (3) The karmamudrā is a pictorial representation [containing] the signs of the salvific activities of the Victorious Ones, and [its] etymology is like the preceding ones. (4) The mahāmudrā is the complete sign. [It] is great in being a cause of the recollection of deities, and thus is called 'great.' Moreover, [a mudrā] is called 'great' if the signs of the Body desired by one are complete. Yet [it can still] be called mahāmudrā even though not all [signs] are entirely complete.198

Moreover, amongst those taught [as mudrās] on account of their being what is to be sealed, (1) the naturally present mudrā is a woman's (i.e. a consort's) body. The [body of a woman] is called a mudrā because [it] is what is to be sealed by the vajra of gnosis and is

197 Compare the Tantrarthavatara (P, fol. 7b5–6; D, fol. 6a7–b1; S, vol. 27, p. 996.4–6): "Or the great beings do not infringe it, and therefore deities are endowed with pledges characterized by infrangibility. Hence the mudrā that involves pledges is called samayamudrā. Or these [pledges] are infrangible, and thus they are expressed by the term samaya[mudrā]" (yang na sems dpa' chen po nnams de las mi 'da' bas na lha mi 'da' ba'i mtshan [D mehan] nyid kyi dam tshig dang ldan pa'i phyir dam tshig dang ldan pa'i phyag rgya la dam tshig gi phyag rgya zhes bya'o) yang na de dag nyid mi 'da' ba yin pas na de nyid la dam tshig ces [D gi phyag rgya zhes] bya ba'i sgrar brjod de). See also Rong-zom-pa's mNyam shoey 'grel pa (B, fol. 131b1–2; D, p. 603.14–17), where the line phyag rgya dam tshig yin par bshad] is commented as follows: "A pledge is characterized by infrangibility, and a mudra is also characterized by infrangibility. Therefore, here [they] are of an identical nature. Given that a mudrā is itself a pledge, a mudrā is [sometimes] called a samaya" (de la dam tshig ni mi 'da' ba'i mtshan nyid yin la phyag rgya zhes bya ba'ang mi 'da' ba'i mtshan nyid yin te) de bas na 'dir bdag nyid gcig ste| phyag rgya nyid dam tshig yin pas phyag rgya la dam tshig ces bshad do]].

198 In commenting on the line phyag rgya chen po'i ngang du gnas]], in his dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 131a5–b1; D, p. 165.16–21), Rong-zom-pa mentions three cases in which a mudrā can be called mahāmudrā: "In general, there are three ways of employing the term mahāmudrā, namely, (1) the word 'great' [can] be employed for all mudrās when the qualities of the various mudrās are being expressed, (2) the term mahāmudrā [can] be employed for the sign pertaining to a complete Body when the terms [relating to] the signs of Body, Speech, and Mind co-occur, and (3) in some cases the term mahāmudrā is employed for the signless dharmakāya. One should thus apply [this term] appropriately in accordance with the context" (... spyir phyag rgya chen po'i sgra 'jug pa nnam pa gsum ste| (1) phyag rgya so so'i yon tan ston pa'i dus na phyag rgya thams cad la yang chen po'i sgra 'jug go| (2) sku gsung thugs kyi mtshan ma'i [B pa'i] sgra 'dom pa'i dus na sku yongs su rdzogs pa'i mtshan ma la phyag rgya chen po'i sgra 'jug go| (3) skabs la lar ni chos kyi sku mtshan ma med pa la phyag rgya chen po'i sgra 'jug ste| skabs kyi ni ci rigs su sbyar bar bya'o]].
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[also] that which is to be signified or is signified. (2) The jñānamudrā is the Body of a female deity (i.e. a non-physical consort) that is generated from gnosis. [Its] etymology is like the preceding one. (3) The mahāmudrā is the dharmakāya, which transcends all signs. It is called mahāmudrā because [it] is what is to be sealed with the sign of gnosis and is [also] the supreme [mudrā]. 199 It is in accord with statements such as that (in the 'Jam dpal thabs kyi 'khor lo).

Karma[mudrā], jñāna[mudrā], and mahā[mudrā]

Are an [actual] woman, [a visually] conceived [female deity],
And the signless perfection of insight (shes rab pha rol [tu] phyin [pa]: pražnāpāramitā), [respectively].

In general (yongs ni), that which is taught as a characteristicless mudrā is semantically identical with this mahāmudrā. [It] is called mahāmudrā because [it] is the cause of all mudrās, for [it] is that which is to be signified by all [other] mudrās and pervades all phenomena. [It] is called the ‘spontaneously present mudrā’ because all signs are spontaneously present as the very Body, Speech, and Mind of the Victorious Ones on account of it. 201

The secret mudrā should be expressed
In terms of its actual nature, characteristics,
Subclassifications, and etymologies.

In his Rab gnas bshad sbyar, Rong-zom-pa first provides an explanation for the phenomenon of venerated objects from a historical standpoint, 202 and then goes on to

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199 In his explanation of the category of the signified found in the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 42b2-4; D, p. 71.16-20), Rong-zom-pa notes that the naturally present mudrā, a woman's body, is also known as karmamudrā. With regard to the remaining two, he employs a slightly different terminology, stating that the jñānamudrā is a visualized female deity (yid kyis sprul pa'i lha mo), while the mahāmudrā is the signless dharmadātā.

200 This citation could not be identified since the source itself, the 'Jam dpal thabs kyi 'khor lo named in the gloss, could not be identified.

201 bDud-'joms Rin-po-che, in the context of discussing meditation in his bsTan pa'i rnam gzhog (p. 436.4-6), states that these four mudrās are so called because meditation ensues when one's mind, and activity have been respectively sealed by these mudrās. He associates the four mudrās with the four gnoses and with a buddha's Body, Speech, Mind, and Activities, as follows: (1) mahāmudrā, associated with a buddha's Body, seals or secures the fundamental mind (kun gzhi rnam [par] shes [pa]: ālayavijñāna) as the mirror-like gnosis (me long lta bu'i ye shes: ādarsajñāna), (2) dharmamudrā, associated with a buddha's Speech, seals or secures the mental [perception] (yid: manas, that is, here yid kyi rnam par shes pa: manovijñāna) as the discerning gnosis (so sor rtog pa'i ye shes: pratayevasanajñāna), (3) samayamudrā, associated with a buddha's Mind, seals or secures the defiled mind (nyon mongs pa'i yid: kliṣṭamanas) as the gnosis of equality (mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes: samatājñāna), and (4) karmamudrā, associated with a buddha's Activities, seals or secures the five sense [perceptions] as the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities (bya ba sgrub pa'i ye shes: kṛtyānuṣṭhānajñāna). The fifth gnosis, pertaining to the dharmadātā (chos [ki] dyings [ki] ye shes: dharmadātājñāna), is said to be the natural expression of all the others. For a translation of this passage into English, see NSTB, vol. 1, p. 356.

202 For a translation of this passage, see above, §1.A.
explain them from the doctrinal point of view of the Mantra system, where such objects of veneration are conceived as mudrās that have been left behind by the Buddha in the world in order to facilitate further salvific activities for the benefit of sentient beings after his demise.\(^{203}\)

According to the Mantra system, mudrās have been left behind in the world for the sake of those in whose cognitive domain buddhas do not occur, and so [the latter] act for the benefit of sentient beings. All existing (i.e. pure and impure) mudrās are merely subsumed under the mudrās of Body, Speech, and Mind. These include mudrās such as (1) those that are empowered as (direct) external objects of the sense faculties, that is, objects that are visually and physically accessible, such as coloured sand mandalas (rdul tshon gyi dkyil 'khor: rajomandala), statues, drawings, stūpas,\(^{204}\) and books, (2) those that are audibly accessible objects, such as the sound of mantras and the sound that resounds in the form of syllables, words, and phrases of the sublime Dharma, and further (3) those that can be mentally conceptualized and perceived. \(^{205}\) [These objects can be] complete in regard to [their various] parts (cha shas) or incomplete; similar or dissimilar. In brief, everything that consists of artifacts, proper (tshul du)\(^{206}\) hand gestures (lag kyi 'du byed kyis bca' ba, lit. 'constructed on the impulse of the hand'), verbal expressions, or thoughts is subsumed under three [categories, namely], deities, mantras, and mudrās; activities for the benefit of sentient beings [can] be carried out when these three come together. The meaning is like what is expressed in the following [passage] from the Vajrapāṇyabhīṣekatantra:\(^{207}\)

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\(^{203}\) Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fols. 272a1–273b4; D, pp. 140.17–142.13). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.G.

\(^{204}\) See von Rospatt 1999, pp. 128–129, where it is stated that in the Vajrayāna context stūpas, or more precisely caityas, by now described as three-dimensional mandalas, are seen as encompassing the entire Buddhist Doctrine, and the numerous deities contained in them as ‘personifications’ of various parts of this Doctrine. The mandala can be reduced to the five buddhas in the centre, who still contain all the elements of the Doctrine, and further reduced to the underlying principle of Buddhahood, or the absolute, personified as the Ādibuddha. (Von Rospatt refers here specifically to Nepal, where the absolute is “popularly ‘personified’” as the Ādibuddha; as we shall see below, such a personification of the absolute is common in other Tantric traditions as well.)

\(^{205}\) The relevance of the gloss here is unclear. Moreover, the dotted line connecting the gloss to the corresponding phrase, which is usually found in B, is missing. B seems to take the gloss as a citation of a line of verse, which may be rendered as follows: “The one on whose hand blazing light appears” or “The one who (or: That which) appears as blazing light on the hand.”

\(^{206}\) The meaning of the phrase tshul du here is unclear. I tentatively translate it in the sense of tshul bzhin du.

\(^{207}\) This passage is found as two separate passages in the canonical version, first the verse, and a few lines later the prose, which in Rong-zom-pa’s citation is placed first. Moreover, the canonical version reads in several instances somewhat differently. Vajrapāṇyabhīṣekatantra (T, fols. 62b6–63a1; D, fol. 44a1–2):

\[ 'jam dpal .... gsang sngags kyichos nyid deschos nyid ston te \text{de'i tshe des tshig gis de'i rnam pa ston} \text{[T brten]} \text{pa na bya ba nus par 'gyur rol]} 'jam dpal brten pa'ichos nyid ci [T ji] \text{ltar las byed nus par 'gyur ba [D gyur pa] la ltos]. \]

Vajrapāṇyabhīṣekatantra (T, fol. 63a5–6; D, fol. 43b5–6):
O Manjūṣrī, the true nature of (the three) 208 mantras, (pictorial representations, and syllables, [all of which are mere analogies] 209—expresses the {sublime} true reality [{which is} the actual thing], and when it (i.e. true reality) expresses [itself in] the form of words, 210 it becomes capable of carrying out activities. O Manjūṣrī, observe the true nature of the supported [phenomena] that is capable of carrying out activities. 211

For example, by 212 rubbing the upper piece of wood (gtsub shing: kāṇḍa)
Against the lower piece of wood (gtsub stan: mathanīya)—
With human effort as its cause—
A strong fire arises.
Likewise, from the coming together
Of mantras, mudrās, and deities—these three 213—
Great [results] (i.e. the ultimate result) arise,
And [these] having arisen, all desirable Objectives whatsoever will be fulfilled.

\[dper na gtsub stan brten \[T bsten\] nas su\][
gtsub shing gtsubs \[T gtsub\] pa byas gyur na\][
mī yis rtso la byas rgyu las\][
stobs dang ldan pa'i me 'byung ngol\][
de bzhin gsum ni 'dus pa las\][
gsang sngags dang ni phyag rgya lnga [= lha]\][
chen po dag ni 'byung 'gyur te\][
'byung nas yid la gang \[D om.\] bsams pa'i \[D pa yi\][
las rnams byed par 'gyur ba \[T gyur pa\] yin\].

Compare the citation of the same passage in Rong-zom-pa’s Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 208a1–b1; D, p. 313.8–22). Although it, too, has the prose preceding the verses, it is clearly closer to the canonical version than the citation found in the Rab gnas bshad sbyar. For the analogy of making a fire by rubbing two pieces of wood against each other, as employed in other contexts, see the Guhyasamājatantra (p. 28.17–21; Tib. T, fol. 22b6–7; D, fol. 104a7–b1) and Hevajratantra II.iii.37.

208 For the sake of a smoother reading I have here inserted the word gsum found in the following gloss.

209 For the sake of a smoother reading I have included here, in this gloss, the translation of the word dpe, which actually occurs in the following gloss.

210 Note the canonical reading: “... observe how the true nature of the supported [phenomena] is capable of carrying out activities.” The Dam tshig mdo rgyas reads similarly, but has sten pa instead of the canonical ston (or brten as found in T).

211 Note the canonical reading: “... observe how the true nature of the supported [phenomena] is capable of carrying out activities.” The Dam tshig mdo rgyas has a reading quite similar to ours, but with sten pa'i chos nyid instead of our brten pa'i chos nyid.

212 Note the conditional particle na found in the canonical reading as opposed to our instrumental: “if the upper piece of wood is rubbed....” The Dam tshig mdo rgyas has here the ablative particle las.

213 Note the canonical reading “mantras and five mudrās” (i.e. lnga instead of our lha). This reading is, however, evidently a scribal error since the canonical version, too, has the collective number ‘three.’ The Dam tshig mdo rgyas for its part has lta instead of our lha or the canonical lnga.
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Thus with regard to those mudrās that are capable of benefiting [sentient beings] when arrayed as sand mandalas, the arrays of syllables [can] be classified as dharma-mudrās pertaining to Speech. If they are set up as books, they are subsumed under samaya-mudrās. Stūpas, too, [can] be classified as samaya-mudrās. The perfection of Body is the mahāmudrā. Likewise, statues and drawings are also the mahāmudrā. Stūpas constructed separately without relying on coloured sand are also reflections of the dharmakāya. Since [they] are taught as mudrās [that signify] what is known as the dharma-dhātu, non-dual gnosis, the result consisting in release, or Body, [they are] on occasion also taught as a buddha’s palace. This is semantically identical with the statement:

Non-dual gnosis itself
Is the abode of all tathāgatas.

The triangle [represented by the letter] e (i.e. [the triangle of] origination of phenomena (chos ’byung: dharma-dhātu)), mudrās in the form of an uṣṇīṣa, and stūpas [can] be classified as samaya-mudrās, pertaining to Mind. Of these, stūpas and mudrās in the form of uṣṇīṣas or uṣṇīṣacakras (gtsug tor gyi ’khor lo) are taught in particular as being samaya-mudrās pertaining to the Tathāgata family. The Sarvabuddhasamayoga[ tantra] (i.e. the Sang. rwa shams dad dang rnyan par phyor bo), when dealing with setting up samaya-mudrās pertaining to the Tathāgata family (from among the six families) as a mandala, states:

The robe (chos gos: dīvara) and alms bowl (lhung bzed: pātra),
And likewise the monk’s staff (’khar gsil: khakharaka),
And books containing the sublime Dharma,
Are other group of mudrās featuring signs.

Thus books (glegs bam: pustaka), too, are taught as being samaya-mudrās. As to the significance of the monk’s staff, it is taught as having [the same] significance as a stūpa, which includes the path and the result. This is because the Exalted One, in proclaiming the significance and the excellence of a monk’s staff as he went to town for alms holding a monk’s staff, stated, for example, the following:

On a mound (spyi bs dus) adorned [with] the four continents,
There exists a stūpa [representing] the maturation of the result, [that is], release.
In the recess [of it], which [represents] empti[ness] and signlessness,

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214 The canonical version reads almost identically (T, fol. 260a5-6; D, fol. 166a2): in the third line T has ni instead of our kyi, which is also found in D; in the fourth line TD have rgya’i instead of our rgya. Note, however, that B has a space of approximately one letter after the syllable rgya—which may be the result of correcting the block from rgya’i to rgya. The reading found in the NyG version (Tb, pp. 161.7–162.1) is even closer to our reading, the only difference being pa instead of our pa’i in the third line.

215 It is notable that the four items mentioned in this verse, namely, the Buddha’s robe, alms bowl, and staff, and books containing his teachings, can all be regarded as relics: the first three as contact relics and the fourth as Dharma relics. On these contact relics, see Strong 2004, pp. 211–221; on Dharma relics, see ibid., pp. 8–10.

216 Compare the Nyang ral chos ’byung (p. 49.13–15): “As for the monk’s staff, it is actually a stūpa and a receptacle of the Three Jewels, and therefore it is a stūpa in which all gods and humans have faith when [they] see [it]” (mkhar gsil ni dngos su mchod rten yin la| dkon mchog gsum gyi rten yin pas| lha mi kun gyis mthong na dad pa’i mchod rten yin no|).

217 I have translated spyi bs dus as ‘mound,’ as called for by the context. I have not been able, however, to confirm this meaning of the word.

104
A rṣi observing the austerities [leading to the attainment of] non-conceptuality performs (stsal) [his practices].

In keeping with this statement, the stūpa is a mudrā [that represents] the Body [that results from] release, while the recess and the rṣi are mudrās [that represent] the path and individual, [respectively]. In brief, books and stūpas are mudrās and signs [that represent] a tathāgata.

In his Sātsṭsha gdab pa, Rong-zom-pa explains different methods of casting miniature stūpas, and asserts that such shrines, containing as they do the Buddha’s relics, are an [iconic] reflection of the dharmakāya, which comprises the Three Jewels.\(^{218}\)

All objectives, it is taught, are accomplished in virtue of the qualities of these different [methods]. Actually, [stūpas] should be recognized as what causes [devotees] to gather an accumulation of beneficial resources. How so? A stūpa is an [iconic] reflection (gzugs brnyan: pratibimba) of the dharmakāya. It is constructed so that beneficial resources [can] be gathered by many sentient beings and the [Three] Jewels [can] be worshiped. The Three Jewels for their part are subsumed under the dharmakāya, for it is taught:

The terms Buddha [and] Dharma Express symbolic representations (phyag rgya: mudrā) of true reality.

It is as stated on the occasion of explaining [this statement]: “The essence of the result [attained by] those [on the path of] training (slob pa: śāikṣa) and those [on the path of] no more training (mi slob pa: āśāikṣa) is [the Jewel that is] the Buddha, and [the Jewel that is] the Dharma, too, is its essence. Therefore, that which is [the Jewel of] the Buddha is [the Jewel that is] the Dharma.” Buddhhas and bodhisattvas are the knowers, and unmistakable true reality is the object of knowledge. Therefore, it is stated that there is no difference between knowledge and the object of knowledge. Since, then, the Three Jewels are more or less (ita bu) taught as being equal, [a stūpa], in being an [iconic] reflection of the dharmakāya (i.e. the Jewel that is the Buddha), is an [iconic] reflection of the [Jewels that are] the Dharma and Saṃgha as well.

There are also instances where the term dharmakāya refers to the essencelessness of phenomena (chos [kYi] bdag med pa: dharmanairāmya), as [when it is] stated: “Homage to the dharmakāya, the supreme relic (gdung).” Moreover, the Buddha’s relics are for their part taught as being true reality (de bzhin nyid: tathatā). In addition to these ways [of explaining], it is taught elsewhere: “The element/relic (dbyings: dhātū) that is the supreme mode of the Dharma is the basis of excellent auspicious objectives (dge don).” Hence, [this] basis of all excellences, the purified dharmadhātu, is taught as being [what] a stūpa means.

Elsewhere, too, it is taught: “As for the dharmakāya, the body (lus) [containing] the accumulation of factors pertaining to awakening (byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos: bodhipaksyadharma) is the non-dual gnosis (gnyis su med pa’i ye shes: advayajñāna), and that [gnosis] is the dharmakāya. The stūpa is a semblance (gzugs brnyan) and symbolic representation (phyag rgya: mudrā) of the latter.” On the basis of these meanings, [stūpas] are shown to be the support (gzhi) for the accumulation of beneficial resources, [which come about] by worshipping and revering the [Three] Jewels. These semblances exist for the sake of sentient beings and not for other purposes, and are thus [receptacles] of the accumulation of beneficial resources.

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218 Sātsṭsha gdab pa (B, fols. 316b1–317a5; D, pp. 373.16–374.14). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.H.
To conclude the discussion on mantras and mudrās as expressions of Buddhahood, I may refer to Rong-zom-pa’s remarks in his Dam tshig mdo rgyas, according to which everything, including one’s body and speech and the physical expression of the deity (lha’i gzugs), is mind, and therefore, after one’s mind is purified, and one’s body, speech, and mind thus unified with those of the deity, any movement of the body becomes a mudrā and any verbal expression becomes a mantra. Hence, according to him, mantras, mudrās, and deities, which are conceived as interchangeably linked with each other, are the only components of Tantric practice. With regard to the similarities and differences between mudrās and mantras, Rong-zom-pa, in his dKon cog ‘grel, states the following:

These two, namely, mantra and mudrā, are taught as being coextensive. Nonetheless, [one] slight difference taught [between the two] is that with mudrās the emphasis is on physical signs, whereas with mantras it is on words of truth, as pertaining to speech. [The similarities and differences can] be taught by subjecting both to numerous analyses on the basis of treatises and the conceptions of individual persons. Of these, the first is: [They] may be subjected to the [following] analysis: “[It is] a distinction based on the difference between body and speech, [both of which are the result of] a maturation [process].” Similarly, the second: [They] may be subjected to the [following] analysis: “[They] are the signs and symbols (brda) of the Body, Speech, and Mind of the Victorious Ones.” [And they] may be subjected to [further] analysis: The third: “These same signs are capable of causing activities to be completed and supernatural powers to be attained.” The fourth: “[The signs] appear in such a way that two [things], namely, manifestations resulting from the empowerments of the tathāgatas and appearances resulting from karma, are merged in them.” The fifth: “These signs, which are endowed with empowerments, are analyzed, by persons who have given pledges, [and determined] to be the deities themselves.” The sixth: “The great gnosis of the Victorious Ones itself is empowered in the form of signs by the power of compassion and resolution. It is, for example, like the appearance of the mind itself as objects and bodies on account of residual impressions.” Of such [analyses], one should know this sixth one to be the best.

C. Manifold Expressions of Buddhahood

As we have seen, Rong-zom-pa presents various Tantric buddhological models that exhibit a tendency to increase the number of components already found in non-Tantric models. Of the five models presented by him in his dKon cog ‘grel, the third, he states, is based on common tantras, the fourth on tantras of the Yoga system, and the fifth on tantras of the Greater Yoga system. According to his presentation, the third includes expressions of Buddhahood in terms of three or four Bodies, five gnoses, and three buddha families; the fourth presents schemata of three or four Bodies, five gnoses, and four buddha families; and the fifth expresses Buddhahood in terms of five Bodies, six

219 Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 201b5–202b2; D, p. 306.4–23). For the notion that body, speech, and mind are indivisible by nature—and in particular the Body, Speech, and Mind of the buddhas—see the Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 231b3–6; D, p. 341.7–11), where the sGyu ‘phrul drwa ba is cited in scriptural support.

220 dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 43a3–b4; D, p. 72.7–23). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.I.
gnoises, and five or six families. It remains to be seen whether and to what extent these buddhological conceptions are indeed mirrored in all tantras belonging to the respective doxographical categories, and whether and how clear-cut the distinction is. My own assumption is that the borderlines between these buddhological schemata, as between the respective doxographical categories themselves, are rather fluid. In fact, one may find in one and the same tantra various schemata. What is important for us is the general tendency to express Buddhahood in increasingly manifold terms, and this phenomenon will be the focus of the following section, particularly the notions of a buddha’s manifold Bodies, gnoises, and families, as set forth by Rong-zom-pa.

The manifold schemata of Bodies and gnoises found in Tantric works were no doubt developed within a different theoretical and practical context than the Yogācāra scheme of three Bodies and four gnoises. It has been already noticed by other scholars that while the three-kāya scheme resulted from an attempt to systematize the various descriptions of Buddhahood found in sūtras and to formulate spiritual experiences of Buddhahood gained from meditational practices, the schemata of four or five found in Tantric works were developed with the aim of differentiating components of Buddhahood so that they would correspond to an equivalent set of psycho-physiological elements on the foundation level (including the four or five cakras, five aggregates, and the dimensions of body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities—arranged in schemata of four or five—and the five poisons) and that they would fit into the cosmological fivefold pattern expressed in a mandala.

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221 See, for example, Mañjuśrīnāmasamgīti 3, where six families are propagated; and 6.18, where a fivefold scheme pertaining to five Bodies, gnoises, buddhas and eyes is found: pañcakāyātmako buddho pañcājñānātmako vibhūḥ | pañcabuddhātmamakutah pañcacakṣur asaṅgādhṛk ||; Tib. sangs rgyas sku lnga'i blag nyid can|| khyab bdag ye shes lnga yi bdag|| sangs rgyas lnga bdag cod pan can|| spyan lnga chags pa med pa 'chang||. For a table presenting the correspondences among these fivefold sets, see Wayman 1985, p. 79.

222 See, for example, Makransky 1997, p. 275. For more details on such homologous schemata, see Snellgrove 1987a, part 3. On the correspondence between the cause (rgyu), or foundation level (gzhī), in the form of the five defilements and the five aggregates, and the result in the form of the five buddha families, see the dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 77b2ff.; D, pp. 109.1ff. & B, fols. 70b3–71a4; D, pp. 101.17–102.9). See also Rong-zom-pa’s Rang byung ye shes (B, fols. 262b4ff.; D, pp. 126.3ff.) for the various fivefold sets, including the five aggregates, five families, the five buddhas pertaining to the five families, their five consorts, five sense faculties, five objects and five gnoises, and the manner in which they correspond to each other. Compare bDud-'joms Rin-po-che’s bsTan pa'i rnam gzhag (fol. 48b1–2), where, in the context of explaining the nirmānakāya, it is stated that the fivefold expressions of Buddhahood, including, among other things, five great fields, five Bodies, five doctrines and five gnoises, are employed as antidotes to the five klesas of the disciples (an English translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, p. 128); and ibid. (fol. 152b1–6), where, in the context of explaining the result of Mahāyoga, five sets of five expressions of Buddhahood each, pertaining to a buddha’s Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activities, are named (an English translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 282–283).
(i) Multiple Bodies

The four-kāya scheme has already received attention from several modern scholars.\textsuperscript{223} It commonly consists of the (1) dharmakāya (chos sku), (2) sambhogakāya (longs sku), (3) nirmānakāya (sprul sku), and (4) svābhāvikakāya (ngo bo nyid sku).\textsuperscript{224} As noted by Snellgrove and others, the svābhāvikakāya in the Tantric four-kāya scheme, where it is placed above the dharmakāya, is also referred to as saha jakāya (han cig skyes pa'i sku, i.e. ‘innate Body’) or, in connection with the four joys realized through the fourfold empowerment, mahāsukhakāya (bde ba chen po'i sku, i.e. ‘Body of great bliss’).\textsuperscript{225} In the Kālacakratantra and its commentarial literature, for example, the fourth body, which is understood there in terms of the concept of the Ādibuddha, is referred to mainly as the saha jakāya, but also as the svābhāvikakāya and the śuddhakāya (dag pa'i sku, i.e. ‘pure Body’).\textsuperscript{226} Snellgrove states that although the conception of this Tantric fourth Body seems to be typical of the Greater Yogatantra system, the way it has been prepared in the Yogatantra system, which, while maintaining the theory of the three kāyas, often refers to a vaj rakāya (rdo rje'i sku, i.e. ‘adamantine Body’).\textsuperscript{227} In this complex of fourfold

\textsuperscript{223} A survey of previous studies on the Tantric four-kāya scheme is found in Hammar 2005, pp. 141–145. A great part of the author’s discussion, however, is devoted to Makransky 1997, which addresses the controversial four-kāya scheme in a Sūtra context, in connection with the interpretation of Abhisamayālaṁkāra 8.1.

\textsuperscript{224} As has already been mentioned, a similar four-kāya scheme was proposed by Haribhadra in the Sūtra context, and traditional scholars have subsequently debated whether these two schemes are identical. Makransky notes that some scholars, such as Ratnakarasanti, rejected the idea that the Tantric four-kāya scheme is, in spite of the apparent similarity, identical with that proposed by Haribhadra; they argue that the theoretical background of these two schemata is different. Makransky refers to Ratnakarasanti’s Śuddhamati, where it is stated that unlike in Haribhadra’s four-kāya scheme, the four-kāya scheme in the Tantra context refers to a buddha’s Body, Speech, and Mind along with his salvific activities (karman), the latter expressing the sameness (samata) of the first three dimensions. Makransky also refers to Abhayākaragupta, who, in his Munimatālaṁkāra, maintains that while Haribhadra’s four-kāya scheme is taught in the Tantric system, this is not done on the basis of a buddha’s own discrimination between gnosis and reality, but on that of disciples. See Makransky 1997, pp. 275 & 283–284.

\textsuperscript{225} See, for example, the Abhisamayamañjarī (p. 28.10): 6dhar masambhoganirmānamahāsukhakaśa

\textsuperscript{226} For the fourth body as propagated in the Kālacakratantra and its commentaries, see Hammar 2005, pp. 141–169.

\textsuperscript{227} The Hevajratantra still refers to three Bodies, although it names in fact four: the dharma-, sambhoga-, nirmāna-, and mahāsukhakāya. See Snellgrove 1987a, p. 251.
schemata, one also finds, among other things, the four joys (ānanda: dga’ ba), four mental states known as four moments (ksaṇa: skad cig), four mudrās, and four cakras, all of which are linked with the four Bodies. The three natures (svabhāva), namely, the imagined nature (parikalpita), dependent nature (paratantra), and perfect nature (parinispamṇa), along with omniscience (sarvajñātva), also correspond to the four Bodies. The four mudrās are commonly associated with the four stages of the ascending of bodhicitta through the four cakras.230

Jñānavajra, for example, discussing the four-kāya scheme as taught in the Mantra system in his Tattvamārgadarśana,231 specifies that the four Bodies are the result of the four mudrās, as follows:232

As for the causes of the four Bodies, the nirmāṇakāya arises from the samayamudrā, and the sambhogakāya from the karmamudrā; the mahāsukhakāya arises by virtue of the dharma-mudrā; the effortless mahāmudrā, because it exists primordially, is the dharma-kāya.

As supports for the attainment of the four Bodies, he names the four empowerments as follows:233

It (i.e. the vase empowerment, bum pa’i dbang: kalashābhiṣeka) purifies the imperfections pertaining to the body and serves as the support for the attainment of the nirmāṇakāya. The secret empowerment (gsang ba’i dbang: guhyābhiṣeka) purifies imperfections pertaining to speech. [It] functions as a support for the sambhogakāya, for [it] is inherited from the

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228 The four joys are (1) ‘joy’ (ānanda: dga’ ba), (2) ‘supreme joy’ (paramānanda: mchog tu dga’ ba), (3) ‘joy of cessation’ (viramānanda: dga’ bral gyi dga’ ba), and (4) ‘innate joy’ (sahaīānanda: lhan cig skyes pa’i dga’ ba). See TSD, s.v. dga’ ba bzhī.

229 The four moments are (1) ‘variegated’ (vicītra: sna tshags), (2) ‘ripening’ (vīpāka: rnam smin), (3) ‘blank’ (vimārda: rnam nyed), and (4) ‘uncharacterized’ (vilakṣaṇa: mthun nyid bral). See TSD, s.v. skad cig bzhī.

230 See Snellgrove 1987a, the section on ‘further consecrations,’ pp. 243–277, particularly, pp. 249–252, where the four-kāya scheme and its correlation with the four cakras is discussed; pp. 265–266, where a table of the correspondences between the four joys, four moments, and four mudrās is given; and also p. 297, where a more comprehensive table of the fourfold schemata is found. See also Dasgupta 1962, p. 91, for the correlation of the four kāyas with the cakras, and pp. 98–99, where the fourfold schemata of cakras, mudrās, moments, and joys, and their correlation, is briefly discussed.

231 Note that Jñānavajra maintains that the four-kāya scheme is propounded also in the Sūtra system. See the Tattvamārgadarśana (P, fol. 162b7–163a2; D, fol. 145b5–146a1; S, vol. 41, pp. 387.14–388.3).

232 Tattvamārgadarśana (P, fol. 163a5–6; D, fol. 146a3–4; S, vol. 41, p. 388.10–13): sku bzhī’i rgyu yang dam tshig gi phyag rgya las sprul sku dang longs sku las kyi phyag rgya las ‘byung chos kyi phyag rgyas bde ba chen po’i sku ‘byung phyag rgya chen po rtsol sgrub med pa de ye nas gnas paschos sku’o|.

233 Tattvamārgadarśana (P, fol. 170b6–8; D, fol. 152b7–153a1; S, vol. 41, p. 406.14–18): des lus kyi nyes pa dag sprul sku thob pa’i rten byed pa’o| gsang dbang gis ngag gi nyes pa dag| sangs rgyas nas bsgyud pas longs sku’i rten byed pa’o| shes rab ye shes kyis yid kyi nyes pa dag| shes rab la brten pas bde chen [P chan]sku’i rten byed pa’o| bzhī pas lus ngag yid gsum gyi sgrub pa dag| chos sku’i ngo bo rtogs brdas bstan te bla ma las byung bas so|.
Buddha.234 The insight-gnosis [empowerment] (shes rab ye shes kyi dbang: prajñājnānābhiśeṣa) purifies imperfections pertaining to the mind. Because [it] relies on insight, [it] serves as a support for the mahāsukhakāya. The fourth [empowerment] (dbang bzhi pa: catuṛbhābhiṣeṣa) purifies obscurations pertaining to the triad of body, speech, and mind. [It causes one] to realize the essence of the dharmakāya, for it emerges from the guru, who shows [it] by signs (brda).

Other tantras, which present fivefold schemata, occasionally postulate the existence of five kāyas. It seems, however, that there is no consensus regarding what these five Bodies are. The TSD lists the (1) dharmakāya, (2) sambhogakāya, (3) nirmānakāya, (4) svabhāvikakāya, and (5) vajrakāya (rdo rje 'i sku), but identifies the Tshig mdzod chen mo as its only source (there are no references to Indian sources).235 As already mentioned, the Maṇjuśrīnāmasamgiti makes reference to five Bodies. It seems, however, that its commentators had difficulty specifying what these five Bodies are, as is evident from their comments on verse 6.18a, which states: “a buddha, characterized by five Bodies.”236 Maṇjuśrīnirmāṇa Narendraśāri merely identifies them as the Bodies of the five buddhas, namely, the Bodies of Vairocana, Aksobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, and Amoghasiddhi.237 Rāja Puṣjarikā merely notes that these are the five buddhas of the five families, or to be more exact, four Bodies emerging out of one.238 Suratīvajra for his part remarks that the five Bodies are nirmānakāyas of the dharmakāya.239 This is in agreement with his remark concerning the six Bodies in chapter two that these six are the five Bodies plus the svabhāvikakāya.240 Ravisṛṭaṁ and Anupamarākāta, while not listing the five Bodies by name, do associate them with five states, namely, the so-called ‘four states’ (gnas skabs bzhi) and a fifth state, which transcends them.241 Among the

234 This argument is unclear to me.
235 See TSD, s.v. sku lnga.
236 Maṇjuśrīnāmasamgiti 6.18a: pañcakāyātmako buddho; sangs rgyas sku lnga'i bdag nyid can||.
237 Nāmasamgitiyāābhānya (P, fol. 178b1–2; D, fol. 153a1–2; S, vol. 8, p. 401.12–16): sangs rgyas kyang yin la sku yang yin pas sangs rgyas sku lnga ste| 'di itar nrnam par snang mdo'ad kyi sku dang| mi bskyod pa'i sku dang| rin chen 'byung idan gyi sku dang| 'od dpag med kyi sku dang| don thams cad yongs su grub [D partially illegible] pa'i sku nrnams so|| bdag nyid ces pa ni sangs rgyas dang sku de nyid gcig pa'o||.
238 Nāmasamgitiṣṭīkā (P, fol. 243a7; D, fol. 212b4–5; S, vol. 8, p. 557.14–17): de la gzhan sku gsum dang bzhi ru gnas pas na 'chang zhes pa'o|| sku bzhi dang idan pa'i sangs rgyas [P add. de] sku lnga'i bdag nyid can|| zhes [D zhas] pa rdo rje rigs la sogs pa rigs lnga'i de bzhin gshegs pa'o|| khyab bdag ni lnga' all.
239 Nāmasamgitiyarthālokakara (P, fol. 53a4; D, fol. 47a7; S, vol. 25, p. 122.18–19): sangs rgyas sku lnga'i bdag nyid can|| zhes pa chos [D add. kyi] sku 'i sprul sku'o||.
240 Nāmasamgitiyarthālokakara (P, fol. 47a1–2; D, fol. 42a1; S, vol. 25, p. 109.16): gzhi de sku lnga negin bo nyid kyi sku dang drug tu idan.
241 Nāmasamgitiṣṭippaṇi (P, fol. 75a4; D, fol. 60b2; S, vol. 8, p. 162.9–10): sad pa dang| rmi lam dang| gnyid log pa dang| bzhi pa dang| bzhi pa 'das pa nyid kyis sku lnga'i bdag nyid can no||; Nāmasamgitiṣṭipratyālokavṛtti (P, fol. 128b4–5; D, fol. 108b3–4; S, vol. 8, p. 289.18–20):
commentators consulted by me, Vimalamitra is the only one who actually follows an explicit fivefold scheme of Bodies, namely, the scheme found in some rNying-ma Tantric scriptures, which will be separately discussed below. According to Davidson, Manjuśrīrṇāmasaṃgīti, in his commentary on the Manjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti, identifies the five Bodies as being the (1) svabhāvikākāya, (2) sambhogakāya, (3) nirmanakāya, (4) dharmakāya, and (5) jñānakāya, and this is regarded by Davidson as the “most orthodox explanation.”

Some of the commentators also allude to five Bodies in connection with the five attributes mentioned in verse 8.3ab: “immaterial, of lovely visible form, foremost, of varying visible form, mind-made.” Anupamarakṣita associates (1) ‘immaterial’ with the dharmakāya, (2) ‘of lovely visible form’ with the sambhogakāya, (3) ‘foremost’ with the vajrakāya, (4) ‘of varying visible form’ with the nirmanakāya, and (5) ‘mind-made’ with a kāya that arises from a mind characterized by great bliss and manifoldlessness.

How the four Bodies are obscured by the ‘four states’ is explained by Mi-pham in the introduction to his Od gsal snying po (pp. 27.3–28.2), a general outline of the Guhyagarbhatantra, as follows: The state of being awake (sad pa) obscures (sgrīb pa) the nature (rang bzhin) of the nirmanakāya; the state of dream (rmi lam) obscures the nature of the sambhogakāya; the state of deep sleep (gnyid ’thug) obscures the nature of the dharmakāya; and the state of meditative absorption (snyoms ’jug) obscures the nature of the svabhāvikākāya.

The Tibetan text reads:

.gzugs med gzugs bzang dam pa ste
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244 Nāmasaṃgīti (P, fol. 18b8; D, fol. 16a7; S, vol. 25, p. 39.8–10); sku lnga ni (1)chos kyi [P om.]sku dang (2)longs spyod rdzogs pa’i sku dang (3) sprul pa’i sku dang (4) rdo rje ltā bu’i sku dang (5) mgon par byang chub pa’i sku’o.

245 Manjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti 8.3ab:

arūpo rūpavān agryo nānārūpo manomayaḥ.

The reason for terming it the “most orthodox explanation” seems to be the fact that none of the Bodies typical of the Tantric systems, such as the vajrakāya, sahajakāya, or mahāsukhakāya, are mentioned by Manjuśrīrṇāmitra. Note, however, that although the concept of a Body of gnosis is known in the Sūtra context, it is commonly understood in connection with the dharmakāya, and not as a separate fifth Body, as is clear, for example, from Haribhadra’s four-kāya interpretation, where the fourth Body is called the jñānātmako dharmakāyaḥ.

244 Manjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti (P, fol. 131a5–6; D, fols. 110b7–111a1; S, vol. 8, p. 295.7–9):

(1) gzugs med chos sku stong dam pa nyid
(2) gzugs bzang longs sku bde ba che [D cha]
(3) dam pa ste ni rdo rje’i skul
(4) sna tshogs gzugs can sprul sku’o
This interpretation seems to be in agreement (except perhaps in the case of the fifth body) with that of Śmṛtiśīnāna, who identifies the five as follows: (1) that which is ‘immaterial’ is the dharmakāya, (2) that which is ‘of lovely visible form’ is the sambhogakāya, (3) that which is ‘foremost’ is the svabhāvika-kāya, (4) that which is ‘of varying visible form’ is the nirmanakāya, and (5) that which is ‘mind-made’ is the vipākakāya. It is unclear what Śmṛtiśīnāna actually means by his identification of the fifth body, since the vipākakāya is normally understood to be the sambhogakāya, already referred to by him as the second in order. Sangsaṣija and Vimalamitra also interpret this verse in terms of the buddha-Bodies, but within the threefold scheme rather than a fivefold one. Suratīvajra associates ‘immaterial’ with the dharmakāya and of ‘lovely visible form’ with both rūpakāyas. Vimalamitra interprets ‘immaterial’ as referring to the dharmakāya, ‘foremost’ and of ‘lovely visible form’ to the sambhogakāya, and of ‘varying visible form’ and ‘mind-made’ to the nirmanakāya. Neither Raviśriśīnāna nor Mañjuśrīnirāṇa Narendrākirti nor Rāja Puṇḍarīka interprets this verse in terms of any of the schemata of buddha-Bodies.

(5) yid ni bde chen spros bral las || skyes pa sku lnga'i bdag nyid do||

For a brief note on the term vipākakāya, see below, the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo, §II.2.8. On this verse, see Wayman 1985, p. 86. See also the table provided by Wayman to verse 618, where these five Bodies are presented (ibid., p. 79).

Nāmasamgītathālokakara (P, fol. 56b4–6; D, fol. 50a7–b1; S, vol. 25, p. 130.1–7): (1) gzugs med ces pa chos sku'o|| (2) gzugs bzang zhes pa gzugs sku gnis so|| (3) dam pa ste gnis su med pa'o|| .... (4) sna tshogs gzugs can (5) yid las skyes|| zhes pa cems can te srid pa'i sgo nga gnis la yid kyi sbyor ba shor bas nor bu dri ma med pa dang nyi ma rab tu snang ba la bya'o|| yan lag bcu gnisy bya ba dang yang 'brel lo||. Note, however, his comment on verse 6.9 in ibid. (P, fol. 51b6–7; D, fol. 46a5; S, vol. 25, p. 120.3–5): bd'en pa bzhī ni ston pa po|| zhes pa chos sku longs sku sprul sku dang thugs rje 'od zer gyi sku dang bzhis'o||.

Nāmasamgītivrītī (P, fol. 23a1–2; D, fol. 20a4–5; S, vol. 25, p. 48.17–21): (1) chos sku la ngo bo nyid ma grub pas gzugs med pa'o|| (2+3) de'i byin 'gyis brlbs || D gyi rlab| las longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku mtshan dang dpe byad kyis brgyan pa| gzugs bzang ba'i dam pa'o|| (4+5) sprul| sku sna tshogs gzugs can de yid ye shes su grol ba las skyes zhes pa dang| yang sprul sku sna tshogs gzugs can gyi yid la ji liter 'dod pa litar skyes zhes bshad do||.

Nāmasamgītiṣṭipanni (P, fols. 82b5–83a1; D, fol. 66b1–3; S, vol. 8, p. 177.4–12): (1) nam mkha'i mtha' nyid kyis sem dang sans la byung ba dang ma [P mi] rig pa'i snang ba thams cad 'gags pa'i phyir rang bzhi thag ma [P pa] med pa'i rang bzhi gi byin pa de gzugs med do|| (2) chos kyi sku dang gzugs kyi sku gic tu guyr pas rnyog pa med pa'i [P pa] gzugs kyi phyir gzugs bzang ngo|| (3) snying bde ba byed pa byi ma'i dkyil 'kor gyi gzhin nyid kyis bzhed thams cad rab tu dkrugs [P dkrugs] pa'i phyir dam pa ste'o|| (4) rtsa stong phrag bdun cu rtsa gnyis su rang bzhi gnyi gzugs kyi bse pa chos kyi dbyings 'bab pa'i gzugs kyi phyir sna tshogs gzugs can no|| (5) skad cig gci la mgon par rdzogs par byang chub pa'i ngo bo nyid kyi phyir yid las skyes pa'o||; Nāmasamgītvyākhyaṇa (P, fol. 184a7–b2; D, fol. 158a2–5; S, vol. 8, p. 414.2–11): gzugs med gzugs bzang dam [D ngan] pa ste [D sta]| zhes bya ba la sogs pa gzungs te| (1) gzugs med ces pa ni yul dpyad pas gzugs su sbot pa dang| reg pas gzugs su sbot pa zhes bya ba la sogs pa med pa'o|| (2) gzugs bzang zhes pa ni chu'i nang gu skyes pa'i grib ma snang ba lta bur snang du rung ba'i phyir ro|| (3) dam pa ste shes [D zhes] pa ni tshogs gnyis la byung ba'i phyir ro| sna tshogs gzugs can yid las skyes|| zhes pa ni (4) phyogs gciq 'pa bsal [D la gsal] ba yin te [D om.]*| kha dog sna tshogs dang| gzugs sna tshogs [D tshangs] dang| reg [D rag] pa sna tshogs pa'i gzugs su sna

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Another list of five, which is found in rNying-ma Tantric scriptures, consists of the (1) dharmakāya, (2) sambhogakāya, (3) nirvāṇakāya, (4) abhisambodhikāya (mgon par byang chub pa'i sku, ‘Body of awakening’), and (5) vajrakāya. According to bDud-'joms Rin-po-che, there are two different interpretations in this regard. The first named by him is that of the so-called Zur tradition, according to which the first three kāyas, that is, the dharm-, sambhoga-, and nirvāṇaśakayas, are the actual Bodies (sku mthyang nyid pa), whereas the other two, that is, the abhisambodi- and vajrakāyas, which are considered to be the distinct apparitional aspect (snang cha ma 'gres pa) of the first three Bodies and their indivisible essence (ngo bo dbyer mi phyed pa'i cha nas), respectively, are conventional. Secondly, he names the tradition of Klong-chen-pa according to which the two material Bodies, that is, the sambhoga- and nirvāṇakāyas, are nominal Bodies (sku btags pa), being how a buddha appears to others (gzhan snang), while the remaining three, that is, the dharm-, abhisambodi-, and vajrakāyas, are the actual Bodies, representing how a buddha appears to himself (rang snang).250

In the *Guhyagarbhatantra, the fifth Body is the so-called *prakṛtiprabhāśavarakāya (rang bzhin gyis 'od gsal ba'i sku), that is, the ‘naturally luminous Body,’ which expresses the notion that all sentient beings are primordially awakened. Suryasiruprabha, in his *Guhyagarbhatantra commentary, explains the five Bodies as follows:251

What are these five Bodies? [They are] the (1) svabhāvikakāya, (2) dharmakāya, (3) sambhogakāya, (4) nirvāṇakāya, and (5) *prakṛtiprabhāśavarakāya. Of these, (1=2) the glorious Samantabhadra is the dharmakāya. (2=1) What, then, is its special feature or essence? What statements (gtan tshigs) such as “the One Who Has Thus Gone (or: Thus Come), the Fully Awakened One, the Exalted One, [and] one endowed with great enjoyment (mahāsambhogikā)” mean is the svabhāvikakāya. (3) With what is the sambhogakāya endowed? [This] is taught by way of [statements] such as “The Body having

ba can no](5) yid las skyes shes [D om.] pa ni ’gro ba rnams kyi yid sbyang bar bya ba'i phyir rol]| Nāmasaṃgitītikā (P, fol. 247a3–4; D, fol. 216a5–6; S, vol. 8, p. 566.11–4): ... (1) gzugs med pa ni rul phra rab 'dus pa'i gzugs med pa ste| (2) gzugs bzang ba ni ‘ja’ tshon lta bu'i kha dog dang gzugs su ldan pa'o]| (3) sna tshogs gzugs can ni kha dog drug dang ldan pa'o]| (4) 'phyi rol na’ [D pha rol ni] yul grub pa med pas yid las skyes [D bskyed pa'o]|.

250 For this explanation of the five-kāya scheme, see bDud-'joms Rin-po-che's bsTan pa'i rnam gzhag (fols. 56b6–57b4), where, in addition to the three kāyas discussed there earlier (ibid., fols. 39b2–56b6; a translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 113–138), the other two kāyas are presented (a translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 139–140; a summary is found in ibid., pp. 18–22). The vajrakāya is said to be the purified [dharmakāya]dhyātu (dhyānings kyi dag pa), and to be unchanging and indestructible, while the abhisambodhi-kāya is said to be the Body that is endowed with the various attributes of a buddha, such as the ten strengths of the tathāgatas, the four fearlessnesses, and so forth. As scriptural support for his explanation of these two Bodies, bDud-'joms Rin-po-che cites the rNying-ma Tantric scripture Ye shes drwa ba. For a translation, see NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 139–140.


252 This phrase is found in the *Guhyagarbhatantra (P, fol. 108b4–5; D, fol. 110b1–2). See also the translation of the discussion in the dKon cog ‘greI, §1, where the passage in which this phrase appears is referred to.
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no front or back, the face appears vividly in all [directions], and [it] is endowed with the [thirty-two] major signs and [eighty] minor signs. The nirmanakaya, it emerges from the samabhogakaya. It is stated that "[it] is inconceivable, [it] appears everywhere as various [manifestations] of a buddha's Body, Speech, and Mind, and so forth. (5) The *prakrtiprabhāsvarakāya is the King of Perception and the rest, and here [in this system, it is] a mandala consisting of five Bodies, five families, and so on. Why is it a 'naturally luminous Body'? It is taught that all sentient beings possess a primordially awakened nature. Moreover, it is taught that, from an absolute perspective, all sentient beings are primordially awakened, [for they are endowed with] what causes primordial awakening, namely, a cause that is utterly pure and that is wholly indestructible, like a diamond, and that all the false conventional aggregates, elements, and sense-bases are primordially awakened in a mandala of deities. Thus it is taught in the first and second chapters [of the *Guhyagarbhatantra], and such is also the subject-matter of this tantra. The [Mahāpari]nirvānasūtra teaches at length that all sentient beings possess a great power, that is, a nature that is primordially awakened and is indestructible like a diamond.

(ii) Multiple Gnomes

The schemata of five and six gnomes are Tantric notions not found in the Sūtra systems. The fivefold scheme is more common, and it consists of the four gnomes known in the Yogācāra context discussed above, that is, (1) the mirror-like gnosis (ādarśajñāna: me long lta bu'i ye shes), (2) the gnosis of equality (samatājñāna: mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes), (3) the discerning gnosis (pratyavekṣanajñāna: so sor rtog pa'i ye shes), and (4) the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities (kṛtyānuṣṭhānajñāna: bya ba sgrub pa'i ye shes), and additionally (5) the gnosis [that equates to] the dharmadhātu (dharmadhātu: chos kyi dbyings kyi ye shes). Concerning the extension of the fourfold scheme of gnomes into schemata of five or six, Rong-zom-pa states, in his dKon cog 'greZ, that the dharmadhātu, which, in the Sūtra context, is often listed together with

253 This phrase is found in the *Guhyagarbhatantra (P, fol. 109a3–4; D, fol. 111a1). The canonical version reads, however, slightly differently: PD correctly read that le; P has dpe 'i byad instead of our original faulty reading tha le; P has dpe 'i byad instead of our dpe byad, which is also found in D.

254 This phrase is found in the *Guhyagarbhatantra (P, fol. 109a4; D, fol. 111a1–2). The canonical version reads, however, slightly differently: PD read sna tshogs par instead of our sna tshogs pa, and kun du instead of our kun tu.

255 This is a reference to the so-called Five Teachers (ston pa lnga), who, in the context of the *Guhyagarbhatantra, are designated as follows: Akṣobhya, the King of Perception (rnam par shes pa'i rgyal po); Vairocana, the King of Matter (gzugs kyi rgyal po); Ratnasambhava, the King of Sensations (tshor ba'i rgyal po); Amitābha, the King of Ideation ('dus shes kyi rgyal po); and Amoghasiddhi, the King of Impulses ('du byed kyi rgyal po). See the *Guhyagarbhatantra (P, fol. 109a5–6; D, fol. 111a3–4).

256 In the case of the scheme of five gnomes, the border is not so clear-cut. Note, for example, the compound "dharmadhātu jñānapradyāpa" found in the Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra (see TSD, s.v. chos kyi dbyings kyi ye shes, and the following entry). Also worth noting are the enumeration of the five gnomes found in Dharmaśaṅgraṇa 94 and the discussion of the five gnomes found in Abhayakaragupta's Munimatālāmākāra, which is classified in the bsTan-'gyur as a Madhyamaka work (for a discussion of the latter, see below).
the four gnosises as the fifth constituent of a buddha, later came to be regarded in some Tantric systems (and perhaps also in some late non-Tantric sources) as a fifth gnosise. The sixth gnosise taught in some other Tantric systems, too, is described by him as the purified dharmadhātu, but this time in the sense of a union of the dharmadhātu and gnosise.

The five, namely, the four commonly known gnosises and the purified dharmadhātu, are known as the five constituents of the stage of a buddha. Since in some tantras the dharmadhātu itself is considered to be a [form of] gnosise, there are five gnosises [in these systems]. According to some [other] tantras, there are six [gnosises, namely, the five just mentioned] and the gnosise [that equates to] the purified dharmadhātu, in the sense of the inseparability of object and subject.

Ratnakarasaṅgi explains each of these five gnosises in his comments on Mahāmāyāśāstra 1.11b, which states:

[The tathāgatas] are self-occurring and endowed with five gnosises.

On the fifth gnosise, the gnosise [that equates to] the utterly purified dharmadhātu, he notes the following:

The gnosise by which the tathāgatas see the true nature of all phenomena as utterly pure is their gnosise [that equates to] the utterly purified dharmadhātu, given that no stains that are marks [consisting in appearances] are perceived at all and only that (i.e. the dharmadhātu) is perceived. Of the [five gnosises], the first three gnosises (i.e. the mirror-like gnosise, gnosise of equality, and discerning gnosise) [constitute] the sambhogakāya, the fourth (i.e. the gnosise of performing [beneficial] activities) is the nirmānakāya, and the fifth (i.e. the gnosise [that equates to] the utterly purified dharmadhātu) is one aspect of the dharmakāya.

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257 On the five constituents of Buddhahood, see the corresponding note in the translation of the passage from the dKon cog 'grel, §II.2.

258 dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 69b4–6; D, p. 100.20–24): thun mong du grags pa'i ye shes bzhi chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa dang lnga ni sangs rgyas kyi sa'i chos lngar grags so|| rgyud kha cig las| dbyings nyid kyang ye shes su grags pas ye shes rnam pa lnga'o|| rgyud kha cig las| yul dang yul can gnyis dbyer med pa'i tshul gyis dbyings rnam par dag pa'i ye shes dang drug tu grags so].

259 Mahāmāyāśāstra 1.11b, Skt. (p. 9.1): svayambhūpāancañānīnāṃ; Tib. (p. 91.2): rang 'byung ye shes lnga ldan 'gyur.

260 Guṇavatī, Skt. (p. 9.18–21): yena jñānena tathāgatāḥ sarvadharmatathān suviśuddhāṃ paśyanti, tamārādarānāṃ, sarvanāmittamālaṃ atyantam aprakhyānāt, tad eṣāṃ suviśuddhadharmadhātyānām | ādānī triṇi jñānāni sambhogakāyaḥ | caturtham nirmānakāyaḥ | pāñcacam dharmakāyaikadesaḥ |; Tib. (pp. 92.16–93.3): ye shes gang gis de bsizin gshegs pa rnamz chos thams kad kyi de bzhin nyid shin tu rnam par dag pa la gzigs pa ste| mtshan ma'i dri ma thams cad shin tu ni snang bas de tsam du gzigs pa ste| de ni de rnamz kyi chos kyi dbyings shin tu rnam par dag pa'i ye shes so| de la ye shes dang po gsum ni longs sphyod rdzogs pa'i sku'o|| bzhi pa ni sprul pa'i sku'o|| lnga pa ni chos kyi sku'i phyogs gcig ste].

261 As we have already seen (see above, §3.D on the four gnosises), according to some Yogācāra lines of thought the ādārāśāñāna is connected with the dharmakāya within the scheme of four gnosises. See bDud'-joms Rin-po-che's bsTan pa'i rnam gzhag (fols. 57b4–58b4), where it is explained that the dharmadhātyānāna, which is said to be associated with the dharmakāya, is the gnosise by which one ‘knows [phenomena] as [they actually] are’ (ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes), that is, knows true reality, and the other four are the gnosises by which one ‘knows [phenomena] to
Abhayākaragupta, in his Munimatālāṃkāra, discusses the five gnoses on at least two occasions. In the first instance, he begins by referring to the five constituents of Buddhahood as found in the Buddhabhiṃsīutra, that is, the dharmadhātu and the four gnoses. Then, after linking both the dharmadhātuṣṭāna and the ādarsajñāna with the dharmakāya, he goes on to explain each of the five gnoses. Regarding the dharmadhātuṣṭāna he states:

The gnosis [that equates to] the utterly purified dharmadhātu is (1) that which is free from the two obscurations and [their] residual impressions, (2) that which is the non-duality of compassion and insight, (3) that which is the perfect realization of the dharmadhātu, (4) that which is [endowed with] the excellences of abandoning and realization, and (5) that which is a vivid perception that has arisen out of a meditative practice [pertaining to] true reality—[one performed until it] has been brought to its utmost culmination (rab kyi mthar thug pa: prakārānaśīhī). That is, [it] is a valid cognition, since [it] is non-deceptive, in having true reality [as its object], and it is a direct valid cognition, since it is non-conceptual and non-deluded. [It] is omniscient [in regard to] that which is necessary [for liberation]; [it] is the Exalted One.

Abhayākaragupta’s explanation of the dharmadhātuṣṭāna found in the second instance is too lengthy to be cited here. I may refer, however, to his opening statement, for it can be the full extent (ji snyed pa mkhyen pa’i ye shes), that is, knows the world characterized by manifoldness. He adds that gśar-ma scholars, who taught that the dharmadhātuṣṭāna refers to ultimate reality and that the other four are intermingled with various aspects of conventional appearances, meant the same thing. bDud-'joms Rin-po-che also notes that according to Klong-chen-pa, both the dharmadhātuṣṭāna and the ādarsajñāna are gnoses by which one ‘knows [phenomena] as [they actually] are’ and only the remaining three are gnoses by which one ‘knows [phenomena] to the full extent.’ For an English translation of this passage, see NSTB, vol. I, pp. 140–142.

A brief discussion is found in the Munimatālāṃkāra (P, fols. 291a7ff.; D, fols. 221b5ff.; S, vol. 63, pp. 1433.2ff.), and a more detailed explanation in ibid. (P, fols. 353b8ff.; D, fols. 263a1ff.; S, vol. 63, pp. 1539.10ff.). For Abhayākaragupta’s discussion of the interrelationship between the five gnoses, see ibid. (P, fols. 292b1ff.; D, fols. 222b2ff.; S, vol. 63, pp. 1435.2ff.).

Munimatālāṃkāra (P, fols. 291b6–292a1; D, fols. 222a3–5; S, vol. 63, pp. 1433.20–1434.6): de la chos kyi dbyings shin tu rnam par dag pa’i ye shes ni (1) gang bag chags dang bcas pa’i sgrīb pa gnyis las grol ba| (2) snying rje dang shes rab gnys su med pa| (3) chos kyi dbyings khong du chud pa rdzogs (P shing mthar phrin) pa| (4) spangs pa dang rtogs pa phun sum tshogs pa (5) yang dag pa’i don (P de kho na nyid) sgom [D bsgom] pa rab kyi mthar thug pa las skyes pa gsal bar snang ba stel yang dag pa’i don can (P yul can) nyid kyi’s ‘na mi’ [P ni ma] sīu ba’i phiyir ishad ma yin la| rtog pa dang bral zhiṅ ma ‘khruṅ pa nyid kyi na mngon sum ste nye bar mkho ba’i (P ‘an nye bar shyar la) thams cad mkhyen pa nyid boom ldan ‘das so|. Note that the glosses found in P are not included in the above translation.

See Munimatālāṃkāra (P, fol. 291b1–2; D, fol. 221b7; S, vol. 63, p. 1433.8–9), where Abhayākaragupta, explaining the five constituents of the stage of a buddha, states that in this context the terms ‘purified dharmadhātu,’ ‘utterly purified dharmadhātu,’ and ‘the true reality of the utterly purified phenomena’ are the same in meaning (‘dir chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa dang| shin tu rnam par dag pa’i chos kyi dbyings dang| shin tu rnam par dag pa’i chos rnam s kyid do zhes pa don thad pa ma yin no||).
regarded as his definition of the *dharmadhātu*, according to which “it is a gnosis whose nature is identical with that of the purified *dharmadhātu*.”

*dPal-dbyangs* (alias *Śrīghoṣa*), in his *rDor sems zhus lan*, explains why the *dharmadhātu* is considered a form of gnosis, as follows:

What difference is there between the gnosis [that equates to] the *dharmadhātu* (i.e. what is to be realized) and the mirror-like gnosis? Why is the *dharmadhātu* called gnosis?

Because the gnosis (i.e. that by which [one] realizes) is not different from (i.e. is identical in nature with) the *dharmadhātu* (i.e. what is to be realized).

The gnosis (by which [one] cognizes) [reality, which is] without origination (i.e. what is to be realized through self-luminosity), cognizes [its object vividly], just like a mirror [vividly reflects the image of an object] (i.e. [it is] a mirror-like gnosis in that [it is] similar to an installed [mirror]).

Because gnosis (i.e. that by which [one] realizes [the *dharmadhātu*]) is indivisible from the sphere of awareness (which is characterized by emptiness), the *dharmadhātu* [can] be called gnosis (because [the latter] manifests itself as) *dharma*. The fivefold scheme of gnosis is found in various Tantric systems, none of which can be discussed here in detail. It is perhaps worth mentioning the *Tattvasaṃgrahāsūtra*, according to which the five gnoses are attained successively, one in each of the five *abhisambodhis*, as follows: (1) the mirror-like gnosis in the first *abhisambodhi*, (2) the gnosis of equality in the second, (3) the discerning gnosis in the third, (4) the gnosis of

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265 *Munimatālāṃkāra* (P, fol. 354a1; D, fol. 263a1; S, vol. 63, p. 1539.11–12): *de la dang po ni chos kyi dbyings shin tu rnam par dag pa dang dag bdag nyid gcig [P cig] pa’i ye shes so*.

266 On this author and his works, see Tucci 1958, pp. 141–151. For a brief discussion of the Dunhuang version of the *rDor sems zhus lan* (IOL Tib J 470), see Dalton & van Schaik 2006, pp. 214–216.

267 *rDor sems zhus lan* (P, fol. 134b1–3; S, vol. 48, p. 351.16–21): *chos kyi dbyings kyi ye shes (rogs bya) dang me long lta bu’i ye shes la khyad ci mchis| chos kyi dbyings la ci’i slad du ye shes zhes bgyil|

| {nogs pa’i} ye shes | (kyang rogs bya) | chos kyi dbyings dang | {ngo bo} khyad med (dr gcig) pas| |
| {nogs bya} skye med | (nyid rang gsal du rig pa’i) ye shes me long | {gi guugs par one ye’o [exp. me long lta bu’i ye shes so]} lta bur [= bu’i?] mkhyen| |
| {yang rogs pa’i} ye shes | (kyang) rig | {pa stong} pa’i ngang dang dbyer med (pa’i) phyir| |
| chos kyi dbyings | (yin pa) la chos nyid | (du rang gsal bas) ye shes brjed [= brjod] {pa yin no}| |

I have attempted to syntactically integrate the glosses into my translation. This could not, however, always be done smoothly; indeed in some cases the glosses seem to pose additional problems. The corresponding passage in the Dunhuang version IOL Tib J 470 is found in p. 1.12–14. The reading of the basic text there is very similar to that of the canonical version (merely displaying some negligible minor variants). This version, too, contains glosses. They are, however, entirely different.

268 Or, if one reads *me long lta bu’i mkyhen [pa]* instead of *me long lta bur mkyhen*: “... [is] a mirror-like cognition.”

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performing [beneficial] activities in the fourth, and (5) the gnosis [that equates to] the dharmadhātu in the fifth.²⁶⁹

Rong-zom-pa, in his Rang byung ye shes, gives brief descriptions of each of the five gnoses. These can be summarized as follows: (1) The gnosis [that equates to] the dharmadhātu is the svābhāvikakāya (ngo bo nyid kyi sku); (2) the mirror-like gnosis is the essence of a buddha’s Mind (thugs kyi snying po); (3) the gnosis of equality is a realization of the absence of a self (bdag med par riogs pa); (4) the discerning gnosis is the subject of both the absolute and conventional truths (don dam pa dang kun rdzob kyi bden pa’i yul can); and (5) the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities is of such a nature as to spontaneously fulfill sentient beings’ objectives (’gro ba’i don lhun gyis grub pa’i bdag nyid).²⁷⁰

In his dKon cog ’grel, in the context of the meditation centred on the Samantabhadra-mandala, Rong-zom-pa explains the five gnoses as follows:²⁷¹

Indeed, the gnosis cannot be divided into parts, such as the one and the many or extremities and the middle. Nonetheless, it is known to be of five types, as mere displays and manifestations of Samantabhadra, namely, (1) the gnosis [that equates to] the dharmadhātu in virtue of its being naturally luminous, given that all obscurations are primordially pure, (2) the mirror-like gnosis, [so called] because all great qualities manifest themselves, without conceptualizing, in the form of reflections upon the bodhicitta, [which is] free from obscurations,²² (3) the gnosis of equality, [so called] because gnosis, although it appears, has no own-nature, nor are [its] qualities supported by anything else, and thus it realizes that all phenomena are [equal], like the vault of the sky (nam mkha’i dkyil: gaganatala), (4) the discerning gnosis, [so called] because, although [it] is non-dual, there is nothing that is not, or that is not perceived as, [buddha]-Bodies, which are a display of gnosis, or a mandala of gnosis, and hence [by it one] cognizes objects as [they actually] are and to the full extent, and (5) the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities, [so called] because compassion and the salvific activities [associated with it] spontaneously emerge out of its domain.

²⁶⁹ See Skorupski 1985, pp. 88–92. It is notable that Rong-zom-pa, in his mTshan brjod ’grel pa, also seems to associate the five gnoses with the five abhisambodhis. Still, despite the overall fivefold presentation of Buddhahood found in this tantra, he describes the result according to the twofold scheme, that is, as the union of insight and stratagem. Similarly, as already noted by Snellgrove, the Hevajratantra, which also basically follows a twofold scheme, reinterprets the five gnoses as representing the process of the original union of two becoming manifold rather than as being an expression of non-duality. See Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 280–281, where an English translation of relevant verses from the Hevajratantra is provided.

²⁷⁰ Rang byung ye shes (B, fols. 263b4–264b2; D, p. 127.3–23).

²⁷¹ dKon cog ’grel (B, fols. 160b6–161a5; D, p. 197.2–13). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.K.

²⁷² My understanding of this sentence, and hence my emendation of the particle ni to na, is supported by Rong-zom-pa’s explanation of the mirror-like gnosis in his mTshan brjod ’grel pa (B, fol. 282b2–3; D, p. 272.11–13): ji ltar me long dag pa la gzugs so sor gsal ba ltar| chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa’i rgyu mthun pa byang chub kyi sens la| sens can gyi khams sna tshogs gzugs brnyan lta bur gsal bar bitas nas| cf. ibid. (B, fol. 289b6; D, p. 280.16–17): ji ltar me long dag pa la gzugs brnyan thams cad snag ba bzhi| sens can rnam kyi don du| sangs rgyas kyi chos sna tshogs snang bar ’dod pas|; and ibid. (B, fol. 292b5–6; D, pp. 283.24–284.2) ’di ltar gnyis su med pa’i ye shes de ni me long lta bu’i mTshan nyid yin te| ’di ltar dri ma thams cad yongs su dag pa dang| sangs rgyas kyi chos thams cad kyi gzugs brnyan snang bar ’gyur ro[.]

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Multiple Buddha Families

The notion of buddha families (kula: rigs) is typically Tantric. Indeed, as noted by Snellgrove, the whole structure of Buddhist Tantric symbolism gradually becomes directly related to buddha families—particularly the fivefold scheme, which is clearly expressed in the form of a mandala. One finds schemata of three, four, five, and six buddha families, at times in the same system.

The threefold family scheme comprises, in descending order of importance, the Tathāgata (de bzhin gshegs pa) family, the Padma (padma) or Abja (chu skyes) family for peaceful deities, and the Vajra or Kuliśa (rdo rje) family for wrathful deities. Rongzom-pa explicitly associates this three-family scheme with the Kriyātantra system. According to Snellgrove, the threefold scheme represents an initial effort to accommodate non-Buddhist deities. He further notes that the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa reveals the theory of buddha families still in the process of formation: the three families are already well defined, but eight other families, some of which were later integrated into the fivefold scheme, are in a state of flux. The fourfold family scheme, which seems to represent a

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273 In presenting the so-called system of the ‘common Vehicle’ (theg pa thun mong) in his dKon cog ‘grel, §II.1, Rong-zom-pa makes reference to the ‘family of the Correctly and Perfectly Awakened Ones’ (yang dag pa rdzogs pa’i sangs rgyas kyi rigs). The term ‘family’ is employed there, however, in the sense of ‘spiritual disposition’ (gotra) as understood in the context of the three possible spiritual dispositions of a Buddhist saint, namely, those of an arhat, pratyekabuddha, and samyaksambuddha.

274 For a discussion by Rong-zom-pa of these three families, see his Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fols. 296b1–297a1; D, p. 166.6–20), where they are indirectly linked with a buddha’s Body, Speech, and Mind.

275 See also the Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 171b1; D, p. 270.22–23): bya ba’i rgyud du phal cher rigs gsum du grags pa’i dbang du bshad de; ibid. (B, fol. 171b3; D, p. 271.3–4): ‘on kyang bya’i rgyud du phal cher lha rnams ni rigs gsum du grags pa gtsor bstan pas lha khyad par gyi dam tshig kyang gtsor rnam pa gsum du ‘gyur ro[].

276 For more details on this process, see Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 190–192. Also note that while some tantras explicitly refer to more than one scheme, in some others the number of families appears to be undecided. Snellgrove remarks that the Tattvasamgrahasūtra, for example, shows hesitancy over the final number of buddha families, in that they are five insofar as the design of the mandala is concerned, but only four when the sets of rituals are distinguished according to family, thus resulting in just four kalpas (rtog pa). He further notes that, although later Tibetan commentators, such as mKhas-grub-rje, explain this fourfold arrangement as a deliberate amalgamation of two families, that is, the Ratna and Karma families, the more plausible explanation is that the Ratna/Karma family brings together those deities and beings who were not included in the earlier threefold arrangement and that such categories are in origin a separate development from the scheme of five buddhas. See ibid., pp. 149 & 197, where the names of the bodhisattvas heading up these families are also listed. Snellgrove remarks that in the Greater Yoga class the distinctions between the families seem to disappear and that the various schemata may be referred to as suits the symbolism of the ritual. As an example, he refers to the Kālacakratantra’s employment of a sixfold family scheme to reflect the six vital parts of the body (ibid., p. 205). He also notes the fact that the Guhyasamājatantra, which generally operates within a fivefold scheme, makes mention of three families corresponding to the three poisons (i.e. disorientation, desire, and aversion), which, as already alluded to, were later extended to five and then identified with the five buddhas (ibid., p. 195).
transitional stage, commonly consists of the above three and, in addition, either the Ratna (rin chen) family, also designated Mani (nor bu), or the Karma family, or a combination of the two. Rong-zom-pa associates this scheme with the Yogatantra system.\footnote{Rong-zom-pa, in his Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 171b1; D, p. 270.23–24), hints that the Subähupapritṛcchātantra, which mentions the Mani family in addition to the three families commonly known in the Kriyātantra, is the source, or at least one of the earliest sources, of the four-family scheme (bya ba'i rgyud 'dir ni phal cher rigs gsum du grags pa'i dbang du bshad de dpung bzang gsis zhus pa las nor gyi rigs kyang grags te). Moreover, in his Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fol. 297a1–2; D, p. 166.20–21), he states that the four tathāgatas of the four families are explicitly mentioned in the Durgatipāriśodhanatantra (gzhan yang rgyud 'di nyid las rig bsizhi'i de bsizhig gshegs pa bsizhig sgsal bar gsungs pa ni...).}

The fivefold family scheme commonly consists of the above three along with the Ratna/Mani family and the Karma (las) family. Rong-zom-pa links the five-family-scheme—which he specifies as the families of (1) Body (kāya: sku), (2) Speech (vāc: gsung), (3) Mind (citta: thugs), (4) Qualities (guma: yon tan), and (5) Activities (karman: 'phrin las)—with the Greater Yoga system.\footnote{For example, in his Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 215a4–5; D, p. 321.22–23), Rong-zom-pa explicitly mentions the Vajraśīkharatrantra in connection with the five families. There he notes that the basic Tantric transgressions associated with the five families, according to this tantra, are fourteen in number (gong du bstan pa'i rdo rje rtsa mo las gsungs pa rigs lnga las rtsa ba'i ltung ba bcu bsizhir grags pa dang...). See Wangchuk 2007, pp. 308–309.} The fivefold set is, however, not always uniform. It occasionally includes different sets of five buddhas, whose association with the families seems to have been a gradual process. According to Snellgrove, the presiding lords of these families were initially bodhisattvas, the presiding buddhas being a later addition. He also argues that originally the set of five buddhas did not necessarily have anything to do with the families but rather signified the universality of Buddhahood in a cosmic sense, having a central buddha and another four in each of the main directions.\footnote{Snellgrove 1987a, p. 196.}

The set that eventually prevailed is Akṣobhya in the East, Ratnasambhava in the South, Amitābha in the West, and Amoghasiddhi in the North. The central buddha is designated as Sarvavit (i.e. ‘omniscient’) or (Mahā)vairocana.\footnote{For a slightly different presentation in the Suvaṃśaprabhāsasūtra and the Durgatipāriśodhanatantra, see Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 196–197; for the fivefold presentation of the Guhyasamājatantra, see ibid., pp. 206ff. See also Mibu 1973, where the order of the five buddhas in the Guhyasamājatantra is discussed.} While the Tathāgata family, centring on Vairocana or Vajrapāṇi/Vajradhara/Vajrasattva, predominates in tantras described by Snellgrove as “more close to Mahāyāna sūtras,” particularly those of the Yogatantra system, the Vajra family, centring on Akṣobhya, does so in tantras devoted to
wrathful deities identified as manifestations of Akṣobhya, particularly tantras of the Greater Yoga system.\textsuperscript{281}

As we have seen, within the general fivefold scheme one finds various sets arranged in correspondence to the five families. Rong-zom-pa on several occasions advances the notion that the five skandhas are in fact the buddhas of the five families. In his d\textit{Kon cog ‘grel}, he names four reasons for this: The five skandhas are the buddhas of the five families because (1) they contain the causes of these buddhas, (2) their tathātā is a buddha, (3) they are to be meditated on and realized as buddhas in order to eliminate ordinary, conceptual thoughts, and (4) sentient beings and buddhas are inseparable in their nature, and thus the five skandhas are in fact countless buddhas. The fourth reason, for Rong-zom-pa, reflects the tenor of the sūtras of definitive meaning and the profound tantras—a position that is, according him, well established on the basis of scriptural authorities, oral instructions, and sustained logical reasoning.\textsuperscript{282}

In his d\textit{Kon cog ‘grel}, when discussing the shared properties of causes and results (\textit{rgyu dang ‘bras bu’i chos mthun pa}),\textsuperscript{283} Rong-zom-pa states that the transformed five appropriated aggregates (nye bar len pa’i phung po: upādānakandha) are the five aggregates of release (\textit{rnam par grol ba’i phung po: vimuktiskandha}), which in turn are the nature (\textit{bdag nyid}) and basis (\textit{gzhi}) of the five components of (1) Body, (2) Speech, (3) Mind, (4) Qualities, and (5) Activities,\textsuperscript{284} as follows: (1) The aggregate of ethical-moral discipline (\textit{tshul khrims kyi phung po: śīlaskandha}) is linked with a tathāgata’s Body; (2) the aggregate of samādhi (ting nge ‘dzin gyi phung po: samādhiskandha) with a tathāgata’s Qualities; (3) the aggregate of insight (\textit{shes rab kyi phung po: prajñāskandha}) with a tathāgata’s Speech; (4) the aggregate of liberation (\textit{rnam par grol ba’i phung po: vimuktiskandha}) with a tathāgata’s Activities; (5) the aggregate of seeing the gnosis through which liberation [is attained] (\textit{rnam par grol ba’i ye shes gzigs pa’i phung po: vimuktijñānadarśanaskandha}) with a tathāgata’s Mind. Then, regarding the correspondence between a tathāgata’s Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activities and the five families, Rong-zom-pa states the following.\textsuperscript{285}

Thus the buddhas [can be assigned to one] of five families, corresponding to the five [components of] Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activities. Therefore, all the innumerable buddhas are subsumed under these five components, and thus all sambhoga-
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and nirmānakāyas are subsumed under five families. This is stated in the *Vajravyūha[ tantra].

Body is the unfabricated true reality.
Mind is the unchanging Vajra family.
Qualities is the Ratna family, which is the origin.
Speech is the desireless Padma family.
Engagement in [the act of] fulfilling the objectives is the Karma family.

The matter of including [the buddhas] within precisely five families is, as has been briefly shown above, extensively taught in this tantra (i.e. the *Guhyagarbhatantra).

In the rNying-ma tradition, the fivefold scheme of Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activities serves as the basis for a twenty-fivefold division consisting of the pairs sku'i sku, gsung gi sku, thugs kyi sku, etc., which can then be further proliferated. Rong-zom-pa, in his mTshan brjod 'grel pa, discusses the magnitude of the qualities (yon tan gyi rlabs chen po) of a tathāgata, and specifically their extensiveness, immeasurability, and excellence, and explains in the context of the immeasurable qualities (rtsis las 'das pa'i yon tan) how the five families of Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activities can be infinitely proliferated or else condensed into one. As to their limitless proliferation, the five families can be multiplied by connecting them with each other, yielding twenty-five families each, and these in turn can be multiplied by four by linking them with the families of hrdaya, mudrā, mantra, and vidyā, yielding one hundred families each. This process is said to continue unendingly, resulting in an inexpressible number of families.

All of these countless families, however, are subsumed under the main five families, which in turn are subsumed under the family of the Ādibuddha. He states:

What are a tathāgata's immeasurable qualities? [In this regard] it is stated:
[They] are qualities [classified] as a tathāgata's qualities of Body, and similarly, [those of] Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activities. Since each basic [group] is

286 The canonical version reads somewhat differently. *Vajravyūhatantra (P, fol. 32b3–4; D, fol. 33a6):

ma bcos sku ni de bzhin nyid||
mi 'gyur rigs ni rdo rje'i rigs||
yon tan kun 'byung rin chen rigs||
chags med gsung gi pad mo'i [D padmo'i] rigs||
bya ba byed pa las kyi rigs||

287 Compare the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 167b1–168b6; D, pp. 203.21–205.7), where Rong-zom-pa employs this method, but instead of combining all five components with each other, he combines the five only with Body, Speech, and Mind, resulting in fifteen, and in addition has the category 'general' (spyi), which he combines with the three just mentioned and once with itself (i.e. spyi'i spyi), resulting altogether in nineteen combinations.

288 Note that in the following passage, after citing Mahājñāpinīmasamgīti 3.1b–2, Rong-zom-pa concludes by stating that even the Vajra family alone is infinite (mTshan brjod 'grel pa, B, fol. 280b5–6; D, p. 270.10–11: rdo rje'i rigs 'ba' 'zhig kyang mtha' yas tel).

289 mTshan brjod 'grel pa (B, fol. 280a5–b3; D, pp. 269.20–270.6). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: "Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction," §1.M.

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divided into five [further] sets of qualities, [the basic group of Body results] in five [subgroups pertaining to] Body, and similarly, the other [four groups have] five [subgroups] each. And each of these sets of five similarly [results in] twenty-five families. And since these [five sets of twenty-five], too, are subdivided according to the families pertaining to hrdaya, mudrā, mantra, and vidyā, [the result is] five groups of one hundred. Since this, too, can be further subdivided in a similar manner, [it results in] inexpressible and countless hundreds of thousands, and thus [in] an ocean, of families.290

And it is as stated in other [scripture].291

The families are said to be infinite.
Still, [they can] all be subsumed under the major families.

Here (i.e. Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti 8.24ab) it is stated:292

A buddha has no beginning and no end,
The Ādibuddha has no cause.293

As to the sixfold family scheme, it usually consists of the five just mentioned and, in addition, the Bodhicitta family, which is commonly associated with the Ādibuddha.294

Rong-zom-pa, in his dKon cog 'grel, explains that the sixth family, referred by him there as the ‘family of Samantabhadra-Bodhicitta’ (kun tu bzang po byang chub sems kyi rigs),

290 Compare the somewhat similar division of the Yogatantra in bDud-'joms Rin-po-che’s bsTan pa’i rnam gzhag (fol. 145b3–5). A translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, p. 273. Compare also bsTan pa’i rnam gzhag (fol. 144a2–5), where a different division according to families is applied to the Kriyātantra. A translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, p. 271.

291 The source of this citation could not be identified.

292 The canonical version reads identically. The Sanskrit text reads as follows:

anādinidhano buddha ādibuddho nir anvayāh |

293 For the notion that Buddhahood can be expressed in terms of one or numerous families, see also the Mahābalatantra (T, fol. 487b2; D, fol. 216b3–4):

rigs gcig dang ni rigs gsun dang||
rigs lnga rigs ni brgya la sogs||
dey nyid ‘di la tha dad med||

294 The sixfold family scheme is found in various tantras, including, as already mentioned, the Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti. What six families they actually are, however, seems to have been a matter of some disagreement. For the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts and an English translation along with references from commentarial literature, see Wayman 1985, p. 65. See also Davidson 1981, p. 21, n. 62. As noted earlier, the same tantra also refers to a fivefold scheme. See also the mTshan brjod ‘grel pa (B, fol. 288b2–3; D, p. 279.4–5): bcom ldan ‘das rigs drug gi rang bzhin can; ibid. (B, fol. 289a4; D, p. 279.20–21): rigs drug gi rang bzhin gyi bcom ldan ‘das. The *Guhyagarbhatantra, too, employs the sixfold scheme (see, for example, the translation of the passage from the dKon cog ‘grel, §II.5). Another tantra that refers to six families is the Kālacakra tantra; there they are associated with the six vital parts of the body (see Snellgrove 1987a, p. 205).
is the source of the other five families, which manifest as a stratagem for taming sentient beings. He cites the Buddhasamayogatantra as a scriptural source: 295

In this context, the family of Samantabhadra-Bodhicitta, which is known as the sixth family, the universal form of all families, is said to appear as five families by means of stratagems [devised to] tame sentient beings, as stated in the glorious Buddhasamayogatantra: 296

[You are] a being who is the main component of all buddhas.
[You are] Vajrasattva, the supreme of [all] bliss.
[You] constantly abide as the nature of all [phenomena]
In [the state of] a secret supreme joy.

Having taught the Bodhicitta family first, it then cites [the following] and similar [verses] in regard to its appearing in the form of five families by means of stratagems [devised to] tame sentient beings: 297

The Fully Accomplished One (yang dag grub pa: samsiddha) alone Should be assigned [to salvific activities] as desired. 298

Therefore, one should not be misled by the fact that no [characteristic] sign of Samantabhadra’s Body is discussed in this context of teaching the [characteristic] signs of the ripakāyas to think that the nature of the Teacher is [that only] of the five families.

In the following paragraph, Rong-zom-pa further states that the buddhas of the five families are of the same nature as Samantabhadra, here the buddha of the sixth family. 299

In his mNyam sbyor ‘grel pa, Rong-zom-pa provides a brief explanation of the six families, which can be summarized as follows: The Bodhicitta family has bodhicitta as its nature and is represented by the glorious Vajrasattva. The Tathāgata family has excellent gnosis as its nature and represents a buddha’s manifestations. The Vajra family has great compassion as its nature and is wrathful. The Padma family has the sublime Doctrine as its nature. The Ratna family has the protection afforded to all by giving as its nature. The Karma family, finally, has diligence as its nature. 300 As alluded to earlier, the

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295 dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 68a4–b3; D, p. 99.6–15). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.N.

296 Buddhasamayogatantra (T, fol. 241a2–3; D, fol. 151b1–2; Tb, p. 114.4–5). The canonical versions and Tb read identically. This verse is repeated in ibid. (T, fol. 246b5; D, folos. 155b6–156a1; Tb, p. 128.6–7). Here the readings are almost identical except for a minor variant in the third line, where D reads gis instead of our gi, which is found also in T & Tb, and in the fourth line, where Tb has gis instead of our nyid, which is found also in T & D.

297 Buddhasamayogatantra (T, fol. 246a7; D, fol. 155b3–4; Tb, pp. 127.7–128.1). The canonical versions read identically. Tb has in the first line bsgrub instead of our grub. Note that these two lines of verse are also found in the Caturāṅgārthāloka (P, fol. 247b2–3; D, fol. 217a6; S, vol. 14, p. 576.19–20).

298 From the context, samsiddha seems to be one of several epithets of Vajrasattva. Also note that I take sbyar here to mean las la sbyar, as the context seems to suggest.

299 dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 69a1; D, pp. 99.24–100.1): de bzhin du rnam par snang mdzad la sogs pa ’i rigs lnga dang kun tu bzang po ’i rang bzhin dbyer med pa yin yang] ....

300 mNyam sbyor ‘grel pa (B, fol. 36a4–b6; D, pp. 497.12–498.8).
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sixth family represents the family of the Ādibuddha, the all-pervasive family from which the other five buddhas manifest. The actual six presiding buddhas may, however, vary from system to system.\(^{301}\)

D. The Notion of Ādibuddha

The concept of Ādibuddha, literally ‘one awakened from the beginning’ or ‘primordial buddha,’\(^{302}\) found in various Vajrayāna systems, has received attention from several

\(^{301}\) See, for example, bDud-'joms Rin-po-che’s bsTan pa'i rnam gzhag (fol. 274.3–5), where the six families of the Yogatantra (pha rgyud) system are listed as the families of Akṣobhya (mi bskyod pa), Vairocana (rnam snang), Ratnasambhava (rin 'byung), Amitābha (’od dpag med), Amoghasiddhi (don grub), and Vajradhara (rdo rje 'chang), and the six families of the Yogiśtantra (ma rgyud) system are given as Vajrasattva (rdo rje sens’dpa’), Vairocana (rnam snang), Vajrāditya (rdo rje ngyi ma), Padmanatāśvara (padma gar dbang), Aśvottama (rta mchog), and Heruka (he rul ka). A translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, p. 274. Note also the sixfold family mentioned in the context of the Kriyātantra system, which seems to have a different underlying concept, comprising as it does the following families (ibid., fol. 144a1): Tathāgata (de bzhin gshegs pa), Padma (padma), Vajra (rdo rje), Maṇi (nor bu), Pauṣṭika (rgyas pa), and Laukika (jig rten). A translation is found in NSTB, vol. 1, p. 271. Also note that the list provided by Candrabhadraṅkirti in his Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgiti commentary is identical with the list of the Yogatantra system just mentioned, except that it has Vajrasattva instead of Vajradhara (see Wayman 1985, p. 65).

\(^{302}\) According to Grönbold, the term ādibuddha initially had a different meaning. The component ādi in this compound was understood in early sources in a temporal sense, and that too, literally, with no metaphysical connotations, and thus meant simply ‘first.’ Hence the term ādibuddha signified, in this case, the ‘first buddha’ (cf. the Tibetan rendering dang po’i sangs rgyas). It was only later, in the Vajrayāna context (from approximately the seventh/eighth cent.), that the component ādi took on a different meaning, (still, to be sure, a temporal one), namely, ‘from the beginning.’ Thus the term ādibuddha means, in this context, ‘awakened from the beginning,’ as in the Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgiti and other similar Tantric works (Grönbold 1992, pp. 120 & 122). Grönbold differentiates between the usage of the term for bodhisattvas, in the sense of ‘awakened from the beginning (although still only a bodhisattva)’ and a later usage expressing a metaphysical dimension, that is, the oneness of the Five Tathāgatas (ibid., p. 138). He refers to Jñānasattvamañjuśryādibuddhasādhana 1, where the Ādibuddha is explained as being “a buddha at the beginning, in the middle and at the end,” and verse 15, where he is described as commanding both stratagem (upāya) and insight (prajñā) (ibid., p. 136; for the Tibetan text, see pp. 140 & 143). He also refers to Nādapāḍa/Nārapā’s explanation in his commentary on the Sekoddeśa section of the Kālacakratantra entitled Sekoddeśatikā, where the word ādi is defined as “without a beginning and without an end” and where it is stated that the Ādibuddha is free from birth and disintegration and is omniscient (ibid., p. 125). For the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts, see the Sekoddeśatikā (pp. 73.1–2 & 224.8–11, respectively). For a translation of this passage, see Snellgrove 1987a, p. 205.

Note, however, that the component ādi, may, according to Grönbold, not have only a temporal meaning but can be used in a figurative sense, as in the term ādideva, which means the ‘first among the gods’ (ibid., p. 124). Again, according to him, the term ādibuddha may apply to a certain deity that is mentioned together with other deities without implying a special status, and can also refer to the historical Buddha (ibid., pp. 126 and 130, respectively). For a brief survey of the various basic meanings of the term ādibuddha, see Hammar 2005, pp. 96–97. The various occurrences of the term in the Kālacakratantra and the Vimalaprabhā together with the different meanings of the terms exhibited in these works are discussed by Hammar in detail in the paragraphs
modern scholars, the latest extensive study being clearly that by Urban Hammar. The term *ādibuddha* is usually restricted to the *svābhāvikakāya*, probably to give the latter a conscious, personalized nuance, and this seems to have been due to the influence of the cults surrounding the Hindu gods Viṣṇu and Śiva (who, once elevated to the supreme rank, grew ever stronger), or possibly even to the influence of Islam (e.g. the *Kālacakra*- tantra). Although there does not seem to exist a systematic presentation of this concept in the Buddhist literature, it is evident that the Ādibuddha is a figure placed above all other buddhas, in such a way that the absolute, which is commonly designated in a non-personal way as *śūnyatā*, *tathatā*, and the like, is presented in personified form. The absolute is normally personified by identifying the *svābhāvikakāya*, which denotes this absolute, with the Ādibuddha. The Ādibuddha is often designated as ‘lord’ or ‘all-

following the pages cited above. See particularly *ibid.*, §4.3, pp. 136–139, where a survey of all of these meanings and the various characteristics of the Ādibuddha is provided.

303 For a detailed overview of previous research on the Ādibuddha concept, see Hammar’s study on the history of the *Kālacakra*- tantra in Tibet and on various concepts related to this tantra, including that of Ādibuddha (Hammar 2005, pp. 88–95). I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Urban Hammar of Stockholm for kindly providing me a copy of his book.

304 According to Grönbold, the hypothesis that the influence of the monotheism of Islam was crucial (put forward by Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. 3, London, 1921, p. 387), previously considered possible by Grönbold himself, has not been confirmed up to now. He further argues that the first traces of the concept of Ādibuddha are found before the Buddhism’s encounter with Islam and that it is purely the result of factors within the Indian spiritual world (*ibid.*, p. 139). Elsewhere he states that the concept of Ādibuddha should be understood as a counterbalance to the enormous expansion of Buddhist myths (Grönbold 1984, s.v. Ādibuddha). Snellgrove, too, states that the concept of a sixth *buddha* that overshadowed the other five *buddhas* was introduced to emphasize the transcendence of Buddhahood as against the pantheistic nature of the five *buddhas* (Snellgrove 1987a, p. 204).

Moreover, according to Dasgupta, the conception of a supreme lord together with his consort (the original pair being the Hindu god Śiva and his female counterpart Śakti) was applied to the Ādibuddha and his consort Ādirājñā, as found in Nepalese Buddhism. In this context, Dasgupta refers to the *Svayambhūpurāṇa* and to the rather late work by the Nepalese Vajrācārya Amapāna (= Amṛṭānanda?) entitled *Dharmakoṣasamgraha* (composed in 1826). As summarized by Dasgupta, the Ādibuddha is described in these works as the *dharmadhātu* and is identified with Vairocana or Mahāvairocana (in his function as the central one of the Five Tathāgatas), or also with Mañjuśrī. It is also designated as *Svayambhū* (‘Self-occuring’), Śambhu (‘Lord of Welfare,’ an epiteth of Śiva), Dharmarāja or Dharmesa (where the word *dharma* is explained, among other things, as ‘entities,’ ‘qualities,’ the ‘Dharmas,’ and ‘dharmadhātu’), Prajāpati (‘Lord of Beings’), and Niraṇjana (‘Spotless’), and is considered to be the nature of the Three Jewels. Furthermore, the Ādibuddha and his consort Ādirājñā are equated in these works with *upāya* and *prajñā*, *karunā* and *śūnyatā*, and Śiva and Śakti, respectively. Dasgupta maintains that the fact that the Ādibuddha was also widely known as Dharmarāja suggests that the supreme lord of the Buddhists can be associated with the Dharmathākura of Western Bengal and some parts of Orissa. For exact references and for more details on the etymologies of some of the designations, particularly Dharmarāja, see Dasgupta 1962, pp. 282–284. On the cult of the Lord Dharma or Dharmathākura, see *ibid.*, pp. 259–342.

305 The Ādibuddha within the four-kāya scheme found in Tantric sources is equated with the fourth Body, which is now the *svābhāvikakāya*. See Grönbold 1992, p. 129, where texts by Tāranātha and Zhu-chen (1697–1774) are cited in which the Ādibuddha is named first and then the three Bodies,
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pervasive [lord]’ (khyab bdag: vibhu). The term ‘all-pervasive’ in this case is commonly explained as the ‘one pervading all [buddha] families.’ This reinforces the idea that the Five Tathāgatas of the five families emanate from the Ādibuddha, or that the Ādibuddha comprises the Five Tathāgatas. The relation of the Ādibuddha to the Five Tathāgatas may, however, take two forms: either one of the latter is the Ādibuddha (usually Vairocana, as Mahāvairocana) or a sixth figure appears as the Ādibuddha. The field of the Ādibuddha is commonly said to be Akanistha (i.e. in the sense of the dharmadhātu). Various Tantric systems, and thus also the various Tibetan schools, which often take different tantras as the centrepiece of their Tantric philosophical system

the dharmakāya being equated with (Mahā)vajradhara, the sambhogakāya with Kālacakra, and the nirmānakāya with Śākyamuni. On the fourth body as the Ādibuddha in the Kālacakratantra and its commentarial literature, see Hammar 2005, pp. 145–169.

306 Grönbold cites in this regard Mi-pham’s dPal dus kyi ’khor lo’i rgyud kyi tshig don rab tu gsal byed rdo rje njii ma’i swang ba, where the term khyab bdag, referring to the Ādibuddha, is explained as rigs rnam kun gyi khyab bdag (Grönbold 1992, pp. 129–130).

307 Vairocana, one of the Five Tathāgatas, is normally placed in the middle (but occasionally also in the east). He is associated with the tathāgata of the Cakra family and his bodhisattva is Samantabhadra (for basic information including iconographical details, see Grönbold 1984, s.v. Vairocana). As noted by Snellgrove 1987a, p. 207, the Ādibuddha appears in the Guhyasamājatantra as Mahāvairocana, Vajrabodhicitta and, at least by implication, as Vajrasattva.

For an example of Mañjuśrī as the Ādibuddha, see Grönbold’s discussion of the Jñānasattvamañjuśrīyādībuddhasādhana along with an edition of the Tibetan text in Grönbold 1992, pp. 122–124 & 139–148, respectively. See also the mTshan brjod ’grel (B, fol. 270a4–b6; D, pp. 258.12–259.7), where Rong-zom-pa explains the different appearances of Mañjuśrī according to the different systems as follows: According to the Śrāvakas, he is a bodhisattva who is still an ordinary person. According to the common Pāramitā system, he is a bodhisattva of the tenth stage. That is, in Jambudvīpa he is one of Śākyamuni’s disciples, and in Akanistha he is a close disciple of the buddha Vairocana. Still, according to profound sūtras, he is already a buddha who abides in the form of a bodhisattva. As for the Tantric systems, according to some tantras, he is a bodhisattva who manifested from the uṣṇīṣa of the tathāgata who is the ‘chief’ (gtsos bo) of the Tathāgata families. According to some Yoga systems, he is one of the sixteen great Knowledge Beings (ye shes kyi sms dpa’: jñānasattva) who manifested from the Mind of the buddha Vairocana, and is called Vajratīrī (rdo rje rnam po) or Mañjuśrīvajra (’jam dpal rdo rje). In a number of Mahāyoga Tantric scriptures, his name is Mañjuśrījñānasattva (’jam dpal ye shes sms dpa’) or *Bodhisattvavajra (byang chub sms dpa’ rdo rje), and he is regarded as the chief of all buddhas and as the ‘lord’ (mnga’ bdag) of all maṇḍalas. And finally, according to the Mañjuśrīmāyājñā, he is Mañjuvajra (’jam pa’i rdo rje), who abides in the Heart (thugs ka) of all tathāgatas in the form of the Ādibuddha and in the form of a Knowledge Being. Notably similar to this scheme are the models of Buddhahood presented by Rong-zom-pa which take Śākyamuni Buddha as their basis. See the note to Mañjuśrīnāmasamāgīti 1.10 in Wayman 1985, p. 60, regarding a similar statement, though less detailed, made by Smṛtiñānakṛti in his commentary on the Mañjuśrīnāmasamāgīti.

308 This sixth figure corresponds, then, to the sixth skandha, that is, ‘knowledge’ or ‘gnosis’ (jñāna), and his consort is called Adiprajñā, Prajñāpāramitā, or Viśvamātī (Grönbold 1984, s.v. Ādibuddha).

309 As briefly noted above, Akanistha has been variously conceptualized, particularly by advocates of Vajrayāna, an issue that will be dealt in a separate study.

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and practice, may refer to different deities, such as Vajradhara, Vajrasattva, or Samantabhadra, as the Ādibuddha, and thus the iconographic depiction of the Ādibuddha may vary correspondingly. Rong-zom-pa refers to the notion of Ādibuddha in the buddhological models of the highest Tantric systems, namely, in the third model presented by him in the *Sangs sa chen mo* and in the fourth and fifth models presented in the *dKon cog 'grel*. There he mentions Vajradhara or Vajrasattva, without, however, explicitly employing the term Ādibuddha.

**E. Wrathful Manifestations**

As has been already mentioned, with the emergence of Vajrayāna one witnesses for the first time wrathful manifestations of Buddhahood, some of them depicted in sexual union. Such wrathful manifestations are in fact found in most Tantric systems. Rong-zom-pa refers to them in the third model presented in his *Sangs sa chen mo* and in all three Tantric buddhological models presented in his *dKon cog 'grel*, that is, the third, fourth, and fifth ones. Some of these figures were obviously adopted or developed from other cults, apparently under the influence of Hinduism. These wrathful forms may be

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310 Both Vajrasattva and Vajradhara may be regarded as the sixth *tathāgata* and thus as the Ādibuddha. According to Grönbold, the two seem, however, to be identical, although they are considerably different as far as their iconography is concerned. Other forms of Vajradhara are Karmavajra and Dharmavajra, and as the latter he is (iconographically) identical with Vajrasattva, except that he holds a double-vajra (*viśvāvajra: sna tshogs rdo rje*). Indeed, the main figure in the Vajrasattva mandala is called Vajradhara. Another name of Vajrasattva that expresses more than any other designation its actual meaning is Dharmadhatu (Grönbold 1984, s.v. Vajradhara, and s.v. Vajrasattva). As noted by Snellgrove, in Vajrayāna (thus named due to the predominance of the *vajra* symbol in this system), one observes the creation of deities with names that contain the component *vajra*—of whom Vajrapāṇi alias Vajradhara is regarded the chief. Snellgrove adds, however, that the iconographical distinction made between Vajrapāṇi as a *bodhisattva* and Vajradhara as the Ādibuddha occurs only in the later Tantric tradition, as followed in Tibet, whereas at an earlier stage Vajrapāṇi is often referred to as a *tathāgata* (Snellgrove 1987a, p. 136).

311 According to Snellgrove 1987a, p. 205, Samantabhadra as the Ādibuddha is probably an elevated form of the *bodhisattva* with the same name who presides over the Tathāgata family in the *Tattvasaṅgrahasūtra*, where he alternates with Vajrapāṇi/Vajradhara.

312 Rong-zom-pa, in his *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fols. 24b6–26b6; D, pp. 52.14–54.17), provides an extensive explanation of the term *vajrasattva*, which, however, cannot be discussed here in detail. He presents there the different conceptions of Vajrasattva entertained in the various systems, including the Mahāyoga, Yoga, and Kriyā systems and non-Tantric Mahāyāna. See also the discussion of *vajrasattva* in Wangchuk 2007, pp. 142–144, where a summary of Rong-zom-pa’s explanation is provided.

313 According to Snellgrove 1987a, p. 150, wrathful deities have in the three lower Tantric systems a lower status (e.g. Bhairava is merely a wrathful manifestation of Śiva), and it is only in the higher Tantric systems that they are regarded as manifestations of Buddhahood.

314 These wrathful deities were, according to Grönbold, conceived as the manifestation of emptiness (Grönbold 1984, p. 292). According to the same author, their origin is unclear; it has been impossible to trace them back with certainty to either demons converted to Buddhism or deities adopted from aboriginal tribal cults (Grönbold 1984, s.v. *krodhadevatās*). For more details on wrathful Buddhist deities including their general iconographic features, see *ibid.*
interpreted as symbolizing the struggle or fight against unwholesome drives or attitudes, or else their mystical personification—a theme already found in earlier forms of Buddhism—but also against the enemies of the Buddhist religion. Traditionally, wrathful manifestations and wrathful activities have often been regarded as special means introduced to deal with beings that are particularly difficult or even impossible to tame by peaceful means. Rong-zom-pa, discussing wrathful activities (khor bo'i mdzad pa) in his dKon cog 'grel, provides an explanation of the phenomenon of wrathful deities in terms of their nature, their placement with respect to the various buddha-Bodies, and their salvific activities. According to him, wrathfulness is in one way or another an integral part of Buddhahood; for the four constituents of Buddhahood named by him in this context—true reality, gnosis, compassion, and salvific activities—are explained by him as by nature entailing wrathfulness in the sense of forcefulness and ‘intolerance’ towards any other alternative. In this passage he refers to the so-called ‘union and liberation’ (sbyor sgrol), which are clearly portrayed by him as special measures taken to deal with particularly wicked beings. He states:

As for the so-called ‘wrathful ones,’ (1) What is their nature? (2) Under which of the Bodies, known in [schemata of] three, four, etc., are [they] subsumed? (3) What kind of buddha activities are accomplished [by them]? (1) Their nature is perfect Buddhahood. (2) As to the [Bodies they] are subsumed under, [they] fit in all [Bodies]—[those included within the schemata of] three and four Bodies and the rest. It is as taught in statements such as [that found] in the *Upāyapāsā[ tantra].

Homage to the wrathful one in the state of equanimity.
Homage to the wrathful one who indulges in enjoyment.
Homage to the one who assembles and emits vajras.

[This] is not [to be understood] as in some tantras, in which the wrathful ones are described [merely] as nirmānakīyas and messengers. Why are they called wrathful? The buddhas are characterized by four constituents. What are the four? [They are] (a) true reality, (b) gnosis, (c) compassion, and (d) salvific activities. Of these, (a) true reality is by nature endowed with wrathfulness, for it provides no room for signs. (b) Gnosis is realization, which is by nature wrathful. It resembles the absence of impulses [at the time] when the fire [at the end of] a world period (bskal pa'i me: kalpāgni) burns. (c) Compassion is inevitably wrathful, for given it, there is no need to make a deliberate effort to protect sentient beings. (d) Salvific activities involve wrathfulness on account of [the beings that require] taming, for they arise in agreement [with them]. (3) How are salvific activities accomplished [by them]? As for the objective, it is as has been taught:

[It is] in order to consolidate the great pride [Required] for taming [the beings] of the three realms of existence [who] are wicked And [who] suffer on account of [their] grasping.

316 dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 169.5–170b1; D, pp. 205.17–206.22). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.0.
317 *Upāyapāsā[ tantra (P, fol. 313a4; D, fol. 311a6–7). The canonical version reads slightly differently: in the first line PD have ngang gis instead of our ngang gi; in the second line PD have khros pas instead of our khor bo; and in the third line PD have khro la instead of our mdzad la.
As for the manner in which they tame: The dark red Body of the Exalted One, the Great Glorious One (dpal chen po, i.e. the wrathful form of Samantabhadra) is transformable into whatever [form desired]. [He] manifests holding various weapons in [his] hands, [which, like his] head and feet, number as many as the atoms in the thousandfold world system (stong kham).318 From the sphere of true reality (de bzhin nyid kyi dbyings) emanated the female wrathful deity Maheśvarī. From the non-dual bodhicitta emerged the delirious wrathful ones. Their strength and power caused all the wicked to swoon. Then the wrathful ones manifested as the great bhairavas of the five families and made these wicked ones into mats and dwelt [on them]. Then the wicked ones became angry and spoke words of fury. Manifesting as Vajrarākṣasa (rdo rje srin po), [they] ‘liberated’ these wicked ones, and also subjugated their wives. Then [Vajrarākṣasa] manifested again as the great bhairavas of the five families and [each] indulged in union with Maheśvarī, whence a retinue consisting of Gaurī and the others manifested. Upon accomplishing the mandala activities, the Ma-mo [deities] dispersed each to her respective quarter. Then [the ‘liberated’ and subjugated ones] were revived with nectar-like samādhi. When [they] saw the overwhelming great radiant Body, [they] offered themselves (lit. ‘[their] bodies’) and [their] retinue, and were then made servants and attendants (ci bgyi dang bka’ nyan) in the great mandala.319

F. Maṇḍalas

The mandala as such is not directly an expression of Buddhahood. Still, Rong-zom-pa mentions it as one of the central features associated with it within the context of Tantric buddhology. I shall therefore briefly discuss the notion of mandala here and the basic idea underlying it, without going into details concerning the physical description of the various types of mandalas, or elaborating upon their function as a means of attaining the spiritual goal. The mandala, a geometrical design with cosmological resonances found in various Indian religious traditions, is an enclosure, not necessarily circular, which separates a sacred area from the profane world, and as such it represents the domain of a particular deity. Since the outer ring borders the profane world, the centre is thus the most sacred area. The mandala depicts a celestial palace inhabited by a chief deity—or a symbol of it in the form of a syllable (bijā)—which is placed in the centre, with associated deities arranged around it in hierarchical order. As noted by Rong-zom-pa, the pattern exhibited by mandalas may vary: it can be simple or elaborate, it can have a central figure or not, the central deity may be surrounded by other deities, individual gods may be accompanied by goddesses, and so forth. Nevertheless, in all cases the mandala provides an abode for the deity and safekeeping for its power.

318 The phrase stong kham is probably an abbreviation of stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams (trisāhasramahāsāhasro lokadhātuḥ), the ‘trichiliocosm’ (Mvy, no. 3044), which is the largest in Buddhist cosmology.

319 The scenario described here is clearly one of the later developments of the Maheśvara subjugation myth, which has its origin in the influential Tantric scripture Tattvasamgrahasūtra; see Davidson 1981. As pointed out by Davidson (ibid., pp. 203–204), rNyīng-ma sources seem to have gained their impetus from the version of the myth initially found in the Guhyendutilakatantra (there Candraguhytīlikatantra) (chapter six) and later in the *Guhyagarbhatantra (chapter fifteen). The similarity of our version here to the one found in the Guhyendutilakatantra (as summarized by Davidson) is striking: the protagonist there is Mahāsamantabhadrā in the form of the wrathful Vajrabṛkṣakrodha, who subjugates all mundane gods and steals their wives, and finally brings them back to life with the help of a divine nectar.

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According to Rong-zom-pa, the reason for the *tantras’* emphasis on the *mandala* is that the chief cause of the ‘dominion of the Dharma’ (*chos kyi rgyal srid*) being attained by the great beings is the Dharma King himself; in other words, the realization of the deity’s power, which is an expression of reality, can be attained only by identifying oneself with the deity.\(^{320}\) And indeed, the *mandala* commonly employed during initiation rituals represents the self-identification of the microcosm with the macrocosm, which latter, for the non-awakened, appears as *samsāra* but for the awakened, who is free from all false conceptions, as *nirvāṇa*. The identification of the microcosm, that is, the practitioner, and more particularly his human body, with the macrocosm, that is, true reality or Buddhahood, represented by the central deity, is accomplished by means of yogic practices in which the practitioner conceives his own body as a *mandala*, and as a result realizes the chief deity and actualizes all the powers it represents. This identification also symbolizes the oneness of *nirvāṇa* and *samsāra*.

According to Snellgrove, the fivefold representation (i.e. the four directions and the centre) developed from a variety of different patterns, some already fivefold, such as the five elements and the five aggregates, and some that were only later adapted to the simple cosmic pattern of a centre and four directional points, such as the *buddha* families, which now take on a fixed fivefold formulation.\(^{321}\) Occasionally, other adaptations to the cosmological pattern are made, including the correlation of the six senses with the four quarters and the zenith and the nadir and the ten perfections with the ten directions.\(^{322}\) In his *rGyud spyi'i dngos po*, Rong-zom-pa discusses *mandalas* as the fourth topic:\(^{323}\)

*Mandala*: That which features numerous (lit. ‘an ocean [of]’) Victorious Ones along with [their] retinues and with a palace is what is expressed by the term *mandala*. There are many explanations [of *mandalas*], based on a subclassification [of them] into natural [*mandalas*], *samādhi* [*mandalas*], reflective (or: illustrative) [*mandalas*], and the like,\(^{324}\) and into

\[\ldots\]

\(^{320}\) *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fols. 35b6–36a1; D, p. 64.11–13): *ci'i phyir rgyud rnams su phal cher dkyil 'khor gtsor ston par māzad ce na bdag nyid chen po rnams kyis* [D *kyi*] *chos kyi rgyal srid bsgrub par bya ba la rgyu i gts'o bo chos kyi rgyal po nyid yin pa'i phyir ro*]. See also the corresponding note to the first etymology given below.

\(^{321}\) A further example of this adaptation are the three poisons, namely, desire (*rāga*: ‘dod chags), aversion (*dvesa*: *zhe sdang), and disorientation (*moha*: *gti mug*), which were extended to five by adding envy (*bṛṣya*: *phrag dog) and calumny (*paśunya*: *phra ma*) or pride (*māna*: *nga rgyal*).

\(^{322}\) For more details and further references relating to the topic, see the chapter on *mandala* in Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 198–213, and the more comprehensive study in Tucci 1961.

\(^{323}\) *rGyud spyi'i dngos po* (A, pp. 498.6–500.2; B, fols. 226b3–227a4; D, p. 91.5–18). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.P. For another discussion by Rong-zom-pa of *mandalas*, see the *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fols. 34b1–36a1; D, pp. 62.21–64.13).

\(^{324}\) In his *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fols. 34b6–35b6; D, pp. 63.10–64.11), Rong-zom-pa mentions seven types of *mandalas* being taught in the ‘subsequent tantra’ (*rgyud phyi ma*) of the *Guhyagarbhatantra*: (1) Natural *mandalas* (*rang bzhin gyi dkyil 'khor*), which embody the primordially pure nature of all phenomena, and are the manifestation of a *buddha*’s Body, Speech, and Mind. (2) Reflective (or illustrative) *mandalas* (*gzugs brnyan gyi dkyil 'khor*), which are spontaneously present *mandalas* consisting of everything that appears as an object of sentient beings’ sense organs. (3) ‘Extra’ reflective *mandalas* (*lhag pa gzugs brnyan gyi dkyil 'khor*), which are any sign in the form of a *mudrā*, such as statues (*gzugs sku*), *stūpas*, and coloured sand
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[mandalas pertaining to] Body, Speech, and Mind,\(^{325}\) and so forth. But strictly [speaking] (nye bar ni)—taking the term in its strict sense (nye ba'i sgrar brjod pa)—[a mandala] presents a setting that contains a celestial palace.\(^{326}\)

[An explanation of it] by way of etymology: The word mandala [has] the meaning of that which contains the essence. Thus, according to this [etymology, something] is called a mandala on account of [its having] the meaning of ‘essence.’ (Mandā [means] ‘essence’ or ‘quintessence,’ la [means] ‘to hold,’ and since a mandala contains qualities that are the very essence [of what it encompasses], [the term] is applied in the sense of the essence itself.)\(^{327}\) [That is to say], a setting [that encompasses] true reality, bodhicitta, and a ‘chief [figure]’ (gtso bo) is [what is] expressed by the term mandala.\(^{328}\) Alternatively, the word mandala [has] the meaning of ‘being encircled with a circumference’ (khor yug tu bskor ba). Thus, according to this [etymology, something] is called a mandala on account of its [exemplifying] the meaning of ‘being encircled’ and [then] ‘set up’ [there]. [That is to say, the various designations of the different types of mandalas are] the names given to settings where [there is] a circle (‘khor), periphery (zlum manḍalas (radul tshon gyi dkyil ‘khor). (4) Samādhi manḍalas (ting nge ‘dzin gyi dkyil ‘khor), which represent the realization that all phenomena are indiscriminately the manḍalas of Body, Speech, and Mind, inasmuch as they are objects of samādhi. (5) ‘Extra’ samādhi manḍalas (lhag pa ting nge ‘dzin gyi dkyil ‘khor), which represent a form of samādhi that features the visualization of individual aspects of deities including their family, colour, hand implements, and the like. (6) Secret bodhicitta manḍalas (gsang ba byang chub sms_s kyi dkyil ‘khor), which represent bodhicitta, the very great bliss, and are the supreme (dam pa) type of manḍala. (7) Assembly manḍalas (tshogs kyi dkyil ‘khor), which are the assembly of all deities or sublime beings (skyi bo dam pa). Rong-zom-pa adds that the *Guhyagarbhatantra itself teaches only five types of manḍalas (it does not mention the two ‘extra’ manḍalas).

325 As already indicated in the above note, according to Rong-zom-pa’s dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 35b4; D, p. 64,6–8), the nature and manifestations of a buddha’s Body, Speech, and Mind are displayed as, or are subsumed under, the natural manḍala.

326 My understanding of the word nye ba (in the phrases nye bar ni and nye ba'i sgrar brjod pa) in the sense of the closest possible meaning from a wider range of meanings is supported by the following statement in the dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 173a5–6; D, p. 209.19–20): shri he ru ka ni sgra mang du ‘jug mod kyil nye bar dpal khrag ‘thung zhes bya ba'i sgrar bshad dol].

327 See MW, s.v. manḍa, which gives, among other things, ‘pith, essence.’ See also the Abhidhānanaṁtimāla (P, fol. 251a4; D, fol. 228a2; S, vol. 120, p. 1540.19–20), where, under the syllable la, the word manḍala (manḍa la) is given as having the meaning of ‘essence’ (snying po). The sGra sbyor (for the Tibetan text, see below, n. 329), provides for manḍa, in the sense of ‘essence,’ the Sanskrit word sāra, which means among other things (MW, s.v.) ‘the substance or essence or marrow or cream or heart or essential part of anything, best part, quintessence.’ As for the syllable la as having the meaning ‘to hold,’ the root referred to here is lā, which means ‘to take, receive, obtain’ (MW, s.v.). Note also that the Ekākṣarakośa (Sanskrit, p. 38; English, p. 37) provides under the syllable la the meaning ślesa, which means among other things (MW, s.v.) ‘adhering, clinging to.’ The sgra sbyor (for the Tibetan text, see below, n. 329) provides for the syllable la in manḍala the Sanskrit equivalent ādāna, which means (MW, s.v.) ‘taking, seizing.’

328 Compare the parallel passage in the dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 34b2–3; D, pp. 62,24–63,3), where Rong-zom-pa explains that the essence contained by the mandala is the essence needed for attaining the ‘dominion of the Dharma,’ as follows: manḍa [D manḍala] ni snying po'i snying khu'am dkyil 'khor lta bu la bya la| la ni len cing 'dzin pa ste gzhi'i don no| de bas na chos kyi rgyal srid bsgrub par bya ba la snying po gzhi 'dzin du gyur pa'i phyir snying po len pas dkyil 'khor zhes bya'o|].
Abhidhīnāma/tīlāla: the word (cf. the syllable however, that the meaning 'to decorate,' the syllable adorn, to decorate,' and s.v. gives, as one meaning, 'any beautiful objects,' which is, however, marked as L (= lexicographers).

Furthermore, the Tibetan equivalent places, retinues, and the like, this is what it is 120, p. 1499.15-16). It is conceivable that 120, p: 1497.2); (2) The same work, under the syllable 120, p. 1495.19-20). These, however, do not seem to reflect Rong-zom-pa’s intention in this case. Rong-zom-pa gives the term brdzis phab pa as a synonym for mnan pa and explains the component la as gzhi ‘dzin pa and thus etymologizes māndala back to the meaning ‘abode’: yang ma da ni mnan pa ‘am brijid (= brdzis) phab pa| la ni gzhi ‘dzin pa ste| don ‘dis na bzhugs pa'i gnas nyid la yang dkyil 'khor zhes bya'o]. It is unclear what Sanskrit words are behind this etymology. I could not trace the meaning ‘suppress’ for the syllables ma or da in any of the abhidhānā works consulted by me. (One is naturally led to consider the root mrd, which means (MW, s.v.) ‘to press, squeeze, crush, pound, smash, trample down, tread upon, destroy’ and the like (see also MW, s.v. mārda). I did find, however, the meaning ‘residence’ and the like for both: (1) Under the syllable Da, the Abhidhānāmanimālā provides the word puyabhedana (pu ta bhe dang [= dana?]), which means (MW, s.v.) ‘a town, city.’ The Tibetan equivalents given are khang, grong khyer, gzhal med khang (P, fol. 216a8-b1; D, fol. 196b5; S, vol. 120, p. 1465.12-13). (2) The same work, under the syllable ma, provides the word grāma (grā ma; note that D reads brā ma), which means among other things (MW, s.v.) ‘an inhabited place, village, hamlet.’ The Tibetan equivalent provided is ‘dug gnas (P, fol. 230a2; D, fol. 209a7; S, vol. 120, p. 1495.19–20). These, however, do not seem to reflect Rong-zom-pa’s intention in this case.

Rong-zom-pa gives in the dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 34b5–6; D, p. 63.7–8), where Rong-zom-pa gives the term brdzis phab pa as a synonym for mnan pa and explains the component la as gzhi ‘dzin pa and thus etymologizes māndala back to the meaning ‘abode’; yang ma da ni mnan pa ‘am brijid (= brdzis) phab pa| la ni gzhi ‘dzin pa ste| don ‘dis na bzhugs pa'i gnas nyid la yang dkyil 'khor zhes bya'o]. It is unclear what Sanskrit words are behind this etymology. I could not trace the meaning ‘suppress’ for the syllables ma or da in any of the abhidhānā works consulted by me. (One is naturally led to consider the root mrd, which means (MW, s.v.) ‘to press, squeeze, crush, pound, smash, trample down, tread upon, destroy’ and the like (see also MW, s.v. mārda). I did find, however, the meaning ‘residence’ and the like for both: (1) Under the syllable Da, the Abhidhānāmanimālā provides the word puyabhedana (pu ta bhe dang [= dana?]), which means (MW, s.v.) ‘a town, city.’ The Tibetan equivalents given are khang, grong khyer, gzhal med khang (P, fol. 216a8-b1; D, fol. 196b5; S, vol. 120, p. 1465.12-13). (2) The same work, under the syllable ma, provides the word grāma (grā ma; note that D reads brā ma), which means among other things (MW, s.v.) ‘an inhabited place, village, hamlet.’ The Tibetan equivalent provided is ‘dug gnas (P, fol. 230a2; D, fol. 209a7; S, vol. 120, p. 1495.19–20). These, however, do not seem to reflect Rong-zom-pa’s intention in this case.

Rong-zom-pa gives in the dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 34b5–6; D, p. 63.5–7) another etymology not provided in his rGyud spyi’i dngos po: “ma da means ‘[something] beautiful’ and la means ‘to decorate,’ and hence, because [a māndala] decorates the Exalted One with [beautiful] places, retinues, and the like, this is what it is called” (yang ma da ni māzes pa’i don| la ni brygan pa’i don te| ‘di litar beom ldan ‘das la gnas dang ‘khor la sosgs pas brygan pa’i phyir yang de skad ces bya’o]). As to the word mada in the sense of ‘something beautiful,’ see MW, s.v. māda, which gives, as one meaning, ‘any beautiful objects,’ which is, however, marked as L (= lexicographers). Furthermore, the Abhidhānāmanimālā lists several words under the letter ma with the meaning ‘beautiful’ or something similar, but not mada. The following are among the words for which the Tibetan equivalent māzes pa has been provided: rama (ra ma) (P, fol. 230b2; D, fol. 209b7; S, vol. 120, p. 1497.2); vāma (bā ma) (P, fol. 230b4; D, fol. 210a2; S, vol. 120, p. 1497.9–10); susama (su sa maṁ) (P, fol. 231b4; D, fol. 210b7; S, vol. 120, p. 1499.13); susima (su śi ma) (P, fol. 231b5; D, fol. 210b7; S, vol. 120, p. 1499.15); anupama (a nu pa ma) (P, fol. 231b5; D, fol. 210b7; S, vol. 120, p. 1499.15–16). It is conceivable that ma da is a corruption of mānda. See MW, s.v. mānda: ‘to adorn, to decorate,’ and s.v. mānda: ‘ornament, decoration.’ Regarding the syllable la in the meaning ‘to decorate,’ the Abhidhānāmanimālā (P, fol. 249b2; D, fol. 226b3–4; S, vol. 120, p. 1537.11–12) provides under the syllable la one word where the Tibetan equivalent of the Sanskrit syllable la is given as rgyan, namely, kunḍala (kunḍa lam), meaning ‘earring’ (rnyan rgyan). Note, however, that the Mantrābhādhaṇa (Sanskrit, p. 24; English, p. 23) gives the word kunḍala under the syllable da, as in the Mātkāṇiṅghaṇṭu (Sanskrit, p. 74; English, p. 75). Further note that the Abhidhānāmanimālā (P, fol. 248b7; D, fol. 226a2; S, vol. 120, pp. 1535.21–1536.1) also registers the word anguli (am gu lI) in the meaning of ‘earring’ (rnyan rgyan), but this seems to be erroneous (cf. MW, s.v. anguliā or anguliyaka: a finger-ring).
A *mandala* of the Victorious One should be understood
On the basis [its] actual nature, subclassifications, [and] etymologies.

G. The Notion of Great Bliss

As already pointed out, the notion of bliss as a constituent of Buddhahood plays a great role in Vajrayāna, where it is often referred to as ‘great bliss’ (*mahāsukha: bde ba chen po*). This great bliss is commonly described as intense, constant, and unchanging. It is conceived as a transcendental bliss that is the nature of true reality and the non-dual quintessence of all phenomena, being the source of all phenomena, and as such pervading the entire universe. It is often equated with the Ādibuddha Vajrasattva or Vajradhara, who, as already mentioned, is in turn identified in the Tantric four-*kāya* scheme with the *svābhavikakāya*. As already noted, in this context the *svābhavikakāya* is also referred to as the *sahajakāya* (‘innate Body’) or as *mahāsukhakāya* (‘Body of great bliss’). It is the bliss resulting from the unity of the male and female principles, whether taken literally, as a union with a consort, or symbolically, as the union of insight (*prajñā: shes rab*) and stratagem (*upāya: thabs*), which represent the female and male principles, respectively.

The idea that a *buddha* is endowed with sexual bliss is found in various Tantric systems, particularly in those of the Yogāniruttara system. The presentation of deities and *buddhas* in sexual union with their respective consorts can be interpreted as symbolizing the idea that a *buddha* is the harmonious combination of the two factors of insight and stratagems, the latter being an expression of compassion, or of his own salvation and his

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331 See, for example, the *dKon cog ’grel* (B, fol. 208a1–3; D, p. 245.1–4), where Rong-zom-pa states: “The name Great Joyful One: Different epithets of Samantabhadra Bodhicittavajra are such familiar expressions as Great Joyful One, Great Blessful One, and similarly Vajragarbha, Paramādyā (‘Primordial Supreme One’), Vajradhara, and Great Vajradhara” (*de la dgyes pa chen po zhes bya ba nī kun tu bzang po byang chub kyi sms rdo rje ’i mishan gyi khyad par ni dgyes pa chen po zhes bya ba ba ba chen po zhes bya ba de bzhin du rdo rje snying po dang dam pa dang po dang rdo rje ’dzin pa dang rdo rje ’chang chen po la sogs pa ji skad grags pa rnams yin pa...*).

332 Snellgrove notes that in the three lower Tantric systems female spouses are apparently regarded as suitable only in association with deities of non-Buddhist origin who play a subsidiary role. Buddhist deities were by contrast provided with handmaidens, that is, goddesses who, according to him, were incorporated into the Buddhist pantheon in such a discreet manner that it is often impossible to determine their origin. He suggests that such feminine associates were probably regarded as acceptable because it was the custom for princely figures to have similar ones in real life. See Snellgrove 1987a, p. 150.

333 For a more detailed discussion of bliss, including numerous references to passages in Tantric sources where great bliss is described, see Dāsagupta 1958, pp. 134–141 and 1962, pp. 33–34 & 78, where also what can be referred to as the ‘ontologization’ of the state of *mahāsukha* is briefly discussed, and pp. 107–109, where *mahāsukha* as a spiritual event is described. On the notion of great bliss as a result of the union of the male and female principles, see *ibid.*, pp. 30–32, where references are also provided. For further general discussions, see Snellgrove 1987a, the paragraph on the fourth consecration, pp. 243–277, particularly the discussion of the four joys, as well as the paragraph on *prajñā* and *upāya* (rendered by Snellgrove as ‘wisdom and means’), pp. 281–288. See also NSTB, vol. 2, pp. 127–128, containing a brief explanation of the four joys.
activities for the salvation of others. The sexual union itself can be interpreted as symbolizing the idea that Buddhahood contains an experience of an immense bliss, something already propounded in non-Mahāyāna and non-Tantric Mahāyāna sources. In the end, though, this symbolism comes down to earth in the ritualistic sexual union of the yogin, which at least originally was considered in a certain strand of Vajrayāna, in seeming contradiction to earlier forms of Buddhism, as a primary means of attaining Buddhahood. In his mNyam sbyor ‘grel pa, Rong-zom-pa, in explaining the term śamvara (bde mchog), clearly distinguishes between the bliss of a buddha that has been induced by a female and one resulting from the realization of true reality, and also between the bliss of a buddha as such and other types of bliss, including those of Śrāvaka saints, as follows:"335

334 Schmithausen 2000a, pp. 18–19. The initiation rituals (abhiṣeka: dbang) of the last and controversial wave of tantras belonging to what is known as the Yoginītantra (rnal ’byor ma’i rgyud) or Yoganiruttaratantra (rnal ’byor bla na med pa’i rgyud) system, and of the Yogottaratantra (rnal ’byor bla ma’i rgyud) system as well (the latter is the higher division of the Yogatantra system, but in fact has more in common with the Yoginītantra than with the Yogatantra system), involve sexual elements including sexual intercourse between the officiant or Tantric master (ācārya: slob dpon) and a female offered to him by the initiate and between the initiate and the same or another female (during the prajñābhiṣeka). In both of these Tantric systems, the deities worshipped are conspicuously depicted or conceived as being in union with their respective consorts. As pointed out by Harunaga Isaacson, the texts do not offer a satisfactory answer to the question why these practices are necessary for those wishing to follow the Tantric path. Isaacson argues that the idea that “the passions must be conquered by the use of the passions themselves” does not provide an adequate explanation, for such statements are commonly understood to be referring to post-initiatory salvific practices and not to the preparatory initiation ritual. He further adverts to the Abhiṣekānirukti, apparently composed by Ratnākaraśānti’s disciple Jinasujayasyārgupta, where three positions are presented on what happens during the prajñābhiṣeka of the Yogatantra and the Yoginītantra systems. According to the first position, in order to be able to cultivate the goal—which is non-dual, transcendent, and blissful—by means of meditative practice, an experience that provides a glimpse of it is needed. This glimpse is obtained through the blissful experience of uniting with the consort. The marking of the moment of this blissful experience—said to occur in the brief interval between the moment in which the initiand’s semen (bodhicitta) is in the centre of the glans of his penis (malJi) and the moment of emission—and the counteracting of all other sensations enable the initiand to experience at least the apparent absence of all duality and thus to have a ‘taste’ of the goal. See Isaacson 1998, pp. 30–32; Sanderson 1994, especially pp. 89ff., where the initiation involving sexual union is described, and also p. 97, n. 1. The notion that the bliss experienced through the practice of sexual union enables the practitioner to get a foretaste of the desired result reminds one that the bliss ensuing from the coming to rest of suffering experienced in the meditative state of cessation (nirodhasamāpatti) is regarded as a foretaste of nirvāṇa in non-Tantric Mahāyāna (cf. above, §3.E on bliss in the non-Tantric context, particularly n. 90).

335 mNyam sbyor ‘grel pa (B, fol. 20b1–4; D, p. 479.17–24): de la shambara [D shamba ra] zhes bya ba sham gyi sgra ni zhi ba dang bsil bar gyur pa la yang ’jug mod kyil ’dir ni bde ba’i don du sbyar te de yang sangs rgyas thams cad kyi rnam par mi rtog pa’i bde ba chen po’i bdag nyid do] zhes bya bar sbyar ro| ba ra ni mchog dang gsor bo’i don te ’dir mkha’ ’gro ma sgyu ma所产生的 kyi rol pa’i bde ba dang ldan bzhin du thar pa’i mchog gi bde ba yang sbyor bas ’jig rten dang nyan thos dag gi bde ba las mchog dang gsor gyur pa’i phyir bde ba’i mchog go zhes bya ba’i tha tshig go].
The term *samvara*: Although the word *ṣaṃ* also means ‘peaceful’ and ‘cool,’ here it is employed in the sense of bliss, and that too as [reflecting] the nature of the non-conceptual great bliss of all buddhas. The component *vara* has the meaning of ‘supreme’ and ‘principal.’ Even as [the deity] is here filled with the bliss consisting of the pleasures [to be had] with illusionary dākinīs, so too it is united with the supreme bliss of release. Thus it has the meaning of ‘supreme bliss,’ for it is superior to the worldly [forms of] bliss and the bliss of the Śrāvakā [saints], and is their principal bliss.\(^{336}\)

As has been pointed out earlier, the notion of bliss, particularly as propagated in the Tantric context, has often been rejected as being of a saṃsāric nature, and thus as something that cannot be identified with the ultimate state.\(^{337}\) The *Kṛṣṇayamāritrantrapāṇijikā* (a commentary on difficult points of the *Kṛṣṇayamāritra* composed by Padmapāṇi and translated by Rong-zom-pa in collaboration with Parameśvara) attempts to clear this point up by arguing that the bliss in question should definitely not be understood as saṃsāric in nature, since it does not have the features of a ‘grasper.’ There it is stated:\(^{338}\)

In this case, suffering and the like are impossible, in keeping with [the state of] freedom from grasping at a self. If [one] grasps at a self, a desire for beneficial things and the like naturally occurs, and suffering is created. How would suffering be possible otherwise? The awakening which is a mind [henceforth] characterized by great bliss (i.e. awakening in its gnoseological sense) is attained, then, as a result of freedom from that which is associated with suffering. [Objection]: This case, too, would entail a [logical] fault. Even if mind had [some] aspect (*rnam pa: ākāra*) of great bliss, it would certainly be overwhelmed by suffering, because bliss and suffering are mutually dependent. Therefore, if one [of them] occurs, by nature the other (lit. ‘the two’) will eventually be seized upon. Hence at some other point there will be suffering, and thus awakening will not be attained. [In response to that] the following may be said: [What do you mean by] the expression ‘aspect of great bliss’? Is it something endowed with a nature like that of a ‘grasper’—[namely, with that of] self-cognition—that experiences for itself the nature of bliss? In that case, defilements [in the form] of false conceptual thoughts pertaining to the ‘grasped’ and so forth would arise, and the result (i.e. suffering) that would arise out of the causal elements (i.e. the defilements) would be apparent to all. As far as this [bliss] is concerned, [this is not the case]. When the mind becomes completely free from all residual impressions [that take the form] of defilements, no saṃsāric suffering occurs in it, and for this reason [this state] is

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\(^{336}\) See also Sanderson 1994, p. 95, where it is stated that the term *satsukham* (‘excellent bliss’) is the etymological equivalent of the term *ṣaṃvara* in the expression *saravīrasamāyogadākinījālasatsukham* (the term dākinījālaṣaṃvara, also *ṣaṃvara*, often occurs in Śaṃvara works), and hence the Tibetan translation *bde mchog*. Cf., however, Snellgrove 1987a, pp. 153–154, where the names Śambara and (Cakra)saṃvara and their respective Tibetan renderings are discussed.

\(^{337}\) See, for example, Dasgupta 1958, pp. 135–136, where works that adopt such a view, including Nāgārjunapāda’s *Apratiṣṭhānaprakāśa*, Saraha’s *dohās*, and the commentary on the latter, are referred to.

\(^{338}\) *Kṛṣṇayamāritrantrapāṇijikā* (P, fol. 396a5–b4; D, fol. 333a2–7; S vol. 23, pp. 1604.11–1605.9). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §1.Q.
expressed by the term 'great bliss.' Moreover, there is no experience of something such as bliss [ever] being grasped at.339

As we have seen, Rong-zom-pa, in his *Sangs sa chen mo*, identifies four main kinds of bliss that various traditions claim are experienced at the stage of a *buddha*, namely, (1) bliss of the Mind, (2) bliss of the Body, (3) (non-sexual) bliss induced by external objects, and (4) sexual bliss. We have already encountered the first two in the non-Tantric context. In his *dKon cog 'grel*, for example, Rong-zom-pa refers to the ‘bliss of the mind’ (*sems bde ba chen po*) and defines it as the arising of a knowledge (*rig pa*) that as a result of non-dual union amounts to a correct grasp of reality.340 This is to be understood as identical with the ‘bliss of the Mind,’ the only difference being that he names here non-dua condition, a typical Tantric notion, as the cause of the realization of true reality. In the Tantric context, the proponents of position 6 posit the ‘bliss of the *svābhāvikakāya*’ or the ‘bliss of the Natural Body’ (*rang bzhin gyi sku'i bde ba*) instead of simply the bliss of the Body, the view held by the proponents of position 5. This Natural Body is referred to by Rong-zom-pa as ‘one endowed with great enjoyment’ (*mahāsāṃbhogika*); and the bliss in question apparently is the bliss inherent in the *svābhāvikakāya* under the Tantric four-*kāya* scheme mentioned above. The last two kinds of bliss, which are induced by external objects, are typical of the Yoganiruttara system, where *mahāsukha*, particularly the joy resulting from sexual union, figures prominently. Rong-zom-pa explicitly refers to sexual bliss under the third conception of a *buddha* presented by him in the *Sangs sa chen mo*—a conception based on the Greater Yogatantra system.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this rather extended chapter I have attempted to give a general overview of the diverse conceptions of Buddhahood as found in the various Buddhist systems, with special reference to Tantric conceptions. I have mainly dealt with conceptions and themes addressed by Rong-zom-pa in the *Sangs sa chen mo* and the *dKon cog 'grel*, which are the focus of the present study. My main concern has been to determine Rong-zom-pa’s own understanding of each of these conceptions on the basis of one or the other of his writings, particularly his *rgyud spyi'i dngos po*, other passages from the *dKon cog 'grel*, *Grub rtha'i brjod byang*, and *Rab gnas bshad sbyar*, and also his *mtshan brjod 'grel pa* and *Sātstsha gدب pa*. Given the multiplicity of buddhological conceptions examined in this chapter, it has not been possible to provide a comprehensive treatment of each conception. Some of them have proved to be more complex than initially assumed, and will require further study on some future occasion.

339 Cf. Steinkellner 1999, pp. 355–360, containing a summary of the main points of the Tantric Tattvasiddhi attributed to Sāntarakṣita, whose purpose is to prove the efficacy of Tantric practice, which necessarily results in the attainment of the soteriological goal (defined there as great bliss). As noted by Steinkellner, however, it appears that a *buddha’s knowledge, which in the last portion of the text takes the place of great bliss as the final result, is described as conceptual. See also my brief discussion of the term ‘conceptual thought’ (*vikalpa: rnam par rtog pa*) in connection with a *buddha’s knowledge in the following chapter, §4.

340 *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fol. 161b2; D, p. 197.19–20): *gnyis su med par mnyam par sbyor ba las don ma nor bar rtogs pa'i rig pa 'byung ba ni sems bde ba chen po zhes bya ste*]
Chapter Three

The Controversy Surrounding the Existence of Gnosis at the Stage of a Buddha

1. Introductory Remarks

In the following chapter, I shall attempt to provide the Indian background of the controversy over whether a buddha possesses gnosis, which was the focus of the debate surrounding the constituents of a buddha. First I shall discuss the problem of ascribing a mental element to the absolute in general. This will be followed by a presentation of the various theories of knowledge adopted by individual branches of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and the implications of their views regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha. I shall do so on the basis of Rong-zom-pa's presentation of the matter and attempt to resolve the apparent problem in his subclassification of Yogācāra according to the various theories of knowledge. Next, I shall discuss the main terms regarding a buddha's knowledge, starting with a brief discussion of the Tibetan term ye shes, which is followed by an analysis of the key terms in our investigation, namely, 'non-conceptual gnosis' and 'pure mundane gnosis.' Then I shall present the main positions as to how a buddha can be active in the world and the debate among the advocates of these positions, as delineated in Rong-zom-pa's Sangs sa chen mo. Finally, I shall provide an overview of the pertinent Indian and Tibetan scholars (up until the eleventh or early twelfth century) and their discussions of the issue surrounding a buddha's gnosis that have been taken into account in this study.

2. The Problem of Ascribing a Mental Element to the Absolute

Erich Frauwallner, in his article on the Indian roots of the Chinese controversy over whether the amalavijñāna ('stainless mind') or the ālayavijñāna ('fundamental mind') is the basis of perceptions and phenomena, remarks that the question of the cognitive element within the absolute was common to various traditions of Indian philosophy. In general, the absolute was thought to be eternal and unchanging. These aspects of the absolute were emphasized in order to avoid attributing to it the processes of alteration associated with the world. The theory of an eternal and unchanging absolute, however, posed a difficulty: since action involves change, the absolute cannot be active or effective
if it is eternal and unchanging. Furthermore, since cognition also involves change, it seems impossible to attribute any cognitive element to the absolute, and it was thus concluded that a cognitive element is not one of its defining features. On the other hand, the non-attribution of a cognitive element to the absolute entailed a problem, namely, that of explaining the connection between the absolute and the world, or, in other words, the tension between the absolute, which is conceived as permanent and thus static, and an assumed or desired effectivity on its part, that is, dynamism. As Frauwallner pointed out, various traditions attempted to resolve this problem in different ways.

The various Buddhist systems too, not surprisingly, have their own notions of the absolute. Yet it can be said that most Buddhist schools did not concern themselves with problems regarding the attribution of a cognitive element to the absolute, because they did not posit the existence of an absolute entity (an eternal soul, spirit, or the like) in the first place. The cognitive processes were credited to the psychic factors, and this rendered the existence of an absolute entity irrelevant. Nonetheless, as Frauwallner pointed out, for those like the Sarvāstivādins, who did not completely deny the existence of such an absolute entity, the question of the existence of a cognitive element in this entity remained a real problem. Furthermore, unlike the Mādhyamikas, who were less affected by this problem emphasizing as they did the inconceivability and ineffability of true reality, and avoiding as they did any positive statement in this regard—avoided posing the ‘decisive questions’—the proponents of Yogācāra, who considered phenomena to be mental appearances, had to deal with what for them was the crucial question regarding the bearer of perception. This is clearly evident in the association of the various positions regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha with the various doxographical subschools of Yogācāra and their different theories of knowledge, as described in Rong-zom-pa’s writings and in various Indian sources as well.

As already pointed out by various scholars, the notion of an absolute entity (such as the tathāgatagarbha), found in later Mahāyāna traditions probably has its roots in the notion of the pure nature of the mind. The latter was already being propounded in the Pāli canon and other non-Mahāyāna works, and in early Mahāyāna literature as well. This idea seeped into later forms of Mahāyāna, where it took on a different form, however, particularly in the Tathāgatagarbha tradition (in which terms such as visuddham cittam or vimalam cittam are employed), but also, though more seldom, in the Yogācāra system, as in the works of the Yogācāra master Paramārtha (499–569), who propounded the existence of an amalavijñāna, that is, a pure mind that has always been present.

1 Frauwallner 1951, p. 150. For the solution offered by the Sāṃkhya school of thought to this problem, see ibid., pp. 150–151.

2 Frauwallner 1951, pp. 151–152.

3 For references, see Seyfort Ruegg 1969, pp. 411ff.

4 The doctrine that the innate nature of the mind is luminous was propagated by some schools of conservative Buddhism, such as the Mahāsāṃghikas. What the canonical passages referring to the luminous nature of the mind actually mean is a problem in itself, one that goes beyond the bounds of this study. It may be said here, however, that although it might indeed imply the existence of a permanent entity, it could also be interpreted as expressing the notion that the mind (as a chain of moments) is not inherently defiled—since otherwise it could never be purified—but is rather defiled by external impurities, and that when these are eliminated, the mind automatically arises in an undefiled, pure form. In any case, this notion has been conceived by most schools of
idea bears striking resemblance to that of self-occurring gnosis, which is strongly propagated in the rDzogs-chen literature (it will be discussed in detail in the next chapter). As we have already seen, since the Tathāgatagarbha tradition conceives the absolute positively (i.e. as inherently endowed with excellent qualities), it has no problem accepting that the absolute is active or effective. The Yogācāra system, by contrast, generally tries to avoid such attributes, and maintains instead that the qualities existing at the stage of a buddha are all generated. In the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra, where true reality (commonly called the dharmadhātu) is described as pure and unchanging, the activities of a buddha are viewed as coming about effortlessly, like the shining of a gem or like celestial instruments, which sound without being played. Nevertheless, as already noted by Frauwallner, although the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra conceives the dharmadhātu as the bearer of existence and perception, the problems that arise from ascribing perception to true reality are not systematically confronted there.

Frauwallner points out that the tradition of the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra was transmitted within the Yogācāra system alongside a tradition that propounded a theory that the psychic complex undergoes transformation (as presented in the Mahāyānasamgraha, for example, according to which the bearer of the psychic processes is the ālayavijñāna and the psychic factors associated with it). Disagreement over these two led to the Chinese controversy, which goes back to the two Yogācāra masters Bodhiruci and Ratnamati, both of whom arrived in China in 508. Bodhiruci maintained that it is the ālayavijñāna that is the basis of all perceptions, thus representing the tradition of the Mahāyānasamgraha, while Ratnamati made the same claim for the tathātā, thus representing the tradition of the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra. Ratnamati was later supported by the Yogācāra master Paramārtha, who attempted to interpret the Mahāyānasamgraha in the sense of the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra, and in 546 himself arrived in China and there propagated the theory of the amalavijñāna. Frauwallner conservative Buddhism and by later Mahāyāna traditions, such as Yogācāra, simply as referring to one ‘moment’ of a pure mind (which is momentary by nature)—one replacing a previous ‘moment’ of a defiled mind after the latter has ceased. Therefore, ‘pure mind’ in such systems has no connotations of unconditionedness or eternality, unlike the term prakṛtiprabhāsvaramātā of the Tathāgatagarbha tradition or the teachings of the amalavijñāna found in Paramārtha’s works. See, for example, Schmithausen 1987, pp. 160–162, and also pp. 232–233 & 240–241; Franco 2000, pp. 94–98, containing a discussion of the chapter from the Spitzer manuscript in which the doctrine of the luminosity of the mind is criticized. See also Wangchuk 2007, pp. 206–210, where the luminously pure mind is discussed in the context of what Wangchuk designates “ontological bodhicitta,” with numerous passages from primary sources being cited.

5 Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra 9.18–19. Note, however, that the classification of the five works of Maitreya (including the Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra) as Yogācāra treatises has been questioned, at least in the Tibetan tradition. See, for example, Mathes 1996, p. 182, where a translation of Mipham’s discussion of the issue is provided.

6 Frauwallner 1951, pp. 154–158.

7 On Paramārtha’s attempt to interpret the principle of vijñaptimātratā in terms of the pure mind of the tathāgatagarbha theory, see Keenan 1992, p. 3, where it is stated that Paramārtha, in his Chinese translation of the Mahāyānasamgraha, added passages to the text, particularly regarding issues connected with the theory of the Buddha Nature; and Keenan 2003, p. 82, where it is stated that at the end of his translation of the Mahāyānasamgraha Paramārtha added citations from the Ratnagotravibhāga, as though the latter reflected the teachings of the former.
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asserts that the teachings of the amalavijñāna as the basis of all perceptions can be traced back to Sthiramati and his followers, who accepted the authority of the old masters, while the teachings postulating the ālayavijñāna as the basis of all perceptions go back to Dharmapāla, who is said to have represented a progressive view—in other words, to the schools of Valabha and Nalanda, respectively.8

In Tibet, the positive interpretation of the absolute is primarily associated with the tathāgatagarbha theory.9 As has been shown by Dorji Wangchuk in an article on the rNying-ma interpretation of the tathāgatagarbha theory, the rNying-ma tradition and large sought to harmonize the two strands of negative and positive interpretations of the absolute, that is, the notion of śūnya and that of the tathāgatagarbha. In the same article, he also points out that Rong-zom-pa—in conformity with the early rNying-ma tradition in general, when the Tathāgatagarbha literature had not yet been accorded special status—interpreted the tathāgatagarbha theory in the light of the doctrine of the self-occurring gnosis.10 In other words, Rong-zom-pa's positive interpretation of the absolute manifests itself in the guise of self-occurring gnosis, in harmony with the rdzogs-chen system.11

3. The Mental Element of the Absolute and Yogācāra Theories of Knowledge

The different interpretations of the absolute in general and the difficulty posed by the existence of a cognitive element in the absolute in particular led to several disputes, one of them being amongst the followers of (Yogācāra-)Madhyamaka and Mantrayāna about

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8 Frauwallner 1951, pp. 148–149. Keenan, while agreeing with Frauwallner “in emphasizing the importance of the question of the purity of the mind, against P. Demiéville,” disagrees with his linking the theory of the amalavijñāna as the basis of all perceptions with Sthiramati, and thus with the tradition of Valabha, and the theory of the ālayavijñāna as the basis of all perceptions with Dharmapāla, and thus with the tradition of Nalanda. For neither of these can he find any firm evidence. See Keenan 1982, p. 18, n. 31.

9 Paramārtha’s notion of the amalavijñāna, although known to Tibetan scholars, had no significant influence on Tibetan Buddhism. References to Paramārtha (note the Tibetan rendering Yang-dag-bden-pa) and his amalavijñāna (dri ma med pa’i nra shes, occasionally also dri ma med pa’i yid) or nine-vijñāna theory in Tibetan literature are found, for example, in the works of mChims ’Jam-pa’i-dbyangs (mChims chen, p. 53.2&21–24) and Tsong-kha-pa, who devotes the eighth chapter of his Yid dang kun gzhi’i dka’ gnas to this issue (a translation into English and the Tibetan text of the latter are provided in Sparham 1993, pp. 153–161 & 234–241, respectively). For another discussion of the matter and references to further Tibetan works, see Kapstein 2000, pp. 80–82.


11 In general, Rong-zom-pa seldom cites Tathāgatagarbha scriptures or any other texts expounding related theories. As far as I can tell at this point, of the texts in which the absolute is interpreted positively, Rong-zom-pa mainly draws upon the twenty-fifth text of the Avataṃsaka (which latter referred to by him as the Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra) to support his theory of self-occurring gnosis. Whether Rong-zom-pa knew the Ratnagotravibhāga, which was translated in the eleventh century, is doubtful. For more on this issue, see the translation of the passage from the dKon cog ’grel, n. 7. Note that Klong-chen-pa, too, equates the purified dharmadhātu with self-occurring gnosis (see my discussion of this type of gnosis, chapter four, §3).
the existence of gnoson at the stage of a buddha, which is our main concern here. The synthesis of Yogācāra and Madhyamaka thought, mainly represented by Śāntarakṣita (ca.

12 As already alluded to, the issue of associating the mental element with the absolute had repercussions for the kāya theory, since the kāyas are linked both to the absolute (through the dharma-kāya or the svābhāvika-kāya) and to the world (through the two rūpākāyas). Haribhadra’s interpretation of Abhisamayālaṃkāra 8 to be teaching four and not three kāyas is, according to Makransky, an attempt to resolve the tension created by unfixed nirvāṇa (apratisbhītanirvāṇa: mi gnas pa’i mya ngen las ‘das pa), that is, the seeming contradiction between Buddhahood as the unconditioned non-dual absolute and its presumptive relation to the defiled world in the form of salvific activities. Although the controversy surrounding Abhisamayālaṃkāra 8 has a background different from that of the controversy over the existence of gnoson at the stage of a buddha, it is nonetheless another good example of the difficulty of ascribing a mental element to the absolute and the related problem of a buddha’s ability to cognize and act in the world, two issues that are central to our controversy. A summary of the main points, as presented by Makransky, would therefore be worthwhile: A buddha’s mind and mental factors, according to Haribhadra, can be subsumed neither under the svābhāvika-kāya (for it is permanent and unconditioned) nor under either of the rūpākāyas (for a buddha’s mind and mental factors are their cause). To solve this problem, Haribhadra differentiates between the svābhāvika-kāya (i.e. the Body that is true reality) as the unconditioned ultimate aspect of a buddha’s awareness, and the [jñānātmako] dharma-kāyaḥ (i.e. the Body of dharmas [constituting gnoson]) as the conditioned conventional aspect of it, the former being regarded as the ontological basis for the transcendent aspect of Buddhahood and the latter as the ontological basis for its immanence, that is, a buddha’s salvific activities in the world. Makransky adds that Haribhadra, as a Mādhyamika, felt the need to negate the absolutism he saw in the Yogācāra model of the three kāyas, which did not differentiate between the absolute (that is, emptiness) and a buddha’s awareness (regarded by him per se as an impermanent conventional phenomenon). He did so by employing logico-epistemological tools developed by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, which heavily influenced other eighth-century Mādhyamikas but were foreign to Mahāyāna sūtras that had taken shape earlier. According to Haribhadra, while the sāmbhoga-kāya and the nirvāna-kāya are perceived by advanced bodhisattvas and ordinary beings, respectively, the jñānātmako dharma-kāyaḥ is directly perceived only by a buddha, as a conventional object. Haribhadra takes the jñānātmako dharma-kāyaḥ as the conventional basis for the svābhāvika-kāya (that is, ultimate reality in the sense of emptiness) and as a ‘dominant condition’ for the manifestation of the two material Bodies. Furthermore, he describes the jñānātmako dharma-kāyaḥ and the two material Bodies as being appearances in terms of ‘true [worldly] convention’ (tathāyasamvṛti), that is—according to Śāntarakṣita’s definition of this term—as something that can be tacitly accepted as long as it is not critically investigated, that is characterized by arising and decay, and that has causal effectivity. (For a translation of this definition by Śāntarakṣita, see Ichigō 1989, p. 153, and Makransky 1997, p. 231.) According to Makransky, Haribhadra here ‘updates’ the Abhidharma formulation of Buddhahood in terms of a buddha’s undefiled dharmas, applying as he does the Madhyamaka distinction between conventional and ultimate truths. Again according to Makransky, others like Ratnākaraśānti and Abhayākara-gupta, who posit only three kāyas and associate a buddha’s mind and mental factors with the svābhāvika-kāya, rejected this inferential argument of Haribhadra’s, for they viewed these mental elements, which are non-conceptual and non-dual and thus free from all error, as equivalent to true reality. Any distinction from a buddha’s point of view between gnoson and emptiness is rejected by them, since it would imply duality. The differentiated forms of undefiled dharmas, however, are ascribed to Buddhahood only conventionally, that is, from the phenomenal viewpoint of ordinary beings. In this way, these thinkers generally adhere to the Yogācāra concept of three kāyas, without accepting, however, the ontological status ascribed to awareness in the Yogācāra system. See Makransky 1997, pp. 9–13, 39–40 & 211–257. For the positions of Ratnākaraśānti, who tends to accept Yogācāra theories, and Abhayākara-gupta, who usually follows a Madhyamaka approach,
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725–788), Kamalasūla (ca. 740–795), Haribhadra (fl. around 800), and their followers, adopts on the conventional level Yogācāra doctrines, that is, foremost the mind-only theory, according to which no external objects exist, the notion that the object–subject dichotomy is a mental construct, its theories of knowledge, and also the doctrines of the three kāyas and the three svabhāvas. But it considers such Yogācāra concepts to be merely a means of gaining access to the ultimate reality postulated by Madhyamaka, and so rejects Yogācāra ontology, which accords special status to the mind, in favour of Madhyamaka ontology, according to which all phenomena are empty in essence. The various attempts to combine these two traditions differed from one another in the manner and degree Yogācāra doctrines have been integrated into Madhyamaka thought. Moreover, as noted by Moriyama in his study on the Yogācāra-Madhyamikas’ refutation of the Satyakāravādins and Alīkāravādins, the fact that by the eighth century the Buddhist tradition of logic and epistemology had become firmly entrenched—particularly amongst (Yogācāra)-Madhyamaka scholars, who endeavoured to employ it to prove the non-existence of all phenomena (in other words, that all phenomena are devoid of an intrinsic nature)—was the cause of many heated debates and controversies. As pointed out by Rong-zom-pa, the controversy regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha amongst the Madhyamikas is closely connected with the controversy amongst the proponents of Yogācāra regarding the existence of images (ākāra: rnam pa).

The existence of Yogācāra subschools was recognized by modern scholars as early as the mid-nineteenth century, and in particular the controversy between the Sākāravādins and the Nirākāravādins has by now been discussed on several occasions. The earliest significant contribution was that by Kajiyama in an article from 1965 in which he presents the views of both parties. In general, amongst the four Buddhist schools, it is the Vaibhāṣikas who do not maintain the existence of (or the necessity for) images (nirākāravādin/anākāravādin), and it is the Sautrāntikas who do (sākāravādin).
The proponents of Yogācāra, who, unlike the Sautrāntikas, negate the existence of external objects, hold that images are appearances developed by the cognizing mind and not impressions left by external objects upon the mind—in other words, the mind cognizes only its own images of objects and not something outside it. Hence, at least according to early (or traditional) Yogācāra, a cognition is necessarily accompanied by images. Nevertheless, later proponents of Yogācāra are divided into those who maintain the existence of images and those who negate it or, alternatively, those who regard the images as true (satyākāravādin) and those who regard them as false (ālikākāravādin). Likewise, as we have already seen, the followers of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka are also said to be divided into these two groups.19

On the position of the Sautrāntikas in this regard, see Kajiyama 1965, pp. 390–392.

Kajiyama rightly notes that the division into Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda does not apply to ordinary beings, in whom, all advocates of Cittamātra or Yogācāra maintain, images exist, but only to a buddha’s knowledge (Kajiyama 1965, pp. 392–393). Previous studies had equated the subdivision into Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda with the subdivision into Satyākāravāda and Ālikākāravāda, respectively. The question regarding the correspondence of these subdivisions of the Yogācāras and the implications for the controversy surrounding the constituents of Buddhahood will be discussed below in more detail.

Interesting here, too, as noted by Dreyfus, is the interpretation of some Tibetan scholars of the term Nirākāravāda in connection with the Yogācāra/Cittamātra school. Shākya-mchog-lđan (1428–1507) goes so far as to differentiate between Yogācāra and Cittamātra. According to him, the Sākāravāda theory, according to which external objects do not exist, but the objective images are real, inasmuch as they are identical with the cognition, is advocated by the followers of Cittamātra, while the Nirākāravāda theory, according to which the representation of objects in cognition is deceptive—for the true nature of cognition is luminously pure, whereas the images, which are merely superimposed on it, are false—is advocated by Yogācāra. rGyal-tshab Dar-ma-rin-chen (1364–1432) and most later dGe-lugs scholars seem to have tackled the same problem but attempted to solve it in a different manner. According to Dreyfus, they reject the generally accepted view that the controversy between these two branches of Yogācāra is based on their acceptance or rejection of the true existence of images. According to them, since the Nirākāravādins are the followers of Yogācāra, they must accept the reality of cognition even in its deceptive state, and thus cannot deny the reality of images. Therefore, the dispute between them is about the “truthfulness of perception regarding the status of commonsense objects”; that is, the Sākāravādins are said to maintain that the appearance of objects as commonsense objects is not distorted by ignorance, while the Nirākāravādins are said to deny not that commonsense objects exist, but that their appearance as such is uncontaminated. Dreyfus notes that this distinction is subtle, and such that any ontological issue is excluded from the debate (Dreyfus 1997, pp. 433–434). From Dreyfus’s description of it, rGyal-tshab-rje’s position is that for the Sākāravādins the distortion occurs not in the appearance of the object (in direct perception?) but only in the following conceptual thought, whereas for the Nirākāravādins, the very first perception is already distortive, and thus involves conceptual thought (vikalpa). Jackson, in a note on Lankāvatārasūtra 10.257 (the first two lines of which are cited by Sa-skyla-paṃḍita Kun-dga’-rgyal-mtshan (1182–1251) in his mKhas ’jug), also indirectly refers to Shākya-mchog-lđan’s stance on this issue (taken in the context of interpreting this verse). Jackson remarks that Shākya-mchog-lđan interprets Śāntarakṣita as taking the term sens tsam in this verse to refer to the Satyākāravādins, and the term snang med to the Ālikākāravādins (Jackson 1987, vol. 2, pp. 422–423, n. 140). The same opinion is found in Keira 2004, p. 76, n. 120.

Kajiyama notes that this controversy must have developed after Dharmakirti and reached its final phase in the eleventh century at the time of the Sākāravādin Jñānaśrīmitra and the
Kajiyama cites passages presenting these two positions from Bodhibhadra’s (fl. around 1000)22 Jñānasārastamuccayanibandhana and Mokṣākaragupta’s Tarkabhāṣā, which, he maintains,23 must have been composed sometime between 1050 and 1202. According to Mokṣākaragupta, the proponents of the Sākāravāda branch of Yogācāra argue that since cognition (viṣṇāna: rnam par shes pa) is self-cognition (svasamvit/vasamvedana: rang rig pa), it is, despite the images, devoid of the duality of grasped and grasper, which arises on account of conceptualization (kalpanā: rtog pa). Thus the truth is knowledge accompanied by images but devoid of conceptualization. Representatives of the Nirākāravāda branch argue that the nature of cognition is pure, like a crystal, and thus unstained by images. The images are not real, and arise due to ignorance. Moreover, since the grasped is non-existent, the grasper, too, is non-existent. Bodhibhadra adds that the proponents of the Sākāravāda branch of Yogācāra maintain that the images are of the ‘dependent nature’ (paratantrasvabhāva: gzhan gyi dbang gi ngo bo nyid), while those of the Nirākāravāda branch maintain that they are of the ‘imagined nature’ (parikalpitasvabhāва: kun tu brtags pa’i ngo bo nyid), and are thus as false as the hairs perceived by a person afflicted with an eye disease.24

Kajiyama further cites and translates several passages from Ratnākaraśānti’s (fl. eleventh cent.) Prajñāpāramitopadeśa that have to do with this controversy and provides the parallel passages in Jñānaśrīmitra’s (fl. tenth/eleventh cent.) Jñānaśrīmitranibandhavali. Based on the passages provided by Kajiyama, Ratnākaraśānti’s position can be summarized as follows:25 All phenomena are sheer mind (sems: citta), sheer cognition (rnam par shes pa: viṣṇāna), and sheer luminosity (gsal ba: prakāśa). Since external objects, that is, the grasped, are non-existent, the corresponding cognition (rnam par rig pa: viṣṇapti), which evinces the nature of a grasper, is also non-existent. The two are of the imagined nature, since they are imagined in false conceptualizations (yang dag pa ma yin pa’i kun tu rtog pa: abhūtaparikalpa) arisen due to residual impressions. These false conceptualizations are of the dependent nature.26 They are erroneous cognition (shes pa: jñāna), for they appear on account of delusion and taints. The grasped and grasper aspects are false. Only sheer luminosity (gsal ba tsam: prakāśamātra) is real. The images are characterized by delusiveness and manifoldness, for they are the objects of deluded cognition. They are also characterized by duality, for

Nirākāravāda Ratnākaraśānti, though he adds that “we are not very sure of the aspect of the controversy before Dharmakīrti” (Kajiyama 1965, p. 393).

22 Moriyama gives Bodhibhadra’s dates as ca. the tenth/eleventh century, apparently relying on Shoryu Katsura. For details, see Moriyama 1984a, p. 10, n. 15.


24 For the Sanskrit or Tibetan texts of these passages and a translation of them into English, see Kajiyama 1965, pp. 393–395. An annotated translation of the passage from Mokṣākaragupta’s Tarkabhāṣā is found in Kajiyama 1966, p. 335, §32.1. The Tibetan text and an English translation of the passage from Bodhibhadra’s Jñānasārastamuccayanibandhana is reproduced in ibid., Appendix II, p. 341.

25 My understanding of these passages at times slightly deviates from that of Kajiyama.

26 Kajiyama states here that “abhūtaparikalpa [i.e. false conceptualization/imagination] is an aspect of the paratantrasvabhāva, but the two bhāgas, cognitum and cognizer, as represented by it belong to the parikalpitasvabhāva” (Kajiyama 1965, p. 398, n. 19).
they appear as the grasped and the grasper. All manifoldness ceases in the state where non-conceptual gnosis, which is the ‘perfect nature’ (yongs su grub pa’i ngo bo nyid: parinispamnasvabhāva), is actualized. The images are said to be false (brdzun pa: alīka) because they can be invalidated. The knowledge that is luminosity is a direct cognition, for it is infallible, and it is thus real. The experience of luminosity is taintless, and this luminosity, unlike images, cannot be invalidated.

The Sākāravādins’ critique against the Nirākāravādins, as recapitulated by Ratnākaraśānti, can be summarized as follows: If the image of blue is false and its luminosity true, the two would be incompatible, and thus the luminosity could not be of the nature of blue. If this were the case, though, things such as the colour blue would not be visible. Since images of blue and the like are not different from their luminosity, which is an unimputed entity, these images, too, are unimputed entities. To this Ratnākaraśānti answers the following: If it were as the Sākāravādins maintain, it would follow that all luminosity experiences the true nature of things, so that everything would be devoid of delusion and so infallible, and in this case all sentient beings would be liberated and fully awakened.27

A valuable description of the main points of the views held by the Satyakāravādins and Alikākāravādins is given by Moriyama in his study on the Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas’ refutation of these two views, during which they take up the question of a buddha’s knowledge. In the following I shall summarize Moriyama’s presentation of the views of the Satyakāravādins and Alikākāravādins under three points, namely, their respective views regarding (1) images (ākāra: rnam pa), (2) self-cognition (svasamvittisvamsamedana: rang rig pa), and (3) the three ‘natures’ (svabhāva: ngo bo nyid). The Satyakāravādins postulate the following: (1) Images are real and existent, but any interpretation of them in terms of the object–subject dichotomy or as either eternal or temporary is false. (2) There is no independent self-cognition separate from images, for self-cognition involves the manifestation of images. Self-cognition and images are in fact identical. (3) Images partake of the dependent nature (paratantrasvabhāva: gzhan gyi dbang gi ngo bo nyid), inasmuch as they are inseparable from cognition (vijñāna: rnam par shes pa), which likewise partakes of the dependent nature, depending as it does on the immediately preceding [moment of mind] (samanantarapratyaya: de ma thag pa’i rkyen), which serves as its cause. It is the misconception of images in terms of duality that lends them an imagined nature (parikalpitasvabhāva: kun tu btags pa’i ngo bo nyid). When self-cognition accompanied by images is separated from the imagined nature, it comes to partake of the perfect nature (parinispamnasvabhāva: yongs su grub pa’i ngo bo nyid). What is most important for our discussion is the implication that images exist as real entities in the self-cognition of the Awakened Ones, and that the difference between the direct perception of an ordinary person and an Awakened One consists in the existence of conceptual thoughts (vikalpa: rnam par rtog pa) projected onto images in the case of the former and their absence in the case of the latter. The Alikākāravādins postulate the following: (1) Both images of the grasped and the grasper

27 For the Tibetan text of the passages from Ratnākaraśānti’s Prajñāpāramitopadeśa and an English translation of them, along with the parallel passages from Jñānaśrīmitra’s Jñānaśrīmitranibandhāvali, see Kajiyama 1965, pp. 397–400. These passages and Kajiyama’s discussion of them are reproduced in Kajiyama 1966, Appendix II, pp. 343–345. For an outline of Ratnākaraśānti’s Prajñāpāramitopadeśa, see Shoryu Katsura’s “A Synopsis of the Prajñāpāramitopadeśa of Ratnākaraśānti,” IBK 25/1, 1976, pp. 487–484.
(grāhyagrāhakākāra: gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i rnam pa) are unreal, for they are produced on the basis of an error or a delusion (bhṛantī: 'khrul pa). (2) Self-cognition and images are independent of each other. Independent self-cognition that is detached from images is alone real, and it is this that is considered non-dual gnosis (advayajñāna: gnyis su med pa'i ye shes). The difference between the cognition of an ordinary person and that of an Awakened One lies in whether or not these false images exist in their cognition. (3) Both images of the grasped and the grasper have an imaginary nature. Once cognition, which partakes of the dependent nature, is free of these images, it becomes non-dual and so attains the perfect nature. 28

Ratnakaraśānti, in his Triyānayavavasthāna, refers indirectly to the question whether a buddha has gnosis in the context of a doxographical presentation of the subschools of Madhyamaka and their respective theories of knowledge. In his presentation there, he subdivides Yogācāra and Madhyamaka as follows. 29

The proponents of Yogācāra are of two kinds, based on the distinction between [those who postulate] cognition with images and [those who postulate it] without them. Likewise, the Mādhyamikas are also of two kinds, based on the distinction between those who maintain that conventional [phenomena] are perceptual images and those who maintain that they are [the result of] residual impressions.

This distinction within Madhyamaka, based on the postulated conventional level, between those who maintain that phenomena are perceptual images and those who maintain that they are the result of residual impressions, clearly correlates with Rong-zom-pa’s division

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28 Moriyama 1984a, pp. 11–14. As pointed out by Moriyama (ibid., pp. 5–7), Śāntarakṣita and his followers attempted to prove the non-existence of intrinsic nature (nihsvabhāva: ngo bo nyid med pa) of all phenomena by employing the two valid means of cognition (pramāṇa: tshad ma), that is, direct perception (pratyavākṣa: mngon sum) and inference (anumāṇa: rjes su dpag pa), a procedure that was also employed by them in the case of other theoretical disputes, including those regarding the epistemological theories of the Yogācāras. The position of the Satyākāravādinīs is mainly refuted by pointing out (1) the incompatibility of the theories of oneness (eka-tva: gcig pu) and plurality (aneka: du ma) with respect to cognition and images and (2) the invalidity of the view of citrādvaya (sna tshogs gnyis med), according to which any cognition accompanied by manifold (citra: sna tshogs) images is unitary (advaya: gnyis su med pa), it being demonstrated that this position involves a contradiction with respect to direct perception. The position of the Alikākāravādinīs is mainly refuted by showing that such non-dual cognition as postulated by them cannot be proven by any valid means of cognition and by demonstrating the contradiction entailed in maintaining unreal images and a real cognition, for there can be neither a relation of identity (tādatmya: de’i bdag nyid) nor a causal relation (tadutpatti: de las byung ba) between the two. For the refutation of the Satyākāravādinīs and the Alikākāravādinīs by some of the main Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas, see ibid., pp. 17–32, and Moriyama 1984b, pp. 3–15. For a translation of Haribhadra’s refutation of these positions in his Abhisamayālamkārikā, see Moriyama 1984a, pp. 46–58, and Moriyama 1984b, pp. 19–35. For another presentation of the Nirākāravāda branch, see the short metrical work by the Nepalese Nandaśrī aimed at establishing the stance of the Nirākāravāda, entitled Nirākarakārikā (Ōtani 5294; Tōhoku 3894; Sichuan 3123, vol. 63).

29 Triyānayavavasthāna (P, fol. 114a6–8; D, fol. 103a3–4; S, vol. 41, p. 273.13–16): rnal 'byor spyod pa rnam srya shes pa rnam pa dang bcas pa dang rnam pa med pa'i bye brag gis rnam pa gnyis so| de bzhin du dbu ma pa yang kun rdzob shes pa'i rnam par smra ba dang| de bag chags su smra ba'i bye brag gis rnam pa gnyis so|. For Seyfort Ruegg’s treatment of this and the following passage, see Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 123.
of the Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas into those who rely on Yogācāra treatises that postulate the existence of images and those who rely on Yogācāra treatises that postulate the non-existence of images, respectively. According to Ratnakaraśānti, the followers of these two subdivisions negate the existence of both mind and gnosis on the absolute level. On the conventional level, however, there is no explicit reference to their position regarding the existence of gnosis, but it seems that, according to him, both maintain the existence of gnosis on this level. Nor does he explicitly state whether only those who maintain the existence of images accept the existence of both kinds of gnosis, while those who do not maintain the existence of images postulate the existence of only non-conceptual gnosis, which, in this case, is referred to by Ratnakaraśānti as 'self-cognition' (rang rig pa: svasamvittisvasamvedana). His statement could be interpreted in this way, since in the case of the former, mind (or gnosis) is said to be accompanied by images, and in the case of the latter not.

The Mādhyamikas who maintain that conventional [phenomena] are images of perception postulate, on the basis of a series of logical arguments, that on the ultimate level neither mind nor gnosis exists. And, on the conventional level, they think that all [phenomena] established in this way simply exist as objects [that are] images [produced by] the mind (sams: citta) and the mental faculty (yid: manas). Likewise, the position of those who maintain that conventional [phenomena] are [the result of] residual impressions: As regards the ultimate truth, [their position] is similar to the previous one, and as for [their] affirmations regarding the conventional level, [conventional phenomena] are [regarded by them as the result of] residual impressions, but the mind, [they maintain], does not appear in [the form of something that has] the characteristics of images and activity (? ’gro ba). These two [positions] are similar inasmuch as both postulate dependent origination, which is the true nature [of phenomena], and put forward arguments for negating mind and self-cognition [on the ultimate level]. Some people maintain that these two [Madhyamaka subschools] differ in [their] sequential analysis of the four extremes (catuskoti)—existence,

30 Ratnakaraśānti distinguishes here between these two sections of Madhyamaka on the basis of how they characterize the conventional level, but he also presents another distinction made on the basis of how they negate the views of others (cited below).

31 Triyānnavayavasthāna (P, fols. 114b6–115a3; D, fol. 103b2–6; S, vol. 41, pp. 274.13–275.4): dbu ma pa kun rdzob shes pa'i rnam par smra ba rnam ni don dam par [D pa'i] rigs pa'i tshogs kyi sams dang ye shes dag yod pa ma yin par smra la kun rdzob tu 'di litar rnam par bzhag [D gzhag] pa thams cad sams dang yid kyi rnam pa yul du gnas pa khor rtoy go| de bzhin du kun rdzob bag chags su smra ba rnam kyi 'dod pa ni don dam pa'i bden pa snga ma lta bu las kun rdzob tu rnam par bzhag [D gzhag] pa rnam ni bag chags rnam kha na yin gyi sams ni rnam pa dang| 'gro ba'i bdag nyid du snang ba ma yin no zhes par ro| 'di gnyis gas rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba'i bdag nyid 'dod pa dang| sams dang rang rig pa 'gog [add. pa'i] rigs pa sgrub [D bsgrub] pa ni mthun no| kha cig na re 'di gnyis kyi ita ba gzhana sel [P sal] ba na rim bzhin du| yod dang med dang yod par ro| yod med gnyi ga min pa ste|| [P om.] zhes pa dang| rtag dang mi rtag rtag mi rtag|| [P om.] rtag dang mi rtag gnyi ga min|| [P om.] zhes pas go rims [= rim] bzhin du mu bzhi rnam par rtog pa mi 'dra'o zhes zer ro|.

32 Cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 123, where this passage is rendered as “both groups are stated to agree in rejecting any substantial self-nature for pratityasamutpāda.”
non-existence, both, and none, and permanence, impermanence, both, and none [being employed] successively—when negating other views.\(^{33}\)

It is not clear from this passage what the position of Ratnākaraśānti himself is regarding the existence of gnosis. Nevertheless, since he is known to be a Nirākāravādin, it can be assumed that he is a proponent of the second position.\(^{34}\)

Kajiyama, in the same article, also refers to Frauwallner’s *Die Philosophie des Buddhismus*, where the controversy between Dharmapāla, who is said to follow Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasamgraha*, and Sthiramati, who is said to follow Vasubandhu and works of the Maitreyā-Asaṅga complex, is discussed. There, Frauwallner cites and discusses passages from Hsūn-tsang’s (602–664) *Ch’eng wei shih lun* (i.e. the *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*) concerning the controversy between the two parties surrounding the nature of the ‘parts’ (*bhāga/*amśa: *cha*) of cognition. Hsūn-tsang, while on the whole following Dharmapāla, often refers to other positions, including that of Sthiramati.\(^{35}\) As is evident from these passages, Sthiramati (or his school) holds that only the self-cognition (*svāsva/vedana: rang rig pa*) ‘part,’ which he considers to partake of the dependent nature, is real, while the grasped or objective (grāhāya or ālambya) ‘part’ and the grasper or subjective (grāhaka or ālambaka) ‘part,’ which he considers to partake of the imagined nature, are regarded as mere conceptions. That is, for him, both the objective and subjective images are unreal. According to Dharmapāla (or his school, which maintains the existence of four ‘parts,’ i.e. the above three and, in addition, the self-cognition of self-cognition), all ‘parts’ are real. For given that both the grasped and the grasper ‘parts’ (into which cognition is said to develop on account of residual impressions) arise due to a cause, they, too, are regarded as partaking of the dependent nature. Hence, according to him, the imagined nature consists only of the quality projected by the mental perception (*manoviṃśa: yid kyi nam par shes pa*) and mental faculty (*mānas: yid*) upon the objects of the remaining forms of perception—which are dualistic—and thus the images themselves are real.\(^{36}\)

Frauwallner further remarks that

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\(^{33}\) It is unclear if the difference between the two lies in their employing only a certain variant of the four extremes or in the manner they employ them in general. Cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 123, where this passage is understood as implying that those who maintain the existence of images employ the four extremes in terms of existence and non-existence, and those who do not, employ them in terms of permanence and impermanence.

\(^{34}\) See also Ruegg 1981, p. 122, where it is stated that Ratnākaraśānti’s doctrine, known as Vījñapti-Madhyamaka (*rang rig dbu ma*), is said to be a synthesis of Vījñānavāda philosophy and certain elements of Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka, but in fact is a Nirākāra-Vījñānavāda teaching, with the Middle Way presented in agreement with the system of the three svabhāvas.

\(^{35}\) Frauwallner 1956, pp. 394–407. Frauwallner remarks that Hsūn-tsang’s presentation does not really reflect the personal opinion of these masters but rather that of their respective schools (*ibid.*, pp. 395–396).

\(^{36}\) Cf. Schmithausen 2005, pp. 62–63, where the two positions regarding the nature of the ‘image part’ of cognition are briefly touched upon in the context of a passage from Hsūn-tsang’s *Ch’eng wei shih lun* concerning the question as to what the component mātra in the term vijñaptimātratā (tā) actually excludes. The proponents of one position claim that it also excludes the ‘image parts,’ which are held by them to be of the imagined nature (*parikalpitāsvabhāva*). This, according to Schmithausen, “would seem to imply that forming images, or the opposition of object and subject, is invariably connected with ‘externalization’.” The proponents of the other position, which is in
these differences were reflected in these two factions' theories of salvation, as follows: According to Sthiramati, after the ‘transformation of the basis [of worldly existence]’ (āśrayaparāvṛtti: gnas ‘gyur ba) all cognitions disappear, for they are mere conceptions, and what remains is alone true reality. 37 According to Dharmapāla, however, all forms of cognition undergo a transformation and continue to exist even after one has attained awakening.38

Schmithausen, in a paper discussing the problem of the external world in Hsüan-tsang’s Ch‘eng wei shih lun, and questioning the recent view expressed by some modern scholars that the Vijñaptimātra school of thought does not (completely) deny an independent existence of material things, briefly touches upon the controversy surrounding a buddha’s knowledge of the world characterized by manifoldness, as conceived in Chinese sources. As pointed out by him, the notion that cognitions cannot take place in a direct manner but only by way of an image into which one’s own mind has transformed or developed (parināma: ‘gyur ba) was held by the Sākāravadins (including Hsüan-tsang and his followers) to be true not only in the case of an ordinary being but also in that of a buddha, insofar as such cognitions are directed towards the conventional. That is, according to Hsüan-tsang, vijñaptimātratā as an epistemological principle that excludes the direct cognition of anything outside a given moment of cognition is valid even in the case of a buddha. Furthermore, buddhas (just like bodhisattvas), according to this system, return for the sake of others to the level of vijñaptimātra, where the external world characterized by manifoldness is cognized through the subsequently attained pure mundane gnosis (or its equivalent), which epistemologically resembles the cognition of an ordinary being. As mentioned by Schmithausen, Hsüan-tsang and his followers were agreement with that of Hsüan-tsang, maintain that the ‘parts’ of cognition are not excluded. They are, according to this position, just like cognition itself, not of the imagined but of the dependent nature (paratantrasvabhāva), and hence mātra is taken to exclude only the external but not the internal objects (i.e. the ‘image parts’). See also below, “Works by Indian Authors,” n. 7, where the translation of the term vijñaptimātra as ‘representation-only’ is discussed.

37 This, however, does not seem to tally with Sthiramati’s explanation in his commentary on Mahāyānasūtrālāmkāra 9.12. See *(Mahāyāna)sūtrālāmkāravyākhyā 9 (pp. 34.12–35.12).

38 Kajiyama maintains that the controversy between Dharmapāla and Sthiramati described in Chinese sources is in principle equivalent to the controversy between the Sākāravadins and Nirākāravadins, and adds that upon reading Frauwallner’s survey on the difference between Dharmapāla and Sthiramati according to Hsüan-tsang, one notices that the controversy between them is “in essence identical with” that between the Sākāravādin Jñānasrīmitra and the Nirākāravādin Ratnakaraśānti. Kajiyama also notes that Frauwallner’s opinion that the origin of Dharmapāla’s theory can be traced back to Asanga contradicts the description by Bodhibhadra according to which Asanga was a Nirākāravādin, but adds that otherwise Dharmapāla’s theory is similar to the Sākāravāda propagated by Jñānasrīmitra and Ratnakṛiti, while that of Sthiramati is similar to the Nirākāravāda as propagated by Ratnakaraśānti. See Kajiyama 1965, pp. 395–397. It may be added that although Asanga’s Mahāyānasamgraha is apparently often cited by the Nirākāravadins as scriptural support (see below, “Works by Indian Authors,” §2.B, the translation of the passage from Dharmamitra’s Prasphutapada; the Tibetan text is found there in nn. 145 & 146), it seems to have been adopted for their own purposes by the Sākāravadins. See, for example, the passage from Hsüan-tsang’s Ch‘eng wei shih lun translated in Frauwallner 1951, p. 405, where Frauwallner identifies the authoritative scripture espoused by the Nirākāravadins as Madhyāntavibhāga 1, and by the Sākāravadins as Mahāyānasamgraha 2.§11 & 2.§2.
well aware of the other position, according to which the subsequently attained pure mundane gnosis, at least in the case of a buddha, allows cognition of objects directly, that is, with no attending image. This view is, however, rejected by them with the argument that a cognition cannot have anything as its object unless a percept of it emerges in that cognition. 39

As has been already stated, the subdivision of the Yogācāra school into Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda has been thought so far to be the same as that into Satyākāravāda and Alikākāravāda, respectively. 40 Yet, as we have seen, Rong-zom-pa’s classification of these branches is somewhat different, for he considers the Satyākāravāda and Alikākāravāda to be subdivisions of the Sākāravāda, the result being altogether three distinctive branches. From his description of the views of these three in regard to a buddha’s knowledge, it appears that what he calls Alikākāravāda is equivalent to the branch known as Samala-Alikākāravāda, whose followers postulate the existence of false images and a cognition that is accompanied by stains (samala: dri bcas), while what he calls Nirākāravāda is equivalent to the branch known as Nirmala-Alikākāravāda, whose followers postulate the existence of false images and a cognition that is without stains (nirmala: dri med), as shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proponents of Yogācāra/Vijñaptimātra</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satyākāravāda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alikākāravāda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samala-Alikākāravāda</td>
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<td>Nirmala-Alikākāravāda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rong-zom-pa’s Alikākāravāda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rong-zom-pa’s Nirākāravāda</td>
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Table 14: Conventional subdivisions of Yogācāra versus Rong-zom-pa’s subclassification

The distinction between the Samala-Alikākāravāda and the Nirmala-Alikākāravāda has been discussed, if for the most part only briefly, by several Tibetan doxographers and other Tibetan authors. The differences between these two branches are explicitly said, at least by some, to apply to both the causal and resultant levels, that is, that of ordinary beings and that of buddhas. As we have seen, how cognition is conceived on the level of ordinary beings affects how it is conceived on a buddha’s level, as far as the status of images is concerned. Nonetheless, it is conceivable that initially some differences merely related to a buddha’s level, since it is there that the Alikākāravādins were confronted with significant problems. On the one hand, they commonly postulate that false images disappear in the case of a buddha (hence their designation as Nirākāravāda), whence it follows that a buddha either does not perceive the world characterized by manifoldness at all or that he perceives it without the mediation of images—positions that, for some, were

39 See Schmithausen 2005, pp. 13–14, n. 12, where the term ‘development’ (parināma: ’gyur ba) is also discussed, and pp. 54–56.
40 See, however, Funayama 2007. Funayama wishes to disprove the hitherto widely accepted assumption that the terms satyākāravāda and sākāravāda are always mutually interchangeable designations for the same Yogācāra subschool.
hard to accept, for in the first case there arose the problem concerning a buddha's involvement in the world, while the second contradicts the ingrained assumption that a thing cannot be perceived without an image and in fact implies externalization. On the other hand, for the Alikākāravādins who insist that one continues to perceive the world characterized by manifoldness even after becoming a buddha, it would follow that this occurs by way of false images—a consequence that was, at least for some, untenable. This problem finally led to the split between the Samala-Alikākāravādins, who do hold to the existence of false images even at the stage of a buddha, but argue that since a buddha knows the appearances to be false, he is not deluded, and the Nirmala-Alikākāravādins, who deny the existence of all images whatsoever at that stage, and thus also reject any cognition of the external world by a buddha. Therefore, it may well be that their differences in regard to the status of the eight viṣṇānas on the causal level are secondary—the result of adaptations made in order to accommodate their different theories about the resultant level. In other words, the primary bone of contention may have been over what epistemological principle to apply to buddhas, and that it was only later that the same epistemological principle was made applicable to ordinary sentient beings. This, however, remains to be seen. Rog Shes-rab-'od (1166–1244), in his Grub mtha' bstan pa'i sgron me, presents the problems entailed in the positions taken by these two branches of the Alikākāravādins regarding a buddha's knowledge in the form of objections, apparently on the part of the Śikṣāvādins, and replies as follows:

[Objection]: Well, do [external objects] appear to those such as buddhas, whose delusions have been exhausted, or not? (1) The Samala-Alikākāravādins state: [They] appear even at the stage of a buddha. [Refutation]: In that case, has a buddha eliminated ignorance, which is the cause of deceptive appearances, or not? If [he] has not, it would follow that he is not a buddha. If [he] has, delusions should not appear. [Objection]: [And] would a buddha in this case (i.e. if images were to appear even to him) not be deluded? [Response]: Although images appear, a buddha knows [them] to be false, and thus he is not deluded. [Refutation]: In that case it would follow that although ignorance has been eliminated, deceptive appearances, which are the result [of ignorance], have not been. (2) The Nirmala-Alikākāravādins state: The objects, which are self-appearances, are a deceptive aspect of cognition, and thus, since the stream of delusions has been disrupted in [the case of] a buddha, no images appear. [Objection]: In that case it would follow that no object of knowledge whatsoever would exist, for delusions would not appear [to him].

Klong-chen-pa, in his Yid bzhin mdzod 'grel, outlines the position of the Alikākāravāda in general, and then proceeds to explain the two subdivisions of it, which he refers to as the ones taken by those who posit that cognition is accompanied by stains (dri bcas) and by those who posit that cognition is pure (dag pa), that is, not accompanied by stains (dri

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41 Grub mtha' bstan pa'i sgron me (pp. 161.5–162.5): 'o na 'khrul pa zad pa'i sangs rgyas lta bu la gsalam [exp. gsal lam] mi gsal byas pasj (1) rnam rdzun dri bcas pa na re| sangyas [exp. sangs rgyas] kyi sa na yang gsal lo zer ro| de ltar na 'khrul snang gi rgyu ma rig pa spangs sam [exp. sam] ma spangs| ma spangs na sangyas [exp. sangs rgyas] ma yin par thal| spangs na 'khrul pa 'di mi snang bar rags [= rigs] so| 'o na sangyas [exp. sangs rgyas] 'khrul par mi 'gyuram [exp. 'gyur ram] byas pasj rnam pa gsal kyang mi bden par shes pas 'khrul par mi 'gyur ro| zer roj de ltar ma rig pa spangs kyang 'bras bu 'khrul snang ma spangs par 'gyur roj (2) rnam brdzun dri med pa na re| yul rang snang 'di shes pa'i 'khrul pa'i cha yin pas| sangyas [exp. sangs rgyas] la 'khrul pa'i rgyun chad pasj rnam pa gsal ba med do zer roj de ltar na shes bya ji snyed pa med par thal| 'khrul pa mi gsal ba'i phyir roj].

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According to him, the former maintain that all eight vijnānas on the level of sentient beings are absolute, which enables them to postulate that buddhas can still perceive the world characterized by manifoldness despite the fact that images are false, while the latter maintain that only the ālayavijnāna is absolute and a natural, or innate cognition (rang bzhin gnyug ma'i shes pa), which leads them to postulate that no images exist at the stage of a buddha. Interestingly, Klong-chen-pa refers to a further subdivision of the Nirmala-Alikārāvādins, namely, those who regard the various aspects of mind, such as its cause and result, as absolute and those who regard only self-luminosity as being so. It seems, however, that this distinction, which I have not seen elsewhere, does not have any significant implication for the theories of knowledge in the case of a buddha, and I shall therefore not attempt here to further investigate this issue. Klong-chen-pa states:

It (i.e. the Alikārāvāda branch) also has two [subdivisions], namely, those who [postulate cognition that is] (1) with stains and (2) those who [postulate cognition that is] pure. The distinction between these two [concerns] differences regarding both the causal and the resultant [levels]. (1) Those who [postulate cognition that is] accompanied by stains maintain that all eight vijnānas on the level of sentient beings are absolute, and that the entire perceptual world and its inhabitants vividly appear at the stage of a buddha. (2) Those who [postulate cognition that is] pure maintain that, on the level of sentient beings, the seven vijnānas which are temporary and adventitious cognitions are conventional, while the ālayavijnāna is [by nature] devoid of increase and decrease and shows no discrepancy regarding modes of grasping (i.e. between that on a sentient being’s level and that on a buddha’s level), and therefore it is absolute, referred to as ‘natural [or] innate (gnyug ma) cognition.’ And at the stage of a buddha, [they maintain], all deceptive appearances of [external] objects cease, just as a dream ceases upon waking up. The experience of not perceiving anything apart from the mind and not conceptualizing anything—merely existing in the form of self-luminous self-cognition—is the dharma-kāya. That which, although it

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42 That the subdivision into dri bcas and dag pa (i.e. dri med) corresponds to Rong-zom-pa’s Alikārāvāda and Nirākārāvāda, respectively, is supported by Klong-chen-pa’s statement in the Theg mchog mdzod (pp. 123.6–124.1), where he splits up the Alikārāvāda into two parts as follows: ‘di la abye na dri bcas rdzun pa bar ’dod pa dang| dri med dag pa bar ’dod pa gnyis las|....

43 Cf. Schmithausen 2005, where reference is made to two opinions regarding the status of the vijnānas, as presented in Hsūn-tṣang’s Ch’eng wei shih lun and in Wōnch’ūk’s Samdhinirmocanasūtraṭīkā, namely, the opinion that all eight vijnānas are false, which is ascribed to Shīramati, and the opinion that only some of them are false, which is ascribed to Dharmapa.ā

44 Yid bzhin mdzod ‘grel (vol. 2, pp. 624.2–625.1): de ’ang bye brag gnyis te| (1) dri bcas pa dang (2) dag pa’o|| de gnyis kyi khyad par ni rgyu dus dang| ‘bras dus kyi khyad par gnyis las| (1) dri bcas pas sms can gyi dus na rnam shes tshogs bryad car don dam du ’dod cing sngs rgyas kyi sa na snod bcud thams cad gsal bar snang bar ’dod do|| (2) dag pa bas ni sms can gyi dus na’ang tshogs bdun gnas gsabs glo bur ba’i shes pa kun rdzob pa yin la| kun gzi rnam shes ni ‘phel ’grib dang ’dun stangs mi mthun pa med pas| rang bzhin gnyug ma’i shes pa zhes don dam dang| sngs rgyas kyi sa na’ang gnyid sad pa na rmi lam zhi ba ltar| ‘khrul ba’i don snang thams cad rgyun chad nas| sms las gzhan ci yang mi snang zhing cir yang mi rtog pa myong ba’ rang rig rgyas gsal tsam du gnas pa de chos sku yin la| de’i byin rlabs kyi dgos po la med kyang gdul bya’i ngor snod bcud thams cad mkhyen pa dang| chos gsungs pa dang| don mdzad par snang ba ni gzugs sku’o|| (2.1) dag pa ba kha cig sms kyi rgyu ’bras la sogs pa’i cha la don dam du ’dod la| (2.2) kha cig myong ba rang gsal las gzhan shes rig thams cad kun rdzob par ’dod do||
does not exist [at all as such], appears to disciples in virtue of it (i.e. the dharmakāya), as knowing the entire receptacle world and its inhabitants, teaching the Dhanna, and acting for the benefit [of others] is the rūpakāya. (2.1) Some of those who [postulate cognition that is] pure maintain that the aspects (cha) of the mind, such as what causes [it] and results [from it], are absolute, while (2.2) some [of them] maintain that all cognition other than the experience of self-luminosity is conventional.

'Jam-dbyangs-bzhad-pa II dKoN-mchog-'jigs-med-dbang-po (1728–1791), in his Grub mtha’ rin chen phreng ba, also refers to the differences between these two positions in terms of both the causal and resultant levels, as follows:45

If one subdivides the Alīkākāravadin, there are two, the Samala- and Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin. Samala-Alīkākāravadin are so designated because they maintain that the nature of mind is tainted with the stains of residual impressions associated with ignorance, while Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin are so designated because they maintain that the nature of mind is not even slightly tainted with the stains of residual impressions associated with ignorance. Alternatively, Samala-Alīkākāravadin are so designated because they maintain that although there is no ignorance at the stage of a buddha, deceptive appearances do exist, while Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin are so designated because they maintain that since there is no ignorance at the stage of a buddha, no deceptive appearances exist either.

The controversy between these two branches of the Alīkākāravadin seems, as far as I have been able to gauge from my limited investigation, not to have been systematized or discussed at length within the Tibetan tradition (or within the Indian tradition either). Details are scarce, and it seems that there has not been complete agreement within the tradition itself. Ḍāng-skya Rol-pa’i-rdo-rje, in his Grub mtha’ mdzes rgyan, presents three interpretations regarding the differences between the Samala- and Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin: (1) According to the first interpretation, the Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin hold that all conventional appearances occur on account of residual impressions associated with ignorance; if the latter are eliminated the former disappear, and thus a buddha is not subject to false appearances. The Samala-Alīkākāravadin believe that conventional appearances have nothing to do with ignorance, and therefore even if the latter is eliminated, the former do not disappear, and thus even a buddha is subject to deceptive appearances. This interpretation is quite similar to the explanations provided by Rog Shes-rab’od and Klong-chen-pa in the passages just cited. (2) According to the second interpretation, the difference between the Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin and Samala-Alīkākāravadin does not lie in whether they accept or reject that a buddha is subject to all appearances, but rather in their adherence to particular authoritative scriptures that lend more or less weight to the notion that everything appears to them. That is, those who lend more weight to it are considered Samala-Alīkākāravadin, while those who lend less are considered Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin. (3) According to the third interpretation, the Samala-Alīkākāravadin maintain that the nature of mind is tainted by stains in the form of dual appearances, while the Nirmala-Alīkākāravadin maintain that stains, being

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45 Grub mtha’ rin chen phreng ba (p. 29.11–18): rnam rdzun pa la dbye na| dri bcas pa dang| dri med rnam rdzun pa gnyis yod| sms kyi ngo bo ma rigs [= rig] pa’i bag chags kyi dri mas bsiad par ‘dod pas na dri bcas pa dang| sms kyi ngo bo ma rig pa’i bag chags kyi dri mas cung zad kyang ma bsiad par ‘dod pas na dri med pa zhes zer| yang na sangs rgyas kyi sa na ma rig pa med kyang ‘khrul pa’i snang ba yod par ‘dod pas na dri bcas pa dang| sangs rgyas kyi sa na ma rig pa med pas ‘khrul snang yang med par ‘dod pas dri med pa zhes zer].
adventitious, do not in the least taint the nature of mind. This interpretation is clearly in agreement with dKon-mchog-'jigs-med-dbang-po's explanation given above. lCang-skya adds that the first two positions are more popular, and that all three positions appeal to various scriptures for support, such as the 'five Yogācāra' works on bhūmi' (sa sde lnga) attributed to Asaṅga,46 the 'seven works on Pramāṇa' (iṣhad ma sde bdun) of Dharmakīrti,47 and Jitāri's works.48

The association of various Indian scholars with these subdivisions, that is, their identification by doxographers as advocates of one or the other theory of knowledge, lacks precision, and in many cases is anachronistic. This issue requires a thorough investigation, which is, however, beyond the scope of this study.49 In this regard, I may

46 That is, the following five sections of the Yogācārabhūmi: the Maulībhūmi, Vinīcayasamgrahāṇī, Vastusamgrahāṇī, Paryāyasamgrahāṇī, and *Vyākhyā(ṣa)samgrahāṇī.

47 That is, the Prāmanavārttika, Prāmanaviśaya, Nyāyabindu, Hetubindu, Sambandhaparīkṣā, Saṃtanāntarasiddhi, and Vādanyāya.

48 Grub mtha’ mādes rgyan (pp. 146.24–147.10): rnam rdzun pa la dri bcas dri med gnyis so|| (1) ‘di nge gnyis kyi khyad par ni kun rdzob kyi snang ba mtha’ dag ma rig pa’i bag chags kyi dbang gis snang ba yin pas| de log na ldog pa’i phyir sangs rgyas la rdzun snang med par ‘dod pa dri med pa dang| kun rdzob kyi snang ba ni ma rig pa dang ‘bre la gang yang yod pas de log kyam ni ldog pa’i phyir sangs rgyas la yang rdzun snang yod par ‘dod pa dri bcas pa yin no zhis pa’i bshad tshul gcig dang| (2) yang rnam mkhyen la thams cad snang mi snang la khyad par med kyi tshul de mang du bsgrub mi bsgrub kyi dri bcas dri med du bzhag pa st| dper na nyan rang rigs nges kyi cho kyi dbag med ma rtogs par mthun kyam de ldar bshad pa mang mi mang gis kyi bshad med rtogs pa yod med pa dang par ‘dod pa’i rang rgyud pa gnyis su grags pa bzhi no|| zhes pa’i bshad tshul gcig dang| (3) yang res kyi ngo bo la gnyis snang gi dri ma bslad par ‘dod pa dri bcas dang| dri ma glo bur ba yin pas sems kyi ngo bo la cung zad kyam ma bslad par ‘dod pa dri med pa yin no zhes pa’i bshad tshul gsum byung ba’i snga ma gnyis grags che zhirugs gsum kas sa sde dang iṣhad ma sde bdun de ta sogs kyi lung mang du ‘dren no||.

49 To give some examples of such associations, one could name Ārya Vimuktisena, Santarakṣita, and Kamalaśīla, who have commonly been considered by Tibetan doxographers as Satyakaravadins. See, for example, Seyfort Ruegg 1981, pp. 89 & 92, n. 296. In the *Perajyāvākārṇasopānāvaka (P, fol. 427b3–4; S, vol. 43, p. 871.11–12), though, Śāntarakṣita and his followers are said to be Nīrākāravadins. Regarding the advocates of the Samala-Ālikārāvāda branch, doxographers commonly name Jitāri (Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 100) and Viniṭadeva (Blo gsal grub mtha’, fol. 84b6), and as advocates of the Nīrāmala-Ālikārāvāda, Haribhadra (Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 102), Kambalapāda (ibid., p. 106), and Dharmottara (Blo gsal grub mtha’, fol. 84b6). Note, however, that Dharmottara is called by Klong-chen-pa simply an Ālikārāvādin (Yid bzhin ma’grub ‘gre, p. 623.3). According to Seyfort Ruegg 2002, p. 204, Tsong-kha-pa took Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva to be Sākāravadins, while acknowledging the fact that they did not express themselves clearly on the matter. For other attempts by Tibetan doxographers to classify various Indian scholars under one of these categories, see Seyfort Ruegg 1981, passim. See also Funayama 2007, pp. 190–192, where the problem of projecting later views onto earlier material and individuals is discussed, with particular reference to Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, and Dharmakīrti as well.

As to Śāntarakṣita’s position regarding the existence of images, see Ichigō 1989, pp. 171–179, where his position on self-cognition is presented, and the issue of a buddha’s knowledge also touched upon. Ichigō contrasts his position with those of the Sākāravadins and the Nīrākāravadins of the Yogācāra school in the form of a table, as follows (ibid, p. 178): The Sākāravadins maintain that, in the case of ordinary beings on the conventional level, images are true and real, and that although images are faultily produced, they are accompanied by a real and true knowledge; while

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Chapter Three: The Controversy Surrounding the Existence of Gnosis

refer again to I'Cang-skya Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje, who, in his Grub mtha' mdzes rgyan, briefly discusses this problem. According to him, Bodhibhadra (fl. around 1000) regards Asanga and Vasubandhu as Alīkākāravādins, and Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as Satyākāravādins. With regard to Dharmakīrti, I'Cang-skya remarks that this is not necessarily the case, because his Pramāṇavārttika, although interpreted by Devendrabuddhi and Śākyabuddhi in Satyākāravāda terms, was interpreted by Prajñākārāgupta in line with Nirmala-Alīkākāravāda, and by Dharmottara (fl. around 800) in line with Samala-Alīkākāravāda.51

in the case of a buddha on the ultimate level, images are true and real, and are accompanied by true and real knowledge, that is, mind-only. The Nirākāravādins maintain that, in the case of ordinary beings on the conventional level, images are false and unreal, and that although they are faultily produced, they are accompanied by a real and true knowledge; while in the case of a buddha on the ultimate level, images are false and unreal (i.e. agreeable [and tacitly accepted] only as long as they are not investigated critically; aviccāraikāramanīya: ma briags gcig pu nyams dga' ba), and that they are accompanied by true and real knowledge, namely, non-dual knowledge (advayājñāna). Sāntarakṣita, according to I'cchigō, maintains that images are equivalent to knowledge, and that the two co-arise dependently. In the case of ordinary beings on the conventional level, the images (and thus knowledge) are false and entail error or delusion, whereas in the case of a buddha on the ultimate level, the images (and thus knowledge) are true and entail no error or delusion, and the knowledge is that of the non-manifestation of non-dual knowledge (advayājñānānirākhābājñāna). Nonetheless, Sāntarakṣita's position regarding the existence of images and a buddha's knowledge requires more consideration. It is notable that while the controversy regarding a buddha's knowledge among the Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas merely concerns the conventional level, I'cchigō refers to Sāntarakṣita's position not only in terms of the conventional level in the case of ordinary beings, where he comes across as an Alīkākāravādin, but also in terms of the absolute level in the case of a buddha, where he seems to be portrayed as a Satyākāravādin. On Sāntarakṣita's and Kamalaśīla's position on the existence of images, see also Keira 2004, pp. 1-2, n. 3, 144, n. 234, 146, n. 237, and Funayama 2007.

50 See also Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 61, where Dignāga is referred to as a Sākāravādin/Satyākāravādin, and Kajiyama 1965, p. 394, where note is taken of Bodhibhadra's classification of Dignāga as a Sākāravādin and Asanga as a Nirākāravādin. Interestingly, Atiśa, in his *Ratnakarāṇodgāthā (P, fol. 123b3-6; D, fol. 110b3-5; S, vol. 64, pp. 322.19-323.5; cf. the version in the Jo bo rje'i gsung 'bum, pp. 799.11-16), has Asanga (i.e. in the Viniścayasamgrahani) asserting that on the absolute level gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha: slob dpon 'phags pa thogs med kyi zhal snga nas kyang 'di litar sms can thams cad mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas nas chos kyi skur gyur pa de'i tshe sangs rgyas ma lus pa thams cad chos kyi dbying rnam par dag pa nyid du gyur nas de'i ngang nyid [D om.] du bzhugs so zhes bsdu bo gtan la dbab par gsungs pas slob dpon 'di yang dag par na gnyis su med pa'i ye shes kyang mi bzhed la| rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes kyi rjes la thob pa yang mi bzhed de| sa gsum pa'i dbang phyug bnyes pas chos thams cad skye ba med par thugs su chud pa'i phyir ro].

51 The fact that there were various attempts by later Indian and Tibetan authors to classify Dharmakīrti under one or the other of these groups has already been pointed out by several scholars. Considering the fact that these categories were coined after Dharmakīrti, such differences are comprehensible. Dreyfus, for example, refers, on the one hand, to mKhas-grub-rje dGe-legs-dpal-bzang (1385–1438), who, while acknowledging the fact that “there is contradictory evidence and that different Indian commentators have come to conflicting conclusions,” himself asserts that Dharmakīrti was a Satyākāravādin, and, on the other, to rGyal-tshab-rje, Sa-paṅ, Go-rams-pa bSod-nams-seng-ge (1429–1489), and the Seventh Karma-pa Chos-grags-rgya-mtsho (1450/54–1506), who classify him as an Alīkākāravādin. See Dreyfus 1997, pp. 434–435 and the following paragraphs, where the reasons for these divergent views are discussed, and Funayama 2007, p.
He adds that Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, too, should not necessarily be regarded as Alikākāravādins, for in Bhavya’s Tarkajvālā, which negates their positions, they are presented as Satyakāravādins.52 IČang-skya refers more broadly to ‘Jam-dbyangs-bzhad-pa’s statement that one finds arguments in favour of both Satyākāra and Alikākāra in authoritative scriptures as well as logical treatises, and that according to the positions of all Indian and Tibetan scholars, including Tsong-kha-pa and his two main disciples, mKhas-grub-rje and rGyal-tshab-rje, one should never generalize (khyab mnyam byas nas sbyar ba) in this regard, a stance which he considers to be a very good one and which he thus himself adopts.53 To be noted here perhaps is that some Indian and Tibetan scholars doxographically place the Alikākāra/Nirlikāra higher then the Satyākāra/Sākāra, and see the former as a link or a transition between Yogācāra and Madhyamaka.54

To summarize this section, what we see here is a perfect correlation between how the epistemological principle is conceived by the various positions on the level of ordinary beings and on the level of a buddha. The positions among the adherents of Madhyamaka and Mantrayāna as presented by Rong-zom-pa may thus be summarized as follows: (1) Those who adopt none of the theories of knowledge of the Yogācāra school maintain that even on the conventional level no mental element whatsoever exists at the stage of a buddha, and thus, needless to say, no images of objects (position 1 in the Sangs sa chen mo). (2) Those who adopt Yogācāra theories of knowledge maintain the existence of some kind of a mental element at the stage of a buddha on the conventional level, namely, (2.1) those who follow the theory of knowledge of the Nirmala-Alikākāra


52 See also the *Perojāvākāraṇasopānanavaka (P, fol. 427b2-3; S, vol. 43, p. 871.9), where Asaṅga and Vasubandhu are classified as Sākāraṇa.

53 Grub mtha’ mdzes rgyan (p. 144.1–11): gsum pa rnām bden rdzun gyi khyad par bshad pa la| dangos dang de’i dbye ba bshad pa’o]| dang po ni| slob dpon byang chub bzung pos thogs med yab sras rnām rdzun pa dang phyogs glang yab sras rnām bden par bshad mod| ’on kyang sde bdun mdo dang bcas pa’i dgongs pa ni rnām bden pa yin par ma nges te| lha dbang blo dang shākyā blos rnām ‘grel gyi dgongs pa rnām bden du bkral zhiṅ| shes rab ’byung gnas spas [= sbrt] pas rnām rdzun dri med| slob dpon chos mchog gis rnām rdzun dri bcas su bkral ba’i phyir rol| thogs med yab sras kyi dgongs pa yang rnām rdzun du ma nges te| rtog ge ’bar bar de dag gi bzhed pa ’gog skabs rnām bden pa’i ’dod pa bshad pa’i phyir rol| des na lung rigs rjes ’brang gnyis ka re re’i gzhung na’ang rnām bden rdzun gnyis gnyis kyi rnām bzhag ’ong ba rje yab sras sogs rgya bod kyi mchas pa kun ’dod pas ’di gnyis so sor khyab mnyam byas nas sbyar bar nam yang mi bya’o]| zhes rje bitsun dam pa ’jam dbyangs bzhad pa’i rdo rjes gsungs pa shin tu legs pas kho bo cag kyang de kho na ltar ’dod do|.

54 See Seyfert Ruegg 1981, p. 92, n. 296 and Keira 2004, pp. 1–2, n. 3, where reference to Śantaraksita as having a similar view is made; Keira 2004, pp. 45–46, with reference to Kamalaśīla in this same regard. See also Klong-chen-pa’s Grub mtha’ mdzod (p. 106.2) and Mi-pham’s dBu ma rgyan ‘grel (p. 198.4–5). Note that according to Mi-pham the theory advocated by the Alikākāra/Śantaraksita contradicts convention, and therefore the view of the Satyākāra/Śantaraksita should be preferred on the conventional level (see his Tshad ma rnām ’grel bshad pa, pp. 631.6–633.2). See also Dreyfus 1997, p. 557, n. 14, where it is stated that Go-rams-pa describes the Nirākāra/Śantaraksita view as the best among the views of the Mind-Only school.
branch postulate the non-existence of images at the stage of a buddha (hence their designation by Rong-zom-pa as Nirākāravādins) and thus maintain only the existence of non-conceptual gnosis on this level (position 2 in the Sangs sa chen mo), (2.2) those who follow the theory of knowledge of the Samala-Alīkāravāda branch postulate the existence of false images even at the stage of a buddha (hence their designation by Rong-zom-pa as Alīkāravādins) and thus maintain the existence of both non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis on this level, but, as the images are false, no objects of perception supposedly truly exist (position 3 in the Sangs sa chen mo), and (2.3) those who follow the theory of knowledge of the Satyākāravāda branch postulate the true existence of images at the stage of a buddha and thus maintain not only the existence of both gnoses on this level, but also the true existence of various objects of perception (positions 4–6 in the Sangs sa chen mo). That is, the existence of only non-conceptual gnosis implies the non-existence of any images whatsoever, the existence of pure mundane gnosis requires the existence of images, be they true or false, and the existence of anything besides these two gnoses implies the existence of true images.

A few words should perhaps be said here as to how these images arise at all. Schmithausen has showed (primarily on the basis of Hsiian-tsang’s Ch’eng wei shih lun and other Chinese sources of the Yogācāra school) that, in the case of ordinary beings, it is agreed that images associated with the seven vijñānas—including those of material things, developed from the sense perceptions—are based on an objective support, or ‘original,’ found in the ālāyavijñāna. Concerning the images that develop from the ālāyavijñāna, such as images of one’s own body and the surrounding material world, there seems to be disagreement. According to some, the ālāyavijñāna has no remote objective support (no ‘original’) but is determined by karmic forces alone, while according to others, at the very least the images of those parts of the external world that are experienced in the same manner by numerous sentient beings are based on an ‘original,’ understood as images developed by minds of other beings.55 As has been already stated, this is regarded as applicable also in the case of a buddha, as far as his perception of the external world is concerned. Nonetheless, here it is not only images of the impure world that can develop and be perceived, but also images of pure phenomena, such as buddha-Bodies and buddha-fields.56

55 For a detailed discussion on this issue, see Schmithausen 2005, pp. 25–47. As noted earlier (chapter one, n. 15), Rong-zom-pa knew about this discussion among the Yogācāras, for he, when discussing the subdivisions of Vijñaptimātra (or Yogācāra) in his ltā ba'i brjed byang (B, fol. 150b4–5; D, p. 15.16–18), briefly mentions the subdivisions of rnam pa 'dra gzhi yod par smra ba and [rnam pa] 'dra gzhi med par smra ba, which appear to be referring to those who advocate a remote objective support, or an ‘original,’ from which images arise and those who do not, respectively.

56 Schmithausen 2005, pp. 55–56. See also the appendix in ibid., pp. 57–64, for a translation and discussion of passages from the Buddhābhūmīyupadeśa and the Ch’eng wei shih lun, in which the pure vijñāna associated with the mirror-like gnosis is said to develop in such a way as to manifest images of buddha-Bodies and buddha-fields and the taught Dharma as its objects, to produce the clusters of mind and mental factors associated with the other gnoses of a buddha as different modes of activity (ākāra), and to cause the arising of similar images in the minds of others.
4. **A Buddha’s Knowledge (jñāna: ye shes): A Brief Discussion of the Key Terms**

A. On the Tibetan Term *ye shes*

The term jñāna (i.e. ‘knowledge’) is rendered into Tibetan as shes pa, mkhyen pa (the honorific form of shes pa), and ye shes. While mkhyen pa is used as a verbal noun (especially in terms such as thams cad mkhyen pa, mkhyen pa’i stobs and the like) to denote the knowledge of the buddhas and the Noble Ones, the noun ye shes is employed in a more technical sense to denote this same knowledge. This is particularly the case with the different types of a buddha’s (or a Noble One’s) knowledge, which are often classified into groups collectively referred to as ye shes gnyis, bzhi, lnga, and drug. The honorific form mkhyen pa and the term ye shes were apparently systematically introduced only at a later stage, in conformity with the rules laid down during the great revision, which include, among other things, a list of standard translations of Sanskrit terms and phrases into Tibetan, and according to which honorific terms should be used in connection with buddhas and Noble Ones. A comparison of different versions of the same text belonging to different stages of revision shows that the word shes pa in earlier versions was later replaced with the words ye shes or mkhyen pa when this referred to a buddha’s (or a Noble One’s) knowledge. One wonders, however, where the element ye, which has no equivalent in the original Sanskrit term jñāna, comes from. The term ye shes is traditionally explained as (1) the primordially existing knowledge, that is, the cognition characterized by emptiness and luminosity which inherently exists in the mental continuum of all beings, and as (2) the knowledge possessed by the Noble Ones. Thus the component ye has etymological significance only in the first case—where ye shes is conceived as primordial knowledge, that is, the ‘mind in its natural state’ (gnyug sems), and as the ‘actual nature of the mind’ (sems nyid) as opposed to the obscured mind of an ordinary being—but not in the second case, where knowledge is conceived as something generated and conditioned.

As already pointed out by Wangchuk, although almost all works expounding the tathāgatagarbha theory were translated in the early period of propagation and although this theory and related ideas are found already in early rNying-ma literature, “it seems to have played quite an insignificant role and never gained prominence or an independent status” during this period. Yet it is of course possible that the notion of a primordially pure mind, which is found already in early Buddhist literature and which was emphasized by later Indian Buddhist traditions (including the Tathāgatagarbha tradition) and the Tantric philosophical system of the rNying-ma school in Tibet, was behind the coining of the term ye shes, which, despite the suggestion of primordiality, was then used also in contexts where the absolute is not necessarily conceived positively.

57 See the introductory remarks to the sGra sbyor (A, pp. 3.25–4.3; B, p. 73.1–6). See also Simonsson 1957, p. 257, §22.

58 For some examples in which the word shes pa was replaced by the word ye shes, see Skilling 1997, Appendix 3, p. 106.

59 See, for example, the Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.v. ye shes: (1) ye nas gnas pa’i shes pa ste sems can thams cad kyi rgyud la rang bzhin gys gnas pa’i stong gsal gyi rig pa, (2) ’phags pa’i mkhyen pa.

60 Wangchuk 2004, p. 179.
Could it be, however, that the element ye in the word ye shes initially meant something else—something along the lines, for instance, of the meaning of the component ye as ‘all,’ ‘total,’ or ‘very,’ as reflected in the Tibetan rendering of the Sanskrit words sarvathā (wholly, totally)⁶¹ and atyantam (excessive, very great, perpetual, absolute, etc.),⁶² or as ‘certainly’ or ‘definitely’?⁶³ Although the use of the

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⁶¹ MW, s.v. sarva; sarvathā: ‘in every way,’ ‘in every respect,’ ‘by all means,’ ‘altogether,’ ‘entirely,’ ‘in the highest degree,’ ‘exceedingly.’

⁶² MW, s.v. atyantam: ‘beyond the proper end or limit’; ‘excessive,’ ‘very great,’ ‘very strong’; ‘endless,’ ‘unbroken,’ ‘perpetual’; ‘absolute,’ ‘perfect.’

⁶³ See Mvy, no. 6407, where the term sarvathā is rendered as rnam pa thams cad and as ye, and Kosa-Index, s.v. ye, where atyantam is given as its Sanskrit equivalent. See also TSD, s.v. ye, which likewise gives the Sanskrit equivalent of the syllable ye as sarvathā. The TSD, further, offers one term in which the word sarvathā is rendered in Tibetan as ye (see s.v. ye med pa, for which the Sanskrit equivalent given is sarvathābhāva (i.e. ‘complete non-existence’). The Tshig mdzod chen mo gives three meanings for the syllable ye: (1) beginning, origin, root (thog ma, ggood ma, rtsa ba), (2) constant, perpetual (gtan, nam rgyun), and (3) certain, definite (nges par, mtha’ gcig). Note also the three meanings given in the Tshig mdzod chen mo for the word yong ye, which is listed there as an old term (rnying) and is apparently another form of ye: (1) certainly or definitely (nges par), (2) in all aspects or completely (rnam pa kun tu), and (3) from the beginning or primarily (rtsa ba nas, gtan nas). The brDa dkor gser gyi me long, s.v. yong ye provides the same meanings. See also ibid., s.v. yod ye, which again has the meaning of ‘certainly’ and ‘totally’: nges par dang rnam pa kun tu zhes pa’i don te. One wonders, however, if yod here is merely a misreading of yong. Compare Klong-chen-pa’s explanation of the syllable ye as a component of the term ye grol in his Tshig don mdzod (p. 266.2-3): ye ni khyab pa spyir brang bas byas pa dang rtsol ba med pa’i don te| gang nas kyang ma byung| gang du’ang ma song| gar yang gnas pa med pa’i don to]].

Also interesting in this context is the rendering of the Tibetan word ye shes into the Zhang-zhung language as ha ra, for the light it may shed on the original meaning of the syllable ye. The Zhang-zhung syllable ha, here corresponding to the Tibetan syllable ye, must mean in this case thams cad, that is, ‘all’ or ‘everything,’ as in the word ha tan, which is rendered into Tibetan as ye nyid. See Martin 2004, s.v. ha ra and ha tan. Also note Martin’s translation of ha ra (i.e. ye shes) as ‘total knowledge.’ (The component ra in the word ha ra apparently is akin to the second syllable in the Zhang-zhung word da ra, which is similarly rendered into Tibetan as shes pa. Note, however, that the word shes pa seems to be commonly expressed in the Zhang-zhung language as shi shin, she shin, sha shin, shin, or shen. See the respective entries in ibid.) Nevertheless, cf. Nyima 2003, s.v. ha sangs kyin, where ha is translated as ‘primordial’ (ye sangs rgyas, ‘primordial enlightenment’). The term ha ra, for all that, is translated by Nyima simply as ‘wisdom’ (ibid., s.v. ha ra). It should be added here that it is difficult in these cases to say whether Zhang-zhung words such as ha sangs kyin are mechanical translations from the Tibetan. The syllable ye itself occurs in the Zhang-zhung language but in a different sense than in Tibetan. It is used there as a derivative particle (Martin 2004, s.v. ye and *ye) and also as the equivalent of Tibetan dbyings. See ibid., s.v. gyer mu ye (Tib. bon gyi dbyings), where Martin states that ‘mu ye, or perhaps simply ye alone, is Tibetan dbyings’; cf. also ibid., s.v. ma ye: (dbyings) space, sphere; and s.v. mu ye: (nam mkha’, mkha’ dbyings, dbyings) heaven, space, sphere, region (note that mu alone also corresponds to Tib. dbyings, mkha’, etc.). In the case of the term mu ye, one wonders whether there is a connection with the Tibetan mu med and its synonym mtha’ yas (‘without limits’). Nevertheless, it seems that the syllable ye in Zhang-zhung is occasionally equivalent to Tibetan ye (ibid., s.v. ye mig: (ye shes, gsal mthong?!)). Cf. also Nyima 2003, s.v. ye?, for which the Tibetan equivalents provided are shes rig and bkra shis pa, translated by Nyima as ‘conception’ and ‘auspicious word,’ respectively; and
component ye in this meaning seems to be rather rare, it is worth pondering whether it was not initially so used in the term ye shes. This would mean that the term ye shes, introduced in order to distinguish it qualitatively from other kinds of knowledge, initially meant ‘complete’/‘total’ or ‘certain’/‘definite’ knowledge, perhaps in the sense of ‘omniscience’ (sarva-jñāna: thams cad mkhyen pa). Also notable in this context is the rendering of the Sanskrit word jñāmin, a term designating a fortune-teller or an astrologer (lit. ‘one with knowledge’ or ‘wise’), as ye mkhyen, which, I believe, literally means ‘one who knows [the future] definitely’ or ‘one who knows all’ rather than ‘one who primordially knows.’

I have not, however, been able to locate any Tibetan source to support such an etymology for the term ye shes. On the contrary, whatever the original meaning of the component ye in the word ye shes may have been, it seems that the tradition takes it to be ‘primordial’—on the basis of speculative etymology (though not necessarily by definition) or as a result of a semantic shift—or simply disregards it altogether. In order, however, to differentiate between these two meanings of the term ye shes, I commonly translate the terminological ye shes as ‘gnosis’; and only when the component ye is to be taken literally, as ‘primordial gnosis.’

s.v. ye thim, for which the Tibetan equivalent provided is ye shes shangs, translated by Nyima as “omniscient nose which smells all aromatic scents.”

64 Compare the term ye 'byams, which is an old designation for emptiness (śūnyatā: stong pa nyid) and is still used in the rNying-ma tradition in this sense. Although the term is often translated as ‘primordial field,’ such an understanding does not seem to be lexically attested. It is conceivable that here, too, the component ye was initially employed in the sense of ‘totality.’ In this case, the term ye 'byams would literally mean ‘total/complete openness/expanse,’ that is, ‘emptiness.’ As in the case of the term ye shes, however, I have not been able to locate any Tibetan source to support such an etymology. Note also the meaning of the Zhang-zhung word ye sangs, which according to Martin 2004, s.v., is equivalent, among other things, to Tibetan stong, that is, ‘empty,’ ‘void.’

65 See the Saṃ bod shan sbyar, s.v. dṣṇyā ninu, dṣṇyā nī, and dṣṇyā nī na (p. 336): ye mkhyen te skar mkhan. The Tshig mdzod chen mo gives three meanings for the term ye mkhyen: (1) primordial knowledge (thog ma nas shes pa), which seems, however, to simply be a literal explanation, (2) a certain Bon deity (bon gyi lha zhig), and (3) an astrologer (skar rtsis mkhan), in which case ye mkhyen is dubbed a metonym (mngon brjod). The etymology of the term ye mkhyen in the Bon-po context is not known to me. It is conceivable, however, that it was coined as a Bon-po parallel to the term ye shes. Note also the Bon-po terms ye gshen, which designates a buddha, and ye sang dkar po, which denotes a particular Bon-po deity (Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.v. ye gshen: sangs rgyas te bon lugs kyi tha snyad cig, and s.v. ye sang dkar po: (1) bod kyi gna’ rabs pa’i rus rgyud cig, and (2) bon po’i lha zhig).

66 In order to reflect the distinction made in the Tibetan language in the translation of the word jñāna, I render the words in question, shes pa and ye shes, differently: shes pa as ‘knowledge’ (but occasionally also ‘cognition’) and ye shes as ‘gnosis.’ I opt for the word gnosis (lit. ‘knowledge’) in spite of its connotations of Gnosticism in the context of Christianity (which, needless to say, do not arise in the context of Buddhism). This allows for a distinct rendering of the word ye shes, which refers to knowledge produced through meditative practice and has a soteriological connotation, particularly when it is used terminologically. I commonly reserve the word ‘insight’ to render the word prajñā (shes rab), although it must be said that in the case of a buddha, jñāna and prajñā virtually have the same meaning and are often used as synonyms. In general discussions, be it noted, particularly in an epistemological context, I translate jñāna as ‘knowledge’ or ‘cognition’ also in regard to a buddha.
Chapter Three: The Controversy Surrounding the Existence of Gnosis

B. Non-conceptual Gnosis and Pure Mundane Gnosis

At the centre of discussion stand two kinds of gnosis known as ‘non-conceptual gnosis’ (nirvikalpañjñāna: rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes) and ‘pure mundane gnosis’ (suddhalaukikajñāna: dag pa ’jig rten pa’i ye shes). In the following, I shall attempt to provide a general idea of these two kinds of gnosis by delineating their main characteristics. Rong-zom-pa, in his Sangs sa chen mo, employs the terms ‘non-dual gnosis’ (gnyis su med pa’i ye shes: advayajñāna) and ‘self-cognition’ (rang rig pa: svasavijnajñāna), two terms particularly used by the Nirākāra-vādins to describe a buddha’s knowledge, as synonyms of non-conceptual gnosis. Elsewhere the terms ‘knowing [phenomena] as [they actually] are’ (ji snyed pa’i mkhyen pa) and ‘gnosis of meditative absorption’ (mnyam bzhag ye shes: samāhitajñāna) are also employed to designate this type of gnosis. In contrast, the terms ‘knowing [phenomena] to the full extent’ (ji snyed pa’i mkhyen pa) and ‘subsequently attained gnosis’ (rjes las thob pa’i ye shes: prsthalaubhajñāna), that is, gnosis of the post-meditative state, are employed to designate pure mundane gnosis. As is already evident from the synonyms, non-conceptual gnosis is characterized by non-duality, and being the gnosis of meditative absorption, is regarded as the cognitive subject of the absolute, and thus as supramundane, while pure mundane gnosis, being the gnosis gained or occurring following such a meditative event, is considered the cognitive subject of the world characterized by manifoldness, and thus mundane, albeit pure. The latter, however, is

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67 On this term, see the following note.

68 On the term yathāvadbhāvikatā (ji lta ba bzhin du yod pa nyid), see BHSD, s.v.: ‘true or full actualization, state of coming to be truly actualized as the thing is or should be.’ On the term yāvadbhāvikatā (ji snyed pa yod pa nyid), see ibid., s.v.: ‘actualization to the full extent, state of becoming actualized in full.’ For references to these two terms in Sanskrit Buddhist works such as the Bodhisattvabhumi and Śrīvakabhumi, see ibid. s.v., and TSD, s.v. ji lta ba bzhin du yod pa nyid, ji snyed pa yod pa nyid, ji snyed pa, ji lta ba, and other entries containing similar terms. See also Sakuma 1990, vol. 2, §A.1.4.3, containing an edition of the pertinent passage from the Śrīvakabhumi, the Tibetan and Chinese translations, and an annotated German translation of it. See also Seyfort Ruegg 2002, pp. 251–252, where further references to these terms in Indian sources and in works by Tsong-kha-pa and mKhas-grub-rje are provided.

69 Hence one also comes across the designation de bzhin nyid kyi ye shes, as in the Suvannaprabhāsāsūtra. See Nobel 1944, pp. 202–203 (the Tibetan version translated from the Sanskrit), where further the term yang dag pa’i ye shes (samyajñāna) is found with reference to non-conceptual gnosis; Nobel 1958, vol. 2, pp. 43–45 (the Tibetan version translated from the Chinese). For a German translation of the Chinese version including references to the Tibetan translations, see Nobel 1958, vol. 1, pp. 46–49.

70 See, for example, Vasubandhu’s auto-commentary on Vīṃśatikā 17cd (Lévi 1925, p. 9.14–16), where non-conceptual gnosis is referred to as supramundane (lokottara) as opposed to the ‘subsequently attained gnosis,’ which is mundane (laukika). See also Arnold 2003, p. 31, n. 54.
occasionally also said to be both mundane and supramundane (laukikalokottara: 'jig rten pa dang 'jig rten las 'das pa) at the same time. 71

The Nirvikalpapravesadhāraṇī states that non-conceptual gnosis consists in the elimination of all dualistic conceptions, and that it is immaterial, undemonstrable (bstan du med pa: amidarṣana), has no substratum, is not subject to appearances, is incognizable, and has no locus. 72 It is further stated that a bodhisattva who abides in the ‘domain’ of non-conceptual gnosis perceives all phenomena, through the non-conceptual gnosis, as being similar to the orb of space and, through the subsequently attained gnosis, like an illusion, mirage, dream, hallucination, echo, reflection, [the reflection of] the moon in water, and a phantom. Furthermore, his experience of the great bliss is said to intensify, as do his mental excellences, insight, and gnosis, and his command of ‘great expounding’. 73

The eighth chapter of the Mahāyānasamgraha, which is concerned with nirvikalpajñāna, 74 describes non-conceptual gnosis as a special feature of superior insight

For further references to texts where the post-meditative gnosis is qualified as mundane, or pure [but] mundane, see Schmithausen 1971, p. 162.

71 As noted in Schmithausen 1971, p. 162, such a statement is found, for example, in the Ratnagotravibhāga and the Viniścayasaṃgrahāṇī.

72 See also the list of attributes found in the Kāśyapaparivarta, §56, and the similar description of tathātā or parinīcpana in the Viniścayasaṃgrahāṇī of the Yogācārabhūmi (P, vol. ‘i, fol. 28b5–7; D, vol. zi, fol. 26b1–3; S, vol. 74, pp. 806.21–807.7). Compare the list of attributes of non-conceptual gnosis found in the Dharmadharmatavibhāga (Mathes 1996, Skt.: p. 103, lines 105–107, Tib.: p. 85, lines 440–443).


74 An edition of the Tibetan text and an annotated translation into French are found in Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, pp. 74–81, and vol. 2, pp. 232–258, respectively. A translation into English based on the Chinese translation by Paramārtha is found in Keenan 1992, pp. 93–100. For a discussion of
and clearly distinguishes it from the following five things: (1) non-focusing of attention / non-mentioning (yid la mi byed pa: amanasikāra), (2) going beyond the stage that involves conceptualization (rtog pa: kalpa/vitarka) and analysis (dpyod pa: vicāra), (3) coming to rest—that is, the cessation—of notions (‘du shes: samjña) and sensations (tshor ba: vedana), (4) materiality (gzugs kyi ngo bo nyid: rūpasvabhāva), and (5) the objectification/description (bkra bar ’dzin pa: citrākāra) of reality. In other words, as Schmithausen has pointed out, non-conceptual gnosis does not mean the cessation of the mental factors. This gnosis, although not characterized by volitional impulses or any reflective actions and mental ‘agitations,’ is intended, and it clearly and directly experiences its object, that is, true reality, as being of its own nature without the object–subject dichotomy.

Furthermore, the Mahāyānasamgraha states that the object of non-conceptual gnosis is the inexpressibility of phenomena, that is, their lacking a self (nairātmya) and being true reality (tathatā), and that this gnosis is the substratum of the subsequent salvific activities of the bodhisattvas, for they increase on

the contents of this chapter, see Arnold 2003. For another English translation of this chapter together with a commentary by Gadjin Nagao, see Kawamura 1991.

75 Mahāyānasamgraha 8.§1 (Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, p. 75): rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes ni lhag pa’i shes rab kyi khyad par du bsta bar bya’o].
   byang chub sms dpa’ rnam kyi shes||
   rnam rtog med pa’i ngo bo nyid[|
   rnam pa lnga ni rnam spangs shing[|
   yang dag don la bkra ’dzin med[.

This passage is based on the Viññāsāramgrahāni of the Yogācārabhūmi (P, vol. ‘i, fol. 29a5–b5; D, vol. zi, fol. 27a1–7; S, vol. 74, pp. 808.3–809.4).


78 Mahāyānasamgraha 8.§5 (Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, pp. 75–76):
   byang chub sms dpa’ rnam kyi shes||
   rnam rtog med pa’i dmigs pa ni[|
   chos rnam brjod du med pa nyid[|
   bdag med de bzhin nyid kyang de]].
account of it.79 As we shall see later, this notion of non-conceptual gnosis as the substratum of salvific activities figures significantly in the controversy regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha.80

In his Theg tshul, Rong-zom-pa defines gnosis (referring thereby to non-conceptual gnosis) as free from conceptual thoughts and duality, and thus also free from appearances. He states:81

As for the characteristics of gnosis, [gnosis] arises as having the characteristic of being free from conceptual thoughts involving an object–subject dichotomy, and therefore [it] cannot be a factor conducive to appearances. It is, for example, just like the blazing fire [at the end of] a world period (kalpāgni: bskal pa'i me), [which] cannot be a factor conducive to the emergence of factors of evolution.

In the same work, pure mundane gnosis is defined by Rong-zom-pa as a cognition characterized by duality, since it is accompanied by false appearances, but a correct cognition for all that. Yet he explicitly states that this gnosis is not a factor conducive to appearances, comparing it to fire that consumes wood, which is here analogous to appearances:82

Pure mundane gnosis is accompanied by dual appearances, and it arises on account of basic wholesome virtues that are ‘pure as regards the three spheres.’83 Therefore, although [it] indeed arises on account of appearances, its characteristic is that despite [its] being

79 Mahāyānasamgraha 8.§8 (Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, p. 76):

rnam par mi rtog ye shes de||
byang chub sems dpa'i de rjes la||
thob pa'i spyod pa'i rten yin te||
de ni 'phel bar 'gyur phyir ro||.

80 For references to various treatments of the notion of nirvikalpaññāna in Mahāyāna treatises, see Lamotte 1973, vol. 2, pp. 45*-46* (“note préliminaire” to chapter eight); Arnold 2003, p. 10, n. 2; Makransky 1997, p. 385, n. 64.

81 Theg tshul (B, fols. 25b5-26a1; D, p. 443.16–19): ye shes kyi mtshan nyid ni gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i rnam par rtog pa dang bral ba'i mtshan nyid du skye bas) snang ba'i rkyen du mi 'tsham ste| dper na bskal pa'i me 'bar ba ni mngon par 'du byed pa rnam s kyi 'du 'phrod ky i rkyen du mi 'tsham pa bzhin no||.

82 Theg tshul (B, fol. 26a1–4; D, pp. 443.19–444.3): dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes kyang gzung 'dzin du snang ba dang bcas shing| 'khor gsum yongs su dag pa'i dge ba'i rtsa ba la brten te skye bas| snang ba la brten te skye ba ni yin mod ky| de'i mtshan nyid ni snang ba phyin ci log dang bcas pa yin yang [B lang]| mthong ba phyin ci ma log pa dang ldan pa yin te] [D || dper na mkhas pa rnam s kyi mdun du 'gal me bskor ba bzhin no|| de bas na de'ang rkyen du mi 'tsham ste| dper na bud shing mang po spungs pa las me sbar na| de na shing tshig pa yang yol ma tshig pa yang yol| nye bar tshig pa'ang yol la| me de'ang shing la brten te skye ba yin mod ky i| 'on kyang me de ni shing gi rgyun yun ring du gnas par byed cing rgyas par byed pa'i rkyen ma yin te| shing nyams par byed pa'i rkyen du nye bar gnas so||. This is followed by an argument for the non-existence of pure mundane gnosis at the stage of a buddha based on this definition. For a summary of this passage, see chapter four, §1.

83 See Mvy, no. 2537, where the term trimandalaparīśuddha (‘khor gsum yongs su dag pa) is listed as one of the ten synonyms of ‘pure’ or ‘purified’ (parīśuddha: yongs su dag pa). The term ‘three spheres’ refers to (1) the actor, (2) the act, and (3) the recipient (BHSD, s.v. tri-mandala).
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accompanied by false appearances, [it] is endowed with correct discernment (lit. 'seeing'). It is, for example, like the turning of a fire-[wheel] in front of persons wise [to its mode of production]. Therefore, neither can [pure mundane gnosis] be a factor conducive [to appearances]. For example, if a fire is ignited in much firewood that has piled up, [some of] the wood burns, [some] does not burn, and [some] is about to start burning. Although the fire arises due to the wood, it is not a factor conducive to the prolonged existence of the wood and its spreading. It is, [in fact], a factor conducive to the consumption of the wood. 

Nonetheless, in the case of a buddha the distinction between the state of meditative absorption and the state following it does not exist, for a buddha is said to be permanently in meditative absorption, and thus to abide in the true nature of reality permanently. Therefore, one cannot speak here of two gnoses that operate only one at a time, as in the case of bodhisattvas. When one thus speaks of these two gnoses with reference to a buddha, the gnosises analogous to that of the subsequently attained gnosis, or pure mundane gnosis, of a bodhisattva must be regarded as operating simultaneously with non-conceptual gnosis; that is, these two gnoses must be considered as two aspects of one gnosis. The issue of how these gnoses can operate simultaneously is, however, beyond the scope of this study and will not be treated here. It is in any case clear, importantly,

84 On the example of a whirled torch, see Śāntarakṣita's Madhyamakālaṃkāra 28 as edited and translated in Ichigō 1989, pp. 200–201, where further references are given.

85 Similar analogies have been used, to get their point across, by other authors who advocate the non-existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha. See, for example, the passage in Candragahapāda's Ratnamallā, translated below (“Works by Indian Authors,” §1.D), where conceptual thought is compared to firewood or fuel: the fire-like gnosis becomes extinct once the fuel, that is, conceptual thought, is consumed. See also the passage in *Madhyamaka-Silālā's Drṣṭivibhāga translated below (“Works by Indian Authors,” §1.A); there ignorance is compared to a wick and sesame oil, and the stream of perception to the stream of lamp[light], which will automatically cease once the wick and oil are no longer present.

86 Makransky, who does not go into the question whether a buddha has gnosis, and if so, what kind, but rather starts out with the assumption that he does, states that texts do not explicitly ascribe the two gnoses to a buddha. (By ‘texts’ he means the Mahāyānasamgraha, Mahāyānasūtraśālāṃkāra, Dharmanāṃvibhāga, Buddhahūnivāyākhyāna, and Ratnakotavidvābhāga along with their respective commentaries. See Makransky 1997, p. 392, n. 44, where he lists his own sources for the treatment of this issue.) Nevertheless, he does cite passages from these sources where explicit references are made to a buddha's non-conceptual and subsequently attained gnoses, and states that in the case of a buddha these two gnoses become two aspects of a single gnosis, the one aspect for cognizing reality and the other the phenomenal world, and that one could perhaps say that a buddha's gnosis (or the aspect of it) that cognizes the phenomenal world is termed 'subsequent' because it "logically follows" from non-conceptual gnosis rather than "sequentially following" it. He also points out that the texts link non-conceptual gnosis with the dharmakāya/svābhāvikakāya, and the subsequently attained pure mundane gnosis with the rūpakāyas, the latter being an expression of the former; and just as the rūpakāyas are regarded as being based on the dharmakāya/svābhāvikakāya, so is the subsequently attained pure mundane gnosis, which is identified as the cause of a buddha's manifestations for the benefit of others, regarded as being based on non-conceptual gnosis, which is identified as the cause of one's attainment of Buddhahood. See ibid., pp. 97–100. Makransky further points out that the so-called four gnoses of a buddha, which he designates as "four capacities of a single awareness," are conceived in a similar manner: The mirror-like gnosis (ādarsajñāna: me long gi ye shes), which is described as 'unmoving' (acala: mi g.yo ba), cognizing as it does the unchanging, unconditioned reality, is identified with non-conceptual gnosis, and thus connected with the svābhāvikakāya. The
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that even those who maintain only the existence of non-conceptual gnosis and reject the existence of pure mundane gnosis and the appearances of the world characterized by manifoldness do not deny that a buddha is able to act in the world. Nāgamitra and Jñānacandra, for example, who, as we shall see below, are advocates of this position, clearly state that a buddha is able to act in the world either on the basis of an impulse or impetus created by previous resolutions or, alternatively, spontaneously and effortlessly, like the sun. Non-conceptual gnosis is regarded thus as the basis for a buddha’s salvific activities and the appearances of various pure phenomena to disciples. As has been alluded to above, it seems that among those who asserted the non-existence of images there were some who allowed for a direct perception of the world characterized by manifoldness without the mediation of images. Ye-shes-sde (eighth/ninth cent.), for example, who considers pure mundane gnosis to consist of conceptual thoughts and thus rejects its existence at the stage of a buddha, argues that a buddha cognizes all phenomena vividly and non-conceptually by means of a direct perception. He also argues that although a buddha cognizes the particulars of all phenomena, he knows them to be mere illusions and does not cognitively apprehend them as entities, and that since he does not grasp them as images, no object–subject dichotomy occurs in this case.

Furthermore, the debate regarding the existence of pure mundane gnosis seems to involve different ways of understanding the nature of this gnosis. Apparently, those who negate its existence at the stage of a buddha consider it to consist of conceptual thoughts (vikalpa: rtog pa), while those who maintain its existence commonly do not do so. As we shall see below, one of the main arguments against its existence is that the process of cognizing the manifold phenomenal world presupposes duality and conceptuality. Of the two authors discussed below who explicitly hold to its existence, namely, Śrīgupta in India and Gro-lung-pa in Tibet, the latter adopts the more widespread stance that although pure mundane gnosis cognizes all phenomena—that is, although it is accompanied by deceptive appearances and is bound up with cognitive activity—it is not deluded, because it knows that phenomena are mere illusions. He argues that pure mundane gnosis still exists at the stage of a buddha, even though all false imaginations (yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa: abhūtapiharikalpa), namely, all minds and mental factors associated with samsāra and characterized by the false object–subject dichotomy,87 are indeed exhausted. Similar arguments are found in sGam-po-pa’s presentation of this position, and as we have already seen, such arguments are also put forward by the followers of the Samala-Alikāravāda branch. Nonetheless, it seems that not all proponents of the existence of pure mundane gnosis take the same stance. Some, though probably a small

remaining three gnoses, that is, the gnosis of equality (samatājñāna: mnyam paṅ gyid kyi ye shes), discerning gnosis (pratyaveksaṁajñāna: so sor rtog pa'i ye shes), and the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities (kṛtyāṅsuṁajñāna: bya ba sgrub pa'i ye shes)—which are described as ‘moving’ (cala: g.yo ba), for they operate within the changing, conditioned world—correspond to the various aspects of a buddha’s subsequently attained gnosis, and are thus connected with the rūpakāyas, namely, the first two with the sambhogakāya, and the third with the nirmānakāya. And just as the svābhāvikakāya and non-conceptual gnosis are regarded as the basis for the rūpakāyas and the subsequently attained gnosis, respectively, so is the mirror-like gnosis regarded the basis for the remaining three gnoses. See Makransky 1997, pp. 100–103, where also references are given.

87 For some references to this term, see the pertinent note in the translation of the passage from Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo below (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §2, n. 20).
minority, take pure mundane gnosia to be conceptual also in the case of a *buddha*. Śrīgupta, one of those to maintain the existence of pure mundane gnosia at the stage of a *buddha*, explicitly calls it ‘conceptual gnosia’ (*rnam rtog ye shes*). He does not seem to see any problem whatsoever in a *buddha* having conceptual thoughts, for he takes them to be indispensable for—or, to use his words, the cause of—a *buddha*’s salvific activities in the world. These two stances are two further attempts to solve the problem of a *buddha*’s ability to act in the world—which, according to these scholars, is possible only because he perceives the world characterized by manifoldness on the basis of pure mundane gnosia. The former solves it by proposing a cognition of the world that involves no delusion, and the latter by readily conceding the existence of conceptual thoughts at the stage of a *buddha*.

As I have already stated, I do not intend to go into the epistemological details of the dispute, that is, into questions regarding the process of perception, such as whether such a process is possible without the mediation of an image and whether it can in any sense be free of conceptual thought. Nonetheless, a few words about the term *vikalpa* (*rnam par rtog pa*) seem called for here. The term, no doubt, has several semantic nuances, which are the key to any understanding of the dispute. When Rong-zom-pa explains the words *kalpa* (*rtog pa*) and *kalpita* (*brtags pa*) in his *Theg tshul*, he differentiates in the case of *kalpa* between three terms, namely, *kalpa*, *samkalpa* (*kun tu rtog pa*), and *vikalpa* (*rnam par rtog pa*). He states that, just as in the case of the terms *kleśa* (*nyon mongs pa*), *upakleśa* (nye ba’i *nyon mongs pa*), and *samkleśa* (kun nas *nyon mongs pa*), when one employs these three terms promiscuously (that is, interchangeably), their semantic range varies, and when they are employed individually (or in a strict sense), they commonly have different meanings: *kalpa* has a broad semantic range, being applied to the sacred teachings pertaining to the path, result, and doctrine; *samkalpa* refers to all minds and mental factors within the three realms of existence; and *vikalpa* is applied to a specific type of mental event that is characterized by volitional impulse (*sems pa: cetanā*) and discerning insight (*shes rab: prajñā*), and plays a role in making transactional-conceptual distinctions. He further adds that in certain cases what *samkalpa* expresses is also expressed by the term *vikalpa*. And indeed, the *Viniścayasanggrahanī*
(or more precisely the *Bodhisattvabhūmīvinīścaya*) defines conceptual thoughts as follows:  

What are conceptual thoughts? [They are] phenomena consisting of the mind and mental factors that are active in the three (sāṃskāric) realms.

That is, in the soteriological context, the term *vikalpa* is used in the sense of false imaginations (*yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa: abhūtāparikalpa*) and refers to the entire sāṃskāric psychic apparatus as opposed to that of the Noble Ones, as expressed, for example, in *Madhyāntavibhāga* 1.8ab:  

False imaginations are  
The mind and mental factors of the three realms.

As we have seen, conceptual thoughts at the stage of a *buddha* are, with few exceptions, commonly rejected by traditional Buddhist scholars, not only by those who deny the existence of pure mundane gnosis (since they take it to involve conceptual activity), but also by those who maintain the existence of this gnosis (since they hold, in the case of a *buddha*, that it is free of conceptual activity). Yet, commonly, the absence of conceptual thoughts implies also the absence of appearances of the world characterized by manifoldness. In his lengthy comment on *prapañca* (*spros pa*), Schmithausen remarks that this term has in the first place a subjective meaning, namely, a mental act produced by a subject, but that it also has an objective meaning, that of the manifold phenomena. He further notes that in the first case, the term *prapañca* is associated with (1) terms such

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90 *Viniścayasaṃgrahāṇī* (P, fol. 302b3–4; D, fol. 287b3; S, vol. 74, p. 695.14–16): *rnam par rtog pa gang zhe na kham gsun na spyod pa'i sams dang sams las byung ba'i chos rnams so|]. For more details of the concept of *vikalpa* in the context of the five-vastu theory in the *Viniścayasaṃgrahāṇī*, see Kramer 2005.

91 *Madhyāntavibhāga* 1.8ab (p. 30.2):

\[abhūtāparikalpa ca cittacaittās tridhātukāḥ |.\]

Tib. (P, fol. 44a1–2; D, fol. 40b5–6; S, vol. 70, p. 903.6–7):

\[yang dag ma yin kun rtog ni|\]
\[sams dang sams byung kham gsun pa|].\]

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as ‘speech’ (vāc) and ‘designation’ (abhilāpa), (2) ‘conceptual thoughts’ (vikalpa) and similar expressions, and (3) terms that describe (mental) effort, activity, or restlessness. These three categories are, however, not mutually exclusive, for prapañca is occasionally elucidated with terms from more than one of these categories. These categories indeed seem to be different aspects of the same semantic field, for conceptual thoughts are clearly connected with speech, particularly ‘mental speech’ (manojalpa), and with mental activity and restlessness. Schmithausen also points out that the term vikalpa has several nuances; he refers, for example, to the Abhidharmasamuccaya, where a distinction is made between ‘freedom from conceptual thoughts [representing knowledge that is] non-erroneous’ (aviparyāsanirvikalpatā) and ‘freedom from conceptual thoughts [representing knowledge that is] free from manifoldness (nisprapañcanirvikalpatā). The first is a state free from erroneous conceptual thoughts, and the second a state not only free from erroneous conceptions regarding phenomena, but also free from manifold appearances. Thus, while in the first case vikalpa denotes erroneous conceptual thoughts concerning the content of phenomena (such as clinging to that content and regarding it as true), in the second case it denotes a mental activity that entails reflecting upon and designating phenomena, but is nonetheless devoid of false conceptions. Schmithausen thus provides three explanations for the term nisprapañca (spros pa dang bral ba) or aprapañca (spros pa med pa), as follows: (1) ‘free from the activities of speech or conceptions,’ or, in the sense of an- and nirabhisamskāra, ‘free from any mental activity or restlessness,’ (2) in the case of nisprapañca, ‘being outside of the sphere of conceptions and speech,’ and (3) ‘free from manifold appearances’ (i.e. in the sense of animitta: mtshan ma med pa) or ‘free from determinations that are established through reflection and speech,’ which also includes the meaning of ‘free from object–subject duality.’ The first two meanings presuppose a subjective perspective, and the third an objective one.

It thus appears that those who maintain the existence of pure mundane gnosis but reject the existence of vikalpas take the latter to be erroneous conceptual thoughts, while those who maintain the existence of pure mundane gnosis and admit the existence of vikalpas take them to be referring to the appearance of the world characterized by manifoldness to one’s consciousness, without, however, any false conceptions being involved. Those who reject the existence of pure mundane gnosis do so because they associate it with vikalpas (apparently not only in the sense of manifoldness, but also in the sense of erroneous, deceptive perceptions), and thus conceive it as implying an object–subject dichotomy.

5. Unfixed Nirvāṇa: The Absolute and Its Activity in the World

The main difficulty all along within the theory of unfixed nirvāṇa has been to explain the ability of a buddha to act in the world, which is taken for granted in Mahāyāna. The tension created as a result of the doctrine of unfixed nirvāṇa led to several controversies, the most crucial of them clearly concerning the gnoseological aspect of Buddhahood and the activities of a buddha associated with it. As we have seen, the question of whether a mental element exists was answered differently by the various branches of Madhyamaka on the basis of their preferred theories of knowledge, which they adopted from Yogācāra.

As a result of the different positions regarding the mental element, there arose different views on how a \textit{buddha} is able to act in the world. The main issues in this regard were the following: (1) If a \textit{buddha} does not have a cognitive element how can he relate to the world in the first place? (2) If he has only non-conceptual gnosis, or if he is always in a form of meditative absorption focused on true reality, this implies that he does not perceive the world characterized by manifoldness, and thus in this case, too, is not able to act in it. (3) Does a \textit{buddha}'s knowledge of the world characterized by manifoldness by means of pure mundane gnosis, which is regarded by some as necessary, presuppose conceptualizations and deluded cognitions within a \textit{buddha}?\footnote{Cf. Makransky 1997, pp. 347–348, where five disagreements caused by the tension arising from the doctrine of unfixed \textit{nirvāṇa} are mentioned, the first three of which are related to the issues pointed out here (in addition, Makransky refers to the issues of whether Buddhahood is attained gradually or spontaneously, and how the \textit{tathāgatagarbha} doctrine is to be interpreted). See also \textit{ibid.}, pp. 348–349, where Makransky lists some of the questions said to have been put forward by King Khri-srong-ide-btsan (to a Chinese monk from Dunhuang) in connection with the heated debate arising from the doctrine of unfixed \textit{nirvāṇa}.}

Sundry attempts to solve these problems and to answer these questions are found in the Indian Mahāyāna commentarial and exegetical literature (many of them have been presented by Rong-zom-pa in his treatment of this issue), and it were these attempts that brought about new concepts relating to Buddhahood.\footnote{In the context of his study of the controversy of whether three or four \textit{kāyas} have been taught in \textit{Abhisamayālaṃkāra} 8, for example, Makransky notes that the fact that Dharmamitra interpreted Haribhadra as having presented four different \textit{kāya} theories, and as having accepted them all as equally valid, could be an indication that all of these theories indeed existed in India at that time, and adds that “it appears that a plethora of Buddhological theories abounded” (Makransky 1997, p. 267).} As we have seen in the previous chapter, it can be said that in general there are three main stances regarding the way in which a \textit{buddha} acts for the sake of sentient beings after entering \textit{nirvāṇa} without remains: (1) a \textit{buddha} acts through something that has been left behind, (2) a \textit{buddha}'s activities are a metaphysical reality, which radiates automatically and spontaneously like the sun, a model presupposing a dynamic or ‘fertile’ \textit{nirvāṇa}, and (3) the \textit{buddha}-Bodies are only for the \textit{buddhas}' own sake, and in order to act for the sake of others a \textit{buddha} must emerge from the state of \textit{nirvāṇa}, which is understood in this case to be a kind of a static, ‘sterile,’ or ‘cold’ \textit{nirvāṇa}. All of these three stances are reflected in the various positions presented by Rong-zom-pa in his discussions on the matter. In the following, I shall summarize the positions delineated by Rong-zom-pa, in the form of objections and responses, in his \textit{Sangs sa chen mo}. As is evident from the passages from Indian and early Tibetan sources translated below (see the sections “Works by Indian Authors” and “Works by Tibetan Authors”), these arguments and counter-arguments reflect the various positions current in India and Tibet before and during the time when Rong-zom-pa composed his treatise.

In the portion of his \textit{Sangs sa chen mo} where the mutual criticism (\textit{brgal ba}) of the parties to the debate and their respective responses are discussed, Rong-zom-pa first presents the criticism directed by the proponents of positions 2–6 against those of position 1—who maintain only the existence of the purified \textit{dharmadātu} and thus reject even the existence of non-conceptual gnosis—and the response to the criticism. The main charge made against this position is that if a \textit{buddha} does not possess even non-
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categorical gnosis and if ‘buddha’ is merely another word for the purified dharmadhātu, numerous difficulties would arise. These are summarized under three points as follows:

1. All the teachings of the Victorious One and all the treatises, which teach the special features of the Buddha (or a buddha), particularly those concerning his gnosis and his great compassion, would be devalued.

2. All efforts at gathering the immeasurable accumulations of beneficial resources and gnosis would be in vain, and there would then be no essence to the result, no cause of and no conditions for it, and no substratum, and this would lead to the propagation of the extreme of annihilationism.

3. Such a conception of Buddhahood is no different from the Śrāvakas’ conception of nirvāṇa as total extinction, and this would imply the superfluosity of Mahāyāna.

In response to the critique that such a position would be a devaluation of the Buddha’s teachings, the proponents of position 1 resort to various scriptures, including the Vajracchedikā, the Ramakūta, and the Jñānālokhālamkāra, in which it is taught that a buddha should not be regarded in terms of visible matter or the like, but rather as true reality itself. Citing these works (of—definitive meaning) in support of their position, they claim that since they establish that a buddha does not consist of body, speech, and mind, gnosis, which is characterized by mind (yid: manas), does not exist either. Non-conceptual gnosis, pure mundane gnosis, and all miraculous manifestations of a buddha appear only to deluded ones, and they do not exist as such.

In response to the second critique that such a position would lead to the propagation of annihilationism, they first define the annihilationistic view as postulating that a thing exists at one point but later ceases, and argue that since on the ultimate level nothing exists, not even the attainment of Buddhahood, the term annihilationism is not applicable in that case. They add that although, on the deceptive conventional level, an own-nature, a cause of, and conditions for the diverse Bodies and gnososes do exist, all of which redound to the benefit of sentient beings, they do not have a substratum. The conditions responsible for the arising of the myriad qualities are said to be of two kinds: As dominant conditions (bdag po’i rkyen: adhipatipratyaya), they name the path previously followed by a buddha and the result it leads to, namely, the gathering of countless basic virtuous deeds, the generation of never-ceasing great compassion, and the spontaneous accomplishment of the objective of the never-ceasing great resolution—all this being the path—and the purified dharmadhātu, which is the result. As causal conditions (rgyu’i rkyen: hetupratyaya), they name two factors that apply to sentient beings, namely, the non-exhaustion of delusions in the mental continuum of disciples, on the one hand, and the existence of favourable residual impressions in that same mental continuum, on the other. They reject the need for a substratum, and employ the example of a rṣi (i.e. ‘sage’; drang srong), whose resolutions or aspirational wishes come about even after his death, without, that is, the need for the rṣi as a substratum that is endowed with capabilities, and even without any other substratum to which the capabilities have been transferred. In the same manner, they argue, the qualities appear for the sake of disciples, even though no non-conceptual gnosis exists to serve as their substratum. The buddhas appear to be endowed with qualities, since compassion and resolutions have been previously respectively attained and made. They do acknowledge, however, the possibility that the qualities appear on account of the continuity of another substratum to which the capabilities have been transferred, such as in the case of a rṣi who leaves behind a wooden splint to which the power of the garuda mantra attained by him had been transferred, and which is thus endowed with the power to cure poisoning long after the rṣi’s death. In this case, the qualities can arise on account of their having been
previously transferred to another substratum. Similarly, a *buddha* leaves behind in the
world his four *mudrās*, namely, the *mudrā* of pledges (*dam tshig* gi phyag rgya: *samayamudrā*),
the *mudrā* of action (*las kyi* phyag rgya: *karmamudrā*), the *mudrā* of the
Doctrine (*chos kyi* phyag rgya: *dharmamudrā*), and the great *mudrā* (*phyag rgya chen po: *mahāmudrā*),
which later measure up to the *buddha* himself in terms of salvific
activities.

In response to the third critique that such a position would entail the
superfluousness of Mahāyāna, in that it postulates Buddhahood in a way similar to the
*nirvāṇa* of a Śrāvaka saint, they argue that this is not at all the case, since, unlike the
*nirvāṇa* of a Śrāvaka saint, a *buddha*, although he is the purified *dharmadhātu*, is
edowed with the excellence of benefiting others. They thus term the *nirvāṇa* of a
Śrāvaka saint an ‘inferior unconditioned [state]’ (*dus ma byas cung zad*) as opposed to
that of a *buddha*, which they consider to be ‘complete purity’ (*yongs su dag pa*).

Next, the refutation of positions 2–6 by the proponents of Position 1 is discussed.
Position 2, according to which non-conceptual gnosis exists, is first refuted by means of
logical reasoning. The existence of non-conceptual gnosis is questioned by posing four
hypothetical reasons for its existence followed by a refutation of these four hypotheses.
(1) It is first suggested that it could exist because it is not ‘reducible’ or ‘destructible’
(*gzhig*) by means of logical reasoning. This hypothesis is refuted with the argument that,
according to the Mādhyamikas, there is nothing that is not reducible through intellectual
analysis, even on the conventional level. (2) As a second hypothesis, it is suggested that
non-conceptual gnosis could exist because it is not reducible by means of antidotes (i.e.
spiritual practices). This hypothesis is refuted by a similar argument, namely, that again
there is nothing that is not reducible with the aid of an antidote. Also, the claim that there
is no antidote for non-conceptual gnosis because it is itself the antidote for the
obscurations is rejected with the argument that there is no cognitive phenomenon
whatsoever that permanently retains the quality of an antidote. Thus, when all residual
impressions are exhausted, there is no cause that could give rise to a cognition in the form
of self-cognition (i.e. non-conceptual gnosis). It is also argued that the explanation that
non-conceptual gnosis arises on account of (a) the accumulation of countless basic
virtuous deeds, (b) the dominant condition of mindfulness (*dran pa*), and (c) gaining
cognitive access to the *dharmadhātu* pertains only to the state in which the object–subject
dichotomy disappears during meditative absorption and only so long as deceptive residual
impressions still persist, but not at the stage of a *buddha*, which is free from both the
object–subject dichotomy and residual impressions. (3) As a third hypothesis, it is
suggested that although non-conceptual gnosis is reducible either by means of logical
reasoning or by an antidote, the *buddhas*, given their command over phenomena, retain it
for some reason, at least as an illusory phenomenon. This third hypothesis is rejected by
demonstrating that a *buddha* would not have any motive for doing so. It could not be for
some purpose of his own, for this, it is stated, would be merely directed toward reality
free from manifoldness. It cannot be for the benefit of others, because a *buddha*’s
qualities emerge unceasingly, even with no cause in the form of non-conceptual gnosis to
rely upon. (4) As a fourth hypothesis, it is suggested that the mere conventional, illusory
existence of a non-conceptual gnosis could be established through logical reasoning. This
hypothesis is refuted by arguing that it can be proved neither through direct valid
cognition, for there is no form of cognition by which it can be perceived, nor through
inferential valid cognition, for there is no definitive ‘logical mark’ (*rtags: linga*) to it. It is
further argued that it can be proved neither through non-conceptual gnosis itself, for in
that case it would not be non-conceptual gnosis at all, nor through pure mundane gnosis, for the proponents of this position reject the existence of the latter in the first place. Likewise, the claim that from the perceived qualities one can infer the bearer of the qualities is equally rejected, since it has been already argued that the qualities appear even without having to rely on non-conceptual gnosis, which the proponents of position 2 claim is the bearer or the substratum. Then the non-existence of such a gnosis is established by arguing that if non-conceptual gnosis or non-dual gnosis is held to be a designation applied to that which arises in a way similar to the dharmadhatu, then its being characterized by momentariness would mean that the dharmadhatu would also be characterized by momentariness, which is, of course, unacceptable. It is similarly argued that self-cognition is the outcome of the manifold residual impressions, and in a state where manifoldness has come to rest, one cannot continue to maintain its existence. Furthermore, the emergence of the buddhas in the world is said to resemble a reflection, which appears on account of sentient beings’ residual impressions. This refutation is concluded by citations from Tantric sources, including the Tattvasamgrahasutra and the Vairocanabhisa/bodhitantra, in which it is stated that the essence of the mantra and of everything empowered in the form of various ritual procedures is true reality, that is, freedom from manifoldness.

The refutation of these four hypotheses is followed by two objections and responses to them. First, it is countered that if the gnosis conceived by the proponents of position 2 as the basis of all other qualities is non-existent, the resolutions and compassion, which are the causes of the qualities appearing for the sake of sentient beings, would not be the qualities of buddhas, but rather only of bodhisattvas. In response, it is argued that this logical error could be applied also to the reasoning in favour of non-conceptual gnosis, since the proponents of position 1 maintain that a buddha’s qualities arise effortlessly and spontaneously on account of previous resolutions and great compassion, and thus the presence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha is of no use in removing the logical inconsistency alleged by the proponents of position 2 (namely, that the previous compassion and resolutions of a buddha would not be the cause of benefit to others). Second, it is countered that it is not possible for the gnosis, which has gradually increased during the stages of a bodhisatva, to cease abruptly at the phase of the Diamond-like Samādhī (rdo rje lta bu'i rtsin nge 'dzin: vajropamasamādhī). This is rebuffed by referring to the teaching that once the first stage is attained, the appearances withdraw gradually, and as they disappear, the cognition, which is the basis of appearances, also disappears. Thus the expression ‘gnosis arose’ is said to be nothing but an expression applied to the extreme coming to rest of appearance.

Next the criticism directed by the proponents of positions 3-6 (those who maintain the existence of pure mundane gnosis) against those of positions 1 and 2 (who deny it) is discussed. Here, two points are put forward: (1) First, the teaching is recalled that the six kinds of clairvoyance and the ten strengths increase proportionally to the attainment of non-conceptual gnosis, and thus an abrupt cessation at the stage of a bodhisatva, to cease abruptly at the phase of the Diamond-like Samādhī (rdo rje lta bu'i rtsin nge 'dzin: vajropamasamādhī). This is rebuffed by referring to the teaching that once the first stage is attained, the appearances withdraw gradually, and as they disappear, the cognition, which is the basis of appearances, also disappears. Thus the expression ‘gnosis arose’ is said to be nothing but an expression applied to the extreme coming to rest of appearance.

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its objective support to arise after the ālayavijñāna has been transformed by means of the
Diamond-like Samādhi. It is also added that since the buddhas cognize true reality, they
cannot be partially disoriented. (2) Under the second point, it is argued that since the
stage of a buddha is inconceivable, it cannot be measured in epistemological terms or
with the logic of an ordinary person, and thus it is not appropriate to reject the existence
of pure mundane gnosis. This critique is accepted, but it is nonetheless pointed out that it
is also applicable to the position that rejects pure mundane gnosis, and even to the one
that rejects both kinds of gnosis. At this point, in what seems to be an intervention in the
debate by Rong-zom-pa, it is stated that even if one can establish the stage of a buddha by
logical reasoning, there is no point in engaging in arrogant disputes in regard to such a
transcendental phenomenon. It is suggested that there are varying degrees of logical
reasoning regarding the inconceivable constituents of a buddha, and one should hold to
the position that is most rational within the framework of one’s own philosophical
system, and not categorically reject the positions that favour the existence of gnosis.

In the third and last part of the debate, the refutation of positions 4–6 is presented.
These positions, which maintain that material Bodies, different kinds of bliss, buddha-
fields, and various characteristics of a buddha, such as being a male, are referred to as
containing extreme inconsistencies (shin tu 'gal ba che ba) and thus are categorically
rejected. The material Bodies (and thus any constituent associated with them) are rejected
with the argument that since the tathāgatas have exhausted all residual impressions
including those pertaining to the view of a self, they no longer have a ‘place of abode
where [one is engrossed in] ignorance’ (gnas kyi sa'i ma rig pa = ma rig pa'i gnas kyi sa:
avidyāvāsabhūmi), a fact said to be the cause of the mind-made conglomerate
(manomayakāya: yid kyi rang bzhin gyi lus) of a bodhisattva. Thus, since all grasping at a
support is lacking, no cognition would appropriate a body. In rejecting these positions
vehemently, it is stated that they in fact represent non-Buddhist views similar to those
associated with Mahēśvara.

As a counter-argument, the proponents of these positions claim that their views
are not a self-fabrication, since they are found in the scriptures of the Buddha. In response
to that, it is argued that the appearance of Śākyamuni in this world and the emergence of
other buddhas in their respective realms are indeed taught and are thus not false. Yet they
are mere appearances lacking a mental continuum that equates to gnosis, one that could
serve as a support for material Bodies and other constituents associated with them, for
these appear either in virtue of the purified dharmadhātu and previous resolutions, or, in
addition to these, by virtue of the previously accumulated (non-conceptual) gnosis. The
appearances are compared to a reflection in a mirror: although the reflection seems to be
contained in the mirror, which in turn appears to function as a substratum, it does not
actually exist, and is thus not actually contained in the mirror, which is, therefore, not a
real substratum.

6. The Various Positions and Their Proponents

While the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha is known to have been a contested
issue in Tibet, particularly between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries, and was
topicalized in various genres of Tibetan literature from the eighth or ninth up until the
twentieth century, up to now it has been unclear to what extent and in what form exactly
this controversy played out in India. The existence of the discussion in Ye-shes-sde’s ITa
ba'i khyad par, which is, as far as I am aware, the only source dating from the early
period of propagation of Buddhism in Tibet that explicitly discusses this issue, clearly suggests that it had already become an issue by the eighth or ninth century in India, where it seems to have continued to be discussed at least until the twelfth century, that is, the time of the last major activities of Buddhist masters in India. Hence Rong-zom-pa’s presentation can be regarded as a detailed account of the diverse positions that were known in India and Tibet before and during his time. In the following, I shall provide an overview of the positions of Indian and Tibetan authors whose works contain an explicit discussion of this issue and who are cited in this study (in the sections “Works by Indian Authors” and “Works by Tibetan Authors”). As already stated, I have limited my sources to those up until the time of Rong-zom-pa, that is, until the eleventh or, at the latest, early twelfth century. These works represent various positions, all of which have been in fact treated by Rong-zom-pa, and there is no doubt that at least some of them served as his source.

A. Indian Authors

I have been able to identify works by nine Indian authors in which the controversy regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha is discussed. My brief discussion of these works found below treats these sources in groups arranged according to the position taken by the authors. What is perhaps most remarkable is that the largest number of sources I located belong to the group that propounds the non-existence of any mental element at the stage of a buddha, a small number to the group that propounds the existence of non-conceptual gnosis alone, and only a very small number to the group that propounds the existence of pure mundane gnosis, which is presupposed by all the remaining positions, according to which constituents of material nature and the like also exist. As I have been able to locate only one Indian source in which the existence of pure mundane gnosis is asserted, I have treated positions 3–6 under one category.

(i) Proponents of the Purified Dharmadhātu as the Sole Constituent of Buddhahood (Position 1)

Rong-zom-pa names two Indian authors as proponents of the first position presented by him, according to which the purified dharmadhātu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood, namely, *Madhyamaka-Sīṃha (dBU-ma’i-seng-ge) and Maṇjuśrīmitra. In addition, I have been able to identify three further Indian authors who clearly advocate this position, namely, Atiśa, Candrāharipāda, and Bhavya.

(a) *Madhyamaka-Sīṃha

There is only one work by the eleventh-century master *Madhyamaka-Sīṃha (said to have been a student of Atiśa) in the bsTan-'gyur, namely, the Saṃksiptanānādṛṣṭivibhāga (henceforth Dṛṣṭivibhāga). *Madhyamaka-Sīṃha discusses there the issue at length,

95 Although I only treat here discussions on the constituents of Buddhahood that are found in the śāstra literature, the issue is touched upon also in sūtras. One example is the Suvarnaprabhāsasūtra, which is briefly referred to below.

96 Seyfort Ruegg notes that *Madhyamaka-Sīṃha seems to be an epithet of Dharmākaramati in the Blue Annals (see Roerich 1949–1953, p. 262), and that *Madhyamaka-Sīṃha and Dharmākaramati are, nevertheless, listed in most sources as different disciples of Atiśa (Seyfort Ruegg 1981, pp.
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presents various positions and establishes by logical arguments the position that the dharmadhatu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood, which he refers to as the Madhyamaka position. Interestingly, according to the colophon, the contents of this work were first presented in a great debate and were committed to memory by the scholars present during it. After circulating among scholars, and thus coming to be known as “oral instructions communicated from one to another,” it was written down by Tāraśrīmitra (fl. eleventh cent.), who then translated it into Tibetan in collaboration with Chos-kyi-shes-rab (fl. eleventh cent.), who in turn is considered a disciple and probably also a colleague of Rong-zom-pa. This clearly shows that at the time when Rong-zom-pa and other Tibetan scholars of the eleventh century were engaged in discussions regarding this doctrinal matter, the debate in India was still very much alive.

(b) Mañjuśrīmitra

At least one work of Mañjuśrīmitra, entitled Bodhicittabhāvanāgvādaśārthānirdēśa (henceforth Bodhicittabhāvanānirdēśa) and said to be an auto-commentary on his Bodhicittabhāvanā, discusses, among other things, the issue of the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, and in it the non-existence of both kinds of gnosis is clearly propounded. It is, however, doubtful whether this is indeed an auto-commentary, given that the author of the commentary refers to Mañjuśrīmitra and even pays homage to him. Furthermore, the basic text, which was translated during the first period of propagation of Buddhism in Tibet, is also found in the rNying ma rgyud 'bum (Tb 22; Tk 38) and in the Bai ro rgyud 'bum (Bg 119) as a rDzogs-chen work under the title Byang chub sms bsgom pa. This work is more widely known in the rNying-ma tradition under its popular title rDo la gser zhen. (There exists an English translation of it from 1987 by Namkhai Norbu and Kennard Lipman entitled Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation.) The text is also embedded in another, longer work in the rNying ma rgyud 'bum entitled Byang chub sms bsgom pa'i rgyud (Tb 37; Tk 69), which is clearly considered a rDzogs-chen tantra. Apart from the first and last portions of the tantra, which appear to be later additions—a nidāna (gleng gzhi) and the like—meant to lend the text the flair of a tantra, the remaining main portion consists of the Byang chub sms bsgom pa with slight variations. In the bsTan-'gyur, both the basic

116–117, n. 377). It seems to me, however, that Roerich may have mistranslated the Tibetan text: instead of taking the phrase dbu ma'i seng ge as the Tibetan rendering of the Sanskrit personal name (or perhaps only a by-name) *Madhyamaka-Simha, translated it as the ‘Lion of the Madhyamika[s],’ thus giving the impression that it is an epithet of Dharmākara-mati, who is mentioned just prior to *Madhyamaka-Simha.

97 See Almogi 1997, p. 89.

98 For a translation of the colophon and the Tibetan text, see below (“Works by Indian Authors,” §1.A).

99 See the Bodhicittabhāvanānirdēśa (P, fol. 71b7; D, fol. 58b4; S, vol. 33, p. 216.1): slob dpon 'jam dpal bshes gnyen gvis kyang....

100 See the Bodhicittabhāvanānirdēśa (P, fol. 72a4; D, fol. 59a1; S, vol. 33, p. 216.15–16): 'jam dpal 'jam dpal bshes gnyen bcas la 'dud.

101 See the lDan dkar ma, no. 611, and the 'Phang thang ma, p. 45.
text and its commentary are found in the Yogatantra section. Rong-zom-pa himself cites the basic text on several occasions apparently as an authoritative rdZogs-chen work. An incomplete version of the Bodhicittabhaavanainirdeśa is also found in the Bai ro rgyud 'bum (Bg 115).

(c) Atiśa

Mi-pham, in the passage from his Me tog 'phreng ba where Rong-zom-pa's stance regarding the existence of gnosia at the stage of a buddha is discussed, refers to Atiśa as having posited the non-existence of gnosia at the stage of a buddha. Mi-pham does not mention which work(s) of the master he had read this in. There exist, however, several works by Atiśa, including the Ekasmṛtyupadesa, *Ratnakarandalodghaṭanāmamadhyamakopadesa (henceforth *Ratnakarandalodghaṭa), bDen gnyis kyi 'bum, and sPyod 'jug khor lo lta bu lam rgyud la ji ltar skye ba'i rim pa (henceforth sPyod 'jug lam rim) (the authorship of at least some of these works is, however, doubtful), where the existence of gnosia at the stage of a buddha is explicitly negated. Since the respective passages in the latter three works came to my attention only shortly before the publication of the present study, only the passage found in the Ekasmṛtyupadesa, which contains the shortest discussion, will be treated. The discussion of this issue is found in works dealing with both the view (lta ba) and conduct (spyod pa): three of the four works are explicitly classified by the compilers of the gsung 'bum as Sūtric works, with the bDen gnyis kyi 'bum falling under those dealing with the view, and the *Ratnakarandalodghaṭa and the Ekasmṛtyupadesa under those focusing on conduct; the fourth work, the sPyod 'jug lam rim, not explicitly classified as either Sūtric or Tantric, is one of the works pertaining to the 'union of view and conduct' (lta spyod zung 'brel). Significantly, most later adherents of Atiśa's tradition, particularly the dGe-lugs-pa, do not appear to have adopted the stance advocated in these four works. (As materials by later Tibetan scholars have not been treated in this study, the position of important bKa'-gdamgs or dGe-lugs authors cannot be discussed here. See the discussion below, though, of the stance adopted

102 Zhu-chen, commenting on the classification of the commentary, states that putting this work of Māñjuśrīmitra (identified by him as a master from Śimhadvipa) under the Śūtra section would have been inappropriate, since from its contents it seems to be a Yogatantra teaching (sDe dge bstan 'gyur dkar chag, fols. 398b7–399a2: byang chub kyi sems bsgom pa don bcu gnyis bstan pa lung gi rjes su 'brangs pa singga la'i gling gi slob don 'jam dpal bshes gnyen gvis mdzad pa'i tshigs su bcad pa bzhig bcu pa'i 'grel pa 'di mdo phyogs su bzhed pa mi 'thad de| gzhung nas rnal 'byor rgyud du gsal bar gsungs pa'i phyir ro|).

103 See, for example, his Theg tshul (e.g. B, fols. 96a6, 105a5 & 106b6; D, pp. 520.21, 530.16 & 532.11) and Rang byung ye shes (e.g. B, fol. 257b6; D, p. 121.3, where he does not mention the title (only Māñjuśrīmitra as its author)).

104 For a translation of this passage, see chapter four, §2.B..

105 The pertinent discussions in the three works that will not be treated are found in (1) the *Ratnakarandalodghaṭa (P, fols. 123b3–123b2; D, fols. 110b3–116b6; S, vol. 64, pp. 322.19–337.13; in the Jo bo rje'i gsung 'bum, pp. 799.11–807.23), which includes a detailed defense of Nāgārjuna's view; (2) the bDen gnyis kyi 'bum (pp. 692.4–696.14), which expands on the topic in the section dealing with the stage of a buddha (buddhabhūmi); and (3) the sPyod 'jug lam rim (pp. 861.3–862.16), which does so when discussing the path of 'seeing the gnosia by means of which liberation is attained' (vimuktiḥānadarśana: rnam par grol ba'i ye shes mthong ba).
by sGam-po-pa, who received transmissions of the bKa’-gdamgs tradition and who seems to follow this tradition on the issue surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha.) Interestingly, according to Las-chen Kun-dga’-rgyal-mtshan’s (1432–1506) bKa’ gdamgs chos ’byung, Atiśa was a proponent of the Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānāvāda branch of Madhyamaka, that is, those who maintain that phenomena have no substratum whatsoever.106 Atiśa’s stance on whether gnosis exists at the stage of a buddha expressed in the above-mentioned works and Las-chen’s associating him with the Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānāvāda branch of Madhyamaka is clearly in conformity with Rong-zom-pa’s presentation, according to which those who held to the position that gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha were Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānāvādins.

(d) Candrāharipāda

A similar position seems to have been held by Candrāharipāda, as reflected in his Ratnamālā (a short work containing verses collected from or inspired by various Buddhist texts), which was translated into Tibetan by Cog-ro Ting’-dzin-bzang-po (b. eleventh cent.) in collaboration with the author himself. Not much is known about the author. According to Bu-ston’s history of the Yogatantra system, Candrāharipāda was a Kashmirian teacher by whom Rin-chen-bzang-po (958–1055) and rNgog-lo-chung Legs-pa’i-shes-rab (b. tenth cent.) were initiated into the mandala of the ‘Jig rten snang byed.107

(e) Bhavya

One more source of special interest for our discussion is the Madhyamakaratnapradīpa (henceforth Madhyamakapradīpa) ascribed to one Bhavya, clearly not Bhāviveka108 (ca. 500–570?), the author of the Prajñāpāramitā, but a later Bhavya of the Madhyamaka–Vajrayāna syncretic tradition.109 In this work, Bhavya evidently negates the existence of

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106 bKa’ gdamgs chos ’byung (p. 68.2–3): jo bo nyid ni rab tu mi gnas pa’i dbu ma ’dzin tel. Cf. Seyfort Ruegg 2000, p. 16, where it is stated that Atiśa may be said to be linked with what later came to be known as Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka.

107 rNa’l ’byor rgyud kyi chos ’byung (p. 147.3–5). See also Martin 2006, s.v. Candrāharipa (Tsandra ha ri pa), where, however, the reference in the rNa’l ’byor rgyud kyi chos ’byung is erroneously given as p. 143.5.

108 I use the form Bhāviveka and not Bhāvaviveka, which latter has been until recently the commonly used form in secondary sources, following the observations made in Yonezawa 1999, p. 1022, and MacDonald 2000, p. 171, n. 20, according to which Bhāviveka must have been the correct form. (These observations support the proposal made by Y. Ejima in an article (in Japanese) from 1991 entitled “Bhāvaviveka/Bhāvaya/Bhāviveka,” IBK 32/2, pp. 838–846). As noted by MacDonald, there was perhaps some confusion concerning the name Bhāviveka/Bhāvaviveka in the manuscript tradition already prior to the thirteenth century.

109 As already pointed out by Seyfort Ruegg, several masters of the tradition that synthesized Madhyamaka and Vajrayāna bore the names of earlier Madhyamikas. Among the masters of this tradition, Seyfort Ruegg names Ārya Nāgārjuna (seventh or eighth cent.), who was presumably Saraha’s disciple; Candrākirtipāda (eleventh cent.); Āryadevapāda; a (later) Śāntideva alias Bhusuku; and a certain Bhavya. As noted by him, too, it is unlikely that the Madhyamakapradīpa was composed by Bhāviveka, for it contains references to both Dharmakīrti and Candrakīrti, and “its doctrine bears the stamp of later developments, including some inspired by Vajrayāna.” Note,
both pure mundane gnosis and non-conceptual gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*. Of great significance is the fact that he at the same time makes reference to self-occurring gnosis, which he equates with true reality and 'great bodhicitta'.

According to the translators’ colophon, this work was translated in Somapuri temple by rGya brTson-’grus-seng-ge (b. tenth cent.) and Nag-tsho Tshul-khrims-rgyal-ba (1011–1064) after they had studied the text under Atiśa, that is, sometime in the mid-eleventh century. Thus it may well have been known to Rong-zom-pa. In any case, the reference to self-occurring gnosis in the *Madhyamakapradīpa* is a clear indication that there were at least some Indian Madhyamaka scholars, apparently belonging to the Madhyamaka–Vajrayāna synthesis, who interpreted the *dharma dhātu* on the basis of self-occurring gnosis, and that such an interpretation does not necessarily have its origin in the Tibetan philosophical systems peculiar to the rNying-ma school.

(ii) Proponents of the Existence of the Purified *Dharma dhātu* and Non-Conceptual Gnosis (Position 2)

In the case of the second position, according to which both the purified *dharma dhātu* and non-conceptual gnosis constitute Buddhahood, Rong-zom-pa does not name any Indian masters. I have been able to locate in the bsTan-’gyur three works by the three Indian authors Nāgāmītra, Jñānacandra, and Dharma mītra in which this position is clearly represented. Since the work by Jñānacandra is a commentary on the one by Nāgāmītra, I treat the two together.

(a) Nāgāmītra and Jñānacandra

Not much is known about Nāgāmītra. Nevertheless, he must have favoured the vijñaptimātra theory, as is evident from various statements in his *Kāyatrayāvatāramukhanāmaśāstra* (henceforth *Kāyatrayāvatāramukha*), a work concerned with the three kāyas written in verse. In this work Nāgāmītra clearly asserts the existence of only two constituents at the stage of a buddha, named by him ‘unstained true reality’ (*dri med de bzhin nyid: nirmala tathātā*) and non-conceptual gnosis. Not however, that according to Seyfort Ruegg this Bhavya is not the author of the *Tarkajvālā* (who, he says, was Bhā(va)viveka) despite the fact that Bhavya refers in the *Madhyamakapradīpa* to the *Tarkajvālā* as his own work. See Seyfort Ruegg 1981, pp. 66 & 106. The question of the authorship of the *Tarkajvālā* is, be it said, beyond the scope of this study.

The author of the *Tarkajvālā*, too, employs the term ‘self-occurring gnosis.’ For references, see chapter four, §3.A. See also Heitmann 1995, where the notion of momentary gnosis in the *Madhyamakahṛdayakarikā* and *Tarkajvālā* is discussed.

For more examples see, chapter four, §3.A, where passages from several Indian works in which this idea is found are provided.

Seyfort Ruegg mentions Nāgāmītra only once in his work on Madhyamaka literature—his treatise on the three kāyas—when discussing the Madhyamaka scholar Nāgābhaya, who is equated by Tāranātha with one Tathāgatabhadra, the author, he claims, of hymns to the three kāyas and the *(tathāgata)garbha*, and thus linked with the so-called Vijnapti-Madhyamaka (*rnam rig gi dbu ma*), which propounded simultaneously theories of the *tathāgatagarbha* and ‘emptiness of other’ (*gzhan stong*). See Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 56, n. 163.

See also the brief reference to this work in Makransky 1997, p. 166.
much is known either about Jñānacandra, who wrote a commentary on Nāgamitra’s *Kāyatrayāvatāramukha* entitled *Kāyatrayavṛtти*. In this commentary Nāgamitra’s concise verses are explained in some detail. The polemical nature of the discussion is evident, for Jñānacandra comments on the basic text by first presenting hypothetical objections by opponents in the form of questions, then cites the basic verses, which are taken by him to be the ‘answers’ to these questions, and finally offers his own interpretation of the verses. Significantly, the two works by Nāgamitra and Jñānacandra were translated into Tibetan during the early period of propagation by Ye-shes-sde (in collaboration with Prajñāvarman), to whom I shall return.

(b) Dharmamitra

The *Abhisamayālaṁkāra Ṛājakārikā Prajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstraṭīkāprāṣphutapadā* (henceforth *Prāṣphutapadā*) by Dharmamitra (fl. around 800) is another work in which the second position is advocated. As noted by Seyfort Ruegg, the *tathāgatagarbha* and *gotra* theories gained a more prominent place in later Madhyamaka thought, and amongst the most important of the later Madhyamaka scholars who incorporated these theories into their writings were the Yogācāra-Madhyamaka scholars Dharmamitra and Abhayākāragupta (fl. around 1100), both of whom were considered by doxographers to be close to the Svātantrika-Madhyamaka school. Seyfort Ruegg holds that Dharmamitra is a representative of the Prajñāpāramitā–Madhyamaka synthesis, a synthesis mainly of the traditions of the *Abhisamayālaṁkāra* and Madhyamaka thought traceable back to Ārya Vimuktisena (sixth cent.), who was then followed by Bhadanta Vimuktisena (sixth or seventh cent.), Haribhadra (fl. late eighth cent.), and the latter’s disciple, Buddhabhāna (fl. late eighth cent.). Seyfort Ruegg comments, however, that Dharmamitra, in his treatment of the ‘naturally existent spiritual disposition’ (*prakṛtiṣṭhagotra*: *rang gzhin (gyi) gnas (pa’i) rigs*) in the first chapter of his *Prāṣphutapadā*, which is a commentary on Haribhadra’s *Śāstravṛtти* (known as the

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115 For his dating of Dharmamitra, who, according to the colophon, was born in Bang-la (= Bangala?), Seyfort Ruegg relies on Tāranātha, who places him in the reign of the Pāla king Dharmapāla’s son and identifies him as a contemporary of Dharmottara (fl. around 800), Vimalamitra, and Dharmākara (alias Arcaña, for whom Seyfort Ruegg gives the dates ca. 730–790?). Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 102. See also id. 1977, p. 284.

116 According to Seyfort Ruegg, Kamalaśīla (ca. 740–795) was “perhaps the first of the leading Madhyamaka masters to incorporate the theory of the *tathāgatagarbha* into the Yogācāra-Madhyamaka school.” Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 95, n. 308.


118 As remarked by Seyfort Ruegg, the connection between the Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka is even older, going back to Nāgarjuna himself. Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 101.

119 For a discussion of Buddhabhāna’s *Abhisamayālaṁkāra* commentary (particularly on *Abhisamayālaṁkāra* 8), see Makransky 1997, pp. 259–263.
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*Sphuṭārtha*, differs from the two Vimuktisenas and Haribhadra and follows rather Kamalaśīla in introducing the tathāgatagarbha and gotra theories into his presentation of Madhyamaka thought. Dharmamitra's *Prasphutapadā* is, according to Seyfort Ruegg, the first known *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* commentary to link the tathāgatagarbha theory with the notion of the 'naturally existent spiritual disposition.' This notion, which was kept alive by several later scholars including Abhayākaragupta, was based on the previous work of Kamalaśīla, who had incorporated the tathāgatagarbha theory into Madhyamaka some decades earlier.

From his *Prasphutapadā*, it is obvious that Dharmamitra belonged to the group of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka scholars who maintained the non-existence of images (nirākāravādin) and who thus rejected the existence of pure mundane gnosis at the stage of a buddha, allowing the existence of only non-conceptual gnosis. Interestingly, Dharmamitra also makes reference to self-occurring gnosis and provides a relatively long

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120 According to Makransky, Dharmamitra misunderstood and thus misinterpreted Haribhadra, particularly in regard to his position on the numbers of kāyas. See Makransky 1997, pp. 263–268, where Dharmamitra's *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* commentary, particularly the controversy over whether three or four kāyas are taught in *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 8, is discussed.

121 Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 103. As noted by Seyfort Ruegg, Dharmamitra explicitly refers to Kamalaśīla in his work.

122 The Vikramaśīla scholar Abhayākaragupta is one of the last great Indian Buddhist masters of the Madhyamaka school of thought. His *Munimatiilal'J'lkiira* is an extensive work expounding Mahāyāna gnosology and soteriology, and probably composed sometime in the first decade of the twelfth century. (As already remarked by Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 114, according to the author’s colophon, Abhayākaragupta composed his *Munimatiilal'J'lkiira* in the thirtieth year of the reign of Rāmapāla (reign ca. 1077–1130 or 1072–1126), that is, in ca. 1106 or 1101. See also Seyfort Ruegg 1977, p. 284.) This work is described by Seyfort Ruegg as “one of the last of the major comprehensive treatises of Indian Buddhism.” The fourth chapter of this treatise, which is a presentation of Mahāyāna on the basis of the Prajñāpāramitā, Madhyamaka, and Yogācāra traditions, discusses the qualities (yon tan: guna) constituting Buddhahood (Seyfort Ruegg 1981, pp. 114–115). There Abhayākaragupta provides a comprehensive discussion of the stage of a buddha, which cannot be considered here. His treatment of the subject undoubtedly deserves a separate examination, especially since his discussion seems to reflect various streams of thought in regard to Buddhahood that were current in India around 1100, that is, more or less around the same time Rong-zom-pa was composing his *Sangs sa chen mo*, or at most several decades thereafter. Rong-zom-pa does not seem to have known Abhayākaragupta’s work (it was first translated by a certain Shākya’i-dge-slong sPong/dPang-zho gSal-ba-grags at Nālandā, and later revised by dPang Blo-gros-brtan-pa (1276–1342)). Nevertheless, it may be assumed that both authors were acquainted with the various discussions of the constituents of Buddhahood—in either oral or written form—that were conducted in India in the eleventh century, and that they, at least in part, relied on the same material. For a representative selection of Abhayākaragupta’s pronouncements regarding a buddha’s gnosis, see the passages towards the end of the third chapter on the eight realizations (*mngon par rtogs pa brgyad*), where he discusses the five gnoses (*ye shes lnga*) and touches upon various questions surrounding them, such as whether a buddha’s gnosis exists, which of the gnoses are of the post-meditative state, and which of them are pure mundane, and which are non-conceptual (P, fols. 293b1–296a3; D, fols. 223a4–224b6; S, vol. 63, pp. 1436.14–1440.21). For a discussion of Abhayākaragupta’s work, particularly his interpretation of *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* 8 regarding the number of kāyas taught there and his understanding of a buddha’s gnosis, see Makransky 1997, pp. 279–286.
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explanation of it, which will be treated in the following chapter. This work of Dharmamitra was translated by Abhiyuktaka Tāraśrīmitra and Chos-kyi-shes-rab, presumably the same team that translated *Madhyamaka-Smiha's Drṣṭivibhāga. Since, as has been already mentioned, there existed a master-disciple relationship between Rong-zom-pa and Chos-kyi-shes-rab, it is, in my opinion, very likely that Rong-zom-pa knew this work as well.

(iii) Proponents of the Existence of Pure Mundane Gnosis (Positions 3–6)

I have been able to identify only one work in the bsTan-'gyur by an Indian author—namely, Śrīgupta’s Tattvāvatāravṛtti—where the existence of both non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis is postulated. It is quite clear that this position has never really gained ground, either in India or in Tibet. Śrīgupta’s work is therefore of special interest and importance since it is one of the few available sources that provide us with first-hand knowledge of this position, which is otherwise mainly known from reports found in works of its opponents.

(a) Śrīgupta

Śrīgupta, in his Tattvāvatāravṛtti, which was translated into Tibetan during the early propagation period, clearly postulates the existence of both non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis.123 Śrīgupta, who according to Seyfort Ruegg probably lived in the seventh century, is said to have been a Yogācāra-Mādhyamika,124 and he evidently belonged to the branch that maintained the true existence of images (satyākāra-vāda).125 According to Rong-zom-pa’s presentation of the various positions, this would mean that Śrīgupta must have posited the existence of all, or at least most of the constituents attributed to Buddhahood, including material Bodies, buddha-fields, and other pure phenomena. As has been stated above, Śrīgupta is in fact the only author discussed by me who explicitly maintains the existence of conceptual thoughts—which he understands in the sense of perception of the manifold phenomenal world (i.e. not in the sense of false perceptions)—at the stage of a buddha.

123 See the *Dan dkar ma, no. 588, and the *Phang thang ma, p. 39. No translation colophon exists, nor do modern catalogues (including Ōtani and Tōhoku) make any mention of the translator of this work. The view that the translator was Ye-shes-sde is represented, however, in Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 86, n. 279.

124 See Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 67, n. 220, where the Bu ston chos 'byung is referred to as one source that classifies Śrīgupta as a Yogācāra-Mādhyamika. See also Klong-chen-pa’s Yid bzhin mcdod (vol. 2, p. 632.2); there Śrīgupta is mentioned as an example of a scholar who belonged to the Lower Svātantrika-Madhyamaka (rang rgyud 'og ma) (a discussion of this branch is found in ibid., pp. 628.1–635.1). On the Lower and Higher Svātantrika-Madhyamaka, see the appendix below, n. 2, which contains a translation of Klong-chen-pa’s explanation of various conceptions of Buddhahood.

125 This fact has been already noted in Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 68. For a synopsis of the main points made by Śrīgupta in his Tattvāvatāravṛtti (with no reference, however, to the issue regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha), see ibid., pp. 67–68.
Chapter Three: The Controversy Surrounding the Existence of Gnosis

B. Tibetan Authors up until the Eleventh or Early Twelfth Century

As noted above, I have limited the Tibetan sources treated by me in the present study to authors who lived prior to Rong-zom-pa or were his contemporary (i.e. authors up until the early twelfth century at the latest). I have been able to identify three Tibetan works going back to this period in which the controversy regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* is explicitly discussed, namely, Ye-shes-sde, Gro-lung-pa, and sGam-po-pa, the first representing position 2 presented by Rong-zom-pa in his *Sangs sa chen mo*, the second position 3 (possibly also 4–6), and the third position 1. Unlike the nine Indian authors, whom I treated in groups arranged according to the position taken by the authors, these three Tibetan authors will be treated in chronological order, as better reflective of historical developments regarding Madhyamaka issues during this period in Tibet in general and the controversy as to whether gnosis exists at the stage of a *buddha* in particular.

(a) Ye-shes-sde

Ye-shes-sde, the famous early Tibetan translator who flourished from the second half of the eighth century to the early ninth century, clearly formulated the second position in his *ITa ba'i khyad par*, a work that has received attention from several modern scholars. The *ITa ba'i khyad par* is the only source I know of dating from the early period of propagation of Buddhism in Tibet that explicitly discusses this issue. In it Ye-shes-sde explicitly negates the existence of pure mundane gnosis, which is conceived by him as conceptual, but implicitly maintains the existence of non-conceptual gnosis. It is conceivable that Ye-shes-sde was influenced in this regard by the two Indian masters Nagamitra and Jñānacandra, whose works he translated. This could have well been the

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127 Ye-shes-sde could have, of course, also drawn inspiration from other texts, such as the *Suvannaprabhasāsūtra*, which takes a clear position regarding the constituents of a *buddha* and which Ye-shes-sde also translated (in collaboration with Jinamitra and Śilendrabodhi). In the chapter on distinguishing the three kāyas (*sKu gsun rnam par dbye ba'i le'u*) found in two of the three Tibetan translations of the *Suvannaprabhasāsūtra* (this chapter is lacking in the available Sanskrit version and in the first Tibetan translation as well), the result, equated there with the dharmakāya, is explicitly described as being true reality and gnosis. The second version, translated by Ye-shes-sde, states the following: “O son of a noble family, how should a bodhisattva mahāsattva understand the dharmakāya? Since all obscurations in the way of defilements have been removed and all wholesome factors have been perfected, only true reality and correct gnosis exist. This is called the dharmakāya” (Nobel 1944, p. 202.11–15: *rigs kyi bu de la li la na byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen pos chos kyi sku shes par bya zhe na nang ong mongs pa'i sgrib pa thams cad dang bral ba' dag be'i chos thams cad rdogs pa'i phyir de kho na nying dang yang dag pa' ye shes nyid tsam du gnas pa' de ni chos kyi sku shes bya'o|). The reading of this passage in the version translated from the Chinese is more or less the same (see Nobel 1958, vol. 2, p. 43.21–26). In the following passage the idea that the stage of a *buddha* merely consists in true reality and gnosis is repeated; the terms used there, however, are *chos kyi de bzhin nying* and *rnam par mi rtog pa' i ye shes* (or more often *de bzhin nying kyi ye shes*). The former is regarded as being for one's

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favoured position in Tibet during the period of early propagation of Buddhism there, which was dominated by the Yogācāra-Madhyamaka tradition. For instance, sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs (eighth/ninth cent.), another famous translator of the early period, also seems to have propounded, at least implicitly, the dharmadhātu and non-conceptual gnosis as being the only two constituents of Buddhahood. This can be inferred from his gSung rab rin po che, where he cites passages from the chapter on the differentiation of the three kāyas of the Suwarnaprabhāsasūtra.128

(b) Gro-lung-pa

Of the early Tibetan authors considered by me, Gro-lung-pa Blo-gros-’byung-gnas, who flourished from the second half of the eleventh century to the early twelfth century and was one of the major disciples of rNgog-lo-tsā-ba Blo-ldan-shes-rab (1059–1109), is a proponent of the existence of both gnoses at the stage of a buddha. As opposed to Śrīgupta, however, Gro-lung-pa rejects the existence of any conceptual thoughts, which he takes to be false imaginations, since, he argues, a buddha knows the manifold phenomena to be mere illusions. His stance on this issue is evident from his bDe bar gshegs pa’i bstan pa rin po che la ’jug pa’i lam gyi rim pa rnam par bshad pa (henceforth bsTan rim chen mo), which is apparently the larger of the two bstan rim works composed by him.129 Little study has been so far devoted to Gro-lung-pa. There is a general discussion of his bsTan rim chen mo—the survival of the work and extant prints, and a description of its structure and contents—in David Jackson’s article on bstan rim literature.130 Here it should perhaps merely be stated that, as remarked by Jackson, this work is an important source for understanding the doctrinal and scholastic developments that occurred within the school of rNgog-lo-tsā-ba up to the early twelfth century, though it no doubt also reflects some mainstream bKa’-gdams influences.131

(c) sGam-po-pa

Among the Tibetan scholars treated in this study, sGam-po-pa bSod-nams-rin-chen (1079–1153), the founder of the Dwags-po bKa’-brgyud subschool, seems to have been among those that rejected the existence of any mental element at the stage of a buddha. This can be concluded from a careful study of the pertinent passage from his Dam chos yid bzhin nor bu thar pa rin po che’i rgyan ces bya ba theg pa chen po’i lam rim (henceforth Thar rgyan), which is well known to Western readers and thus needs no particular introduction here. sGam-po-pa, who had received both bKa’-gdams and bKa’-
Chapter Three: The Controversy Surrounding the Existence of Gnosis

brgyud transmissions, apparently ascribed this position to teachers of the bKa’-gdams tradition. Nonetheless, as we shall see below, later proponents of the bKa’-brgyud school were so ill at ease with the stance taken by sGam-po-pa that they interpolated a passage that represented the view of Mi-la-ras-pa instead. In this passage, however, a buddha’s gnosis is treated in terms of the absolute level and not the conventional one, as it should have been in this context.

As noted by Jackson, who briefly treated this work in the same article on bstan rim literature, sGam-po-pa probably composed his Thar rgyan within a few decades of Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo. Although sGam-po-pa takes a position regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha that is different from that of Gro-lung-pa, it is obvious that he made use of Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo. In his discussion of the issue, he in fact incorporates one whole passage from the bsTan rim chen mo, which he reproduces virtually word for word, and also two citations of authoritative scriptures that Gro-lung-pa had already drawn attention to. Whether sGam-po-pa made use of Ye-shes-sde’s ITa ba'i khyad par cannot be determined with certainty. It is obvious, however, that, like Ye-shes-sde, he considers pure mundane gnosis to be conceptual and that he employs the analogy of the āmalaka fruit and the citation from the Dharmaśāntikūśūra, both of which are found in the ITa ba’i khyad par. As regards other sources used by him for his discussion of this issue, a close examination of the above-mentioned passages found in Atiśa’s works and similar passages in works of early bKa’-gdams masters may lead to the identification of some of them, and in particular to that of the ‘spiritual teacher’ (dge bshes pa) referred by him as holding the position that gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha—the one regarded by sGam-po-pa himself as felicitous (bde ba).

7. Concluding Remarks

This chapter has been devoted to the controversy surrounding the existence of knowledge at the stage of a buddha. I first touched upon the problem of ascribing a mental element to the absolute in general, and then went on to discuss this problem in connection with the various Yogācāra theories of knowledge, with the aim of clarifying Rong-zom-pa’s presentation, on the one hand, and of tracing similar claims in Indian sources, on the other. This has been followed by a discussion of the key terms, including the Tibetan term ye shes and the two terms central to Rong-zom-pa’s discussion, namely, non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis. I then went on to briefly discuss the difficulty posed by the absolute and its activity in the world against the backdrop of the Mahāyāna doctrine of ‘unfixed nirvāṇa,’ which led to several controversies, that surrounding the gnoseological aspect of Buddhahood and the activities of a buddha often associated with it being the most crucial one. In this connection, I provided a summary of the arguments and counter-arguments put forward by Rong-zom-pa in his Sangs sa chen mo. Finally, nine Indian and three Tibetan authors and works of theirs in which they deal with the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis, and which have been taken into consideration in the present study, were briefly discussed.

1. Introductory Remarks

Rong-zom-pa contends that the purified dharmadhātu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood and thus rejects the existence of both non-conceptual gnosis (rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes: nirvikalpajñāna) and pure mundane gnosis (dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes: suddhaZaukikajñāna). This is evident not only from his discussion of the various positions regarding the stage of a buddha found in the Sangs sa chen mo and dKon cog 'grel, but also from other works. The term dharmadhātu, literally meaning 'the true essence of phenomena,' is employed as a synonym for tathatā or śūnyatā, that is, 'true reality' or 'emptiness.'¹ The purified dharmadhātu, or tathatā, is regarded as the result, that is, nirvāṇa. The process of purification is not conceived as involving any alteration within the dharmadhātu, but rather as a purification from extraneous defilements. Thus the result is not understood as arising from the generation or production of something new, but rather as merely the manifestation of what has always been present (namely, the natural purity of the dharmadhātu) after the removal of such defilements.² This position represents a traditional view of Buddhahood and is frequently found in Madhyamaka treatises.

In Rong-zom-pa’s presentation of this position in the Sangs sa chen mo, however, the purified dharmadhātu seems to be conceived as equivalent to what is called self­occuring gnosis (svayambūjñāna: rang byung gi ye shes). As scriptural support, Rong-zom-pa cites a verse supposedly from the Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra. To be sure, this interpretation is referred to only briefly on one occasion, and is not repeated in any of the

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¹ For a discussion of the various meanings and the historical development of the term dharmadhātu, see Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 145ff., n. 116. For a discussion of the various meanings of the term dhātu, see ibid., pp. 82ff., n. 7, and BHSD, s.v. dhātu.

² See Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 53 & 111ff., n. 46, §C.e., where the term tathatāviśuddhiprabhāvita is discussed, and pp. 148ff., n. 117 & 149ff., n. 121.
arguments in favour of the purified *dharmadātu* as being the sole constituent of Buddhahood. Furthermore, Rong-zom-pa makes no reference to the rTdzogs-chen system whatsoever in connection with this position, neither in the *Sangs sa chen mo* nor in his discussions of this controversy in other works of his. As already shown above, this position, he maintains, is that of certain Mādhyamikas, namely, those who are not associated with any of the theories of knowledge of the Yogācāra system, and whom he, in his *Ita ba'i brjed byang*, identifies as the Sarvadharmāpratīṣṭhānavādins, who maintain that phenomena have no substratum at all. In conformity with the Madhyamaka philosophical system, most of the Indian authors who propagate this position (and it is upon their works that Rong-zom-pa seems to have relied) do not endorse a positive interpretation of the absolute, but rather understand it as the state of total cessation of all manifold phenomena. In the present chapter I shall discuss Rong-zom-pa’s own position including his interpretation of the absolute and his understanding of self-occurring gnosis (which seems to be supported by at least one Indian source).

In addition to Rong-zom-pa’s discussions of the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis in his *Sangs sa chen mo*, *dkon cog 'grel*, and *Ita ba'i brjed byang* already referred to, there is a lengthy one, too, in his *Theg tshul*, in which he establishes the non-existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha. Here I shall merely summarize the main points of this discussion in order to augment our understanding of his position. Rong-zom-pa first argues that no appearance (*snang ba*) has an own-nature, and that everything appears on account of different causes and conditions. These entities that appear, he states, are deceptive (*slu ba*) and unreal (*yang dag pa ma yin pa*), and thus are of the same status (*'go mnyam*), in that they are all mere illusion (*sgyu ma*) or phantoms (*sprul pa*). He then goes on to refute the objection that it is not merely that phenomena appear to be lasting, but it is indeed the stream of causes and effects that never recedes or ceases, appearing as it does to pure mundane gnosis, and that if it were to cease, this would imply annihilationism. The Buddha, he states, taught dependent origination (*rten cing 'brei bar 'byung ba: pratītyasamutpāda*), which means that if causes and conditions are present, results will arise, and if they cease, their results also cease. Yet, he argues, the Buddha never taught that the stream of causes and results never ceases. Appearances that appear to the pure mundane gnosis of *bodhisattvas*, he continues, are the result of having still not exhausted the residual impressions (*bag chags: vāsānā*) of the two graspings, namely, the grasping at a self and the grasping at phenomena as real. As for whether buddhas possess pure mundane gnosis, he states, this is a matter for a separate examination. He further refutes the assertion that although it is true in the case of impure sāṃsāric phenomena that the results cease upon the cessation of the causes, it is not true in the case of pure phenomena, such as buddha-Bodies, pure fields, and the like, which have been produced on account of immeasurable accumulations of beneficial resources (*bsod nams kyi tshogs: punyasambhāra*) and gnosis (*ye shes kyi tshogs: jñānasambhāra*). It is true, he argues, that immeasurable accumulations of beneficial resources and gnosis

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3 Summaries of the main points of these three discussions are found in chapter one; a summary of Rong-zom-pa’s discussion of the ability of a buddha to act in the world is found in chapter three, §5, and annotated translations of the *Sangs sa chen mo* and the pertinent passage from the *dkon cog 'grel* are found in part two.

4 The following is a summary of the pertinent passage from his *Theg tshul* (B, fols. 21b6–32a2; D, pp. 439.11–450.10).
are the causes of and conditions for the appearance and cognition (‘dzin pa) of these pure phenomena, but they are not the actual (i.e. generating) cause of any appearances (snang ba’i dngos gzhis ’rgyus); they are rather the conditions for their purging (snang ba dag par byed pa’i rkyen). The accumulation of beneficial resources is not the cause, for it is like a boat, which is advantageous so long as there is a danger of sinking into water, but is of no use when one reaches a dry shore. Likewise, as long as there is a danger of actions resulting in baseness (gnas ngan len: dau#hulya), actions resulting in beneficial resources are advantageous, otherwise not.5 Ultimate awakening, he states, means the coming to rest of both the unwholesome and the wholesome.

He then goes on to explain why the accumulation of gnosis is not the actual cause either. Neither non-conceptual gnosis nor pure mundane gnosis, he states, can be the actual cause of appearances. Non-conceptual gnosis is free from conceptual thoughts, which presuppose a ‘grasped’ and ‘grasper’ (i.e. object and subject), and thus it cannot be a factor conducive to appearances. Pure mundane gnosis is accompanied by dual appearances, and arises on account of basic wholesome virtues. Yet despite the fact that it is accompanied by false appearances (snang ba phyin ci log pa), it is characterized by correct perception (mthong ba phyin ci ma log pa), like the perception of a fire-wheel by a person who is wise to its mode of production,6 and thus it cannot be a factor conducive to appearances either. Rong-zom-pa likens appearances to fuel and non-conceptual and pure mundane gnosces to fire. The two gnosces indeed arise depending on appearances, just as fire arises depending on fuel, so that the two cannot be the actual cause, that is, the generating and sustaining condition (rgyun yun ring du gnas par byed cing rgyas par byed pa’i rkyen) of appearances, just as fire is not a sustaining condition for fuel, but on the contrary a condition leading to its annihilation (nyams par byed pa’i rkyen).7

Rong-zom-pa then goes on to reject the existence of both kinds of gnosis. Employing Yogācāra terminology,8 he argues that when the perception of appearances is transformed, no causes of or conditions for the arising of pure mundane gnosis are any longer to be found. That is, since nothing arises without causes and conditions, or from mismatched causes and conditions, once the perception of appearances (snang ba’i rnam par shes pa) has been transformed, there are no causes and conditions whatsoever that could generate pure mundane gnosis. He also rejects the view that although one may deny the arising of pure mundane gnosis on the absolute level, there is no contradiction in

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5 For the analogy of a boat, see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo below, n. 98.
6 For more on Rong-zom-pa’s employment of the analogy of a fire-wheel in connection with self­occurring gnosis, see below, §3.B.
7 For a translation of his explanation of the characteristics of these two kinds of gnosis, see chapter three, §4.B, where further references to the analogy of fire and fuel (or firewood) are provided (n. 85).
8 Note that although Rong-zom-pa employs the terminology connected with the Yogācāra theory of transformation, he in fact rejects this theory, stating that no transformation actually takes place. See, for example, his dKon cog ’grel (B, fols. 91b6–96a1; D, pp. 123.16–127.20), which, while commenting on the idea of the ‘generation of the primordially awakened mind as gnosis’ (ye nas sangs rgyas pa’i sems ye shes su bskyed pa), repeatedly states that in reality there is no transformation (gnas ’gyur ba med pa), since the nature of mind is such that it is self-occurring gnosis.
accepting the appearance of its arising on the conventional level as mere illusion (*sgyu ma tsam*). He argues, to be sure, that the fact that phenomena lack an own-nature (*rang gi ngo bo nyid*) on the absolute level does not conflict with the fact that they do arise on the conventional level. But the principle of dependent origination taught by the Buddha is such that the appearance of results even when their conditions have ceased is untenable on both the absolute and conventional levels. If one examines the matter carefully, he continues, non-conceptual gnosis, too, cannot exist at the stage of a *buddha*. He demonstrates that even according to the Yogācāra’s own theory of transformation of the ālayavijñāna, the existence of non-conceptual gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* falters. According to the presuppositions of both Yogācāra subschools, that is, those who postulate eight *vijñānas* ([rnam par] *shes pa tshogs brgyad du smra ba*) and those who postulate one (*gcig pur smra ba*), any form of non-conceptual gnosis that does not transcend cognitive awareness (*shes rig*) is unsustainable. Does non-conceptual gnosis, he asks, arise as something that is associated with sensation (*tshor ba: *vedanā*) or dissociated from it? If it is associated with sensation, how can it be non-conceptual? If it is dissociated from it, how can it be cognitive awareness? If it is independent of sensation, would one not call it an ‘inanimate object’ (*bems po: jaḍa*)? Thus, he states, if it is maintained that it is dissociated from sensation, then there is no need at all for this dispute.

He then, employing ‘reasoning [based on the rule-boundedness] of reality [itself]’ (*chos nyid kyi rigs pa: *dharmatāyukti*),9 goes on to refute the argument that non-conceptual gnosis arises from latent tendencies associated with true reality (*chos nyid kyi bag chags*), and that it arises due to its own proximate (or: appropriating) cause (*nye bar len pa’i rgyu: upādānakāraṇa*). Have these latent tendencies associated with true reality, he asks, been infused (*bsgos pa: vāsita*) with something else, or have they not? If they have, he argues, how could it be true reality, and if not, how could one get around positing nature (*rang bzhin*) as a cause? Does this proximate cause, he asks further, depend on another condition, or does it not? If it does not, how could phenomena be said to originate dependently, and how could one get around positing an autonomous creator as a cause? If this is the case, how does nature differ from general causes and conditions? Therefore, he states, it cannot be proven that the stream of causes and results pertaining to appearances of pure phenomena does not cease, and thus all phenomena, including pure ones, have the same status, that of being illusions. After arguing that the *buddhas*’ salvific activities in the world are possible even without a substratum (again employing the analogy of a *rṣi*10), he seeks to establish that the nature of a *buddha* is characterized by non-origination (*sky ba med pa: amuptāda*)—on the basis of logical reasoning and citations from authoritative scriptures—and concludes by stating that it is thus evident that the true nature of a *buddha* is nothing but the purified dharma dātu. It should be added, however, that despite the fact that he clearly and repeatedly rejects the existence of both non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*, in several instances, he reiterates the idea that since Buddhahood is something inconceivable one

9 For a brief discussion on the four kinds of reasoning (*yukti: *rigs pa*), see Wangchuk (forthcoming), §2, where references to previous studies are also provided.

10 For the analogy of a *rṣi*, see the translation of the *Sangs sa chen mo* below, §IV.1.B.ii.
Chapter Four: Rong-zom-pa’s Position

should not categorically dismiss the positions that maintain the existence of gnosis at that stage.\(^1\)

In the present chapter, I shall first (§2) present a general analysis and a translation of Mi-pham’s discussion of Rong-zom-pa’s position, which he believes to be merely a rejection of the existence of gnosis generated on the path, referred to by him as ‘extrinsic gnosis’ (gzhan byung ye shes, lit. ‘gnosis arisen from another’), but not of what is called self-occurring gnosis (rang byung gi ye shes: svayamabhūṭa). This will be followed (§3) by a discussion of the term self-occurring gnosis as found in Indian sources and in Rong-zom-pa’s works, and (§4) by a presentation of Rong-zom-pa’s stance on the nature of the appearances of pure phenomena and its implications for his understanding of a buddha’s ability to work in the world for the benefit of others. Finally (§5), I shall briefly discuss Rong-zom-pa’s Madhyamaka affiliation and highlight the main features of his Madhyamaka view as an Apratīṣṭhānavādin.

2. Rong-zom-pa’s View regarding the Existence of Gnosis at the Stage of a Buddha as Addressed by Mi-pham

A. The Main Points of Mi-pham’s Argumentation

Mi-pham, in his catalogue to Rong-zom-pa’s collected works, the Rong zom gsung ’bum dkar chag, provides the reader with a detailed biography of Rong-zom-pa, a short biographical account of rGyal-sras gZhan-phan-mtha’-yas (b. 1800), who was responsible for the compilation of the collection, and a brief description of the necessary editorial work done by himself, and then enters into a short discussion of Rong-zom-pa’s stance regarding whether or not gnosis exists at the stage of a buddha.\(^1\) Mi-pham states that most early Tibetan scholars argued that among those who do not maintain the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha are Candrakīrti (ca. 600–650) in India and Rong-zom-pa in Tibet. As we shall see, Mi-pham himself strongly rejects this claim and devotes the entire discussion to disproving it.

During my attempts to locate sources in which such a claim about Rong-zom-pa’s position is found, I tracked down several such works, all by rNying-ma scholars. The earliest source I am aware of is Kah-thog Dam-pa-bde-gshegs’s (1122–1192) 'Dus mdo ‘i khog dbub, a summary of the dGongs pa ‘dus pa’i mdo. Admittedly, the reference to Rong-zom-pa is found there only in a gloss by an anonymous author. Thus the gloss may be a much later insertion made on the basis of one of the sources discussed below. It cannot be ruled out, though, that the glosses are relatively early and that they were integrated into those later works, which clearly relied on the ‘Dus mdo ‘i khog dbub. Dampa-bde-gshegs discusses various positions in regard to how a buddha acts for the benefit of others.

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11 See, for example, his sNang ba lhar bsgrub (B, fol. 137a4; D, p. 567.21–23); sangs rgyas pa’i dag pa ‘jig rten pa’i ye shes ni| de bzhin du yod dam pa ni brtag par bya ba stel| bsam gyis mi khyab pa’i chos yin no|; and the Rang byung ye shes (B, fol. 258b4–5; D, pp. 121.24–122.2), where, discussing the question whether that which appears to a tathāgata’s gnosis is deceptive, he states the following: yang ni de bzhin gshigs pa’i spyod yul ni| bsam gyis mi khyab pa’i yul yin pas ‘di la mi brtsad par bzhag go zhes bshad do|.

12 An annotated English translation and a critical edition of the Tibetan text are found in Almogi 1997.
of sentient beings, and names three different ones: (1) with a substratum \(\text{rten can}\), as is the case with the beneficial activities performed by a Brahmin who has attained the power of a gar\(\text{\u02f2}\)da pillar, (2) without a substratum \(\text{rten med}\)—such as the beneficial activities resulting from a \(\text{r\syt}\)i’s aspirational wish—and (3) naturally, that is, in virtue of spontaneously present compassion—as is the case with space (functioning as a provider of room). The glosses identify the adherent of the first position as Zhang Shes-rab-blama; of the second, as Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po; and of the third, which is favoured by the author, as sublime teachers such as Lha-rgje bDe-gshegs, clearly a reference to Zur-chung Shes-rab-grags-pa alias bDe-gshegs-rgya-bo (1014–1074). This threefold scheme is also found in the \gSang sngags lam rim\ ascribed to Padmasambhava and revealed by Nyang-ral Nyi-ma-'od-zer (1136–1204). In the commentary on it called the ‘Grel pa rin chen phreng ba, also ascribed to Padmasambhava (no reference is made in the colophon to the revealer (gter ston), possibly Nyang-ral himself), the pertinent line of verse is commented as follows:19

Of the three, acting for the benefit [of others] in virtue of having a substratum, acting for the benefit [of others] without having a substratum, and acting for the benefit [of others] naturally: (1) The first, acting for the benefit [of others] in virtue of having a substratum [is explained as follows]: [A buddha] acts for the sake of others by means of \sambhogak\(\text{\u02f2}\)ayas in the case of pure disciples and \nirm\(\text{\u02f2}\)nak\(\text{\u02f2}\)ayas in the case of impure disciples; [the two material Bodies] being based on non-dual gnosis, that is, the \dharmak\(\text{\u02f2}\)ya, which [serves as] a substratum (gzhi). [This is] the tradition that [maintains] the existence of gnosis. (2)

13 ‘Dus \(\text{mdo}'i\) khog \(\text{dbub}\) (pp. 26.6–28.1).

14 The analogy of the gar\(\text{\u02f2}\)da pillar is employed by Rong-zom-pa himself in the \Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.1.B.ii. For other occurrences, see the translation, n. 57.

15 The analogy of a \(\text{r\syt}\)i is also found in the \Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.1.B.ii.

16 This may be a reference to the eleventh-century translator Zhang-co-gru-lo-ts\(\text{\u02f2}\)a-ba Shes-rab-blama. The same person is referred to by Lo-chen Dharma-shri as ‘Bring-mtshams-kyi-zhang Shes-rab-blama (see below, n. 22).

17 ‘Dus \(\text{mdo}'i\) khog \(\text{dbub}\) (pp. 26.6–27.2): don byed tshul gyi 'dod gzhung nil (1) rten can gyis don byed par 'dod pa Bram zes mchod sdong bsgrub pa lta bur 'dod pa dang! [bod kyi shang shes rab bla ma la sogs pa'i gzhyang] (2) rten med kyis don byed par 'dod pa drang srong smon lam gyi don byed pa lta bu dang! [bod kyi dge bshes rong som chos kyi bzang po la sogs pa'i gzhyang] (3) thugs rje lhun grub ngo bo nyid kyis don byed par 'dod pa nam mkhas don byed pa lta bu 'ol] [tha rje bder gshegs la sogs pa bla ma dam pa rams kyi gzhyang].

There follows a brief explanation of the third position, apparently held by the author to be the position propagated in the Anuyoga system to which the \dGongs pa 'dus pa'i mdo\ belongs. On this occasion reference is made to Dharmabodhi as a proponent of this position.

18 \gSang sngags lam rim (p. 5.5): rten can rten med ngo bo nyid don byed %.

19 ‘Grel pa rin phreng (pp. 159.6–160.3): rten can gyis don byed pa| rten med kyis don byed pa| ngo bo nyid kyis don byed pa gsum las[1] (1) dang po| rten can gyis don byed pa nil gzi chos sku gnyis su med pa'i ye shes la brten nas gdul bya dag po la longs sku [= skus? / sku dang?] ma dag pa la sprul sku [= skus?] mdzad de ye shes yod pa'i lugs sol[2] (2) gnyis pa rten med kyis mdzad pa nil sangs rgyas la rang sgyud kyis bdus pa'i ye shes med mod kyang gdul bya'i blo snang du gzugs sku gnyis su snang nas don mdzad pa ste| ye shes med pa'i lugs sol[3] (3) gsum pa ngo bo nyid kyis mdzad pa nil chos thams cad kyi chos nyid gshis cir yang ma yin pa las| rtsal cir yang ma 'gags pa shar nas mdzad pa ste| gnyis med kyi lugs sol].
Second, acting without a substratum [is explained as follows]: Although a *buddha* does not partake of gnosis, one confined to an individual [mental] continuum, [he] does act for the benefit [of others], appearing as the two *rupakāyas* to the minds of disciples. [This is] the tradition that [maintains] the non-existence of gnosis. (3) Third, acting naturally [is explained as follows]: [A *buddha* is said to] act on account of the dynamism [of true reality], which emerges without ceasing in any way (i.e. unfolds freely) out of the reality of all phenomena, the nature of which is not [defined] in any way [as anything]. [This is] the tradition [that maintains] neither of the [above two] positions.

Interestingly, the position maintaining that a *buddha* acts without a substratum and the position maintaining that he acts naturally and spontaneously are considered identical by Rong-zom-pa. This also seems to be the case with the Indian authors who hold a similar position. The anonymous author of the glosses found in the *Dus mdo'i khog dbub*, apparently a follower of the Zur tradition—which often differs from the mainstream rNying-ma school (what in recent times has been called the Rong-Klong tradition, that is, the tradition of Rong-zom-pa and Klong-chen-pa), including in their interpretation of the *Guhyagarbhatantra*—understandably associates Rong-zom-pa with the second tradition and the Zur master Lha-je bDe-gshegs with the third position.20 As we shall see below, Mi-pham also considers the position according to which a *buddha* acts without a substratum and the position according to which a *buddha* acts spontaneously as two different views. Unlike the authors associated with the Zur tradition, however, he identifies Rong-zom-pa as an advocate of the position that a *buddha* acts spontaneously, thus dismissing the claim that he rejected the existence of gnosis, understood in this context as the substratum.

The same scheme is found in sNgags-'chang bSam-grub-rdo-rje’s (1295–1334) *Rin chen ’bar ba’i gur*, a summary (khog dbub) of the *Guhyagarbhatantra* according to the Zur tradition. The explanation of each of the positions provided there is similar to the one found in the *Dus mdo’i khog dbub* (it is, however, slightly more detailed). There (a certain) Haribhadra in India and Zhang Shes-rab-bla-ma in Tibet are named as proponents of the first position; Nāgārjuna in India and Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po in Tibet, of the second; and Śrī-Sīṁha in India and Zur-chung Shes-rab-grags-pa in Tibet, of the third.21 It is thus evident that the author of the glosses found in the *Dus mdo’i khog dbub* comes from the same doctrinal tradition as bSam-grub-rdo-rje. Lo-chen Dharma-shri’s *Guhyagarbhatantra* commentary, known as the *gSang bdag zhal lung*, which again follows the interpretation of the Zur tradition, provides the same details (here identifying Zhang Shes-rab-bla-ma as a ’Bring-mtshams-pa), apparently relying on bSam-grub-rdo-rje for his information.22 Strikingly, unlike Mi-pham, all three sources name Nāgārjuna, and not Candrakīrti, as the Indian scholar to have held this position. Moreover, in his *gSang sngags lam rim ’grel pa* (composed in 1805), Kah-thog-dge-rtse-paṇḍita ’Gyur-
med-tshe-dbang-mchog-grub (1761–1829), clearly basing himself on one of the above-mentioned works, also identifies Rong-zom-pa as someone who maintained the non-existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha.*

In his discussion, Mi-pham criticizes those who have falsely understood the *dharma-dhatu*, in being free from manifoldness, as being ‘mere emptiness’ (*stong rkyang*)—as defined by a non-affirming negation—and then gone on to assert that since Rong-zom-pa maintains that the stage of a *buddha* is free from manifoldness, he completely denies the existence of gnosis at this stage. Mi-pham argues that though Rong-zom-pa maintained that the *dharma-dhatu* lacks all manifoldness, he never claimed that being free from manifoldness is identical with mere emptiness as defensible on the basis of a non-affirming negation. He could not possibly have made such assertions, since they are not in harmony with the view of the rDzogs-chen tradition of which Rong-zom-pa was a strong advocate. The rDzogs-chen tradition, he holds, teaches the indivisibility of the foundation and the result (*gzhi 'bras dbyer med*), and therefore, since according to this system self-occurring gnosis already exists at the foundation level, Rong-zom-pa could not have denied its existence on the resultant level. Mi-pham takes the resultant level, that is, the *dharma-dhatu* to be the union of appearance and emptiness (*snang stong zung 'jug*), as is already the case on the foundation level, which is also regarded as free of change and transformation. The *dharma-dhatu* is thus understood to be nothing more than the revelation of the foundation, which implies that only that which exists on the foundation level can exist on the resultant level. Thus, according to Mi-pham, Rong-zom-pa denies the existence of what he calls ‘extrinsic gnosis’ (*gzhan byung ye shes*), but not that of ‘self-occurring gnosis’ (*rang byung ye shes: svayambhūjñāna*), which is intrinsic. Since the true nature of the mind is gnosis, Mi-pham argues, it is self-occurring, and therefore, what is designated as extrinsic gnosis, namely, gnosis that arises due to causes and conditions, such as meditation, cannot exist at the stage of a *buddha*. The term *gzhan byung ye shes*, be it noted, is not employed by Rong-zom-pa, and very probably was coined after his time. He does employ, however, the term ‘generated gnosis’ (*yongs su bskyed pa’i ye shes*) in contrast to self-occurring gnosis.

In order to better understand Mi-pham’s discussion, a few words should perhaps be said about how the terms self-occurring gnosis and extrinsic gnosis are understood by him. It is not possible to provide here a comprehensive account of how Mi-pham employs the former term in his various works. I shall thus limit myself to briefly discussing his understanding of it in relation to extrinsic gnosis. As stated, the main philosophical idea behind the distinction of these two terms in the discussion pursued by Mi-pham is that of the indivisibility of the foundation and the result; that is, the result is nothing new that has been attained by the application of the five paths and the two accumulations, but a revelation of something inherently existent at the foundation level. In his *Tshig bdun rnam bshad*—a work in which he interprets the seven-line prayer to Padmasambhava according to its ‘outer’ (*phyi*), ‘inner’ (*nang*), and ‘secret’ (*gsang ba*) meanings—Mi-pham extensively explains self-occurring gnosis as being, in particular, something that

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23 gsang sngags lam rim ’grel pa (p. 891.3).

24 See below, n. 38.

25 See his *Theg pa’i bye brag* (B, fol. 181.3; D, p. 49.20–21): ... ye shes kyang rang byung gi ye shes dang| yongs su bskyed pa’i ye shes zhes ‘byung ba....
occurs independently of adventitious causes and conditions, as is evident from the following statement:

[The meaning of] this kind of gnosis is taught on the basis of numerous synonyms: primordial release, that is, release from intellectual-emotional defilements; self-occurring gnosis, which is not bound by karma and which is beyond causes and conditions....

More light may be shed on the essential meaning of the term self-occurring gnosis by a perusal of the numerous other synonyms of it that Mi-pham gives in various passages of his Tshig bdun rnam bshad. While interpreting the ‘inner hidden meaning’ (rang sbsd don) of the name Padmasambhava according to the ‘path of liberation’ (grol lam) as ‘reality, which is the ultimate mode of existence’ (chos nyid don gyi gnas lugs) or as an ‘actual buddha’ (nges pa don gyi sangs rgyas), he states: 27

Other synonyms of it (i.e. Buddha Padmasambhava in its definitive sense, nges pa don gyi sangs rgyas padma ‘byung gnas) have been given according to the individual intent of the [various] scriptures: Samantabhadra, Adibuddha,28 dharmadhātu, the culminating point (bhūtakoṭi), bodhicitta—that is, dharmatā—tathatā, ultimate truth (or: reality), self-occurring gnosis, tathāgatagarbha, gnosis that pervades samsāra and nirvāṇa, the primordial [state of] mind, which is luminous by nature, the [inherent] gnosis of a [buddha’s] Mind [that is to be meditated upon at] the time of death, innate great bliss, and Causal Heruka. The ultimate meaning established by the Three Great Ones—the Great Middle Way, Great Seal, and Great Perfection—and furthermore, the meaning taught on the basis of numerous synonyms in the sūtras and tantras is precisely this.

The term gzhan byung ye shes had been already employed in opposition to rang byung ye shes by Dol-po-pa Shes-rab-rgyal-mtshan (1292–1361), and one wonders whether he actually coined it. In any case, the term can be regarded as largely peculiar to the Jonang-pas. Dol-po-pa juxtaposes rang stong and gzhan stong, rang rig and gzhan rig, and rang byung and gzhan byung. He subdivides rang rig into rnam shes rang rig and ye shes

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26 Tshig bdun rnam bshad (pp. 347.5–348.1): de ita bu′i ye shes de la ming gi rnam grangs du mas bstan te] nyon mongs las grol ba′i gdod nas rnam grol] las kyis mi ‘ching zhung rgyu rkyen las ‘das pa′i rang byung ye shes]....

27 Tshig bdun bshad (pp. 320.3–321.2): de′i mtshan gyi rnam grangs gzhan yangi gzhung so′i ′dongs pas [= pa′i] dbang gis btags pa] kun tu bzang po dang] dang po′i sangs rgyas dang] chos kyi ′dbyings dang] yang dag pa′i mtha′ dang] chos nyid byang chub kyi sems dang] de bzhin nyid dang] don dam pa′i bden pa dang] rang byung gi ye shes dang] bde gshegs snying po dang] srid zhi kun khyab kyi ye shes dang] rang bzhin ′od gsal gnyug ma′i sems dang] ′da′ dka [= ka]a thugs kyi ye shes dang] than skyes bde ba chen po dang] rgyu′i ke ru ka dang] dbu ma chen po dang] phyag rgya chen po dang] rdzogs pa chen po ste chen po gsun gyi [= gyis] gan la phab pa′i mthar thug gi don dang gzhan yang mo rgyud rnam nas mtshan gyi rnam grangs du mas bstan pa′i don ′di nyid kho na′o]. a Note the term ′da′ ka ye shes (atayayājñāna), which occurs in a title of a Mahāyāna sūtra, two commentaries of which are found in the bsTan-"gyur: the Atayayājñānasūtravyākhyāna ascribed to Prajñāsambudra (Otani 5504; Tōhoku 4003) and the Āryatayayājñānamahāyānasūtravyāttī ascribed to Śāntideva (Otani 5505; Tōhoku 4004). See also Wangchuk 2007, pp. 214–216, where synonyms and near synonyms of what Wangchuk calls “ontological bodhicitta” are discussed.

28 See chapter two, §4.D, where the notion of Adibuddha as a personification of true reality is discussed.
rang rig, and further subdivides ye shes rang rig into rang byung ye shes and gzhan byung ye shes. Of these last two, the former is called by him, among other things, ‘gog bden ye shes (‘gnosis pertaining to the Truth of Cessation’), and the latter lam bden ye shes (‘gnosis pertaining to the Truth of the Path’); the former, unlike the latter, is considered by him to have no cause.29 Mi-pham, in his discussion of Rong-zom-pa’s position, describes extrinsic gnosis as a gnosis ‘confined to the limited [mental] continuum of a person’ (gang zag gi rgyud nyi tse bas bsad pa) that extends from the path of training (slob pa’i lam: saik.~amarga) to the path of no more training (mi slob pa’i lam: aśaik.śamārka);30 he thus uses the term ‘gnosis [confined to] an individual [mental] continuum’ (ye shes rang rgyud pa) as a synonym of extrinsic gnosis. Although Mi-pham does not state this explicitly, it is clear that for him the term gzhan byung ye shes refers to the knowledge possessed by the Noble Ones—in agreement with Dol-po-pa’s understanding of the term—or what amounts to the same thing, as self-occurring gnosis under the aspect of its ‘conventional mode of appearance’ (tha snyad snang tshul), namely, as generated by causes and conditions, and not under the aspect of its ‘conventional mode of existence’ (tha snyad gnas tshul), namely, the revealed self-occurring gnosis.

In his discussion, Mi-pham supports his argument that Rong-zom-pa merely rejects the existence of extrinsic gnosis with several citations from Rong-zom-pa’s Sangs sa chen mo. He draws mainly on passages in which Rong-zom-pa expresses the notion that all of a buddha’s constituents appear to disciples naturally in virtue of the purified dharmadhātu, just as a reflection in a mirror arises in virtue of its clean surface, and also in virtue of the two accumulations and previous resolutions. Most interestingly, he further cites three important passages that reflect Rong-zom-pa’s approach in dealing with various views in general and with the controversy surrounding the stage of a buddha in particular: Mi-pham chooses to cite two passages in which Rong-zom-pa states that since Buddhahood is an inconceivable phenomenon, one should not categorically flout the position maintaining the existence of both non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis; another passage in which he strongly negates positions that maintain the existence of constituents other than gnosis, which he holds to be positions marked by extreme inconsistencies; and finally a passage where he states that even if one attempts to establish the stage of a buddha through logic, he sees no point in engaging in arrogant disputes regarding this transcendental phenomenon.

This choice by Mi-pham is very significant, since he is obviously attempting here to demonstrate the complexity of Rong-zom-pa’s discussion, and emphasizing the fine nuances found in it. The last passage is particularly important, since the idea behind it—as made clear in the following statements in the Sangs sa chen mo, which are, however, not cited by Mi-pham—is that there are different types of logical reasoning, with varying degrees of conclusiveness, regarding the constituents of a buddha, and that one should hold to a position that is most rational within the framework of one’s own philosophical system. The opinion of some masters, such as Buddhaguhya and Sūryaprabha, that since

29 For Dol-po-pa’s differentiation between rang byung ye shes and gzhan byung ye shes, see his Ri chos rgya mtsho (pp. 616.2–620.7); Stearns 1999, pp. 239, n. 32 & 249, n. 13. Cf. Karmay 1988, pp. 114–115, n. 42 & 132.

30 Cf. the passage from the ‘Grel pa rin phreng cited above, n. 19.
Chapter Four: Rong-zom-pa's Position

such issues are beyond the intellect of ordinary people, they should be left open is also mentioned in this context.

This relativization of the various views by putting them into perspective, and thus recognizing their validity within their own respective systems, is an important element in Rong-zom-pa's philosophical method, which had a great impact on Mi-pham generally, including his understanding of Buddhahood. This comes out in Mi-pham’s discussion in a single sentence, in which he states that Rong-zom-pa’s claim that Buddhahood solely consists in the dharmadātu free from manifoldness is simply made in order to establish its single mode of existence, defined as the indivisibility of the two truths. Although Mi-pham does not elaborate upon this idea in his discussion, this statement is central for understanding his interpretation of Rong-zom-pa’s writings in general and of his conception of Buddhahood in particular. What Mi-pham wishes to convey here is that Rong-zom-pa, in defining Buddhahood as merely being the dharmadātu free from manifoldness, establishes what Mi-pham designates the ‘ultimate mode of existence’ (gnas tshul don dam), understood in the sense of the indivisibility of appearance and emptiness (snang stong dbyer med) or the indivisibility of the two truths (bden gnyis dbyer med), that is, freedom from manifoldness.31 This mode of existence is taken by Mi-pham to be different from what he designates the ‘conventional mode of existence’ (tha snyad gnas tshul), which is defined in terms of non-existence and emptiness, and which, together with what he designates the ‘conventional mode of appearance’ (tha snyad snang tshul), which in turn is defined in terms of illusion and the like, is considered by him to fall under the category of conventional truth.32 To what extent Mi-pham’s interpretation of Rong-zom-pa’s position regarding the non-existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha is in conformity with Rong-zom-pa’s actual view will be discussed below.

B. Mi-pham’s Discussion: A Translation33

There were many scholars and accomplished masters among the upholders of the tradition of the early translations (i.e. the rNying-ma school); however, the most excellent of all are those called Rong-[zom-pa and] Klong-[chen-pa], the two all-knowing ones, who are widely famed as the sun and moon. Most Tibetan [scholars] of earlier generations, based on merely a superficial evaluation (’ol spyi) of Rong-zom-pa’s writings, argued that this master completely denied [the existence of] gnosis at [the stage of] a buddha, saying, “Those who do not maintain [the existence of] gnosis at [the stage of] a buddha are Acārya Candrakīrti in India and Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po in Tibet.” Those [scholars] did not fathom (lit.

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31 That is, for Mi-pham, the ‘indivisibility of appearance and emptiness’ clearly does not imply that manifoldness per se is retained, but that appearance—or, to be more precise, ‘mere appearance’ (snang rtsam)—is somehow retained in the Hegelian sense of ‘sublation’ (Aufhebung), that is, appearing, but translucently, like an illusion.

32 Mi-pham’s scheme of ultimate mode of existence, conventional mode of existence, and conventional mode of appearance can be best understood within the context of his two kinds of two truth models. See, for example, his gZhi‘i le’u (pp. 568.4-569.1); bRgal lan rnyin snang (pp. 165.2-166.2); and the gZhan stong seng ge nga ro (pp. 361.4-363.4). For a discussion of Mi-pham’s two kinds of two truth models, see Wangchuk 2000, pp. 221ff.

33 Rong zom gsung ’bum dkar cag (A, pp. 24.6–33.5; B, fols. 12b3–17a1; D, pp. 15.3–19.24). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §2.A.
Rong-zom-pa's negating [the existence of] non-conceptual gnosis through logical reasoning [used to analyze] the ultimate \(^{35}\) is purely concerned with negating extrinsic gnosis. That extrinsic gnosis is something conditioned that arises from causes and is confined to a person's limited [mental] continuum (gang zag gi rgyud nyi tse bas bsdus pa) \(^{36}\) [and extends] from [the path of] training (slob pa'i lam: aśākṣamārga) up to [the path of] no more training (mi slob pa'i lam: aśākṣamārga), is a stance of the common Vehicle. [Rong-zom-pa] sets forth incontrovertible (lan gyis bzlog par mi nus pa) and flawless (yang dag pa) logical reasoning that refutes this [stance], and thus maintains [by implication] that a buddha's gnosis is the self-occurring, unconditioned [gnosis], the very [same] gnosis that exists on the foundation [level], that is, the immaculate [dharma]dhatu [in its state] of ultimate purity. And thus [he] maintains that [a buddha] does not possess any conditioned gnosis, one confined to the [mental] continuum of a person. Yet this master [could] not have maintained that gnosis does not exist at all [at the stage of a buddha], for [he sought to] establish the [doctrinal] position of rDzogs-chen, [which maintains that] self-occurring gnosis, the primordially luminous dharma dhātu, and Samantabhadra-Bodhicitta, \(^{37}\) although [they] are different names, are identical in nature and primordially exist on the foundation [level] in virtue of the nature of reality (chos nyid kyi ngo bcos). And therefore, since [according to this tradition] there is no transformation of the unconditioned gnosis at any [of the three] levels (skabs)—foundation, path, or result \(^{38}\)—how could one say that it exists on the path of training but does not at the time [that one is on the path] of no more training? The Sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo, a work of the master Rong-zom himself, \(^{39}\) states.  

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\(^{34}\) Mi-pham might be referring here to the statement from the Āryasuvikṛantavikramāpariprcchā that is cited in the passage from Atiśa's Ekasmṛtyupadeśa translated below ("Works by Indian Authors," §1.C).

\(^{35}\) The term mthar thug par rigs pa probably is synonymous with don dam dpyod byed kyi rigs pa, that is, the logical reasoning used to analyze the absolute. Compare a few sentences further on where the texts has mthar thug dpyod pa'i rigs pa.

\(^{36}\) Cf. Kośa-Index, s.vv. svasamtaṇapatiita: rang gi rgyud du gtogs pa, and parasamtaṇapatiita: gzhan gi rgyud du gtogs pa.

\(^{37}\) Note that the text reads byang chub kyi sems kun tu bzang po instead of the usual kun tu bzang po byang chub kyi sems.

\(^{38}\) On the notion of the indivisibility of the foundation, path, and result, see the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 165b2–4; D, pp. 201.24–202.3): sangs rgyas kyi sa'i chos thams cad kyang 'di'i gnas skabs su gshi dang lam dang 'bras bu'i chos rnams rang bzhin bye brag tu gyur pa med de| gshi nyid lam du byas pa yin la| 'bras bu gshi las khyad par 'phags pa med pas| 'di ni sangs rgyas thams cad kyi gsang ba'i man ngag nges pa'i don mthar thug pa yin no zhes bstan no\].

\(^{39}\) The passages given here by Mi-pham are not always exact citations of the Sangs sa chen mo; some of the passages have been shortened, and some are not citations at all but rather a paraphrasing of the pertinent parts of the Sangs sa chen mo. One 'citation' even consists of two
Further, [the myriad qualities] also emerge in virtue of the dharmadhatu having become utterly purified, for all continuous connections with residual impressions have been completely exhausted, just as a reflection occurs on account of an object and a clean surface.

And: 41

These two, [namely], the accumulations [of beneficial resources and gnosis] and resolutions [on the one hand] and the dharmadhatu purified of all adventitious impurities [on the other], are dominant conditions.

And: 42

The stage of a buddha is nothing but the utterly purified dharmadhatu.

And: 43

Because [all basic virtuous deeds accumulated on the path] become a condition for [their] appearing to others, under the influence of the purified dharmadhatu, [buddhas] are not partially disoriented, for [they] completely cognize that which is purified, that is, free from manifoldness.

And it teaches that all [appearances appear] like a reflection in a mirror, under the influence of the purified dharmadhatu and [previous] resolutions, or that the material Bodies appear, in addition to these [two influences], also under the influence of the great gnosis. 44 And [it further] states: 45

Since Buddhahood is an inconceivable phenomenon, however, [one] should not categorically flout this position, which maintains that the two kinds of gnosis are manifest in the continuum of a buddha. So it has been maintained by masters of the past, such as [Buddha]guhya and Sūryaprabha.

different passages put together. Nonetheless, I have translated the passages as given, and when differences occur, they are pointed out in notes.

40 This citation is from §IV.1.B.ii (second passage (a.2.)), and is virtually identical with the reading in the Sangs sa chen mo. See also the following citation.

41 This passage is a summary rather than a citation. It is based on the Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.1.B.ii (second passage), which also covers the previous citation.

42 This sentence as such is not found in the Sangs sa chen mo, but simply reflects the view of position 1, which repeatedly occurs in the treatise.

43 This passage is a combination of two different passages in the Sangs sa chen mo, namely, a portion from §IV.1.B.iii and a second one from §IV.2.B.ii (second passage). Except for variations in punctuation, the text is an exact citation of the passages.

44 This is identical with the last sentence in §IV.2.C.ii (second passage), except that, in addition to a few slight differences, it reads me long gi gzugs bnyan bzhin du snang ba instead of de lta bu dag snang, thus incorporating the example of a reflection in a mirror found in the following passage.

45 This citation is from §IV.2.B.ii (third passage). Except for the last sentence, which is a summary of the corresponding statement in the Sangs sa chen mo, the citation is almost identical, showing only slight variations.
And it teaches that extreme inconsistencies—"[The buddhas' mental] continuum consisting in gnosis is endowed with sensations," "[Buddhas] have the physical form of a male," "Further, [although they enjoy a sensation of bliss, they] do not indulge in women," "[They] partake of the bliss of indulging in women," and so forth—should certainly be refuted, assuming that [one maintains that these constituents] are not mere appearances to disciples, [but] do exist in a buddha's individual [mental] continuum. And [it states further]:

Because a buddha's gnososes are inconceivable, we do not commit the offensive (or: ill-considered) [act] of rejecting them. And, after showing the contradictions in the assertions that gnososes [confined to] an individual [mental] continuum is [both] real and possesses marks [consisting in appearances] (mthshan ma: nimitta), [it states]:

[Even] if one weighs [the matter] logically, [I] see no point in engaging arrogantly in dispute regarding this highly transcendental [phenomenon].

One understands [Rong-zom-pa's stance] from these statements, for it is evident that the great Rong-zom-pa explicitly maintains that the dharmadhātu is beyond manifoldness, but by no means did [he] ever teach [it] to be the mere and plain emptiness of a non-affirming negation (med dag stong rkyang phyang chad, i.e. the mere absence of something). Thus [the entire issue] rests on this crucial point. This is established in view of the undeniable [fact that in] all the writings of this lord of scholars various types of logical reasoning have been clearly employed for the sole purpose of establishing the [highest] mode of existence (gnas lugs), that is, the indivisibility of the two truths (or: realities).

If [Rong-zom-pa] maintained that the [dharma]dhātu is not a union [of appearance and emptiness (snang stong zung 'jug)] but exclusively non-existence (med pa phyogs gcig), [it would follow that for him] the arising of various appearances at the time of the foundation is impossible; nor at the time of determining the path (i.e. the correct view and the like) would freedom from manifoldness be possible, for [his view] would not be free from manifoldness pertaining to [the extreme of] non-existence (med pa'i spros pa); and if, at the time of the result, the mental flow ceases in the sphere (ngang du), [with the latter being determined by] a non-affirming negation alone, how could there be anything to cause (i) complete knowledge of the dharmadhātu, which is endowed with the two purities, and

46 This passage is an abbreviated version of §IV.2.C.i (first passage).
47 This is a citation from §IV.2.B.ii (second passage). Mi-pham, however, has sangs rgyas kyi ye shes instead of sangs rgyas rnams kyi chos. On the expression gzu bo mi byed, see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo, n. 86.
48 This is a citation from §IV.2.B.ii (beginning of the third passage), with slight differences.
49 It is conceivable that the text should read pa'i instead of pas in the phrase ... gsungs pas gnad 'di.... In this case the sentence would translate as follows: "... for [the entire issue] rests on the crucial point that evidently the great Rong-zom-pa explicitly maintains...."
50 See below the translation of the passage from the dKon cog 'grel, §III.5, where the position maintaining that the purified dharmadhātu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood is discussed, it being stated there that this position is based on the scriptural system that maintains the indivisibility of the two truths.
51 It seems that the phrase ngang du should be understood here in the sense of klong du.
52 The two purities are (I) natural purity (prakṛtiśuddhi: rang bzhin gyis rnam par dag pa), referring to the natural purity of reality regardless of whether it is polluted by adventitious stains,
(ii) compassion to arise? [The dharmadhātu in this case would be] like the non-existent horn of a rabbit. Therefore, those who, not having understood the meaning of the manifoldlessness of the dharmadhātu, hold a mere non-affirming negation to be the dharmadhātu, [necessarily] think that this tradition of Rong-zom-pa totally rejects [the existence of] gnosis at the stage of a buddha, and thus they simply smear the immaculate tradition of a great being [with] the impurities of their own mind.

In brief, this dharmadhātu, [that is], bodhicitta that is the union of awareness (rig pa) and emptiness [already at] the foundation, is free from change and transformation, and once the ultimate truth of cessation, [that is], the dharmadhātu, which is endowed with the two purities, is revealed, the existence of [the type of] gnosis that exclusively knows [phenomena] as [they actually] are as a subject separate from the dharmadhātu, and the existence of [the type of] gnosis [confined to] an individual [mental] continuum that is a subject that perceives the various [phenomena characteristic of] manifoldness can]not be proved by any logical reasoning [used for] analyzing the ultimate. It is as stated by Nāgārjuna [in Mulamadhyamakakārikā 18.7]:

That which can be expressed ceases,
For the cognitive domain of the mind ceases.
True reality, which has not arisen and does not cease,
Is equivalent to nirvāṇa.

If one is forced to determine that [all phenomena], despite [their] appearing as duality, [that is], as object and subject or the like, do not exist in this way even now, at the foundation [level], when [one is still an ordinary] sentient being, but exist as [having] the nature of nothing but the dharmadhātu, how much more so at [the resultant level, that is,] the stage of a buddha, in which all contaminations in the form of adventitious residual impressions have been exhausted! It is thus established that other than the dharmadhātu itself, which is the manifestation of the foundation as it is (gzhi ji bzhin pa), there is no gnosis whatsoever that [is confined to] an individual [mental] continuum and is endowed with a substratum. The purified dharmadhātu itself is thus the essence (dngos gzhi) of all gnoses. The buddhas, given that they do not deviate from it (i.e. the dharmadhātu), know [phenomena] as [they actually] are. And non-conceptually, effortlessly, and spontaneously knowing all objects of knowledge contained by the dharmadhātu without deviating [from the dharmadhātu] is knowing [phenomena] to the full extent. Therefore, in all sūtras and tantras this is referred to as 'cognitive gnosis that is endowed with the ten powers,' or as 'gnosis that is knowledge of all aspects.'

There is, however, no need at all for a gnosis [confined to] an individual [mental] continuum—[gnosis] which would supersede the revelation of the purified dharmadhātu. For this reason, the victorious Klong-chen-rab-'byams stated that Bla-ma Rong-pa, too, took pains to establish the non-existence of manifoldness at the ultimate stage.

and (2) the purity characterized by stainlessness (vaimalaviśuddhi: dri ma med pa'i rnam par dag pa), that is, purity from adventitious stains. On these purities, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 315–316.

53 The canonical version (P, fol. 13a4; D, fol. 11a2; S, vol. 57, p. 26.11–13) reads almost identically, except that in the third line it has ma 'gags instead of our mi 'gag. The Sanskrit texts reads:

nivṛttam abhidhātavyam nivṛttaś cittagocarāḥ
anutpannāniruddhā hi nirvāṇam iva dharmatā ||

54 For the term ‘knowledge of all aspects’ (rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa (nyid): sarvākārājñatā), see the passage from Dharmamitra's Prasphutapadā translated below ("Works by Indian Authors," §2.B, n. 131).
by logical reasoning, in consideration of the meditative absorption void of appearances\textsuperscript{55}—during which obscurations, namely, the stains of the object–subject dichotomy along with the [corresponding] residual impressions, completely vanish into the ‘inner sphere’ (nang dbyings),\textsuperscript{56} [that is], the ‘womb of the great primordial purity’ (ka dag chen po ‘i stubs)—and in consideration of the explanations [found] in rDzogs-chen scriptures according to which all dual phenomena, such as Body and gnosis, are non-existent.\textsuperscript{57}

Most Tibetan teachers maintain that a buddha only partakes of an utterly pure non-dual gnosis, but that a gnosis that [knows phenomena] to the full extent—that perceives impure sentient beings and the like—does not exist as part of a buddha’s own perception (rang snang). The great Rong-zom-pa, however, has sought to prove that non-conceptual gnosis, that is, [gnosis that knows phenomena] as [they actually] are, [can be said to be non-existent] in the same way as you assert the non-existence of pure mundane gnosis—that is, [that nothing exists] apart from the purified dharmadhātu alone. In doing so, [he establishes that] if the two gnoses—[the one which knows phenomena] as [they actually] are [and the one which knows them] to the full extent—exist at the stage of a buddha, [they] equally exist, and if [they] do not exist, [they] equally do not exist, and therefore the stage of a buddha [must] exist as the purified dharmadhātu alone. Nonetheless, if the dharmadhātu itself is expressed in terms of its [different] aspects, it is also possible to establish the two [kinds of] knowledge—[namely, knowing phenomena] as [they actually] are [and knowing phenomena] to the full extent, for there is not the slightest phenomenon (i.e. object of

\textsuperscript{55} Tibetan authors often speak about [mind] in the state of absorption with appearances (mnyam bzhang snang bcas: sanirābhāssasamāhīta) as opposed to [mind] in the state of absorption void of appearances (mnyam bzhang snang med: anirābhāssasamāhīta), a topic that cannot be discussed here. Cf., however, Mi-pham’s dBu ma rgyan ’grel (p. 278.1), where the perception of a yogin is subdivided into snang bcas rjes thob and snang med mnyam bzhang. Cf. also TSD, s.vv. snang ba med pa ’i sa: nirābhāsabhūmi\textsuperscript{3}, and sangs rgyas kyi sa snang ba med pa: nirābhāsabuddhabhūmi\textsuperscript{3}.

\textsuperscript{56} As noted in Ehrhard 1990, pp. 277–278, n. 4, Klong-chen-pa differentiates between a ‘fine, inner sphere’ (nang dbyings phra ba) and a ‘gross, outer sphere’ (phyi dbyings rags pa) in connection with the theory of the three kāyas. The former corresponds to the dharmakāya (or: the unity of the three kāyas) on the foundation (gzhi) level, and the latter to the two rūpakāyas on the level of the ‘appearance of the foundation’ (gzhi snang). For references, see ibid.

\textsuperscript{57} I have not been able to trace such a statement in Klong-chen-pa’s writing. It is not my intention to examine Klong-chen-pas’s view regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, and thus in the following I shall merely cite a passage from Klong-chen-pa’s Grub mtha’ mdzod (p. 123.3–5), where meditative absorption void of appearances and the existence of gnosis in this state is briefly described during a discussion of the difference between a deluded and non-deluded mind according to the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka system: “Those who hold the view of definitive meaning [taught] by Nāgārjuna, including his supreme disciple Candrakīrti, maintain the following: In the meditative absorption of those who have reached [one of the] stage[s] (bhūmi) and at the stage of a buddha, there is no appearance of any object of knowledge as duality, that is, an object and subject—an object of knowledge and a knower or the like—and therefore the arising-and-continuing of the subject, that is, gnosis, also comes to rest, and at that time the arising-and-continuing of the mind and mental factors ceases altogether” (… slob don klu sgrub kyis nges pa don gyi lta ba ‘dzin pa ’i slob ma ’i mchog zla ba grags pa la sogs pa rnams ni ’di ltar ’dod de sa thob pa ’i mnyam gzhag dang sangs rgyas kyi sa na shes bya dang shes byed la sogs pa ’i yul dang yul can gyi shes bya gzung ’dzin du snang ba gang yang ma grub pas yul can ye shes kyi ’jug pa ’ang zhi ba ste de ’i tshe sms dang sms las byung ba ’i ’jug pa thams cad rgyun chad de....).
knowledge) other than the dharmadhatu [itself]. For that reason the gSang sngags lam rim by Jinendra Padmasambhava states:

58

[There are three ways of explaining the activities of buddhas] for the benefit of others: with a substratum, without a substratum, and naturally.

Those who maintain that a support in the form of gnosis [confined to an] individual [mental] continuum [is necessary] at the ultimate stage of a buddha in order that benefit to others can occur are the adherents of Cittamātra and others (i.e. Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas).

[Those who maintain that] even though there is no such support, buddhas appear for the sake of others by dint of [previous] resolutions are the Mādhyamikas (i.e. Mādhyamikas who do not follow Yogācāra theories of knowledge when defining the conventional level).

And [the position that] avoids falling into these two extremes—[the one which holds that buddhas] act for the benefit of others naturally and effortlessly, [in virtue of] the beneficial effects (byin rlabs: adhīṣṭhāna) of the inconceivable purified reality—is the purport of the tantras [of] Mantra[yāna], such as the rDzogs-chen [tantras]. The *Guhyagarbha[tantra] states:

59

Because [buddhas] are linked to sentient beings through great compassion, [They] appear everywhere in the six destinations (i.e. realms of existence).

And in the rDzogs-chen tantras this is called the ‘gnosis characterized by all-pervading compassion’.60 Accordingly, the great Rong-zom-pa seeks to prove that although there is no substratum, buddhas appear in various forms, such as pure and impure fields, and with various sizes and colours of Body, depending on how [such forms] have been ‘propelled’ (’phangs pa) by force of [past] resolutions, and that there is no genuine (rang mtsaran pa) substratum confined to their [mental] continuum. Nonetheless, he proves that buddhas act for the benefit of others owing to the beneficial effects of the svabhāvikākāya, [that is], the purified dharmadhatu. Ultimately, given this [explanation, Rong-zom-pa’s position] is on a par with (la bzla ba) the purport of the tantras [of] Mantra[yāna], according to which buddhas act for the benefit of others naturally.61

Although [I] could have greatly elaborated [on this point, I] have explained [it only] briefly. I cannot dispense with having said at least this much. [Its purpose is] to remove misgiving [resulting from] the great fear and distrust [that arises] when those who have not come close to the meaning of the ultimate [truth] and who take what is called the dharmadhatu as nothing but mere emptiness (stong rkyang) hear the profound and difficult writings of this great being. If one by all means [insists on] taking the non-existence of both [kinds of] knowledge at the [stage of] a buddha as definite, the ‘knowledge of all aspects’ would be as [non-existent as] a rabbit’s horn, and this would be to detract egregiously from the supreme result [of all]. If there were no ‘knowledge of [all] aspects,’ there would not be any buddha who [could] show the correct path to disciples. If [such a buddha] did not exist,

58 On this verse, see above, §2.A.

59 *Guhyagarbha[tantra] (P, fol. 118b8; D, fol. 121a4–5). Note that our text reads 'gro drug kun gnas instead of 'gro drug dus gnas in the canonical version. For Rong-zom-pa’s comment on this verse, see below, §4.

60 See, for example, Klong-chen-pa’s Tshig don mdzod (p. 465.3), which uses the expressions chos sku gzhi gnas kyi ye shes, longs sku mtsaran nyid ’dzin pa’i ye shes, and sprul sku kun khyab kyi ye shes, and also ibid. (pp. 467.5–468.1), containing the respective parallel expressions ngo bo ka dag gi ye shes, rang bzhiin lhun grub kyi ye shes, and thugs rje kun khyab kyi ye shes.

61 Mi-pham relies here on Rong-zom-pa’s discussion in his Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.1.B.ii.
it would also be impossible for the Dharma and Saṃgha to exist, and this would then contravene the path and result of Mahāyāna. For that reason, [only] those who have determined the meaning of the inconceivable manifoldless dharmadātu [can be said to] have actualized the true reality of a tathāgata—[his] Body being characterized by gnosis (ye shes kyi sku: jñānakāya)—through [their] faculty of discerning insight. Lord Nāgārjuna states [in Mālamadhyamakakārikā 22.15]:

All those who make
The manifoldless and imperishable tathāgata manifold,
Being struck by manifoldness,
Do not see the tathāgata.

And the [Vajracchedikā]sūtra states:

Whoever sees me as visible matter,
and so forth. When it comes to establishing the nature of a tathāgata according to the meaning of [these] authoritative scriptures, there is no equal to the writings of the great Rong-zom-pa. Therefore, one should know that the two all-knowing ones—Rong-[zom-pa and] Klong-[chen-pa]—are indistinguishable [in regard to their] ultimate intention, which accords with the intention of the tantras of rDzogs-chen, the king of all Vehicles.

3. Self-occurring Gnosis

A. Occurrences of the Term in Indian Sources

The notion of self-occurring gnosis (svayābhūjñāna: rang byung (gi) ye shes) in the sense of intrinsic gnosis is central to the philosophy of the rNying-ma school, particularly in connection with the rDzogs-chen tradition. The term svayābhūjñāna as such occurs in earlier Indian literature, although in most cases not in the sense of intrinsic gnosis, but in the original meaning of the term, namely, the ‘gnosis of a self-occurring one,’ where svayābhū is a term for buddhas and pratyekabuddhas, one expressive of the fact that they attain awakening without the help of others; or, along the same lines, when svayābhū is taken as qualifying gnosis, ‘autogenous gnosis,’ that is, gnosis that has come about independently of external influence.

Rong-zom-pa was well aware of the
fact that the term \textit{svayambhûjñâna} as used in Indian sources does not always mean self-occuring gnosis in the sense of intrinsic gnosis. In his \textit{Theg tshul}, he differentiates between two meanings of the term, namely, (1) according to the Yogacaras of the Nirakaravada branch and (2) according to \textit{sûtras} of definitive meaning, the connection being apparently the employment of the term self-cognition (\textit{svasamvitā/svasamvedana: rang rig pa}) in both cases.\footnote{The employment of the term \textit{rang rig} in connection with self-occuring gnosis in rdZogs-chen literature and in Rong-zom-pa’s writings is briefly referred to in Karmay 1988, p. 107, n. 4 & pp. 114–115, n. 42.} According to him, in the first case the term simply refers to the natural coming to rest of all impulses. As to its meaning in \textit{sûtras} considered by him to be of definitive meaning, he cites and comments upon a passage from the \textit{Vimalakîrtinirdesâsûtra}, a verse from what he refers to as the \textit{Gandavyûhasûtra} (but what is in fact the twenty-fifth text of the \textit{Avatamsaka}), and a verse from a rNying-ma Tantric scripture entitled \textit{Khyung chen} (Tb 21), all of which, according to him, employ the term in the sense of the luminous and stainless nature of mind.\footnote{\textit{Theg tshul} (B, fols. 71b5–73a4; D, pp. 494.18–496.9).}

A study of the term and its meaning as found in Indian sources will not be attempted here. Nonetheless, before discussing Rong-zom-pa’s understanding of self-occuring gnosis in the sense of intrinsic gnosis, I shall first list some Indian works in which the term occurs, and note some of the pertinent passages, without, however, going into them.\footnote{The employment of the term \textit{svayambhûjñâna} in Indian and early Tibetan sources (including the ones listed here) and its different usages will be attempted within the framework of a separate study focusing on Rong-zom-pa’s \textit{Rang byung ye shes}, a small work devoted to the topic.} As is evident, many of them employ the term in the sense of autogenous gnosis:\footnote{Further references are found in \textit{TSD}, s.v. \textit{rang byung gi ye shes} and \textit{rang byung gi ye shes dang mthun pa}.}

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Chinese, see de La Vallée Poussin 1988–1990, vol. 2, p. 398; the \textit{Pratimokṣasūtrapaddhati} (P, fol. 11b3; D, fol. 10a3–4; S, vol. 84, p. 23.20–21): \textit{rang byung} \textit{zhes bya ba ni bcom idan ’das te} "\textit{gshan gyi lung med par bla na med pa’i mkhyen pa brnyes pa’i phyir ro}"; Bhavya’s \textit{Tarkajvāta} (P, fol. 137b2–3; D, fol. 126a6; S, vol. 58, p. 310.10–11): \textit{gshan gyi} [P \textit{gyis}] \textit{dring mi ‘jog par mkhyen pa’i phyir rang byung dang|} (referred to also in Heitmann 1995, p. 417); cf. \textit{Mūlamadhyamakakārikā} 18.12: \textit{saññabuddhanam anupāde śrāvakānām punah kṣaye | jñānām pratyekabuddhānām asamsargāt pravartate |}, Tib. (P, fol. 13a7–8; D, fol. 11a5; S, vol. 57, pp. 26.20–27.1): \textit{rdzogs sangs rgyas nrams ma byung zhing|} "\textit{nyan thos rnam ni zad’ pa na} [D gyur kyang|] \textit{rang sangs rgyas kyi ye shes ni| brten [D ston] pa med las rab tu skye|}". A reference to \textit{buddhas} or \textit{pratyekabuddhās} as self-occuring is also found in \textit{Ratnagotrībhāga} 1.33, 1.138, 1.153 & 4.56 (English translations are found in Takasaki 1966, pp. 202, 282, 296 & 368, respectively). Similarly, the \textit{Ratnagotrībhāgaśavyākhyā}, commenting on verse 1.5, refers to Buddhahood as self-occuring (Johnston, p. 8.9–10; Takasaki 1966, p. 157). For further references see \textit{TSD}, s.v. \textit{rang byung} and \textit{rang ’byung ba}; cf. s.v. \textit{rang byung gi byang chub}. See also the passage from Dhamamitra’s \textit{Prasphutapada} translated below. Note that the term \textit{svayambhū} has been also employed to designate several non-Buddhist deities, including Brahma, Śiva, and Viṣṇu (see \textit{MW}, s.v.).
1. Bodhisattvabhūmi⁶⁹
2. Bhadrapalasūtra⁷⁰
3. Saddharmapundarīkasūtra⁷¹
4. Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra⁷²
5. Candrakīrti’s Trisaranasaptati⁷³
6. Dharmamitra’s Prasphuṭapadā⁷⁴
7. Bhavya’s Tarkajvalā⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Bodhisattvabhūmi III.4 (Vihārapaṭala) (Wogihara, p. 326.18–22; Dutt, p. 223.18–20): samyag āśu ca sarvākārasarvabodhisambhārānukūlāṃ [Dutt add. sarva] sattvesu sarvākārabodhisattvavrtyānukūlāṃ anuttarasamyaksambodhisvayambhūjñānapratilāmbhānukūlāṃ sarvākāravadhvākarānānukūlāṃ tac cītām utpadyate]. The Tibetan text reads (P, fol. 194a5–6; D, fol. 169a4–5; S, vol. 73, p. 943.1–6): yang dag par myur du nram pa thams cad du byang chub kyi tshogs thams cad dang mthun pa dang| sms ca rnam las rnam pa thams cad dus byang chub sems dpa’i bya ba dang mthun pa dang| bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa’i byang chub rang byung gi ye shes ‘thob pa dang mthun pa dang| nram pa thams cad dus byang rgyas kyi ’phrin [D phrin] las mdzad pa dang mthun pa’i sms de skye’o]].

⁷⁰ Bhadrapalasūtra (p. 76, §8J): bzang skyong| ‘on kyang byang chub sms dpa’ sms dpa’ chen pos de bzhin gshes pā dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa’i sms rgyas de dag mthong na’i ’di ltar yon tan gyi chos rmad du byung ba dang ldan pa’i de bzhin gshes pā dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa’i sms rgyas rrnas kyi ’di lita st| ye shes chen po dang| sms rgyas kyi ye shes dang| de bzhin gshes pa’i ye shes dang| rang byung gi ye shes dang| mi nnyam pa dang nnyam pa’i ye shes dang| ’jig rten gsun po thams cad las khyad par du ’phags pa’i ye shes ni ngo mthar che’o]]. For an English translation, see Harrison 1990, p. 74 (§8J).

⁷¹ Saddharmapundarīkasūtra (Kern, p. 485.1–2; Vaidya, p. 268.11–12): amātsaryo ’ham kulaputā aparigṛhīta citto viśārādo buddhajñānasya dātā | tathāgatajñānasya svayambhūjñānasya dātā |; Tib. (T, fol. 268a3–4; D, fol. 179b5–6): rigs kyi bu dag| nga la ser sna med do| ’dzin pa’i sms med do| ’jigs pa med par sms rgyas kyi ye shes sbyin pa’o] de bzhin gshes pa’i ye shes dang rang byung gi ye shes sbyin pa’o]. Cf. ibid. (Kern, p. 45.11 (2.47ab); Vaidya, p. 30.15–16): upīyam etam kurute svayambhūr bauddhāsyā jñānasyā prabodhārtham |; Tib. (T, fol. 30a3; D, fol. 20a1): sms rgyas ye shes rab tu rtogs bya’i phyir| da ltar rang byung ba ni thabs mdzad de|, where svayambhū clearly refers to the Buddha himself.

⁷² Akṣayamatinirdeśasūtra (as cited in Jinaputra’s Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya, P, fol. 93b6–8; D, fol. 75b7–76a1; S, vol. 76, p. 1141.4–7): mi rga mi ’chi ba’i bdud rtsi’i bde bas yongs su bskang ba’i phyir na ba dang sman ’dod pa rnam la sman sbyin pa’o| rang dbang dang rang nyams dang rang ’byung [D byung] gi ye shes yongs su bskang ba’i phyir byang chub sms dpa’ [D dnga’] rrnas kyi [D kyi] bran po [P om.] dang bran mo yongs su gtong ba’i sbyin pa’o]]. This passage is not in the citation found in the Sanskrit version (p. 104, §131). See also Braarvig 1993, vol. p. 30.36–39 (text) and vol. 2, p. 118 (translation).

⁷³ Trisaranasaptati 41:

\[
gang zhig rang byung ye shes ’dod\]
\[
rang rgyal byang chub don gnyer bas\]
\[
rtsom pa de yang rang rgyal gyi\]
\[
byang chub kho na nges ’thob bo\]
\]

An English translation is found in Sørensen 1986, p. 41.

⁷⁴ For a translation of a passage from Dharmamitra’s Prasphuṭapadā where the two meanings of the term svayambhūjñāna are discussed, see the following passage.
75 Tarkajviilii (P, fols. 132b7–133a1; D, fol. 122b6–7; S, vol. 58, p. 300.12–17): yid bzhiin gyi nor bu dang dpag bsam gyi shing mthu sna tshogs dang ldan pa ltar rang 'byung [D byung] gi ye shes skad cig gcig gis chos thams cad menyam pa nyid du mkhyen pa rnam par mi rtog pa sgrib pa med ma phyin ci ma log pas rang gis [P gi] de nyid gnyis su med pa gzhans gi dring mi 'jo gog pa rnam par mi rtog pa zhi ba tha dad pa nyid ma yin pa' damgs su med pa'i bdag nyid thugs su chud pa ni sangs rgyas shes bya'o] (a translation of this passage, except for the first sentence, is found in Heitmann 1995, p. 415); ibid. (P, fols. 158b6–159a1; D, fol. 146a2–4; S, vol. 58, p. 356.9–17): gal te yang lam thun mong ma yin na' nyans thos rnam kyi phyogs gcig pa dang [gzhans gi rgyis gcig shes par 'gyur la] bcom ldan 'das rnam kyi ni gzhans la rag ma las shing rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa nyid yin pa ji ltar srI [P sred] ce [P zhe] na' ston pa'i dbang po khyad 'phags pas] kun mkhyen ye shes srI pa yin] lam gcig na yang 'dod pa bzhiin[ 'ga' yis so so yang dag rig] bcom ldan 'das kyi dad pa la sogs pa'i dbang po ni shin tu rno ba yin la] nyans thos rnam kyi ni brtal [D rtul] ba yin rang sangs rgyas rnam kyi ni 'bring po yin te' des na bcom ldan 'das ni rang byung thams cad mkhyen pa nyid 'kyi ye shes' [P kyi's] yin gcig nyans thos la sogs pa rnam kyi ni [P om.] ma yin no].

76 For a passage from the Madhyamakapradipa where the existence of both non-conceptual and pure mundane gnosises at the stage of a buddha is negated, and where svayambhujñana in the sense of true reality is referred to, see below, the section “Works by Indian Authors,” §1.E. See further Madhyamakapradipa (P, fol. 329a7; D, fol. 262a1–2; S, vol. 57, p. 1493.11–13): gzhans yang don dam pa'i bden pa'i [D pa] shes rab ces bya ba rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes chos nyid byang chub kyi sems rang byung gi ye shes chen po'i mdun na ci yang med pas chad par smra ba yang ma yin te]. As stated above, a discussion of the authorship of the Tarkajviilii cannot be undertaken here. Nonetheless, it is notable that the term svayambhujñana is employed in the Tarkajviilii in a rather conservative sense, namely, as designating gnosis that is momentary, whereas in the Madhyamakapradipa it is clearly employed in its later meaning as self-occurring gnosis, that is, true reality. Note that the passage provided here is also cited by Dol-po-pa in his Ri chos rgya mtsho (p. 715.1–2).

77 Vimalakirtinirdeśasūtra (Skt. ed. p. 106.13–18; cf. translit., p. 424.1–5): riktam iti ca tuccham iti ‘cāsārakam iti’ cāsvāmiṁka iti cāniketam iti ca pratyavēkṣate, arikta-punyaś cātucchajñānaś ca paripārasamkalpaś ca svayambhujñānābhiṣiktaś ca svayambhujñāne cābhīniyuktaḥ nītārtho buddhavāṃśe pratiṣṭhito bhavati | evam hi kulapūrṇāh evam dharmādhipatukā bodhisattvaḥ ’sanskrte na pratīṣṭhate sanskrteṃ nās paryayati. [a Ms. omits; b Ms. reads nābhīṣikto; c Ms. reads dharmāvimitukā; d Ms./Ed. read bodhisatvah/va; e Ms. reads pratīṣṭhate. The Tibetan text reads (ibid. translit., p. 424.6–11): gsog dang| gsob dang| snying po me pa dang| bdag po med pa dang| gnas med par so sor rtog kyang bsod nams gsog ma yin pa dang| ye shes gsob ma yin pa dang| bngaogs pa yongs pa rdzogs shing rang byung ba'i ye shes su dbang bsuk par dang| rang byung gi ye' shes la brtson pa dang| nges pa'i don sangs rgyas kyi rigs la rab tu gnas pa yin te| rigs kyi bu de ltar na de lta bu'i chos la mos pa'i byang chub sems dpa' ni 'dus ma byas la mi gnas shing 'dus byas kyang zad par ni byed do]). [a Text reads yes. For the Chinese translation, see ibid. (translit., p. 425). As already mentioned, Rong-zom-pa cites this passage, or parts of it, as scriptural support in connection with self-occurring gnosis. See his dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 52b1–2; D, p. 82.12–15); ibid. (B, fol. 161b1; D, p. 197.17–18); Theg tshul (B, fol. 71b6–72a1; D, p. 494.21–23).

78 Ratnagotrīvibhāgavyākhyā (Johnston, p. 8.13–16): ity evam atyadhūntācintyaviśayam buddhatvam aṣṭrutvā parataḥ svayam anācāryakaṇa svayambhujñānena nirabhilāpyasvabhāvatām abhisambudhya.... The Tibetan text reads (P, fol. 78b7–8; D, fol. 78a4–5; S, vol. 70, p. 996.3–5):
11. *Avatamsaka* (in this context the entire collection seems to be referred to, at least by some, as the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*).  
12. Suratīvajra’s *Nāmasaṃgyorārthāloka-kara*  
13. Atiśa’s *Ratnakarāṇḍodghāṭa*  
14. *Guhyagarbha-tantra*  
15. dGongs pa ’dus pa ’i mdo

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*Ratnakarāṇḍodghāṭa* (P, fol. 124b4–6; D, fol. 111b1–3; S, vol. 64, pp. 324.20–325.4; cf. the passage in the version found in the *Jo bo rje ’i gsung ’bum*, p. 800.16–20): ye shes kyang rang ’byung gi ye shes chen po yin te bla ma a wa [P ba] dhū ti [D ti] pa [P ba] dang| bla ma tā [P ti] mra dūi [P dri] pa’i zhal nas ye shes chos kyi dbyings dang tha mi dad| chos kyi dbyings la rang ’byung ye shes btags| bsam du med cing tshig gi spros dang bral| gdul bya’i ngo rang de nyid rnam lṅgar gsungs| zhes sblo dpun klu sgrub kyi gsungs zhes gsungs so|. Note that this passage occurs during a discussion of the question whether a *buddha* possesses Bodies, gnosis, and other features that appear to sentient beings. The author here cites his teacher Avadūtīpāda (alias Advayavajra or Maitripāda) and another as yet unidentified scholar (named Tānmdadvipa?) (P reads ti mra dri pa; D, tā mra dūi pa; and the version found in the *Jo bo rje ’i gsung ’bum, tam bha ra ti pa*, both of whom are said to be citing Nāgarjuna.

*Guhyagarbha-tantra* (P, fol. 118b8; D, fol. 121a4): rang ’byung [D ’byung] ye shes gnas med snang| For Rong-zom-pa’s comments on this line, see below, §4.
Interestingly, mGon-po-skyabs (fl. eighteenth cent.), the Mongolian author of the rGya nag chos 'byung, mentions a Chinese translation by the Kashmiri Panḍita Buddhatara of one bam po—length mahāyānasūtra entitled 'Phags pa shin tu rgyas pa'i mdo sde rang byung gi ye shes nges don bstan pa. An accompanying gloss notes that this sūtra does not seem to exist in Tibetan translation, but that it is quite similar to a commentary of the Saṃdhinirmodanasūtra.

Dharmamitra, in the fourth chapter of his Prasphaṭapadā, considers the term ‘knowledge of all aspects’ (rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa (nyid): sarvakāraṇajñatā), and in doing so discusses the term svayambhūjñāna, for which he gives two possible meanings: (1) an ontological one, namely, the dharmadhiitu, that is, true reality, and (2) a gnoseological one, namely, autogenous gnosis that is knowledge of all aspects. He further states that knowledge of all aspects is considered to be self-occurring because it is attained on account of perceiving true reality, which results in having command over all phenomena. He states:

The true reality taught by all buddhas is nirvāṇa. What is nirvāṇa? [It] is taught [as being] purified true reality, and [it is] on account of this [purification that it] is taught as being a constituent of a buddha. “All phenomena” [means] both conditioned and unconditioned [phenomena]. “Having command over” them [means having the power to eliminate, }

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83 dGongs pa 'dus pa'i mdo (P, fol. 156b1–3; D, fol. 167a3–4): de nas lang ka'i bdag po dris pa| gsang ba pa'i bdag po gang gi ye shes 'diitar lnga kho nar zad dam| 'on te gzhan tha dad par yang snang| smras pa| lang ka'i bdag po ye shes ni gang gi dbang gis lngar yang snang la| bsam gyis mi khyang pa dang| skad cig bu drug dang| rigs gcig pa dang| rnam pa gsum dang| de kho na nyid gsum dang| rnal 'byor bzhhi dang| rang 'byung ba gcig go||; ibid. (P, fol. 159a1–3; D, fol. 169b4–6): gsang ba'i dbyings de ni thams cad rang rig pa'i phyir rang 'byung gi ye shes zhes bya ste| ye shes de la ni skabs kha cig tu ni rnam par mi riog pa'i ye shes zhes bya'o| kha gcig tu ni stong pa nyid kyi ye shes zhes bya'o| kha cig tu ni chos kyi dbYings kyi ye shes zhes bya'o| kha cig tu ni nnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes zhes bya'o| kha cig tu ni so sor rtog pa'i ye shes zhes bya'o| kha cig tu ni bya ba grub pa'i ye shes zhes bya'o||. Cf. the dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 91b6–95a3; D, pp. 123.16–126.23), where Rong-zom-pa, while discussing the initiatory steps (gleng bslang) taken by Samantabhadra in the context of the *Guhyagarbhatantra, discusses the concepts of non-origination (skyey ba dang bral ba), non-cessation (*gag pa dang bral ba), non-abidance (gnas pa dang bral ba), non-perception (dmigs pa dang bral ba), and non-movement (*gro 'ong dang bral ba) in the light of the five gnoses, which according to the common systems are the result of transformation, given that bodhicitta is generated under the influence of one’s spiritual disposition and spiritual friends, but according to the system of the *Guhyagarbhatantra all are self-occurring gnosis, for bodhicitta is regarded there as merely an illuminating factor of the primordially awakened mind.

84 Cf. Demiéville 1978, p. 238, s.v. Butsudatara (Fo t'o to lo), the Sanskrit original of which is given as Buddhatrata (Buddhatara?).

85 rGya nag chos 'byung (p. 146.10–13): ‘phags pa shin tu rgyas pa'i mdo sde rang byung gi ye shes nges don bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo bam po gcig pa kha che'i paṇḍi ta buddha ta ra'i 'gyur| ('di bod ma yod med kyi gsal ka mi snang dgyongs pa nges 'grel dang ha lam dbyigs mthungs pa zhir tu 'dug).}

86 On the term sarvakāraṇajñatā, see n. 131 to the translation of a passage from Dharmamitra’s Prasphaṭapadā in the section “Works by Indian Authors,” §2.B.

realize, generate, bring to an end,\(^{88}\) make an aeon into a moment, potentiate a moment into an aeon, and the like. Command over all phenomena is [due to] the influence of the self-occurring (rang byung: svayambhi). What is the self-occurring? [It is] self-occurring gnosis. This, in turn, is two-fold, namely, (1) the dharma\textit{dh\textit{atu}} and (2) the gnosis that is the knowledge of all aspects attained by a person in his final [samsāric] existence.

(1) Considering [the first meaning, namely,] \textit{dharma\textit{dh\textit{atu}}}: The Āryagandavyūha states:\(^{89}\)

\begin{quote}
Even if inconceivably many
World spheres were destroyed by fire,
Space would not disintegrate;
Similar is the case with self-occurring gnosis.
\end{quote}

In what sense is it self-occurring gnosis? [It is self-occurring] because it is not created by way of causes and conditions, and because it [itself] is the cause of non-conceptual gnosis. As for other [scriptures], the \textit{Mother of the Victorious Ones} (rGyud ba'i yum: Jinajanan) states:\(^{90}\)

\begin{quote}
Nothing is the object of gnosis. Gnosis, in turn, is not the object of anything. Gnosis has no object. Were gnosis to have an object, it would be nescience (mi shes pa: ajñāna).
\end{quote}

Therefore, the purified \textit{dharma\textit{dh\textit{atu}}} itself, it [might] be maintained, is gnosis. But if this were the case, it would contradict statements such as: “To be very brief, the stage of a \textit{buddha} is composed of five constituents.”\(^{91}\)

(2) Considering [the second meaning, namely,] gnosis that is knowledge of all aspects attained by a person in his final [samsāric] existence: A \textit{bodhisattva} [in his final samsāric existence is one who], having heard instructions that were taught [to him as a result of his] having pleased [his] spiritual friends over a long period (i.e. during his previous existences), attains gnosis in that (i.e. final) life without a teacher. Hence, since he

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\(^{88}\) The terms ‘eliminate’ (spang ba), ‘realize’ (mngon du bya ba), ‘generate’ (skyed pa), and ‘bring to an end’ (dgag pa) seem to be tag words for the Four Noble Truths, namely, the second truth of the ‘source of suffering’ (duḥkhasamudaya: sduṅ bṣnag kun ‘byung), the third truth of ‘cessation of suffering’ (duḥkhanirodha: sduṅ bṣnag ‘gog pa), the fourth truth of the ‘path through which suffering comes to an end’ (duḥkhanirodhagāmini pratipad: sduṅ bṣnag ‘gog par ‘gyur ba’i lam), and the first truth of ‘suffering’ (duḥkha: sduṅ bṣnag), respectively. Cf. Mvy, no. 1316: duḥkham āryasatyam pariṣṭeyam: sduṅ bṣnag ‘phags pa’i bden pa yongs su shes par bya; no. 1317: duḥkhasamudayah prahātavyah: sduṅ bṣnag kun ‘byung ba spang bar bya; no. 1318: duḥkhanirodhaḥ sākṣātkaśrayah: sduṅ bṣnag ‘gog pa mngon du bya; and no. 1319: duḥkhanirodhagāminī pratipad bhāvayitavyā: sduṅ bṣnag ‘gog par ‘gyur ba’i lam bṣgom par bya (see also Mvy, nos. 1321–1324). For the problematic reading of this passage, see the pertinent note to the Tibetan text.

\(^{89}\) On this verse, see the translation of the \textit{Sangs sa chen mo}, §III.1.

\(^{90}\) Compare the statement from the Āryasuvikrāntavārikāśāvatāparipṛcchā that is cited in the passage from Atiśa’s \textit{Ekāsrtyupadeśā} translated below (“Works by Indian Authors,” §1.C).

\(^{91}\) This is clearly a reference to the \textit{Buddhabhūmisūtra}. For details, see the translation of the passage from the \textit{dKon cog ’grel}, §II.2, n. 21. Note also that the reading of our text here is identical with that of T.
has not depended on others at all, [the gnosis] is self-occurring, as has been taught in the following and other statements:92

O Upaga, I have attained awakening;
I had nobody as my teacher.

The first [meaning of] self-occurring [gnosis] is, [as] shown earlier, the true reality that has been taught by all buddhas. [In] the present [context, I] stick to the second [meaning of] self-occurring [gnosis].

As to having command over all phenomena on account of repeated practice over many aeons, it is as stated [by Sāntideva in Bodhicaryāvatāra 6.14ab]:93

There is nothing that does not become easy
Through repeated practice.

With regard to having command [over phenomena] as a result of having accumulated beneficial resources for that duration, it is stated [in the Lalitavistara]:94

The wishes of a person who is endowed with beneficial resources are fulfilled.

One should know that a detailed [treatment of this topic is found] in the Puṇyabalāvadāna.95 In addition, as far as the main [point] regarding command over all

92 This is clearly a free, abridged rendering of Catuspariṣatsūtra 10.4, which contains the Buddha’s answer to Upaga’s question as to who his teacher was. The canonical text (as edited in Waldschmidt 1957, p. 129) reads as follows:

\[
\text{nga dang 'dra ba yod min pas|}
\text{nga la slob dpon 'ga [= 'ga'] med do|}
\text{'jig rten sangs rgyas nga gcig pul|}
\text{yang dag byang chub dam pa thob|}.
\]

The Sanskrit text reads (ibid, p. 128):

\[
\text{ācāryo me na va kaścit sadṛśaś ca na vidyate |}
\text{eko 'smi loke sambuddhaḥ prāptaḥ sambodhim uttamām |}.
\]

For the Pāli text, see ibid. p. 128. A German translation is provided in ibid., p. 129, an English translation in Kloppenborg 1973, p. 20. This same verse is also found in Udāna 22.4. For other parallels, see ibid. (Bernhard, vol. 1, p. 279).

93 The canonical reading is slightly different (Bhattacharya 1960, p. 83): In the first line it has na instead of our te and mi ’gyur ba instead of our ma gyur pa’i. The Sanskrit text reads:

\[
\text{na kimcid asti tad vastu yad abhyāśasya duśkaram |}
\]

See also Crosby & Skilton, p. 51 (for an English translation) and Steinkellner 1981, p. 64 (for a German translation).

94 Lalitavistara (p. 293.16):

\[
\text{abhiprāyu sidhyati ca punyavato narasya |}
\]

The Tibetan text reads identically (T, fol. 254a2; D, fol. 171a4):

\[
\text{bsod nams ldan pa’i mi yi bsam pa rnams kyang ‘grub|}.
\]

95 The Tibetan title of the Puṇyabalāvadāna (Skorupski 253; Tōhoku 347) found in the canonical versions reads simply bsod nams stobs kyi rtogs pa brjod pa and not gZhon nu bsod nams stobs kyi rtogs pa brjod pa’i mdo, as we have here.
phenomena is concerned, [one] should understand, on the basis of the [following] reasoning, that if [one] realizes the dharmadhātu, [the] resultant [fulfilment of wishes] is simply dependent on the manner in which [one] wishes:

There is no phenomenon Apart from the dharmadhātu.

And:

[The nature of] one entity [is] the nature of all entities; [The nature of] all entities [is] the nature of one entity. He who realizes [the nature of] one entity as true reality Realizes [the nature of] all entities as true reality.

Hence the gnosis that is knowledge of all aspects is attained by taking true reality as an objective support, and thus [it] is considered to be self-occurring on account of [its] having command over entities. This same [gnosis] is referred to as an aspect of Buddhahood, [namely,] the awakening that is perfect in all respects, inasmuch as it knows the various [phenomena] in their distinctiveness. This is the only difference.

Some maintain that self-occurring [gnosis] is [both] the cause and a 'phenomenon' (chos can: dharmin), while perfect awakening is in all respects the result and the true reality (chos nyid: dharmata) of that phenomenon. As scriptural support [they] propose the following [statement]:

O son of a noble family, the buddhas, the Exalted Ones, having become perfectly awakened, enter into an absorption in a samādhi called 'the utter awakening of a buddha,' and as soon as they enter into this absorption in the samādhi, there [come to] exist as many [buddha]-Bodies as there are sentient beings, [and] there exist as many [buddha]-Speeches and -Minds as there are [buddha]-Bodies.

96 These two lines of verse are found in Madhyāntavibhāga 5.19 and Mahāyānasūrīlāmākāra 13.11ab & 13.12ab: dharmadhātuvinirmukto yasmād dhammo na vidyate. The Tibetan text of the Madhyāntavibhāga (P, fol. 47b8; D, fol. 44b2–3; S, vol. 70, p. 912.5–6) reads identically except that in the first line it has ni instead of our las and par instead of our pa'i. The Tibetan text of the Mahāyānasūrīlāmākāra, where the verse occurs twice (P, fol. 20a4–5 & 20a5–6; D, fol. 18a2–3 & 18a3; S, vol. 70, p. 842.15–16 & 842.17–18), is slightly different: the first line reads like the Tibetan text of the Madhyāntavibhāga (the first instance has, however, pa instead of par); the second line reads gang phyir chos med de yi phyir instead of our 'di ltar chos yod ma yin te. These two lines are also cited by Rong-zom-pa in his mṬshan brjod 'grel pa (B, fol. 272b1; D, p. 261.3–4).

97 Cf. Catuḥśataka 8.16 (Skt. text as cited in the Prasannapadā, p. 128.3–4, ad Mūlamadhyamakakārikā 4.9):

bhāvasyaikasya yo draṣṭā draṣṭā sarvasya sa smṛtah |
ekasya śūnyatā yaiva saiva sarvasya śūnyatā ||

The Tibetan text reads (P, fol. 10b3; D, fol. 9b6; S, vol. 57, p. 801.6–8):

dngos po gcig gi lta po gang||
de ni kun gyi lta por bshad||

gcig gi stong nyid gang yin pa||
de nyid [D ni] kun gyi stong pa nyid||.

98 I have not been able to locate this source.
B. Rong-zom-pa on Self-occurring Gnosis

As we have seen, Mi-pham argued that Rong-zom-pa did not deny the existence of self-occurring gnosis (in the sense of intrinsic gnosis), only that of extrinsic gnosis. In order to verify this claim, Rong-zom-pa’s own stance on self-occurring gnosis needs to be examined. In his *Sangs sa chen mo*, he presents the stance of position I, and states thereby that there is no real difference between the gnosis of a *buddha* and the mind of ordinary beings. Anything that has the characteristics of cognitive awareness (*shes shing rig pa*), be it dual or non-dual, is, according to him, a mere appearance resulting from residual impressions. An appearance is always deceptive and does not actually exist in the way it appears. Thus even the mind of sentient beings is in reality pure, and is not characterized by cognitive awareness, and can therefore be called self-occurring gnosis. The difference is that on the level of non-*buddhas* the mental continuum, in the case of ordinary beings, arises as conceptual cognition, that is, as dualistic cognition, while in the case of *bodhisattvas* from the first *bhūmi* onwards it arises during meditative absorption in a non-conceptual form. Yet this self-cognition (*rang rig pa: svasamvittisvamasvedana*), that is, non-conceptual gnosis, involves cognitive awareness, and therefore it, too, is deluded. In the case of *buddhas*, however, since all residual impressions are exhausted, nothing that has the characteristics of cognitive awareness exists. Hence there is nothing that has been attained by them that is superior to the nature of the mind of sentient beings. The notion that the mind of sentient beings is primordially pure and thus not different from a *buddha*’s gnosis is brought up by Rong-zom-pa on several occasions. In his *Theg tshul*, in order to illustrate the idea that there is neither anything to be eliminated nor is there anything to be gained, Rong-zom-pa employs the analogy of the jackal’s vision. To ordinary people’s vision, he states, it, appears that there is darkness to be eliminated by means of light, which is regarded as its antidote, but if one were to acquire the vision of a jackal one would understand that there is actually no darkness to be removed. Similarly, if one attains the vision of the Dharma, one realizes that there is neither defiled nor undefiled visual perception and that the mind is luminous by nature.

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99 See the translation of the *Sangs sa chen mo*, §III.1.

100 See, for example, the *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fol. 53b4–5; D, p. 81.17–18): *sems can gyi sms rang byung gi ye shes kyi snying po can yin pa dang| mDo snags grub bdus* (B, fol. 196b1; D, p. 64.2–3): *sems kyi rang bzhin rang byung gi ye shes su ‘dod pa dang| sNang ba lhar bsgrub* (B, fol. 137a6–b1; D, p. 568.1–4): *so so skye bo’i shes pa’ang rang bzhin gyis rnam par byang pa’i mtshan nyid yin pa dang| ye shes kyang byang chub kyi sms bskyed pa ‘ba’ zhi la ltos pa ma yin te| rang byung gi ye shes yod par bdag cag lta bu gnyi ga la mthun par grub pa’i mdo sde las gsung te|.

In other instances he repeats the idea that self-cognition in the sense of non-conceptual gnosis is non-existent. In his mDo sngags grub bs dus, he states that the mind is merely self-cognition (rang rig: svasamvid), and that cognition of others (gzhan rig: anyasamvid) is deluded and thus does not exist as such. Therefore, he continues, the mind is primordially pure, and hence when non-conceptual gnosis arises, it does not supersede self-cognition. Self-cognition itself is by nature empty, and therefore it is called self-occurring gnosis.102 In the dKon cog 'grel, he further states that both mind and gnosis are primordially devoid of all object–subject dichotomy, and that even self-cognition is devoid of a cognitive element and is thus primordially luminous; and therefore it is referred to as self-occurring gnosis. He goes on to state, however, that this self-occurring gnosis has no substratum whatsoever and possesses no nature of its own, but is nevertheless able to manifest itself in the form of buddha-Bodies and gnoses for the benefit of sentient beings.103

Rong-zom-pa’s Rang byung ye shes is a small work entirely devoted to discussing the view that even the perception of an ordinary person is in fact self-occurring gnosis. A translation of this work and a thorough study of the philosophical ideas set forth in it cannot be undertaken here. In the following I shall merely summarize the main points of Rong-zom-pa’s stance. Rong-zom-pa begins his Rang byung ye shes with the assertion that even the mind of an ordinary person is endowed with (or has the characteristics of) self-occurring gnosis (rang byung gi ye shes can) and that as a result of this each phenomenon should be regarded as an expression of that gnosis, and the phenomena in their entirety as an undefiled mandala—a notion found elsewhere in his

mongs pa dang nyon mongs pa can ma yin pa’i myi [B mi] shes pa la rdzas myed [B med] par shes pa nal sens rang bzhin gvis ‘od gsal bar shes te| de’i tshe rnam par mi [B me] rtog pa’i ye shes sgrib pa dang mtshungs pa ma yin te| shes shing rig pa’i mtshan nyid rdzas su yod par mthong yang| des sgrib pa sel ba’i bya ba byed pa mi dmigs so| de bas na ‘khrul pa’i [B pa’i] blo tshor ba’i spyod yul du gang snang snang la rdzas su mi gzung ngo]]. For the analogy of the jackal’s vision in a similar context, see the rNyiog-ma Tantric scripture Ye shes gsang ba sgron ma’i rgyud (p. 829.5–6):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{rin po che yi gser gling du|}\& \\
\text{phyin pas thams cad gser du snang|}\& \\
\text{’khor ’das bzang ngan med par shes|}\& \\
\text{ce spyang ’e na’i* mig bzhin du|}\& \\
\text{gnyis su med par thag gcad do|}. \quad *\text{e na stands for e na, a species of a deer or antelope}
\end{align*}
\]

(see MW, s.v. e na; BHSD, s.v. e na)

102 mDo sngags grub bs dus (B, fol. 198a3–5; D, p. 65.20–24): rang byung gi ye shes kyang sens rang rig pa tsam yin pa dang| gshan rig pa rnam kyang ‘khrul pa [D ba] yin pa’i phyir| de bzhin yod pa ma yin pas| sens gnyis nyis dag pa’i phyir dang| rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes skyed [B skyed] pa’i tshe yang| [B] rang rig pa tsam las bogs dbyung du med pa’i phyir dang| rang rig pa nyid kyang ngo bo nyid kyis stong pa’i phyir rang byung gi ye shes so].

works. The main questions he attempts to answer in this regard are whether self-occurring gnosis is actually existent (*mtshan nyid par grub pa*) and whether statements affirming the existence of self-occurring gnosis are statements requiring interpretation (*dgongs pa'i tshig*) or straightforward teachings (*gzugs por gsungs pa*). He proposes that a person has only one mental continuum, and thus that self-occurring gnosis and deluded cognition must share that one continuum, but that the two are not intertwined (*sgril mar gnas pa*). He also argues that gnosis and deluded cognition are mutually exclusive, and that when deceptive appearance (*'khrul pa'i snang ba*) is present and experienced, no experience of true reality (*ma 'khrul pa'i don*) is possible and vice versa. Furthermore, a truly existent (*rdzas su yod pa: dravyasat*) entity and an entity that is not truly existent, he states, are not contradictory, any more than two entities that do not truly exist are, and thus there is no contradiction in positing that both the mind of an ordinary being and self-occurring gnosis share one mental continuum, for it is not posited that the two are truly existent. That is, deluded cognition is established as existent merely on the conventional level (*tha snyad tsam du yod pa*), and thus it does not truly exist as something that has the characteristics of an object–subject dichotomy, while self-occurring gnosis is regarded as actually existent (*mtshan nyid par grub pa*) only tentatively (or provisionally) (*re zhig*). Here, too, Rong-zom-pa emphasizes that even when cognition of true reality arises, along with a (justifiable) certitude (*nges pa'i shes pa*), nothing is attained that supersedes the continuum of that cognition or that is superior to it. In order to demonstrate his point he employs the analogies of a firebrand which, when whirled around quickly, is perceived as a fire-wheel (*mgal me'i 'khor lo: alātacakra*), and of a rope that is erroneously taken to be a snake. When a quickly turning firebrand appears as a fire-wheel, the characteristic of this appearance is the quick turning and not the wheel. Similarly, when a rope appears as a snake, the cognition of the appearance is a cognition that arises as an image of a rope, and not a cognition that arises as an image of a snake. Likewise, the conceptual thought that arises as ‘grasped’ and ‘grasper’ (i.e. object and subject) is something that arises as having the characteristics of self-cognition and not the characteristics of grasped and grasper. Furthermore, although the characteristics of quick turning and a fire-wheel are mutually exclusive, the appearance does not truly exist as something that has the characteristics of a fire-wheel, and thus there is no contradiction in it being established as having the characteristics of quick turning. Likewise, deluded conceptual thoughts do not truly exist, and thus there is no contradiction in them being established as having the

104 See, for example, his *dkon cog 'grel* (B, fols. 163b6–164a1; D, p. 200.5–6): *chos thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa rang byung gi ye shes chen po lhun gyis rdzogs pa'i dkyil 'khor*....

105 Rong-zom-pa also employs the analogy of a fire-wheel in connection with self-occurring gnosis in his *Theg tshul* (B, fols. 80b5–81a1; D, p. 504.10–14). There he states that self-occurring gnosis manifests on the level of impulses, that is, on the level of ordinary sentient beings, and argues that if karma, whose true nature is considered by him to be self-occurring gnosis (*ibid.*, B, fol. 58a6; D, p. 479.16), were to exist truly (that is, in the way it appears), then self-occurring gnosis could not possibly exist. He compares the former to a fire-wheel, and states that if it were to exist truly as a wheel, then the firebrand could not possible exist (*de lta na mngon par 'du byed pa'i dus nyid na rang 'byung gi ye shes rang shar ba yin te gshan du na de lta ma yin te las rdzas su grub pa zhir na rang byung gi ye shes gtan ma grub pa 'gyur te dper na 'gal me'i 'khor lo rang gsal ba gal te 'khor lo'i mtshan nyid rang gsal bar rdzas su grub pa zhir na 'gal me rang bzhin gyis 'od gsal ba gtan ma grub pa bzhin no||).
characteristics of self-cognition. Neither the mental continuum of deluded cognition nor the mental continuum of self-occurring gnosis exists. Cognition is established as one continuum, just as the continuity of a fire-wheel and the continuity of quick turning do not exist as two. And further, the mental continuum of a cognition that arises as the image of a rope and the mental continuum of a cognition that appears as the image of a snake do not exist as two continua. Just as cognition is confined to one mental continuum, so there are not two continua with respect to deluded cognition and self-occurring gnosis. When a cognition that captures the experience of what appears as objective and subjective images arises, there is no cognition of appearance that is devoid of all object–subject dichotomy. Similarly, at the time of non-dual appearances, there is no cognition that captures the experience of dual appearances (when a fire-wheel appears there is no appearance of quick turning, and when quick turning appears, there is no appearance of a fire-wheel, and when the appearance of a snake is experienced there is no cognition of a rope, and when there is a cognition of a rope, there is no cognition of a snake).

When non-conceptual gnosis, which correctly cognizes reality, arises, nothing that supersedes (bogs phyin) or excels (khyad par can) the stream of self-occurring gnosis itself has been attained. It is like when a cognition of a rope arises, it is the stream of cognition itself that arises as an image of a rope, and it is not that something else that does not resemble a stream arises, for not even one moment of a cognition that arises as an image of a snake is experienced. Likewise, when a cognition featuring objective and subjective images arises, not even one moment of something that arises as having the characteristics of the grasped and grasper is established, but only something that arises as having the characteristic of self-cognition, and therefore, also when non-conceptual gnosis arises, its characteristic of self-cognition is primordial, and the arising is nothing but the arising of self-occurring gnosis.

The teachings that the perception of an ordinary being is endowed with self-occurring gnosis are not words that require interpretation, but are straightforward teachings. As to the notion that self-occurring gnosis is real, Rong-zom-pa states that the Mantrayāna scriptures do not maintain that self-occurring gnosis is truly existent but rather that it, like the ordinary mind, does not truly exist. Temporarily, however, phenomena are established as real or unreal simply on the basis of whether they are true or untrue (i.e. on the conventional level). To illustrate this Rong-zom-pa employs the following analogy: Experienced people, although the bluishness and fluctuation of a Fata Morgana do not truly exist, tell unexperienced ones who mistake it for water that it is not water but a Fata Morgana. That is, they show that the water is unreal and the Fata Morgana is real. Furthermore, the Mahāyānists, although they do not maintain that a rope, grass, particles, and fragments of particles are truly existent, teach those lacking in discernment who mistake the rope for a snake that the rope is real, by insisting that it is not a snake but a rope. Likewise, they teach that what is called a rope does not exist as a single roundish substance, but as something having the characteristics of a collection of many stalks of grass. Similarly, they teach that what is called grass does not exist as something that has the characteristics of many stalks of grass but of fragments of fine particles, and that even a substance consisting of particles does not exist, but that these particles are empty, and they go further until emptiness, too, is deconstructed. Likewise, he continues, although the system of Mantrayāna maintains that no objects—the deluded perceptions within the three realms of existence and their deceptive appearances—exist in the way they appear, not even conventionally, temporarily resorting to scriptures of the Lower Vehicle, it teaches, for the sake of those holding a lower view, that all phenomena
are self-occurring gnosis and a *mandala* displayed by gnosis. Thus all appearances are regarded by this system as pure by nature, but under no circumstances do they exist as actual entities. Since such phenomena are the gnosis’ self-manifestations (*rang snang*), they are seen, temporarily, as a *mandala* displayed by it. Since these latter appearances are non-deceptive in regard to attaining *nirvāna*, they are the sublimest of all appearances, and therefore are referred to as the ‘correct convention’ (*yang dag pa’i kun rdzob: tathyasamvṛti*). As for other appearances, they are deceptive in regard to attaining the goal, and thus, although they and the phenomena just referred to are similar in the sense that they are both appearances, they are referred to as ‘erroneous convention’ (*log pa’i kun rdzob: mithyāsamvṛti*).

In his argumentation Rong-zom-pa emphasizes the need, on one hand, to consider each view within its philosophical system and, on the other, to understand each statement in its exact context, namely, whether it has been said from the point of view of false convention, correct convention, or ultimate truth (*don dam pa’i bden pa: paramārthasatya*). By examining the various views or statements in this way, he states, one will come to realize that each of them is correct within its own philosophical system and can be proven through both logical reasoning and authoritative scriptures—something that he also addresses in his discussion in the *Sangs sa chen mo* (and which is emphasized by Mi-pham). There is no fault, he argues, in establishing more or less deceptive appearances as deceptive or non-deceptive, or as either existent or non-existent. It is just like establishing the existence of a snake, rope, particles, fragments of particles, emptiness and so forth in terms of pairs (i.e. snake and rope, rope and particles, particles and fragments of particles, and so forth): even if one says that the first member of each pair does not exist, this does not falsely detract from it, and even if one says that the latter one exists, this does not falsely impute anything to it; again, even if one says that the perception of the first members is deluded, this does not falsely detract from it, and even if one says that the perception of the latter ones is not deluded, this does not falsely impute anything to it. Moreover, maintaining that “if a phenomenon is established as deceptive, it is not truly existent” is not false detraction; nor is maintaining that “if a phenomenon is non-deceptive, it is truly existent” false imputation. Therefore, he continues, neither ‘truly existent’ versus ‘not truly existent’ nor ‘deceptive’ versus ‘non-deceptive’ endures as characteristics of phenomena as such. The characteristics of phenomena are simply established according to the degree of one’s intellectual capacity. Using this argument, he propounds, in accordance with the stance of Mantrayāna, the non-existence of all phenomena from the point of view of the ultimate truth; their existence as pure phenomena, that is, phenomena as a display of the self-manifestation of self-occurring gnosis, from the point of view of correct convention (such pure phenomena being conducive to the attainment of *nirvāna*); and their existence as deceptive phenomena from the point of view of false convention (such phenomena not being conducive to the attainment of the goal). Mi-pham seemingly bases his argumentation on this view of Rong-zom-pa’s—which is to be found not only in his *Rang byung ye shes* but also in other works, among which the most important in this respect is his *sNang ba lhar sgrub*—and correlates his own distinction between the mode of appearance, the mode of existence, and the ultimate level with Rong-zom-pa’s distinction of false convention, correct convention, and ultimate truth.

To summarize, although Mi-pham’s exact understanding of self-occurring gnosis has yet to be determined on the basis of a comprehensive study of his works, his understanding of Rong-zom-pa’s position in regard to the existence of gnosis at the stage
of a *buddha* does not seem to fully represent the latter's intent. While Rong-zom-pa indeed establishes the existence of self-occurring gnosis from the point of view of Mantrayāṇa, he does so only by temporarily holding to what he considers as a lower view, that is, a view that does not accept the indivisibility of the two truths. Importantly, for Rong-zom-pa self-occurring gnosis is not in any sense cognitive; it is not characterized by cognitive activities, whereas for Mi-pham it is the ultimate valid cognition (*tshad ma: pramāṇa*).\(^{106}\)

4. Rong-zom-pa on How the *Buddhas* Act

As we have clearly seen, the two questions as to how a *buddha*’s emanations of Body, Speech, and Mind become perceptible or otherwise accessible to sentient beings, and thus effective in terms of salvific activities, and whether a *buddha* must perceive sentient beings in order to be able to act for their benefit are central to the dispute surrounding the existence of gnosis. For if a *buddha* has no cognitive faculties to serve as a substratum for his compassion and activities, and perceives no appearances, could there be any other substratum for his compassion and activities, and what would be the mode of communication between him and sentient beings? Rong-zom-pa at one point mentions three positions, namely, one that does not posit any substratum, one that posits non-conceptual gnosis, and one that posits the six kinds of clairvoyance arising through the power of meditative absorption (i.e. pure mundane gnosis).\(^{107}\) We already know that he is an advocate of the first position. His deliberations on the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* thus also beg questions regarding his view on the ontological status of appearance and the epistemological status of perception in general, and of whether appearances are at all perceptible to a *buddha* in particular. The Tibetan term *snang ba* is obviously used by him in the sense of both appearance (something that appears during an act of perception) and the perception itself. Appearances-and-perceptions are, however, obviously not limited here to visual appearances-and-perceptions. Rong-zom-pa’s stance on the ontological status of appearances and the epistemological status of perceptions requires an in-depth study of its own, but for the sake of corroborating his stance on Buddhahood, some of his propositions regarding appearances-and-perceptions may be

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106 See, for example, Mi-pham’s *Nges shes sgron me* (p. 103.3–4):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mthar thug de kho na nyid ni} & \| \\
\text{gcig las med phyir de kho na} & \| \\
\text{mthong ba'i tshad ma'ang gcig yin te} & \| \\
\text{tshad ma gnyis pa mi srid do} & \| \\
\text{gnas lugs bden gcig zung 'jug ste} & \| \\
\text{tshad ma rang byung ye shes nyid} & \| \\
\text{spang bya ma rig gcig pu las} & \| \\
\text{med phyir rig dang ma rig tsam} & \|
\end{align*}
\]

For an English translation, see Pettit 1999, p. 222.

107 *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fol. 163a3–5; D, p. 199.11–14): de la thugs rje dang mdzad pa ’byung ba’i gzhis gang yin she na| gong du bstan pa bzhiin du| kha cig ni gzhis mi ’dod do| kha cig ni mi rtog pa’i ye shes kyi dbang gis gdul bya la snang ngo zhe’o| kha cig ni mnyam par gzhag [B bzhag] pa nyid kyi mthus mngon par shes pa chen po drug ’byung ngo zhes zer ro|.
Chapter Four: Rong-zom-pa’s Position

mentioned here. According to him, all appearances-and-perceptions, be they pure or impure, are conditioned and deceptive/deluded—a notion repeatedly stated in various works of his in different contexts. Thus they occur only if and only as long as their conditional factors, namely, residual impressions (bag chags: vāsanā) and ‘negative propensities’ (bag la nyal: anusaya), persist (ji srid rkyen nye bar gnas kyi bar du). In the dKon cog ‘grel, for example, he explains that appearances-and-perceptions have actually no basis (gzhi) and no root (rtsa ba), that is, no substratum (rten), for they are all the dharmadhātu itself. He states that just as neither mind nor that which appears to mind is truly existent, neither gnosis nor that which appears to gnosis is either, and thus there is nothing to be eliminated and nothing to be gained, and therefore the various appearances-and-perceptions do not require a basis or a substratum. 108 That is, neither saṃsāra nor nirvāṇa, and neither mind nor gnosis, has a substratum—a position clearly based on the *Guhyagarbhatantra, according to which the rootless mind (rtsa ba med pa’i sans) is regarded as the root of all phenomena (chos rnam kun gyi rtsa ba). 109 A little later on he adds that all saṃsāric phenomena are the self-manifestations of mind and all nirvānic phenomena are the self-manifestations of gnosis. 110 Furthermore, appearances-and-perceptions, according to him, are of varying degrees of impurity and purity: extremely impure (shin tu ma dag pa), somewhat impure (cung zad ma dag pa), pure (dag pa), and extremely pure (shin tu dag pa). 111 A buddha, who has exhausted all residual impressions and negative propensities, however, is free from all appearances-and-perceptions. 112 Hence the buddhas’ manifestations are also regarded by him as lacking any substratum or essence, and thus as nothing but mere appearances (snang ba tsam). 113

108 dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 98b4; D, p. 130.15–17): de ltar na sans dang sans kyi [B om.] snang ba gnyis ka dngos por ma grub [D ‘grub] pa bzhiin du] ye shes dang ye shes kyi snang ba gnyis ka yang dngos por ma grub pas blang dor med cing rnam par dag go||; ibid. (B, fol. 99a1; D, p. 130.21–22): de lta bas na sna tshogs su snang ba la gshi dang rien dgos pa ma yin la.

109 *Guhyagarbhatantra (P, fol. 113a4; D, fol. 115a5):

  rtsa ba med pa’i sans nyid ni||
  chos rnam kun gyi rtsa ba yin||

See also Wangchuk 2007, n. 72, where this verse and a similar one from the *Guhyagarbhatantra is cited during a discussion of the question regarding the root cause of the physical world and its inhabitants (ibid., pp. 211–214).

110 dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 100b3–4; D, p. 132.16–18): ‘di dag kyang ‘khor ba’i chos thams cad ni sans rang snang ba yin la| mya ngan las ‘das pa’i chos thams cad ye shes rang snang bar bstan pa’o||.

111 dKon cog ‘grel (B, fols. 15b4–16a4; D, pp. 42.11–43.3). For Rong-zom-pa’s relativity theory of the purity and validity of perception, see Wangchuk (forthcoming).

112 sNang ba lhar bsgrub (B, fol. 137a3–4; D, p. 567.20–21): bag chags thams cad ma lus par zad pa la ni yongs su dag pa’i spyod yul yang snang ba ma yin no||; dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 16a4–5; D, p. 43.3–4): bag la myal yongs su zad pa rnam la ni| snang ba thams cad dang bral te spros pa thams cad yongs su zhi bar yang ‘gyur ro|.

113 See also the dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 162b4–6; D, p. 199.1–5). There Rong-zom-pa, discussing the question of how the salvific activities of buddhas emerge, explains that all phenomena, be they saṃsāric or nirvānic, are mere appearances and thus have no substratum, employing the following analogy: Just as the appearance of an illusory person (sgyu ma’i skyes bu) who rescues many
In the passage from the *dKon cog 'grel* that deals with the conceptions of Buddhahood according to the various scriptural and doxographical systems—the one that has been considered in the present study—Rong-zom-pa starts his discussion with a picturesque illustration of how the emanations of a *buddha*’s Body, Speech, and Mind emerge and appear to various sentient beings. According to this passage, a *buddha*’s manifestations emerge and appear effortlessly and without any conceptual thought, on account of his previous resolutions, great compassion, great insight, and the purified *dharma-dhatu*, on the one hand, and those residual impressions of his disciples that are characterized by wholesome karma, on the other. In order to illustrate the idea that a *buddha* is conceived differently by different sentient beings, he employs the analogy of rain, which, he says, falls differently in different realms, depending on various factors, such as the particular ocean deities, the atmospheric conditions of each abode, and the karma of the respective sentient beings. And this occurs without any intention or effort on the part of the various factors involved, including the ocean deities, the lightning and thunder, and the rain itself.\(^{114}\)

Elsewhere in the same work, Rong-zom-pa names three factors that serve as connecting links between *buddhas* and sentient beings. Following the statement that *buddhas* are free from manifoldness and any sign of appearances, and thus cannot be perceived by cognitive means, he responds to two possible objections, namely, that in that case, (1) the notion that *buddhas* are able to perceive other *buddhas* will be hard to explain, and (2) *buddhas* would not be able to perceive sentient beings and thus could not act for their benefit. Rong-zom-pa argues that although self-occurring gnosis itself has no substratum and no essence, it does manifest as pure phenomena, such as Bodies and gnoses. The appearing of *buddhas* to ordinary beings is thus explained by him as being due to three causes, namely, ontological, gnoseological (or epistemological), and ethical ones. In particular, it is argued that *buddhas* and sentient beings are inevitably linked to each other because (1) the minds of sentient being are ontologically pure, and thus equivalent to true reality, that is, the *buddhas*, (2) the perceiving subject, that is, the *buddhas*’ gnosis, is not separated from its object, that is, the true nature of all phenomena, including sentient beings, and (3) sentient beings are embraced by *buddhas* through the compassion the latter previously exercised on the path.\(^{115}\)

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\(^{114}\) See the translation of this passage in Rong-zom-pa’s wider discussion in the *dKon cog 'grel* below, §I.

\(^{115}\) *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fols. 139b1–140a6; D, pp. 174.11–175.11). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §2.C.
Chapter Four: Rong-zom-pa’s Position

[Objection]: [As to] the explanation that buddhas perceive [other] buddhas because [they] appear [to one another in virtue of their] similar (mthun pa) gnosis, how do [they] appear and how do [they] perceive?

[Response]: [To explain this one may quote the following line of verse,] articulated [in the *Guhyagarbhatantra]].

Self-occurring gnosis appears without a support (gnas).

Now, self-occurring gnosis is as explained above: [Both] mind and gnosis are primordially devoid of any object–subject dichotomy, and hence [their] defining characteristic is that [they] are independent of other [entities] (i.e. in the sense of true reality free from manifoldness). Even the mere self-cognition itself is [in reality] devoid of cognitive features, and thus, given that it is primordially luminous, it is referred to as self-occurring gnosis. This [self-occurring gnosis] has no substratum. [Its] beneficial effects (byin gyis brlabs: adhiśthāna)—the various arrays of Bodies and gnoses in the utterly pure [buddha]-fields—appear, therefore, even without any substratum and without obtaining (i.e. possessing) an own-nature (bdag nyid thob pa: ātmalābha). Hence it has been stated:

Self-occurring gnosis appears without a support.

[Objection]: In that case, this would lead to the undesirable consequence that the Victorious Ones would not perceive sentient beings.

[Response]: That [buddhas] perceive [sentient beings] on account of three causes is explainable (bshad du rung ba). In order to demonstrate that, it has been stated [in the *Guhyagarbhatantra]]:

Because [things] imagined [in accordance with sentient beings’] false conceptual thoughts are [essentially] pure, And [a buddha’s] gnosis is not other than the [dharma]dhatu, [And] because [buddhas and sentient beings] are linked through great compassion, [Buddhas] appear [at] all times and places [of] the six destinations (i.e. realms of existence).

Concerning these [three],

(1) The first cause: All obscurations in the form of things that are variously (gang dang gang) imagined (or: construed) in accordance with (ji skad du) the [various] false conceptual thoughts [harboured by] living beings are [in reality]

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116 *Guhyagarbhatantra* (P, fol. 118b8; D, fol. 121a4).
117 That is, in the dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 91a3–94b4; D, pp. 122.24–126.15).
118 Cf. Mulamadhyamakakarika 15.2cd:

\[ \text{akrtrimaḥ svabhāvo hi nirapeśaḥ paratra ca |}. \]

The Tibetan text reads (P, fol. 10b2; D, fol. 8b5; S, vol. 57, pp. 20–21):

\[ \text{rang bzhin dag ni bcos min dang|} \]
\[ \text{gzhan la ltos [P bltos] pa med payin|}. \]

119 For a discussion of the term ātmalābha, see the translation of the *Sangs sa chen mo* below, n. 56.
120 *Guhyagarbhatantra* (P, fol. 118b8; D, fol. 121a4–5). The first line in D reads log par rtog||

rtags rnam dang cing|, the prefix b in brtags having apparently been read as a double shad.

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the purity of the buddhas, and thus dharmas (including sentient beings) and dharmatā (i.e. buddhas) are inherently linked. 121

(2) The second [cause]: The buddhas’ gnosis is not separate from the dharmadhātu of all phenomena, and thus there is a link between the object (i.e. the true nature of all phenomena, including sentient beings) and the subject (i.e. the buddhas’ gnosis), whose natures are identical.

(3) [The third cause]: There is a link [consisting in] the buddhas’ embracing [sentient beings with] compassion as a result of their having embraced all sentient beings of the three realms with great compassion during [their] previous engagement in activities pertaining to awakening.

Therefore, it is said that the beneficial effects of the tathāgatas emerge and appear at all times and places of the six destinai:ions. Or alternatively (rnam pa gcig tu), according to the position (gzhung) of those who maintain that the Victorious Ones possess pure mundane gnosis, the Victorious Ones appropriate sentient beings as ‘objects of connection’ (’brel ba’i yul) through these three links, but sentient beings do not appropriate [buddhas] as objects of connection. Therefore, buddhas perceive [sentient beings]; sentient beings do not perceive [buddhas].

It is thus clear, given that Rong-zom-pa does not accept the existence of either non-conceptual or pure mundane gnosis, that for him buddhas do not actually perceive sentient beings but merely appear to them, on account of the above-mentioned three links, in the form of various pure phenomena that are the manifestations of self-occurring gnosis (i.e. the purified dharmadhātu). An actual perception of sentient beings by buddhas is thus accepted, according to him, only by those who maintain the existence of pure mundane gnosis. That sentient beings might, at least from the point of view of those who accept the existence of pure mundane gnosis, be perceived by buddhas is an idea repeated by Rong-zom-pa in his Rang byung ye shes while responding to the question whether what appears to a buddha’s gnosis is, like what appears to sentient beings, deceptive. In this regard he states that in the case of non-conceptual gnosis one cannot talk of appearances in the first place, for this gnosis is non-conceptual. As for appearances channelled through pure mundane gnosis, he continues, some deny the existence of this type of gnosis, but if one does not, this much should be conceded, for pure mundane gnosis is said to perceive only sentient beings. 123

121 Cf. the sNang ba Ihar bsgrub (B, fol. 129b5; D, p. 559.23–24): sems can dang rgyas kyi khyad par ni chos kyi ngo bo nyid kys phyre ba ma yin te; ITu ba’i brjed byang (B, fol. 155b3; D, p. 21.8–10): chos nyid rgyas yin na| chos can rgyas ma yin par mi rung stel| chos can gyi ngo bo nyid chos nyid yin pa’i phyir| chos can dang chos nyid rgyas pa yin zhingl.

122 Cf. Klong-chen-pa’s Phyogs bcu’i mun sel (pp. 390.6–391.1): “Moreover, the assertion by some that the six [classes of] sentient beings do not see buddhas but buddhas see [them] is not the purport of the scriptures” (de’ang kha cig ’gro drug gis mi mthong la sangs rgyas kyis gzigs par ’dod pa ni gzhung gi dgongs pa ma yin no). The phrase sems can dag gzigs pa tsam yin pasl nyid la snang ba’i bag chags zad pa’i phyir de tsam bzod par bya’o| zhes bsad do| “because the residual impressions that induce appearances have been exhausted in a tathāgata, he perceives
Chapter Four: Rong-zom-pa’s Position

The notion that no substratum is necessary for the emergence of the various pure appearances pertaining to Buddhahood is taken up by Rong-zom-pa again in the context of practice, or, to be more precise, in the context of explaining *samādhi* in terms of deity yoga (*lha'i rnal 'byor*). Of the two types of *samādhi*, that is, with or without signs, he subdivides the *samādhi* with signs into three types of yoga, namely, (1) yoga involving the transformation of the *yogin* through the empowerment bestowed by the deity (*byin gyas brlabs pa'i rnal 'byor*), compared to a transformation of iron into gold through alchemic means, (2) yoga during which the *yogin* envisions himself as a deity (*yongs su btags pa'i rnal 'byor*), compared to the construction of a statue by first melting gold, and (3) yoga of completion (*rdzogs pa'i rnal 'byor*), compared to the effortless emergence of reflections in clear water. Rong-zom-pa associates these three types with the Śrāvakas, Yogācāras, and Mādhyamikas, respectively. In the context of the yoga of completion, he states that the various manifestations arising during meditation have no substratum and no own-nature, but rather manifest on account of the purified mental continuum of disciples and their faith in the Three Jewels, on the one hand, and on account of the *buddhas’* previous resolutions and compassion, on the other, and compares these manifestations to the moon reflected in water, which has no true essence:

The yoga of completion is concordant with (*sgo mthun pa*) Madhyamaka. [As for] the true reality of a self (*bdag gi de kho na nyid: atmatattva*), [a self], too, is a mere conceptual construct. Thus a self is simply an undifferentiated notion referring to the five aggregates. Its true reality is simply the coming to rest of all manifoldness. Thus no substratum whatsoever can be perceived [to underlie it]. Mandalas of Bodies and gnoses manifest out of it (i.e. the self) in various [ways during the process of meditation], and yet [they] have no substratum and no essence. Nevertheless, appearances, in the view of disciples, resemble the moon reflected in water. As to the reflected moon, it is neither the case that the nature of the moon is in the water, nor is it the case that [it] came from the moon itself. Yet, if both appearances of clear water and the moon in the sky exist in the visual perception of worldly beings, it consequently appears as if the moon is in the water. Likewise, as long as the residual impressions associated with delusions have not been exhausted in the minds of disciples, appearances do not withdraw. Given that [sentient beings] appear as [beings who have] a clear continuum characterized by the gradual purification of the wholesome residual impressions, which have been obscured as a result of these (i.e. residual impressions associated with delusions), and as [beings who] rely on the [Three] Jewels out of faith, and given that the Victorious Ones are endowed with appearances of [themselves] spontaneously acting [for the benefit of others on the basis of their previous] resolutions and compassion, [they] appear to the [mental] continuum of disciples in accordance [with their

only sentient beings”) does not yield a proper sense. It may be that the text here is corrupt, and that the phrase *nyid la snang ba'i bag chags sad pa'i phyin*, which originally was the reason given for the previous statement *kha cig mi 'dod pa yang yod do||* has been misplaced. In that case we would read: “some do not maintain the existence [of pure mundane gnosis], given that the residual impressions that induce appearances have been exhausted in a *tathāgata*”).

124 *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fols. 43b4–46a6; D, pp. 72.22–75.18).

125 *dKon cog'grel* (B, fol. 45a4–b6; D, pp. 74.14–75.6). For an edition of the Tibetan text, see below, part three: “Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction,” §2.D.
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

capacity]. Thus if [this yoga] is spontaneously accomplished, one becomes equal to a *buddha*. Nonetheless, a beginner *yogin* should also create various manifestations for the sake of living beings, as appropriate, from the realization of and meditation on such matters, but should not hold on to [these manifestations as possessing] any substratum or essence.

5. Rong-zom-pa’s Madhyamaka Affiliation

One may perhaps wonder about Rong-zom-pa’s Madhyamaka affiliation to one or another of the commonly known Madhyamaka subdivisions. Rong-zom-pa provides on several occasions a doxography of Buddhist philosophy, and, as has already been observed by several scholars, in his treatment of the subdivisions of Madhyamaka, he does not use the terms *svātāntrika* and *prāsaṅgika* to designate the two main subdivisions, but follows the division that was in vogue during the early propagation period, namely, that into Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka. Whether Rong-zom-pa was aware of the terms *svātāntrika* and *prāsaṅgika*, believed to have been coined sometime during his life, or whether he deliberately avoided employing them cannot, however, be determined with certainty. But considering the fact that the division into Svātāntrika and Prāsaṅgika probably became popular only a century or so later, one would tend to believe that he was not aware of it.

Yet the fact that he has not employed the division into Svātāntrika and Prāsaṅgika, and the fact that he held the Yogācāra-Madhyamaka view to be of more significance than that of the Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka, has led Georges Dreyfus to conclude that Rong-zom-pa “had a clear preference for Sāntaraksita’s view, which he described as Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and contrasted favorably with Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka.” As has been already pointed out by Dorji Wangchuk, Dreyfus’s conclusion was based on John Pettit’s statement that Rong-zom-pa, in his *Grub mtha’i brjed byang*, suggests that Yogācāra-Madhyamaka is ‘more important’ (*don che ba*). In this regard Wangchuk notes that “what the closing phrase of the pertinent statement by Rong-zom-pa actually says is that ‘The treatise [or position] of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka appears (snañ) to be more significant’,,” and adds that this “statement gives Rong-zom-pa’s personal opinion about the then prevalent two Madhyamaka systems (i.e. Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka) and not his doctrinal affiliation.” And indeed, a careful examination of Rong-zom-pa’s works reveals that although for him Yogācāra-Madhyamaka made better sense than Sautrāntika-Madhyamaka, and although he often employs Yogācāra terminology and concepts, he

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126 For Rong-zom-pa’s description of the different ways in which buddhas appear to sentient beings in accordance with their spiritual capacities, see the *dKon cog 'grel* (B, fol. 116a4–b6; D, pp. 149.10–150.3).
127 See Dreyfus 2003, p. 331.
128 See Pettit 1999, p. 90.
129 *I Ta ba’i brjed byang* (B, fol. 147a3–5; D, p. 11.11–14): *dbu ma rnam gnyis kun rdzob kyi tshul mi mthun pa la’i lung dang rigs pa gang che ba ni tgyud dang mdo sde spyi’i gzhung dang rigs pa spyi’i tshul dang* *dbu ma’i mkhan po gzhung phyi mo mdzad pa’i slob dpon klu sgrub dang* *ārya de ba’i gzhung ltar na yang* *rnal ’byor spyod pa’i dbu ma’i gzhung don che bar snang ngo]*.
neither necessarily regarded Yogācāra-Madhyamaka as the highest Madhyamaka system nor did he consider himself a Yogācāra-Madhyamika (i.e. at least not as it has been understood by later doxographers). What was then Rong-zom-pa’s Madhyamaka system of preference? To answer this question satisfactorily, his works and the doctrinal views expressed therein will need to be thoroughly studied. Particular attention should thereby be paid to the division of Madhyamaka into Māyopamavāda and Apratīṣṭhānavaṇḍa, which is referred to by Rong-zom-pa alongside the division into Saurāntika- and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka, and which seems to be common among both Indian and Tibetan scholars of the eleventh century. A treatment of this Madhyamaka subclassification will be attempted in a separate publication. Here I shall merely attempt, on the basis of my study of Rong-zom-pa’s writings concerning the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, to highlight some of the main features of his Madhyamaka view.

Mi-pham, in his efforts to revive Rong-zom-pa’s doctrinal tradition, stressed on several occasions the fact that Rong-zom-pa’s view is in harmony with that of Nagarjuna and Candrakīrti. In his commentary on the Madhyamakālaṁkāra, the dBu ma rgyan 'grel, for example, he states:132

Rong-zom-pa taught in a way whose intent and tone were the same [as those of] Lord Nagarjuna, the venerable Candrakīrti, and others.

And, as already mentioned, Rong-zom-pa’s view regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha has been said by the critics to be identical with that held by Candrakīrti (which is clearly considered by them an infelicitous one).133 Taking all this into consideration, it is worth noting that Rong-zom-pa’s views on this subject are consistent with the Madhyamaka traditions of Nagarjuna and Candrakīrti.

131 For details, see below, n. 136.
132 dBu ma rgyan 'grel (pp. 309.6–310.1): ... rong zom pas gsungs pa de bzhin du mgon po klu sgrub dang zla ba'i zhabs la sogs pa dgongs pa gcig dang dhyangs gcig tu gyur pa yin te|.
133 The following two lines of verse from the Madhyamakāvatāra (p. 361.13–14) are often referred to in this context; they explicitly state that once there is no further arising or ceasing the mind itself ceases:

\[
\begin{align*}
de\text{tshe skye ba med cing } & \text{'gag pa med}\| \\
\text{sems 'gags pas de sku yis mngon sum mdzad}\|.
\end{align*}
\]

As has been noted above, some rNying-ma authors affiliated to the Zur tradition named Nagarjuna instead of Candrakīrti as the Indian scholar who rejected the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha. It should perhaps also be added here that later discussions of the matter often refer to Śāntideva’s Bodhicaryāvatāra 9.35, which states (Bhattacharya 1960, pp. 193–4):

\[
yada na bhāvo nābhāvo mateḥ saṃtiṣṭhate purah | \\
tadānyagatyabhāvena nirālambā praśāmyate8 ||. 8 Bhattacharya reads 'ti.
\]

The Tibetan text reads (Bhattacharya 1960, pp. 193–4; here, however, vv. 34d–36):

\[
\begin{align*}
gang\text{tshe dngos dang dngos med dag}\| \\
\text{blo yi mdun na mi gnas pa}\| \\
de tshe rnam pa gzhon med pas\| \\
dmigs pa med par rab tu zhi|.
\end{align*}
\]

German and English translations are found in Steinkellner 1981, p. 120, and Crosby & Skilton 1995, p. 118 (here, however, v. 34), respectively.
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consideration, several questions come to mind: Can Rong-zom-pa, like Candrakīrti, be considered a Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamika? If Rong-zom-pa's view is in accordance with that of Candrakīrti, whose Madhyamaka is highly regarded in Tibet, why was he criticized for it? And further, while it is true that the majority of later Tibetan scholars advocated the position that gnosis does exist at the stage of a buddha, can the same be said about Tibetan scholars of the eleventh-century? Was Rong-zom-pa, that is, an exceptional case?

As we have already seen, the view that gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha was the prevalent view among several Indian Mādhyamikas (and, in fact, most Indian scholars consulted in the present study held this view). It has by now also become clear that Rong-zom-pa was not the only Tibetan scholar to follow suit. Indeed it is evident that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries this was a widespread view among Tibetan Mādhyamikas, particularly among the bKa'-gdams-pa. We have already mentioned the bKa'-brgyud master sGam-po-pa, who received bKa'-gdams transmissions, as one proponent of this position. sTag-tshang-lo-tsā-ba, in his autocommentary on the Grub mtha' kun shes, cites from the Madhyamakāvatāra and Bodhicaryāvatāra, and goes on to place “Kha-rag Byang-[chub]-ghon-[nu] (unidentified as yet) and others” among those who claimed that both Candrakīrti and Śāntideva maintained that a buddha does not possess gnosis.\(^\text{134}\) And now, thanks to the recently published bKa' gdams gsung 'bum, we have extensive further evidence that this position was prevalent during Rong-zom-pa’s time and in the decades following.\(^\text{135}\) As pointed out earlier, Rong-zom-pa identifies this position as that of the Apratiṣṭhānavāda branch of Madhyamaka. This is also true of most other early sources (and discussions of them by later Tibetan scholars). Our understanding of the division of the Madhyamaka system into Apratiṣṭhānavāda and Māyopamavāda is therefore crucial for our understanding of Rong-zom-pa as a Mādhyamika. Since a detailed discussion of this Madhyamaka subclassification, particularly whether the Apratiṣṭhānavāda and Māyopamavāda branches of Madhyamaka can be regarded as equivalent respectively to the Śvātantrika and Prāsaṅgika branches, will be undertaken in a separate article,\(^\text{136}\) here I shall merely attempt to recapitulate some of the main features of Rong-zom-pa’s Madhyamaka view as a follower of the Apratiṣṭhānavāda branch of Madhyamaka.

There is no evidence that Rong-zom-pa knew Candrakīrti’s works. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that, at least regarding the question as to whether gnosis exists at the

\(^{134}\) Grub mtha' kun shes kyi rnam bshad (p. 152.12–14): ‘di dag gis 'khrul nas| kha rag byang gzhon sogs kyis| slob dpon ‘di gnyis sangs rgyas la ye shes med par ‘dod dod| zhes kyang smras mod kyi|....

\(^{135}\) At least two of the papers presented at the XVth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (held June 23–28, 2008 at Emory University, Atlanta) within the panel “Tibetan Scholasticism in the 11th and 12th Centuries” used early bKa'-gdams material that clearly shows that Rong-zom-pa was not an exception in negating the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha: “Dividing Madhyamaka in bKa' gdam spaes bKa' gda ma sa Exegesis of Śāntideva's Bodhicaryavatāra” by Kevin Vose, and “A Tibetan Skeptic? A Preliminary Analysis of Patsab's Prāsaṅgika Philosophy” by George Dreyfus. (These papers, along with other papers presented in the panel, are slated to be published as a special issue of the Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, probably in 2009).

\(^{136}\) This article will present an enlarged version of my talk held at the IABS congress in 2008 within the panel “Tibetan Scholasticism in the 11th and 12th Centuries.”

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stage of a *buddha*, they indeed held similar views. Both of them clearly reject the existence of any cognitive element at the stage of a *buddha*, and both of them maintain that a *buddha*’s activities come about spontaneously and effortlessly, without a need for gnosis as a substratum for the various manifestations of Buddhahood. However, while Candrakīrti’s argument for the absence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* is that once the manifold appearances disappear, the mind, too, ceases, Rong-zom-pa mainly resorts to the Apratīṣṭhānavāda argument that phenomena have no substratum and thus their existence on the conventional level is rejected as well, only their ‘mere appearance’ is admitted.137 Later Tibetan scholars, including those who considered themselves Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamikas, and thus followers of Candrakīrti, did not feel at ease with this position—a matter which, again, cannot be discussed here in detail. It can perhaps merely be noted that while Rong-zom-pa’s position was interpreted by Mi-pham to be referring to the cessation of extrinsic gnosis (*gzhon byung ye shes*), that is, gnosis accumulated on the path, Candrakīrti’s statement regarding the cessation of the mind at the stage of a *buddha* has been interpreted, for instance, as meaning the cessation of the ‘defiled’ (*zag pa dang bcs pa*) mind and mental factors. We know that the designation of the Madhyamaka of Candrakīrti and his followers as Prāsaṅgika-Mādhyamaka is purely Tibetan in origin, and that it probably became widespread only after Rong-zom-pa’s time. We have enough evidence to believe that the division into Māyopamavāda and Apratīṣṭhānavāda was also very common at that time. As has already been pointed out, Rong-zom-pa is said to have composed several works relating to the concept of apratīṣṭhāna,138 but unfortunately none of them seems to have survived, and thus his understanding of this branch of Madhyamaka will have to be pieced together from the occasional discussions of the issue found in his extant works. In his *IṬa ba’i brjed byang*, Rong-zom-pa provides the following explanation:139

The view of Madhyamaka is, in brief, of (1) those who maintain that [phenomena] are like illusions, that is, māyā, and (2) those who maintain that [they] have no substratum, that is, apratīṣṭha. Of these, (1) [those who assert that phenomena are] like illusions maintain [the following]: If one examines and analyzes [phenomena, which] appear as outer and inner

137 For a distinction between two positions that reject the existence of gnosis in a manner that appear to reflect this difference, see below “Works by Tibetan Authors,” §3, n. 34.

138 See above, chapter one, n. 26.

139 *IṬa ba’i brjed byang* (B, fols. 154b5–155a4; D, p. 20.9–21): *dbu ma’i lta ba mdo r bsdun na| (1) ma ya ste sgyu ma lta bur ’dod pa dang| (2) a pra ti sti te rab tu mi gnas par ’dod pa’o|| de la (1) sgyu ma lta bu ni phyi nang gi dngos po sngan ba rNams la rigs pa dam pas gzhal zhing btags na yang dag pa’i dngos po yang mi rnyed la mgon sum du dmigs pas gzhal na rgyu dang ’bras bu’i dngos po yang de bzhin du bden te bden pa ’di gnyis ka yang khyad du ggod du mi rung bas bsdus na dngos po rNams kyi chos nyid ni ngo bo nyid sgyu ma lta bu’i chos nyid ni bden no zhes ’dod do|| (2) rab tu shin tu mi gnas pa ni chos thams cad la ming dang brda dang tha snyad kyi mtsan nyid sna tshogs s kun bzhan cin| rnam par bzhag kyang ji [B ngi lta bu’i mtsan nyid du’ang gnas pa mi ’grub ste| rags pa a cang [D cad] ches kyi tha na rab tu phra ba zhe’am| shin tu zab pa’i gnas gcig la yang mi gnas mi rten pas| rab tu shin tu mi gnas pa zhes bya’o|| ’di ni shes bya yongs su ggod pa’i dus na’ang ’di ltar ggod la| sangs rgyas kyi sa’i dus na’ang chos kyi dbhyings rnam par dang pa spros pa yongs su zhi ba’i mtsan nyid du ’dod do||. The division defined here by Rong-zom-pa has been already noted by other scholars; see, for example, Tauscher 2003, pp. 209 & 244, n. 10, where this passage from the *IṬa ba’i brjed byang* is cited in part.
entities, on the basis of solid logical reasoning, no real entities [can] be found, but if one examines [them] by means of direct valid cognition, the causal and resultant entities are thus [found to be] real. Neither of these realities can be denied, and therefore, in short—regarding the true nature of entities—a true nature, which is an illusion-like nature, is the truth. (2) [Those who maintain that phenomena] have no substratum state [the following]: Although all phenomena are expressed and established in terms of various characteristics—names, symbols, and conventions—[they] do not exist as having any such characteristics. [They] neither exist in nor do [they] rely on a substratum—not even an extremely subtle or extremely profound one, let alone (a cang che) a gross one—and therefore [they] are completely devoid of a substratum. This [system] determines [the status of phenomena] in this way also when positively determining (yongs su gcod pa) the objects of knowledge, and [it] maintains that at the stage of a buddha, too, the purified dharmadhātu is characterized by tranquillity with regard to manifoldness.

To sum up, according to Rong-zom-pa, the Māyopamavāda branch maintains that since phenomena can be established by means of direct valid cognition, on the one hand, but cannot be established as real entities when analysed logically, on the other, their true nature is that they are like illusions; the Apratiṣṭhānavāda branch maintains that although phenomena can be proven to have certain characteristics, such as names, they do not truly exist with such characteristics, since they have no substratum. One important point in Rong-zom-pa’s argument is surely the statement that this way of examining phenomena is followed by the Apratiṣṭhānavādins also when positively determining them. Positive determination (pariccheda: yongs su bcad pa) versus negative determination (vyavaccheda: rnam par bcad pa) in connection with the division into Māyopamavāda and Apratiṣṭhānavāda is a complex issue and will be dealt with elsewhere. It is perhaps sufficient to state at this point that, according to Rong-zom-pa, for the Apratiṣṭhānavādins, appearances are considered to be lacking a substratum regardless of the perspective from which they are considered.

Rong-zom-pa, however, was not only a Mādhyamika, but a staunch follower of Mantrayāna as well, and this had a great impact on his philosophical view. Again, an in-depth analysis of Rong-zom-pa’s Madhyamaka-Tantra synthesis is beyond the scope of this study. Noteworthy, however, is that while in his ITa ba'i brjed byang he identifies the position according to which gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha as that of the Apratiṣṭhānavāda, in his dKon cog 'grel, he states that this is the position of what he calls ‘special Mahāyāna,’ that is, the distinctive philosophical system that, among other things, maintains the indivisibility of the two truths. According to this system, all phenomena—both samsāric and nirvānic, on both the conventional and absolute levels, and on the levels of both ordinary and awakened beings—lack a substratum. This ‘special Mahāyāna’ is propounded in certain progressive sūtras and tantras which particularly emphasize both the notion that all phenomena lack a substratum and the indivisibility of the two truths. That he clearly considers this latter a peculiarity of Mantrayāna is evident

140 For the phrase a cang ches, see the brDa dkrol gser gyi me long, s.v.: phar zhog gam smos ci dgos sam lta ci smos zhes pa'i don te.

141 See Seyfort Ruegg 2000, pp. 31–32, n. 58, where it is stated that a non-presuppositional and non-implicative negation (prasajyapratīśedha: med (par) dgag (pa)) and a presuppositional and implicative negation (paryudāsapratīśedha: ma yin (par) dgag (pa)) can be associated with a negative and a positive determination, respectively.

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from his explanation of the view of Mantrayāna scriptures found in the *Ita ba'i brjed byang*. This passage immediately follows the one concerning the views of the two Madhyamaka branches of Māyopamāvāda and Apratīṣṭhānavāda just cited:142

Now I shall briefly explain the view prevalent in the scriptures of Mantrayāna: Their maintaining that on the absolute level there is neither arising nor cessation is in conformity with Madhyamaka. They are also in conformity with the view that on the conventional level the aggregates, elements, and sense-bases are mere illusions. Regarding [its] distinguishing feature, [it] sets itself apart in its viewing these [aggregates, elements, and sense-bases], which have the characteristics of being illusions, as [also] having the characteristics of being pure deities, and in viewing the two truths as being indivisible.

The same sentiment is expressed in the *Theg tshul*, where all Tantric systems are defined as those that assert the indivisibility of the two truths:143

Regarding these subdivisions of Mantrayāna, they begin with Kriya, the first [Tantric system], and end with the Great Perfection, all of which maintain the indivisibility of the two truths.

In sum, there can be little doubt that Rong-zom-pa was an Apratīṣṭhānavādin. The view that phenomena do not have any substratum whatsoever is reflected not only in his discussion of the constituents of Buddhahood, where any attempt on the part of other Mādhyamikas, including followers of Mantrayāna, to establish the existence of gnosia (let alone other phenomena) at the stage of a *buddha*—even as mere illusion—is strongly rejected, but also on numerous other occasions. As we have seen, for him, a total absence of a substratum is true throughout the three levels of foundation (gzhi), or sentient beings; path (lam); and result (bras bu), or Buddhahood. The term apratīṣṭhāna is central to his doctrinal view and is referred by him profusely throughout his works, mostly by way of the Tibetan phrase *rten med* (pa), which is, alongside *rab tu mi gnas pa*, another rendering of the Sanskrit apratīṣṭhāna. He often resorts to related terms, such as *gzhi med pa*, *gnas med pa*, and *rtsa ba med pa*, to convey this same idea. Rong-zom-pa’s arguments and illustrations are similar to those used in eleventh-century Indian sources, including the simile of a mirage and that of fuel consumed by fire, to explain the notion that phenomena are mere appearances that are devoid of a substratum; or those of a *rṣi* and a wish-fulfilling jewel to demonstrate the ability of a *buddha* to act spontaneously and effortlessly, that is, without having to rely on a substratum. It may be remarked here that later Tibetan authors identified several sub-branches of Apratīṣṭhānavāda, and it is yet to be determined whether Rong-zom-pa can with any reasonableness be connected with any one of them in particular.

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142 *Ita ba'i brjed byang* (B, fol. 155a4–6; D, pp. 20.21–21.2): *da ni gsang sngags kyi gzhung las grags pa'i lta ba cung zad brjod par bya ste| don dam par skye 'gag med par 'dod pa ni dbu ma dang mthun no| kun rdzob tu phung po khams dang skye mched sgyu ma tsam du lta ba'ang mthun no| bye brag tu na sgyu ma'i mtshan nyid de dag kyang yongs su dag pa'i lha'i mtshan nyid du lta ba dang| bden pa gnyis kyang dbyer med par lta bas bye brag tu byas pa'o||

143 *Theg tshul* (B, fol. 79a4–5; D, p. 502.17–19): *gsang sngags kyi nang gi bye brag 'di dag kyang| bden pa gnyis dbyer myed par 'dod pa'i dang po kri ya nas brtsems nas| rdzogs pa chen por mthar phyin to||
6. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter we have, on the one hand, confirmed that Rong-zom-pa indeed rejects the existence of both non-conceptual and pure mundane gnoses, but on the other, showed that he establishes, from his chosen point of view of Mantrayāna, the existence of self-occurring gnosis. Yet self-occurring gnosis exists for him only temporarily, that is, only when considered from a ‘lower’ view, in which a distinction between the two truths is made, and that too, needless to say, only on the conventional level and not truly. We have seen that for him, as for other Mādhyamikas of his time, self-occurring gnosis, too, has no essence and no substratum, and that it is in fact the dharmadātu itself. Thus Mi-pham is in a way right to assert that Rong-zom-pa only rejects extrinsic gnosis and not self-occurring gnosis. The crucial difference, however, is that for Rong-zom-pa, self-occurring gnosis is not a cognitive phenomenon in any sense of the term, thus begging the question as to why it is called gnosis in the first place, whereas for Mi-pham it is the ultimate valid cognition. In view of Rong-zom-pa’s rejection of any cognitive feature within self-occurring gnosis or the dharmadātu, it will be worthwhile to examine how he understands the notion of the ‘non-duality of the sphere and gnosis’ (dbyings dang ye shes gnyis su med pa), which he clearly seems to profess. Furthermore, it has been shown that for Rong-zom-pa, as an Apratītavadin, the world characterized by manifoldness and its appearances are accepted as mere illusions as long as they are not analyzed, but once they are analyzed, their existence cannot be established, not even as illusory phenomena, since they all have no substratum. It has also been pointed out that as a follower of the Tantric philosophical system, which affirms the indivisibility of the two truths, he argues that all phenomena, sāṃsāric and nirvāṇic alike, are free from manifoldness on the level of ordinary beings, as they are on the level of Awakened Ones.

Lastly, it should be noted that while Rong-zom-pa indeed rejects the existence of extrinsic gnosis, he does so particularly forcefully when it is posited as a substratum for the buddhas’ salvific activities, but he does not reject its mere appearance in the view of sentient beings. Moreover, the fact that he time and again states that Buddhahood is an inconceivable phenomenon, and thus that one should not categorically reject the existence of the two kinds of extrinsic gnosis, is significant. As has already been remarked, he is, in spite of his assertion that the dharmadātu is the sole constituent of Buddhahood, clearly more restrained in his rejection of the existence of the two kinds of extrinsic gnosis, especially non-conceptual gnosis, than in his rejection of the other constituents of Buddhahood thought to exist by the remaining positions, which are considered by him to harbour great inconsistencies. This is no doubt testimony to his inclusivistic approach, one in general very sensibly open to listening respectfully to others’ views despite the fact that he himself did not share them. He sensed, in short, that the question of gnosis is a very delicate and complex one.

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144 See, for example, the dKon cog 'gre (B, fol. 117a2; D, p. 150.7–8), where the expression dbyings dang ye shes gnyis su med pa’i dkyil ’khor is used. See also above, §4, where the fact that a buddha’s gnosis is not separate from the dharmadātu is named by him as one link between buddhas and sentient beings.
Part Two

Annotated Translations
A Note on the Annotated Translations

This section contains translations of two discourses by Rong-zom-pa on the concept of Buddhahood as formulated in various scriptural and doxographical systems. The first is his *Sangs sa chen mo*, a work entirely devoted to the topic, and the second is the discussion found in his extensive *Guhyagarbhatantra* commentary known as the *dKon cogs 'grel*. By way of an overview of the texts, outlines of them have been provided prior to the translation. In the translations, I have followed the subdivision of the text as presented in the outlines and provided the paragraphs with numbers and subheadings accordingly. Since the central ideas and key terms concerning the development of the concept of Buddhahood as presented by Rong-zom-pa in these works have been already discussed in chapter two of the introductory part, the annotations to the translations concern only those terms and ideas that have not been discussed before, provide references for the various citations when these could be identified, clarify syntactic problems found in the text, and the like.

The translations of Rong-zom-pa’s discourses on traditional buddhology are followed by translations of discussions in Indian sources of the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*; some of these sources have clearly been used by Rong-zom-pa. The cited passages are arranged according to the position taken by the authors, starting with those who assert that the *dharma-dhatu* is the sole constituent of Buddhahood—namely, *Madhyamaka-SiJ1ha, Mañjuśrīmitra, Atisa, Candrabaripāda, and Bhavya*—continuing with those who postulate, in addition, the existence of non-conceptual gnosis—namely, Nāgamitra, Jñānacandra, and Dharmamitra—and concluding with one author who also postulates the existence of pure mundane gnosis—namely, Śrīgupta. Lastly, translations of passages by three early Tibetan authors—Ye-shes-sde, Gro-lung-pa, and sGam-po-pa—on the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* are included. In this case the sources are arranged chronologically.

Glosses (*mchan bu*) are found in the passage from sGam-po-pa’s *Thar rgyan* and Rong-zom-pa’s *rGyud spyi'i dngos po* (which is cited in the introduction). The glosses, following a convention employed in the critical editions of the Tibetan texts, have been enclosed within braces and given in a smaller script. Glosses that indicate sources are given prior to the citation, while those that contain clarifications appear immediately following the applicable word or phrase. For more details on these conventions, see the introductory remarks to the critical editions.
The Sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo

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V. The Concluding Statement
2. An Annotated Translation

I. The Opening Statement

[In the present work I shall] present briefly the doctrinal positions (‘dod gzhung) of different individuals along with the scriptures (gzhung) upon which [they] are based for those who ponder over [the following]: In what manner do the constituents—that is, the characteristics and qualities—of the stage of a buddha exist? Do these characteristics and qualities actually appear and exist (ldan pa, lit. ‘[are they] possessed’), as taught [in the scriptures], [even when considered] from the perspective of the tathāgathas, or have they been taught [merely] in consideration of [how they] appear to disciples? How, [that is,] should [they] be regarded in the definitive sense? The constituents of the Awakened One taught in brief and in detail in the sūtras, śāstras, and the Mantra systems are [as follows]:

II. The Different Conceptions of the Buddha (or a Buddha) as Found in Various Scriptures

1. A Brief Presentation

The myriad (lit. ‘ocean-[-like],) qualities of a buddha are taught [as follows]:

1 As mentioned in chapter one, Rong-pa Me-dpung, in his Tho yig, states that Rong-zom-pa composed seven treatises, both short and long, on the stage of a buddha; he does not, however, provide any details. The title Sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo is a descriptive title (reminiscent of the Buddhābhūtisūtra and its commentaries) that was probably assigned by a scribe or an editor. In the concluding statement, Rong-zom-pa refers to this work as a ‘memorandum’ (brjed byang), a term that would perhaps have appeared in the title had Rong-zom-pa assigned one to this work.

2 It seems that Rong-zom-pa uses la in the sense of ‘and’ in connection not only with verbs but also, unusually, with nouns. There are several cases that support this assumption (see, for example, the passage from the dKon cog ‘grel translated below, n. 28). Here, the reading of la in the sense of dang is further supported by the immediately following sentence, which contains the same phrase but has dang instead of la: sangs rgyas kyi sa'i mthshan nyid la yon tan gnyos ji ltar gnas pa dang mthshan nyid dang yon tan de dag kyung....

3 Most of the qualities or constituents of a buddha specified here correlate with those listed in the Bodhipātala of the Bodhisattvabhumi (Wogihara, p. 89.3–9; Dutt, pp. 62.20–63.2). For critical editions of the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts and an annotated translation of this passage, see Nakamura 2004, pp. 23–24, 36, and 53–59 (§1.3.1), respectively. Specific references will be made below in the pertinent notes according to the outline found in Nakamura 2004. The same qualities are referred to in the Lakṣanānuyāyājanapātala (Wogihara, p. 375.3–8; Dutt, p. 259.2–5) and explained in the Pratiṣṭhāpātala (Wogihara, pp. 384–410; Dutt, pp. 265–282). Various lists of the qualities of a buddha are found in sundry treatises, including the Mahāyānasūtraśālāṃkāra, Mahāyānasamgraha, and Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya. For a comparative table containing such references for each of the qualities listed in the Bodhipātala, see Nakamura 2004, p. 82.

4 Note that the phrase sku gsung thugs ye shes bzhi may be also understood as ‘the four [constituents, namely,] Body, Speech, Mind, and gnosis.’
strengths, the eighteen unique [qualities], the thirty-two great compassions, the [thirty-two] major signs and [eighty] excellent minor signs, the excellent ornamental configuration of buddha-fields, the countless means (lit. ‘doors’) [provided by] dhāranis and samādhis, the unique applications of mindfulness, the state of being free from

5 sGra sbyor, no. 19 and Mvy, no. 110: chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa: dharmadhātuviśuddhi. The compound dharmadhātu(su)viśuddhi (chos kyi dbyings (shin tu) rnam par dag pa) is clearly to be understood here in the sense of ‘[the result of] the purification of the dharmadhātu,’ that is, in the sense of (su)viśuddhadharmadhātu or ‘the purified dharmadhātu.’ For more on this, see Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 110–113, n. 46, p. 148, n. 117, & p. 163, n. 174. Cf. Bodhipatāla 1.3.1.c, which has catasrah sarvakārāḥ pariśuddhayah (rnam pa thams cad yongs su dag pa bzhī). The four purifications are those of (1) the basis [of worldly existence, i.e. the body] (āśraya: gnas), (2) the objects (ālambana: dmigs pa), (3) the mind (citta: sens), and (4) gnosis (jñāna: ye shes). For more details on these four kinds of purification, see Schmithausen 1969a, pp. 93–95; Nakamura 2004, pp. 54–55, n. 21.

6 For the ten strengths of a tathāgata (de bzhin gshegs pa’i stobs bcu: daśa tathāgatabalāṇi), see the sGra sbyor, nos. 27–37; Mvy, nos. 119–129. See also Bodhipatāla 1.3.1.d: daśa balāṇi (stobs bcu). For further references, see Nakamura 2004, p. 55, n. 22; Lindner 1997, p. 307, n. 9.

7 For the eighteen unique qualities of a buddha (sangs rgyas kyi chos ma ‘dres pa bco bgr Yad: aśāśāṣāvenikabuddhadharma), see the sGra sbyor, nos. 43–59; Mvy, nos. 135–153. See also de La Vallée Poussin 1988–1990, vol. 4, pp. 1136–1148 (Abhidharmakosabhāṣya 7.5), and pp. 1195–1196, n. 162, where similar lists found in other sources are discussed. References are also given in Nakamura 2004, p. 83; Lindner 1997, p. 307, n. 9; Makransky 1997, pp. 23–28; Griffiths 1994, pp. 66–75.


9 For the thirty-two major signs of a great being (skyes bu chen po’i mtshan sum cu rtsa gnis: dvātrimśan mahāpuruskalakṣaṇañāni), see Mvy, nos. 235–267. For a translation of the passages in the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra in 18,000 lines and the one in 25,000 lines where the thirty-two major signs are discussed, see Conze 1975, pp. 583–585 & 657–665, respectively. For a translation of the corresponding passage in the Ratnagotravibhāga, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 343–347. See also Ratnāvalī 2.75–95; Bodhipatāla 1.3.1.a. Further references are given in Nakamura 2004, pp. 53–20, n. 19.

10 For the eighty excellent minor signs (dpe byad bzung po bgr Yad bcu: aśūty anuvyayāñānā), see Mvy, nos. 268–349. For a translation of the passages in the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra in 18,000 lines and the one in 25,000 lines where the eighty minor signs are discussed, see Conze 1975, pp. 586–587 & 661–664, respectively. See also Ratnāvalī 2.96–100; Bodhipatāla 1.3.1.b. For a list of these signs in Sanskrit together with a French translation of it, preceded by a list of references to both preliminary and secondary sources that discuss these signs, see Lamotte 1973, vol. 2, pp. 54*–58* (§16). See also Dharmasamgraha 83 & 84, and Appendixes I & II, where lists found in other sources are provided. For a general discussion of the thirty-two major and eighty minor signs focusing on their attribution to the sambhogakāya in Abhisamayālaṃkāra 8 (rather than to both rūpakāyas, as is generally the case), see Makransky 1997, pp. 119–120 & 176–179.

11 Cf. Bodhipatāla 1.3.1.f, which has trūṇī smṛtyupasthānāṇī (dran pa nye bar gzhag pa gsum). For the ‘three unique applications of mindfulness’ (ma dres pa’i dran pa nye bar gzhag pa gsum: trūṇī oṣen[=ni]kāṇi smṛtyupasthānāṇī; no Sanskrit equivalent is given in the edition by Ishihama &
inattentiveness,12 [the state of] being completely purified from the continuous connection (mtshams sbyor: pratī/ānusamādhi) with residual impressions (bag chags: vāsanā),13 the gnosis that is supreme in all respects (rnam pa thams cad mchog gi ye shes: sarvākāravaraññā),14 and so forth are taught.

2. A Detailed Presentation

Moreover, a buddha’s Bodies and fields and the excellent bodily features (sku’i bkod pa phun sum tshogs pa) are taught in various ways, [as follows]:

A. The Conception of the Buddha as Found in Some Common Sūtras

In some common sūtras (thun mong gi mdo) it is proclaimed that the Exalted One, the glorious Sakyamuni, acted in this world as if (tshul bstan pa) he, the Bodhisattva Siddhārtha15 [now] in [his] final existence (srid pa tha ma: caramo bhava!), had become fully awakened by [practising] renunciation, and then, staying mainly in the company of such retinues as the Saṅgha consisting of one thousand two hundred fifty fully ordained monks,16 turned the Wheel of the Dharma, and finally passed into [parī]nirvāṇa.

B. The Conception of the Buddha (or a Buddha) as Found in Some Sūtras and Tantras

Moreover, according to some [uncommon] sūtras and some tantras, the place where buddhas attain the ‘seat of awakening’ (byang chub kyi snying po: bodhimaṇḍa) is Akaniṣṭha, as stated [in Lankāvatārasūtra 10.774].17
A *buddha* does not become awakened. 
Either in the [worldly] Realm of Sensual Desire or in the Immaterial [Realm].
You who are free from passion
Become awakened in Akanistha of the Material Realm.

The Exalted One, the glorious Vairocana,18 a *sambhagakāya [buddha]*, manifests himself *(ston par mdzad)* in the abode [called] Akanistha in a definite manner—[that is], in the form of a universal king—in a definite place, [and] in a definite time, basking in the Mahāyāna doctrine for [the sake of] a completely pure retinue.19 As to [this

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18 Rong-zom-pa could be referring here to the *Tattvasamgrahasūtra*. See the opening lines of the *tantra*, whose main figure is Vairocana. Compare Klong-chen-pa’s *sNga sgisspyi don* (p. 9.7–15), citing a passage from the *Guhyagarbhatantra* in which it is stated that a *buddha* can take the form of Vairocana. It is, however, unlikely that Rong-zom-pa considered the *Guhyagarbhatantra* or any other tantra of the Mahāyāna system to fall under the present category, which is regarded by him as including the lower Tantra systems.

19 This is a reference to what is known as the ‘five definitenesses’ (*nges pa lnga*), which are the five attributes of the *sambhagakāya*, namely, a definite teacher (*ston pa*), definite doctrine (*bstan pa* or *chos*), definite retinue (*khor*), definite place (*gnas*), and definite time (*dus*). On the five definitenesses, see Mi-pham’s *mKhas ‘jug*, (p. 390.9–17) and *mKhas ‘jug sdom byang* (p. 129.7–10). Note Tsong-kha-pa’s *Legs bshad gser phreng* (vol. 18 (tsha), fol. 94b5–6), where doubt is cast on the Indian origin of the notion of five definitenesses, the author being merely aware of the Prajñāpāramitāśāntarāharpadipa—that is, Atiśa’s condensed commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṁkāra*—which contains explicit reference to only four ‘definitenesses,’ namely, the above five excluding definite time (P, fol. 261b3–4; D, fol. 239b5; S, vol. 53, p. 1339.9–10), and where he further points out that this notion stands in contradiction to the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (‘di la nges pa lnga ldan du smra ba la ni don bsdus sgron mer| nges pa bzhi ste ‘khor dang nil| gnas dang ston pa chos su ste| zhes pa tsam las ma mthong la ‘dis ni khungs mi thub cing cer ma zad theg bsdus ltar na de la gnod pa yang snang bas dpyad par bya’o’i’). Tsong-kha-pa is obviously referring to *Mahāyānasamgraha* 10.35, where the *sambhagakāya* is described as appearing in various ways (that is, as having different forms) to different kinds of retinues (for an English translation of the basic text and its commentaries, see Griffiths & Hakamaya 1989, pp. 246–250, §O.). See also dPal-sprul’s *mNgon rtogs rgyan gyi spyi don* (p. 438.1–2), which reproduces Tsong-kha-pa’s statement. These five definitenesses are conceived in contrast to what are called the ‘five excellences’ *(phun sum tshogs pa lnga)* of the *nirmāṇakāya*, which are indefinite. Note, however, that Rong-zom-pa himself uses *phun sum tshogs pa lnga* for both sets of attributes. For Rong-zom-pa’s detailed explanation of these five attributes, see dKon cog ’gre (B, fols. 59b5–90b2; D, pp. 90.9–122.7), where he explicitly describes only three attributes as *phun sum tshogs pa*, namely, *ston pa phun sum tshogs pa*, *gnas phun sum tshogs pa*, and *’khor phun sum tshogs pa* (ibid., B, fols. 61a4, 64a1 & 84b2; D, pp. 91.21, 94.19 & 116.6). It is only in the paragraphs following his discussion that he employs the collective term *phun sum tshogs pa lnga* (ibid., B, fol. 90b6; D, p. 122.17). Also see *ibid.* (B, fols. 32b4 & 32b6–33a1; D, pp. 60.23–24 & 61.4–6), where he specifies the five attributes (here, too, employing the collective term *phun sum tshogs pa lnga*), but with *rgyud* instead of *bstan pa* (or *chos*). In the immediately following passage, he briefly explains
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sambhogakāya], it is the Body of the maturation (rnam par smin pa'i sku: vipākakāya) of the gathering of limitless accumulations of beneficial resources (bsod nams: punya) and gnosia in the past.20 Śākyamuni, the Exalted One (bcom ldan 'das: bhagavat), is an apparitional Body that manifested21 on account of it and acted as if he had become awakened in this world.

the five attributes just listed, referring to them as ston pa thun mong ma yin pa, gnas thun mong ma yin pa, 'khor thun mong ma yin pa, dus thun mong ma yin pa, and rgyud kyi gzhung phun sum tshogs pa thun mong ma yin pa (ibid., B, fols. 33a2ff.; D, pp. 61.9ff.). Compare the description of the Jewel that is the Buddha in Ye-shes-sde's Sangs rgyas gtsa ba'i 'grel pa (P, fols. 269b8–271b3; D, fols. 228b1–229b7), under five points (don rnam pa lnga) corresponding to five 'excellences,' namely, those of (1) cause (rgyu phun sum tshogs pa), (2) result ('bras bu phun sum tshogs pa), (3) nature (rang bzhin phun sum tshogs pa), (4) one's own benefit (bdag gi don phun sum tshogs pa), and (5) others' benefit (gzhan gyi don phun sum tshogs pa).

Makransky remarks that the concept of 'five definitenesses' (nges pa lnga) is found in Tibet at least from the fourteenth century on, and specifically in Bu-ston's history of Buddhism. See the Bu ston chos 'byung (pp. 78.12–79.4), where the five are specified as gnas nges pa, said to be Akanīṣṭha; ngo bo nges pa, said to be the thirty-two major and eighty minor signs (mchab dpal); 'khor nges pa, said to be bodhisattvas of the ten stages; longs spyod nges pa, said to be the enjoyment of the Mahāyāna doctrine; and dus nges pa, said to be infinite time (rgyun mi chad pa). As the earliest Indian source known to him to list such definitenesses as characteristics of the sambhogakāya, Makransky names Atiśa's condensed commentary on the Abhisamayālamkāra, where, as already mentioned, only four definitenesses are given. He also adds that the notion of the five definitenesses contradicts the general conception of sambhogakāya buddhas residing in different pure realms, having different retinues, etc., as found in the Indian sources. As to the definite teacher (termed by him 'definite form'), which, following Bu-ston, refers to the thirty-two major and eighty minor signs of a great being with which the definite teacher is endowed, Makransky notes that it probably has its roots in the eighth chapter of the Abhisamayālamkāra, where these characteristics are ascribed to the sambhogakāya, probably for the first time. See Makransky 1997, pp. 106–107.

mKhas-pa lDe'u, in his history of religion, also refers to only four definitenesses, those of place, retinue, doctrine, and time (lDe'u chos 'byung, p. 14.1–3): longs sku nges pa bzhi dang ldan pa stel| gnas nges pa 'og min| 'khor nges pa sa bcu'i byang chub sems dpa' |chos nges pa theg pa chen po| sku tshe nges pa rtag tu gnas pa'o| Here, unlike in Atiśa's Prajñāpāramitāpindārthapradīpā, which excludes definite time, the excluded element is that of definite teacher.

20 Regarding the term vipākakāya, see Bhavya's Tarkajviilī (P, fol. 141b4; D, fol. 103a7–b1; S, vol. 58, p. 319.2–3), containing a reference to Vajrasena according to whom the vipākakāya (here in the sense of the sambhogakāya alone) is a Body of Maturation supported by the dharma-kāya, and whose domain of activity is Akanīṣṭha ('phags pa rdo rje sdes ni grugs kyi sku 'og min gyi spyod yul canchos kyi skiu' gzhi la brten pa ni rnam par smin pa'i sku zhes bshad do|). See also Rong-zom-pa's dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 73b5–74a1; D, p. 105.3–6): de la ma dag pa'i lus ni las kyi rnam par smin pa'i lus dang ngag dang yid du snang ba'o| dag pa'i lus ni las la dbang thob pa rnam m kyi smon lam las grub pa'i lus dang ngag dang yid du snang ba'o| shin tu rnam par dag pa [B par] ni rgyal ba rnam m kyi sku dang ye shes kyi dkyil 'khor du snang ba'o|.

21 For references to the term 'phrul pas sprul pa: nirmitanairmāṇika, see TSD, s.vv. 'phrul pas sprul pa along with the following two entries. See also BHSD, s.vv. nirmita, nirmita-nirmāṇa, nairmāṇika, and nairmita-naimāṇika. The term also occurs on two occasions in the passage from the dKon cog 'grel translated below (§§II.1 & II.2).
C. The Conception of the Buddha (or a Buddha) as Found in Some Tantras

Further, some [other] Tantra systems teach that a buddha abides in the abode of Akaniṣṭha, the palace of the dharmadhātu, as a Body that is seemingly always present (da ltar byung ba: pratyutpanna) [in the form of] the Exalted One, the great Vajradhara [or] Vajrasattva, [that he] is endowed with bliss, which is unconditioned and unstained (zag pa med pa: anāsrava), and with the bliss of great enjoyment (longs spyod chen po: mahāsambhoga), [that he] abides amidst countless gatherings of goddesses, [that he] is not diverted from the great bliss of coupling with a consort (gzungs ma), [that he] is affectionate (mnyes gshin pa: vatsala) in virtue of [his] great compassion (thugs rje chen po: mahākaruṇā), [that he] exerts himself for the liberation of all sentient beings, [that he] exists as the nature of all phenomena, [that he] is the lord who manifests as all phenomena, [and that he, in this form of the Ādibuddha Vajradhara or Vajrasattva,] is known as the lord of all buddhas.

Furthermore, according to the Mantra systems, as far as the maṇḍala of a sugata is concerned, [the central figure can] have the form (tshul) of a samābhogakāya or a

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22 It is clear that the Akaniṣṭha referred to here is not the same Akaniṣṭha of the Material Realm referred to above as the actual place in which awakening is attained. For Rong-zom-pa’s equating Akaniṣṭha with the dharmadhātu in the context of the *Guhyagarbhatantra, see his dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 64a1–b2; D, pp. 94.19–95.11). See also Klong-chen-pa’s sNgags kyi spyi don (p. 4.4–10), where, in the context of explaining Akaniṣṭha in terms of the three kāyas, chos sku’i ’og min is said to be the dharmadhātu.

23 See Chandra 1959, s.v. da ltar byung ba, where further references (including the Mvy) that elucidate this term are provided.

24 A similar description of Vajrasattva as always present and endowed with permanent bliss, including sexual bliss, is found in the Buddhasamayogatantra (T, fol. 246b5–6; D, fols. 155b7–156a1; Tb, pp. 128.6–129.1):

| sans dpa’ sangs rgyas kun gyi dngos||
| rdo rje sans dpa’ bde ba’i mchog||
| gsang ba mchog gi [D gis] dgyes pa na’i||
| thams cad bdag nyid [Tb gis] rtag tu bzhugs [Tb zhugs][||
| ’di ni rnal ’byor bcom ldan ’das’||
| rtag pa dam pa brtan [Tb bstan] pa st[ Tb de]| |
| rtag tu da ltar byung [TD ‘byung] ba bzhin]| |
| ngo bo nyid ni ’da’ bar dka’]| |

In his commentary, Rong-zom-pa explains that Sarvabuddhasamayoga, that is, Vajrasattva, has three characteristics or aspects: (1) being endowed with naturally pure great bliss (rang bzhin gyis rnam par dag pa’i bde ba chen po), (2) having a Body which, without beginning or end, is seemingly always present (sku gdod ma dang tha ma med par rtag tu da ltar byung ba lta bu), and (3) constantly indulging in supreme bliss in outer and inner maṇḍalas of supreme bliss related to dākinīs (mkha’ ‘gro ma bde ba mchog gi phyi dang nang gi dkyil ’khor dag na rtag tu bde ba chen po la longs spyod pa’i mtshan [= mtshan nyid] can gyi rnam par bzhugs pa’o) (mNyang sbyor ’grel pa, B, fol. 3a6–b1; D, p. 460.10–18).

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nirmānakāya, [can] have a peaceful or wrathful form, or [can] be in the form of vidyās or mantras, [and it can] abide in a constellation (tshul) of either large or small maṇḍalas.25

III. Six Positions regarding the Constituents of a Buddha

The various postulates (gzhung so sor smra ba) [put forward] as being of definitive meaning on the basis of these scriptural [categories, the ones] that are known to exist, are as follows:

1. The Position Maintaining the Existence of Only One Constituent

Some individuals maintain: The purified dharmadhātu is the sole constituent of the Awakened One. From the perspective of a tathāgata himself, not even the gnoses that are the subjects of the absolute and the conventional truths—non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis, [respectively]—or the material Bodies (gzugs kyi sku: rūpakāya)—the nirmānakāya and sāṃbhogakāya—are existent. The mind of sentient beings is like the gnosis of a buddha. Yet that which arises as [something that] has the characteristics of cognitive awareness (shes shing rig pa), [regardless of] whether it appears as an object—subject dichotomy or not, exists [as] mere appearance resulting from residual impressions. An appearance, no matter how [it] appears, is deceptive and does not exist as such. Thus even on the level of sentient beings [the mental continuum] is wholly pure. Therefore, it is also called self-occurring gnosis. It is stated thus in the Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra:26

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25 This last paragraph must be grounded in part on conception B, which is based on some uncommon sūtras and some tantras, that is, those of the lower Tantra systems. This is evident from Rong-zom-pa’s discussion in his dKon cog ‘grel. There, in his description of the third of five modes—a description based on the ‘common esoteric, unsurpassable Vehicle’ and which corresponds to the Tantric systems mentioned in the Šangs sa chen mo under conception B—he explicitly refers to the various types of maṇḍalas. See my translation of the pertinent passage in the dKon cog ‘grel, §11.3, along with the overview provided in chapter one.

26 The sDong po bkod pa is one of the two common Tibetan names of the Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra (the other being sDong pos brgyan pa), the forty-fifth text in the Avatamsaka (Skorupski 10, Tōhoku 44; see also Mvy, nos. 1341 & 7821). The verse cited here, however, is not found in this section. Mi-pham, who cites it in his ‘Od gsal snying po (p. 105.4–5), simply names the Avatamsaka (Phal po che) as the source. Rong-zom-pa cites this verse on several other occasions. See his Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 256b3–4; D, p. 370.6–8); Theg tshul (B, fol. 72a4–5; D, p. 495.6–8), where, unlike here, he uses the title sDong pos brgyan pa’i mdo; mDo sngags grub bs dus (B, fol. 196b2–3; D, p. 64.5–6), where he does not indicate the source; and sNang ba lhar bsgrub (B, fol. 137b2–5; D, p. 568.6–9), where he first names the ‘Phags pa sdong po bkod pa as the source and then gives the name of the chapter in which this verse occurs as lHa ’i bu rab mt she ma’i gnas su chos kyi ’khor lo bs kor ba’i skabs, that is, The Chapter of the Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma in the Abode of Suyāmadēvaputra (on Suyāmadēvaputra, the head of the yāma gods, see BHSD, s.v. suyāma). This is clearly the twenty-fifth text of the Avatamsaka, entitled Rab mt she ma’i gnas su byang chub sms dp a’ ’dus pas tshigs su bcad pa bst an pa, that is, Proclamation of Verses by the Gathering of Bodhisattvas in the Abode of Suyāmadēvaputra, where the verse in question indeed occurs (T, Phal chen, vol. kha, fol. 61b5–7; D, Phal chen, vol. ka, fol. 303a5–6). It is thus obvious that Rong-zom-pa refers to the entire Avatamsaka as the Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra (as we have seen, under both its conventional Tibetan names, sDong po bkod pa and sDong pos brgyan pa). It may be noted here that Dharmamitra’s Prasphutapadā, which also cites this verse, again names the
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Even if inconceivably many
World spheres were destroyed by fire,
Space would not disintegrate.
Similar is the case with self-occurring gnosis.27

Similarly, [in reality] even the mind [is such that] there is no change [in it displaying] the characteristics of becoming cognitively aware (shes rig), and thus it is similar to [the mental continuum of] a tathāgatha himself. Yet [there is] a difference: At the level of sentient beings, [the mental continuum] arises [as] conceptual cognition, [that is, as] an appearance characterized by the object–subject dichotomy, on account of deceptive residual impressions. But that [appearance] is not real. For the noble ones, those who have seen the truth (bden pa mthong ba: drṣṭasatya),28 [the mental continuum] arises during meditative absorption as [something that] has the characteristics of non-conceptuality. Furthermore, this self-cognition (rang rig pa: svasamvittisvasamvedana), which has arisen on account of residual impressions, arises as [something that] has the characteristics of cognitive awareness, even as [the mental continuum] does not [actually] exist as [something that] has the characteristics of self-cognition, and therefore this [non-conceptual gnosis], too, is a deluded cognition. The tathāgatas for their part, given that [their] continuous connection with residual impressions is completely exhausted, are, to

Ganḍavyūhasūtra as the source (for the Tibetan text and the translation, see chapter four, §3.A). Interestingly, as I have already pointed out, it is possible that Rong-zom-pa relied on this work of Dharmamitra for his discussion of the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha. Whether the designation of the entire Avatamsaka as Gandavyūhasūtra was a widespread practice is unknown to me. Mr. Shin’ichirō Horī (of the IIIBS, Tokyo) informed me that the Chinese scholars Fācāng (643–712)——in his Huāyānjīng Tānxiànqì, vol. 1 (Taishō 1733, vol. 35, p. 121a10–11)——and Chéngguān (738–839)——in his Dàfāngguāngfóhuāyānjīngshū, vol. 3 (Taishō 1735, vol. 35, 524b20–21)——seem to refer to the entire Buddhāvatamsaka (explicitly called in the same context by its common Chinese title Huāyān) as the Gandavyūha (the Sanskrit title being provided in Chinese phonetic transcription). The matter is, however, complex since it is uncertain which Sanskrit word is being rendered as Huāyān (which means ‘flower ornament’): whether Avatamsaka (see MW, s.v. avatamsa: ‘a garland,’ ‘ring-shaped ornament’; compare, however, the Tibetan rendering Phal po che, which reflects the meaning ‘large number’/‘collection’ preserved in Hybrid-Sanskrit (see BHSD, s.v. avatamsaka)) or Gandavyūha (see BHSD, s.v. ganda: ‘stalk,’ which meaning is reflected in the Tibetan rendering sDom po bryaṅ pa or sDom po bkod pa). Moreover, of the three available Chinese translations bearing the title Huāyān, only two contain the entire Avatamsaka, while the third one merely contains the Gandavyūhasūtra. Given that the Gandavyūhasūtra is the last section of the Buddhāvatamsaka and that titles are commonly found at the end of a work (in the concluding statement or colophon), it is understandable why the title Gandavyūhasūtra should have erroneously been assumed to cover the entire collection.

Note that the canonical version reads slightly differently. The differences are, however, basically stylistic: Line 1 has rnams instead of our mang, line 3 ’gyur ba med instead of our mi ’gyur bzhin, and line 4 in D has ’byung instead of byung.

27 Note that a similar thought is expressed in Ratnagotravibhāga 1.54, this time, however, in connection with the tathāgatagarbha instead of self-occurring gnosis. For an English translation, see Takasaki 1966, p. 236.

28 The editors of versions C and D added a genitive particle, resulting in the reading ’phags pa’i bden pa mthong ba rnams, which can be translated as “those who have seen the noble truth.” In any case, this refers to bodhisattvas, from the first bhūmi onwards.
be sure, devoid of the arising [of anything] that has the characteristics of cognitive awareness. They are the purified dharmadhātu itself. Therefore, there is nothing that has been attained [by the tathāgathas] which is superior to the nature of the mind of sentient beings. On the contrary, [they] simply are (or: have become) what the nature of the mind has [always] been.

2. The Position Maintaining the Existence of Two Constituents

Some contend [as follows]: The stage of a buddha [comprises] two [constituents, namely], (i) the purified dharmadhātu, and (ii) non-conceptual gnosis. A buddha is not endowed with pure mundane gnosis or a special array of material Bodies (gzugs kyi sku'i bkod pa'i khyad par), for these are characterized by the object–subject dichotomy. Therefore, if one asserts that a buddha is endowed with them, this would simply [imply] that one seeks to assert that a buddha, too, is subject to delusions. 29

3. The Position Maintaining the Existence of Three Constituents

Some claim: The stage of a buddha [comprises] three constituents, namely, (i) the purified dharmadhātu, (ii) non-conceptual gnosis, and (iii) pure mundane gnosis. These three exist simultaneously, [with the two gnoses] as the attributes (chos: dharma) and [the dharmadhātu] as the possessor of the attributes (chos can: dharmin). A buddha does not possess a Mind that is not in meditative absorption. 30 Even as [he] is constantly in

29 See below “Works by Tibetan Authors,” §3.II, where sGam-po-pa presents a similar argument brought forward by the proponents of this same position.

30 Not having a mind that is not in meditative absorption (nāsty asamāhitacittam: sms bsnyan par bzhag gzhag pa med pa; Mvy, no. 139) is one of the eighteen unique qualities of the Buddha or a buddha (aśṭadasaśāvenikabuddhadharma: sangs rgyas kyi chos ma 'dres pa bco brgyad) listed in Mvy, nos. 135–153. (Note, however, that there are different lists of such eighteen qualities. For some references, see above, n. 7.) Several sources describe a buddha’s Mind as being constantly in meditative absorption. See, for example, the Drumakīmaraśajaparipṛcchā (p. 175.7): duḥ ba thugs ni rtag tu mn̄yam par gzhag||; and the Jñānalokālamkāra (Skt. ed., p. 70, v. 5; cf. translit., p. 142): sadā samāḥitaś cātī 'gacchams tiṣṭham śayam api|| śṛyāpaṭheśu sarveśa nirālamba namo stu te||, a The Ms. reads gacchataś cātī gaccham tiṣṭham svayam api; the Tibetan reads (ibid., translit., p. 142) gshegs dang bzhugs dang gzims pa yid|| spyod lam rnam pa thams cad du|| rtag tu mn̄yam par bzhag māsad pa|| mi rten khyod la phyag 'tshal lo||; for the Chinese translation, see ibid. (translit., p. 143). See also Mahāyānasūtraśālamkāra 20.21 & 21.46; Ratnagotrīvibhāga 3.11 (Takasaki 1966, p. 341).

Also worth noting is the passage in the mChims chen where the issue whether the mental continuum of a buddha is always wholesome, as claimed by most traditions, or whether it can be also neutral, as claimed by the Vaibhāṣikas, is discussed. In support of the former position, a sūtra is cited in which it is stated that the mental continuum of a buddha, referred to there as an ‘elephant,’ is always (that is, while going, standing, etc.) in a meditative absorption. According to mChims 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs, the Vaibhāṣikas, faced with this statement, argue that a buddha is said to be always in a meditative absorption because he does not conceptualize, ‘I go,’ ‘I stand,’ etc. (mChims chen, pp. 352.20–353.5: sde pa gzhān dag na re sangs rgyas rnam kyi rgyud ni rtag tu mn̄yam par bzhag pa'i phyir spyod lam bzhī char yang dge ba kho nar rgyud gcig pa yin gyi lung ma bstan gvyi sms med de|| mdo las kyang| glang chen gshegs na'ang mn̄yam par bzhag| glang chen bzhengs na'ang mn̄yam par bzhag| glang chen mna'i na'ang mn̄yam par bzhag| bzhugs na'ang mn̄yam par bzhag pa yin zhes gsungs pa'i phyir ro|| ... bye brag tu smra ba ni sangs rgyas
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meditative absorption, this pure mundane gnosis arises as [something] devoid of obscurations. This [pure mundane gnosis] must exist because [a buddha] is characterized by multifarious activities (yongs su byed pa) for the sake of [both] himself and others. [A buddha] does not possess, [however, constituents] such as a Body or the sensation of experiencing bliss. If a tathāgatha were to possess a Body of Maturation (rnam par smin pa'i sku: vipākakāya)—brought about by the beneficial resources—and a sensation of enjoyment, this would lead to the undesired consequence that the buddhas are endowed with a body (lus: deha), an abode (or: support) (gnas: pratiṣṭhā or pada), and [the sensation or objects of] enjoyment (longs spyod: bhoga or artha), [which are worldly elements]. Therefore, [a tathāgata] does not have these [constituents].

4. The Position Maintaining the Existence of Four Constituents

Some contend [as follows]: Buddhas do not possess the array of material Bodies. [They] do, however, take pleasure (nyams su bstar ba) in the unstained great bliss that is gnosis, [namely], what is called Perfect Enjoyment (sambhoga). In this case, buddhas are endowed with (i) the purified dharmadhātu, (ii) non-conceptual gnosis, (iii) pure mundane gnosis, and (iv) the bliss consisting in the realization of the unconditioned [state of] tranquillity (zhi ba). Thus [they] are endowed with four constituents.

5. The Position Maintaining the Existence of Six Constituents

Some claim [as follows]: In virtue of [their] spiritual disposition (rigs: gotra) and spiritual friends (dge ba'i bshes gnyen: kalyāṇamitrā), the buddhas have been gathering immeasurable accumulations of beneficial resources and gnosis and have [also] been

kyi thugs ni spyod lam bzhi char du bzhud na'ang bzhud do snyam pa la sogs pa nas bzhugs na'ang bzhugs so snyam du dgongs pa nye bar gnas pas thugs mi bshed bzhin du yul la mi 'jug pa'i phyir mdo las de skad du gsungs kyi sangs rgyas la lung ma bstan rnam smin skyes dang spyod lam pa dang sprul smsi mi mnga' ba ni ma yin no zhes 'dod do zhes zer ro]]. Cf. Bhavya’s Madhyamakapradīpa (P, fol. 356b6–7; D, fol. 283a3–4; S, vol. 57, pp. 1546.8–11): mdo gzhan las kyang] glang chen bzhugs kyang mnyam par bzhag [D gzhag] glang chen bzhud kyang mnyam par bzhag [D gzhag] glang chen mnal yang mnyam par bzhag] glang chen gzims kyang mnyam par bzhag] ces gsungs so]. See also below, “Works by Tibetan Authors,” §3.II, where sGam-po-pa presents a similar argument brought forward by those who claim that buddhas possess non-conceptual gnosis but not pure mundane gnosis.

The text may have initially read bdag dang gzhon gyi don yongs su rdzogs par byed pa. In that case it would translate as follows: “by [his] acts of fulfilling the objectives of [both] himself and others.”

That is, the ‘receptacle world’ (bhājanaloka), the place where the body resides.

On the notion of the external world consisting of bodies, abodes, and objects as a projection of the mind, see Mahāyānasūtraśāstraṃkāra 11.44; Madhyāntavibhāgagābhāṣya ad 3.22; and Lāṅkāvatārasūtra (p. 54.10, v. 2.125cd & p. 56.7). Cf. Madhyāmakāvatāra 6.89 (for the Sanskrit text and an English translation, see Wangchuk 2007, p. 211).

The function of nyid here is unclear. One possibility would be to read ‘on kyang nyid to be semantically equal to ‘on kyang ni, as suggested in the translation above, although I have not been able to find a similar construction elsewhere. Another possibility would be to understand it in the sense of rang, that is, reading nyid rdzogs par longs spyod pa (‘perfect self enjoyment’).
exhausting entire heaps of obscurations ever since [they] generated the resolve to [strive for] the supreme awakening. As a result, [their] incomparable excellent Body of Maturation, generated by countless basic virtues (dge ba'i rtsa ba: kuśalamūla), has come into existence in entirely pure [buddha]-fields. That is, a Body, which has come about by the practice of constantly benefiting sentient beings, and whose nature it is to benefit all disciples in ways suitable [to them], has come into existence. Therefore, it is called the Body of beneficial resources. Thus [Buddhas] also possess such a material Body, and this Body indulges in the great bliss of focusing on the nature (bdag nyid) of gnosis [occurrent during] samādhi. The moments [of] bliss in which the Body indulges suffer no interruption by [any] other moments [of sensation]. Therefore, buddhas are endowed with [the following constituents]: (i) the purified dharmadhatu, (ii) non-conceptual gnosis, (iii) pure mundane gnosis, (iv) material Bodies, which have been attained through the immeasurable accumulation of beneficial resources, (v) the bliss of the Mind, which perceives the unconditioned, and (vi) the bliss of the Body, which comes about through [the accumulation of] beneficial resources and gnosis, for they are endowed with six attributes pertaining to bliss. As for the bliss of indulging in a retinue of goddesses, since it is a reproachable matter, [buddhas] are not endowed with it.

6. The Position Maintaining the Existence of Numerous Constituents

Some claim [as follows]: Buddhas are purified from all faults along with the seeds [of faults]. As for the good qualities, the more accumulations [of beneficial resources and gnosis] are gathered, the less redundant (don med pa), incomplete, or imperfect does everything included under common or uncommon qualities become. Hence [buddhas] exist as the essence of the result, which partakes of all qualities, and they never suffer interruption or alteration [of any kind]. Thus, regarding the constituents of a buddha, [a buddha] is endowed with (i) the purified dharmadhatu, (ii) non-conceptual gnosis, (iii) pure mundane gnosis, (iv) the Body [resulting from] the maturation of gathering endless accumulations of beneficial resources and gnosis, [that is], the Body of great enjoyment—[in the form of] the Exalted One, the great Vajradhara, (v) buddha-fields

35 Countless basic virtues (dge ba'i rtsa ba: kuśalamūla) should perhaps be understood here as the accumulated beneficial resources just mentioned, which together with the accumulated gnosis causes the Body of Maturation to appear in various buddha-fields.

36 These six attributes pertaining to bliss may well be the six attributes of bliss listed by Rongzom-pa in his dKon cog 'grel, §III.A.B.a, when outlining the position maintaining the existence of numerous constituents, namely, bliss which is (i) supreme, (ii) undefiled, (iii) immeasurable, (iv) immutable, and (v) great, along with (vi) the ability to generate bliss in all disciples. One may choose to equate them with the six kinds of bliss described in Abhidharma sources, namely, the mental bliss together with the five kinds of physical bliss (associated with the five sense perceptions). However, as mentioned above (chapter two, p. 75), the physical bliss maintained by this position seems to be independent of external objects, and therefore experienced only through the tactile faculty (i.e. only 'internally').

37 I take the adjective chen po in the phrase longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku chen po to be qualifying longs spyod rdzogs pa and not sku; hence my translation 'Body of great enjoyment' (and not 'great Body of Enjoyment,' or 'great sambhogakāya'). This is supported by the phrase longs spyod chen po, which occurs once above (§II.C) and three more times in the passage from the dKon cog 'grel considered in the present study (§§I, II.5 & II.4.B.a), and which can stand for both mahāsambhoga
[that are] commonly known [to have] excellent configurations [and are] described in the sūtras [as being endowed with] excellent [objects of] enjoyment, [and that are situated] in [other] fields [that have] excellent arrays [and] are entirely pure special realms, and (vi) the extraordinary bliss of intensely indulging in uncommon objects of desire (’dod pa’i yon tan), for [they] are also endowed with an ultimately unchanging great bliss, which is the enjoyment (rol pa) of coupling amidst innumerable gatherings of Knowledge Goddesses (ye shes kyi lha mo). And [they] are also endowed with (vii) the bliss which comes from indulging in external [objects] of desire, for [they] indulge in all [objects of] bliss, such as [agreeable] visible matter and [melodious] sounds, (viii) the bliss of the svābhāvikakāya,38 because [they] have attained the Body [caused by] the maturation of the basic virtuous deeds, and (ix) the bliss of the Mind, for [they] have perceived unconditioned reality, [the state of] tranquillity. Therefore [buddhas] have the special characteristics of [these] three or even four [types of] bliss.39

These are a mere overview of each of the positions (gzhung).

IV. Critiques and Responses

Now, [I] shall present criticism (brgal ba) of these [positions] and the response [to it].

1. A Critique of Position 1 by All Other Positions and a Response to It

A. Critique

At first, a joint critique of the position that denies [the existence] of even non-conceptual gnosis at the stage of a buddha by the adherents of the remaining positions, [that is], by those who maintain [the existence of] only non-conceptual gnosis and so forth: If, as maintained by you, buddhas do not possess even non-conceptual gnosis, and if [the word ‘buddha’] is a designation given merely to the purified dharma dhātu, this will lead to numerous shortcomings. [These are], in brief:

(i) All the Teachings of the Victorious One and all the mass of commentarial treatises of preceptors of the past propound endless models (tshu!) regarding the special features of the Bodies and gnosis and the arising of great compassion. Thus you evidently in this

(‘great enjoyment’) and mahāsāṃbhogika (‘one endowed with great enjoyment’). See also the passage from Klong-chen-pa’s Yid kyi mun sel (§3.2.1) in the appendix, where the phrase longs spyod chen po’i sku is found in a similar context.

38 The term svābhāvikakāya, which is commonly rendered into Tibetan as ngo bo nyid kyi sku, is customarily rendered by Rong-zom-pa as rang bzhin gyi sku or bdag nyid kyi sku. The former is more common than the latter and is attested elsewhere. See, for example, the Tibetan translation of Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra 9.59ab and the commentary on it in *(Mahāyāna)sūtrālaṃkāravyākhyā 9 (p. 116).

39 It is not entirely clear to which kinds of bliss the figures three and four refer. It may well be that the figure three refers to the three kinds of bliss listed last (nos. vii–ix), which are considered perhaps less controversial, and the figure four to all four kinds of bliss listed (nos. vi–ix), including sexual bliss, which is more controversial. My understanding of the particle yang as referring only to the figure four is supported by such an interpretation. The alternative is to take the particle as referring to both figures, in which case the phrase would translate as “of even [these] three or four.”
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case depreciate all the Teachings of the Victorious One and all treatises, and you had therefore better claim to be a Second Jewel (i.e. a Second Buddha\(^40\)).

(ii) Furthermore, all effort to gather immeasurable accumulations of beneficial resources and gnosis after generating the resolve to [strive for] awakening on the strength (stobs: balal) of [one’s] spiritual disposition and the strength of [one’s] spiritual friends would be in vain.\(^41\) And because there would be no essence to the result—that is, the arising [of] great qualities for the sake of sentient beings—no cause of it, no conditions [affecting it] and no substratum [to it, this stance] would lead, in addition, to the propagation of the extreme of annihilationism (mtha’ chad pa = chad pa’i mtha’: ucchedānta).\(^42\)

(iii) Further, by comparing nirvāṇa to the extinction of fire,\(^43\) [a buddha] would turn out to be like a Śrāvaka [saint], whose one and only aim (lit. ‘direction’) is tranquillity (zhi ba phyogs gcig pa),\(^44\) [implying] the superfluousness of Mahāyāna.\(^45\)

\(^40\) For a similar statement, see the Sānṅg sa chen mo below, §IV.2.C.i.

\(^41\) As noted in Wangchuk’s study on the concept of bodhicitta, in the chapter devoted to the causes and conditions pertaining to bodhicitta, the strength of one’s spiritual disposition and the strength of one’s spiritual friends are two of the five strengths said in the Mahāyānasūtraālamkāra to give rise to conventional cittotpāda (Wangchuk 2007, pp. 283–284). Furthermore, one’s spiritual disposition and spiritual friends are, as stated by Wangchuk, named in the Bodhisattvabhumi and other treatises as two of four causes (hetu: rgyu) of cittotpāda or bodhicitta (ibid., pp. 283, 284–285).

\(^42\) See the passage from Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo translated below, where a similar argument is found (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §2).

\(^43\) On the comparison of nirvāṇa to the extinction of fire, see the Nirupadīkā Bhūmiḥ of the Yogācārabhūmi §2.1.2 (Schmithausen 1991, p. 706.3): pradyotasyeva nirvāṇam vimokṣaṁ tasya cetasaḥ; Tib. (ibid. p. 707.3): mar me shi bar gyur pa ltar|| de yi sems ni rnam par groj||. This verse is found in Mahāparinirvānasūtra §44.11 (pp. 400 (Skt.), 401 (Tib.)). It is also cited in the Prasannapadā (p. 520.7). See also Dīghanikāya (II 157): pājottass’ eva nibbāṇam vimokṣo cetasa ahūti (cf. the English translation found in Walshe 1987, p. 271); Bhavya’s Madhyamakapradīpa (P, fol. 337a2–3; D, fol. 267b5–6; S, vol. 57, p. 1508.11–14): mdo sde pa dang| gos dam can gyi sde pa dag ni ’di skad du| mya ngan las ’das pa[P add. dag] ni dngos po ’yod pa yang ma’ [P med pa tsam] yin te| mar me shi bar gyur pa bzhin| de yi sems ni rnam par thar|| zhes zer te [D ste] mya ngan las ’das pa me shi ba ltar ’dod do||. For Rong-zom-pa’s explanation of the term nirvāṇa and its comparison to the extinction of fire, see his Theg tshul (B, fol. 25a6–b3; D, p. 443.3–11). For more on this comparison and its interpretation in early sources, see Schmithausen 2000c, pp. 130–135, where further references are provided. Note, however, Walpola Rahula’s remarks regarding this comparison: “An Arahant after his death is often compared to a fire gone out when the supply of wood is over, or to the flame of a lamp gone out when the wick and oil are finished. Here it should be clearly and distinctly understood, without any confusion, that what is compared to a flame or a fire gone out is not Nirvāṇa, but the ‘being’ composed of the Five Aggregates who realized Nirvāṇa. This point has to be emphasized because many people, even some great scholars, have misunderstood and misinterpreted this simile as referring to Nirvāṇa. Nirvāṇa is never compared to a fire or a lamp gone out” (Rahula 1974, pp. 41–42).

\(^44\) For the term zhi ba phyogs gcig pa, see TSD, s.v. zhi ba phyogs gcig gi lam: šamaikāyanamārga (referring to the Lankāvatārasūtra). Cf. the Theg tshul (B, fol. 2a4–b1; D, p. 417.12–13), where Rong-zom-pa describes the awakening of Śrāvakas saints and pratyekekabdhas as rnam par grol ba’i sgo phyogs gcig. Cf. also the It’a phreng ’grel pa (B, fol. 244b4–5; D, p. 326.10–13); there
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As these major shortcomings are evident, you should abandon this position.

B. Response

Response to it: The three [logical] flaws [alleged by you] in your critique are not applicable to this philosophical system of ours.

(i) A Response to the First Point of the Critique

First, although [you] allege that [we] contradict the scriptures [containing] the Teachings [of the Buddha], this is not the case. All the profound scriptures of definitive [meaning] emphatically establish this position [of ours]. The Vajracchedikā states:

Rong-zom-pa explains the difference regarding the ‘entrance to release’ of Śrāvaka saints, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas: rnam par grol ba'i sgo 'i bye brag ni nyah thos rnam ni rgyu dang rkyen las rnam par grol ba'i rnam par thard pa'i sgo nas skyes pa'o| rang langs rgyas ni [D ni] rgyu dang 'bras bu rnam par bsig [D ba shig] pa'i rnam par thar pa'i sgo las skyes pa'o| byang chub sms pa' ni bsam gyis [B gyi] mi khyab pa'i rnam par thar pa'i sgo las skyes pa'o|.

45 Cf. the Thug tshul (B, fol. 30a3–4; D, p. 448.8–11), where Rong-zom-pa notes a similar critique: “[Some] ask: If not even the mere continuum of the great gnosis is to be perceived, [it would follow that] there is no substratum for the emergence of the [salvific] activities [generated by a buddha’s] great compassion. Therefore, how could this be anything but a nirvāṇa consisting exclusively in tranquillity? Also, how could the term unfixed nirvāṇa (aprātiyṣṭhitanirvāṇa) be applicable [to the stage of a buddha]?” (... ‘di skad du ye shes chen po'i rgyun tsam yang mi dmigs na| thugs rje chen po'i mdzad pa 'byung 'ba rten' [B brten] nyed [B med] pa'i phyir zhi ba phyogs gcig pa'i mya ngan las 'das par ji ltar mi 'gyur| mi gnas pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa zhes bya ba'i sgra'ang ji ltar 'jug ce na|). See also the passage from Gro-lung-pa's bsTan rim chen mo translated below, containing a similar argument (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §2).

46 The canonical version (T, fol. 249b3–3; D, fol. 131a7–b1) reads slightly differently: Lines 1, 2, and 4 have the plural particle dag instead of our instrumental (lines 1 and 2 gis, and line 4 yis). Line 3 in D is identical with our reading, whereas T has spong bas instead of spong bar. Lines 5 and 6 are in reverse order. Line 6 is identical with our line 5, but line 5 (i.e. our line 6), though semantically identical, has a different formulation, namely, sangs rgyas rnam ni chos nyid bta instead of our chos nyid du ni sangs rgyas bta. The Sanskrit text reads (Vajracchedikā, pp. 56.18–57.2):

ye mām rūpeṇa cādṛkṣur ye mām ghoṣena cānvayuh |
mithyāpraḥānaprasytā na mām drakṣyanti te janah ||
dharmatō buddhā draṣṭavyā dharmakāyā hi nāyakāḥ |

For an English translation, see Conze 1957, p. 89. For an edition of the Sanskrit text of the Gilgit manuscript, see Schopen 1989, p. 105 (fols. 106b–11a1); a translation is provided in ibid., p. 129. These lines are also cited by Buddhaghuya in his Vairocanaḥbhisambodhitantrapiṣṭhātha (p. 308.3–15), where the reading seems to be somewhere between ours and that of the canonical version; for an English translation see Hodge 2003, p. 469.

Harrison argues that no three kāya–related notion of the dharmakāya is found in the Vajracchedikā and that the term dharmakāya occurring in this verse is not employed in the nominal sense but rather as an adjective and hence means ‘having the dharma for a body.’ Hence he translates the last two lines cited here by Rong-zom-pa (employing, however, the Sanskrit version) as follows: “The Buddha is to be seen in terms of the dharma; the Tathāgata has the dharma for a body.” He further notes that the second verse, which contains the term dharmakāya
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Whoever sees me as visible matter,
Whoever comprehends me as sound,
Has entered a wrong [path to] abandoning.⁴⁷

(only the first two lines of which are cited by Rong-zom-pa), is a later insertion, but adds that even with its insertion, the Vajracchedikā "never goes beyond the Mainstream position." See Harrison 1992, pp. 68–69, where Conze’s translation is also briefly discussed and where references to translations of this verse by other scholars are given. In the following paragraphs (pp. 70–73), Harrison makes a similar point regarding the employment of the term dharmakāya in the Saṃādhirājasūtra, Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, and Lankāvatārasūtra. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that Rong-zom-pa (like several other scholars in India and Tibet) understood the term dharmakāya in this verse as the Body of Reality, that is, the absolute, the true essence of a buddha, and this is indeed the way it should be understood in our context, for it is this understanding that made Rong-zom-pa cite this verse in the first place. Any other interpretation of the term here would make his citation of the verse as scriptural support meaningless. This is lent extra credence by the following line of verse (i.e. the last line cited here), which reads in Tibetan chos nyid du ni sangs rgyas bīta, that is, with chos nyid and not chos, which would be the corresponding translation of the Sanskrit, which reads dharma and not dharmatā. The same can be said about the citation of this verse by Mañjuśrīmitra in his commentary on the Bodhisattabhāvanā cited below ("Works by Indian Authors," §1.B). He, too, advocates the position that the dharmadhatu is the sole constituent of a buddha, and likewise cites this verse as scriptural support. See also Makransky’s translation of the verse, where, despite citing the Sanskrit texts, he takes dharmakāya in the sense of dharmatākāya (Makransky 1997, p. 35). In the preceding paragraph, he argues that in the Prajñāpāramitā context, too, the term dharmakāya tends to be employed in the sense of dharmatākāya. In a long note, he criticizes Harrison’s conclusion that the term is employed in the Prajñāpāramitā literature in the Mainstream sense, that is, as ‘Dharma-bodied.’ In his opinion, Harrison’s thesis forced him “to go to great lengths to ignore the meaning and the centrality of prajñāpāramitā itself in the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras” (ibid., pp. 373–375, n. 12). See also ibid., p. 45, where Makransky translates the same verse, this time as cited by Sthiramati in his *(Mahāyāna)sūtrālaṃkāravyākhyā (referred to by him as Vṛttibhāṣya); and pp. 378–379, n. 20, where he provides the Tibetan text (based on the Peking and sDe-dge editions), noting that the Tibetan translation of this quote differs significantly from the available Sanskrit texts. What is particularly relevant for us here is the reading of the second line of the second verse, namely, de bzhin nyid du sangs rgyas bīta. De bzhin nyid (the common Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term tathā) as opposed to chos (which would correspond to the available Sanskrit reading dharma) accords semantically with our reading, chos nyid. Given differences in the reading of the verse as it appears in this passage, Makransky suggests that Sthiramati may have been quoting from a different version of the Vajracchedikā. For Sthiramati’s citation of these lines, see *(Mahāyāna)sūtrālaṃkāravyākhyā 9 (p. 12.3–7). See also Seyfort Ruegg 1971, p. 457, n. 41, where the last two lines of verse from the Vajracchedikā cited here are quoted, and references given to other works containing a similar train of thought, including Candrakīrti’s Prasannapadā ad Mūlamadhyamakakārikā 22.15 and Madhyamakāvatāra (p. 361); Prajñākaramati’s Bodhicaryāvatāraparajīka 9.38; Aṣṭasahasrikā 4, 17, 28 & 31; Saṃādhirājasūtra 22.21; Udānavarga 22.12; Theragāthā 469.

Note that Rong-zom-pa’s understanding of the term dharmakāya here as referring to the absolute by no means implies that he did not know other meanings of the term. See the discussion of traditional buddhology in the introduction (chapter two, §2.C), where several passages discussing the term dharmakāya in Rong-zom-pa’s works are cited and translated.

⁴⁷ From Rong-zom-pa’s remarks that immediately follow the verse, it seems that he takes this line to mean “Has wrongly entered [a path leading one] to abandon (i.e. to miss attaining) [Buddhahood].” In Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit prahāna often stands for pradhāna (‘exertion’), a
That person will not see me.  
The 'leaders' ('dren pa: nāyaka) are the dharmakāya.  
[One] should regard a buddha as true reality.

A buddha is referred to as true reality, and at the same time it is taught that to take a buddha as visible matter and sound is to abandon Buddhahood (sangs rgyas nyid: buddhatva) (or: a buddha as he actually is). The Ratnakūta, too, states:48

Do not regard a buddha as visible matter,  
Do not analyse [him] in terms of name (mtshan: nāma), family (rigs: gotra), or ancestral lineage (rgyud: anvaya).  
[He] is not to be explained as sound.  
[He] is not characterized by citta (sems), vijnāna (rnam shes), or manas (yid).49  
The Exalted One is that which is the true reality.

Also along these same lines, [that which] consists of body, speech, and mind (yid) [should] not be considered a buddha; rather, it is true reality that [should] be considered a buddha. Gnosis is characterized by mind (yid: manas, in the sense of yid kyi rnam par shes pa: manovijnāna). [The latter] is explained as [derived] from the root (skad kyi byings: dhātu) man ('to think') and as [comprising the mental processes of] 'fixation of meaning that is not explicitly reflected in the Tibetan rendering of this term as spong ba. See BHSD, s.vv. pradhāna and prahāna. See also the translation of this line in Schopen 1989, p. 129: "They have engaged in a misguided effort." Nonetheless, the yang dag par spong ba bzhi are often characterized by Tibetan scholars as requiring exertion (brtson 'grus: vīrya). See, for example, Mipham's mKhas 'jug (p. 168.2–3), where the nature of the four samyakprahānas is said to be 'exertion': yang dag par spongs pa bzhi ni| ... ngo bo ni brtson 'grus so|).

48 This verse is found in the 21st text in the Ratnakūta, entitled Bhadramāyākāravākarana (T, fol. 86a7–b1; D, fol. 26a7–b1). The canonical version reads slightly differently: the second line in both T and D seems to represent a different translation, reading na tshod rigs su ma yin sgra dang ni instead of our rigs dang rgyud du mi brtag sgra dang mi, probably reading vayas (na tshod) instead of our anvaya (rgyud); the third line in T has 'gyur bar instead of our 'gyur ba, which is also found in D; the fourth line in D has ba min instead of our ma yin, which is also found in T; and the fifth line in both T and D has sangs rgyas instead of our de ni. An edition of the Tibetan text is found in Régamey 1938, p. 36, vv. 59 & 60a; cf. Régamey's translation in ibid., pp. 81–82. Note that Rong-zom-pa cites this and the previous verse also in his Theg tshul (B, fol. 31b–3 & 31b6–32a); D, pp. 449.22–24 & 450.6–8) for the same purpose, that is, in order to establish that the essence of a buddha is the purified dharmadhātu.

49 The terms citta, manas, and vijnāna were originally understood as synonyms, or at most taken to refer to different aspects of the mind in general, and it is only later that they started to be given substantially specific meanings, namely, equating citta with ādānavijñāna (i.e. ālayavijñāna), taking manas as a faculty of the mind that gives rise to a sense of ego (the notions of 'I' and 'mine'), and employing vijnāna to designate the traditional kinds of mental faculties responsible for perception. See Schmithausen 1987, vol. 1, pp. 122ff. & 149, and the corresponding notes in vol. 2, especially, p. 426, n. 820, where further references are provided, and also p. 487ff., n. 1297, where the meaning of the term manas is discussed in more detail.

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thought' (mngon par rtog pa: abhinirūpanā)\(^50\) and cognition (shes pa: jñāna). The [Sarva]buddhavisayavatārañjñānālokālaṃkārasūtra\(^51\) states:\(^52\)

> A tathāgata is characterized by having never originated.\(^53\)
> All phenomena are similar to a sugata.
> Those with a foolish mind that clings to marks [consisting in appearances]
> Engage with phenomena that do not exist in the worlds.

Reality (i.e. the true nature of phenomena), which has never originated, is a tathāgata. Hence all phenomena, being unarisen, are themselves equivalent to [true reality, and thus to a tathāgata]. If one asks: “Well then, how come [phenomena and tathāgatas] appear to...

\(^50\) See BHSD, s.v. abhinirūpanā. Cf. also MW, s.v. ni-ārūp.

\(^51\) Rong-zom-pa’s version of the title, De bzhin gshegs pa’i yul la ’jug pa ye shes snang ba rgyan gyi mdo, has tathāgata (de bzhin gshegs pa) instead of sarvabuddha (sangs rgyas thams cad) of the canonical version.

\(^52\) The canonical version reads slightly differently (T, fol. 287a1–2; D, fol. 284b3–4): Line 1 reads de bzhin gshegs pa rtag tu skye [T skyes] med chos instead of our rtag tu skye medchos ni de bzhin gshegs. Line 2 has kun kyang instead of our thams cad. And line 3 has rnams instead of our dag. The Sanskrit text reads (Jñānalokālālkara, Skt. ed. p. 37, v. 1; cf. translit., p. 54):

\textit{anutpōdadharmā\(^b\) satatam tathāgataḥ sarve ca dharmāḥ\(^b\) sugatena sādṛśāḥ} \textit{nimittagrāhena tu bālabuddhayo asatsu dharmesu carantī loke} ||. \(^a\) The Ms. reads “dharmāḥ.” I follow here, as in other instances, the reading provided in the publication of the critically edited text. Nonetheless, Martin Delhey pointed out to me that an emendation to “dharmā” is also possible, and is probably even more plausible; \(^b\) The Ms. reads dharmā.

For the Chinese translation, see \textit{ibid}. (translit., p. 55). See also Rong-zom-pa’s sNang ba lhar bsgrub (B, fol. 131b5–132b4; D, pp. 562.4–563.1), where the verse (partially cited in the following note) is quoted and explained; and his mDo sngags grub bdus (B, fol. 196b4–6; D, p. 64.9–12), where, however, the title of the work is not given. This verse is often cited by Indian authors. See, for example, Bhavya’s Madhyamakapradīpa (P, fol. 329b5; D, fol. 262a6; S, vol. 57, pp. 1494.8–11 & P, fol. 357a3–4; D, fol. 283a5–6; S, vol. 57, pp. 1546.19–1547.1), where this verse is cited, and \textit{ibid}. (P, fol. 357a1–3; D, fol. 283a5–6; S, vol. 57, p. 1546.15–19), where also the verse from the \textit{Vājrachedikā} cited above is quoted. See also Bhāviveka’s Prajñāpradīpa (P, fol. 75a1–2; D, fol. 62b3–4; S, vol. 57, p. 949.18–19). Sthiramati’s *(Mahāyāna)sūrālāṃkāra-vyākhyā (p. 12.7–9) cites only the first two lines. Rong-zom-pa is probably citing here, as is apparently the case in some other instances in the \textit{Sangs sa chen mo}, from Buddhaguhya’s \textit{Vairocanābhissambodhitrantrapiṇḍārtha} (pp. 306.28–308.2), which has a reading closer to our text than the canonical version; for an English translation, see Hodge 2003, p. 469.

\(^53\) My translation follows the Sanskrit and Tibetan canonical versions. Rong-zom-pa, however, as is clear from his following commentary, took chos, in the sense of ‘phenomena,’ to be the subject of the sentence and ‘tathāgata’ to be the predicate, yielding: “Phenomena, which have never originated, are the tathāgata.” This is made explicit in his sNang ba lhar bsgrub (B, fol. 132a2–4; D, p. 562.9–12): de la rtag tu skye med chos ni de bzhin gshegs zhes bya ba ni gtan tshigs so|| chos rnams thams cad ces bya ba ni chos can no|| bde bar gshegs pa dang ‘dra zhes bya ba ni dpe’o|| bsgrub bya ni chos thams cad de bzhin gshegs pa yin par bsgrub par bya ba yin pa’o||; \textit{ibid}. (B, fol. 132a6–b1; D, p. 562.17–19): chos thams cad ni de bzhin gshegs pa yin pa rtag tu skye ba med pa’i chos de de bzhin gshegs pa yin pa’i phyir dper na dus gsum gyi bde bar gshegs pa dang ‘dra’o||.

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worldlings as if arising and ceasing?” [the answer is]: [Worldlings] engage with non-existing phenomena, as if [engaging with] a river [formed by] an optical illusion. It has been taught in profound authoritative scriptures, such as the ones [just cited], that what makes a buddha (sangs rgyas kyi dngos po) is the purified dharmadhātu.

It is similarly stated in the instructions of the preceptors of the past that non-conceptual gnosis, pure mundane [gnosis], and all miraculous manifestations of a buddha are mere appearances [that appear] to [those with] faulty [perception], and that they do not exist as such. Proponents of such a position, such as the masters Mañjuśrīmitra and *Madhyamaka-Simha, have turned up at intervals [throughout the ages]. Hence this position [of ours] follows an established tradition [in line with] the great path. Do not say: “Because [you] depreciate the Teachings of the Victorious One and the scriptures of the preceptors of the past, you claim to be a Second Jewel.” We, [in fact], have been [trying to] establish the position that is the very essence of [the Buddha’s] Doctrine.54

(ii) A Response to the Second Point of the Critique

Furthermore, do not say that [according to our position] there exists neither an own-nature (bdag nyid) nor a cause, nor conditions, nor a substratum [as these pertain] to the excellence of Body and gnosis—which come into being for the sake of living beings—and to the emanations [rooted in] compassion—whence, [according to you,] the gathering of accumulations has been in vain—and that [this] leads to the propagation of the extreme of annihilationism. This [position of ours] is devoid of this flaw. [Holding] an annihilationistic view means postulating that [a thing] exists at one point but later ceases. We do not postulate [anything of] the kind.55 Moreover, within—of the modes of the two truths—that of absolute truth, neither what is called the ‘gathering of accumulations,’ nor the ‘removal of obscurations,’ nor the ‘attainment of Buddhahood,’ nor ‘sentient beings fraught with obscurations’ [can] be perceived. There is neither ‘obtaining an own-nature’ (bdag nyid thob pa: ātmalābha) (i.e. coming into existence),56 nor abiding, nor

54 Compare the similar argument presented (though only briefly) by sGam-po-pa, who equates a buddha with the dharmakāya. See below “Works by Tibetan Authors,” §3.III.

55 This argument is also found in the passage from *Madhyamaka-Simha’s Drṣṭivibhāga translated below, “Works by Indian Authors,” §1.A.

56 See Prasannapadā-Index, s.v. ātmalābha; see also the Lankāvatārasūtra (p. 16.4–13; Tib. T, fols. 63b3–64a1; D, fol. 63a1–5), where phenomena are said not to have obtained (i.e. to possess) an own-nature, the term employed being alabdhisthāma (bdag nyid du ma red pa). This term is rendered into Tibetan in several slightly different ways. For further references, see TSD, s.vv. bdag nyid thob pa, bdag nyid du rnyed pa med (= bdag nyid du red pa med), bdag nyid du ma rnyed pa (= bdag nyid du ma red pa), bdag nyid du red pa med, bdag nyid ma rnyed (pa) (= bdag nyid ma red), bdag nyid ma thob pa. The term ‘obtaining (or: possessing) an own-nature’ is crucial to understanding Rong-zom-pa’s position. An explanation of it, as applied to phenomena from the conventional point of view, is found in a passage from the mNyam sbyor ‘grel pa (B, fol. 142a3–6; D, p. 615.12–19), where Rong-zom-pa defines the terms power (mthu), nature (rang bzhin), and essence (ngo bo nyid). There he clearly states that essence is ‘obtaining an own-nature,’ which in turn means—as he makes clear in terms of fire—consisting of atoms of (one of) the great elements, and being perceptible to the sense faculties:

‘Power’ is the function [of a given phenomenon], namely, its specific ability [to produce a certain effect], ‘nature’ is [its] quality (chos), and ‘essence’ is [its] obtaining (i.e. having) an
own-nature. For example, the power of fire is [its] specific function, namely, [its] combustibility; [its] nature is [its] quality, namely, the characteristic of heat; and [its] essence is [its] obtaining (i.e. having) an own-nature of that kind (i.e. combustibility and heat), [namely], an own-nature that is [that of] the atoms of [one of the] great elements [and can] be an object of the sense faculties. Thus there is no [fundamental] difference between combustion, heat, and the essence [of fire]. This is on a par with the following [case]: In response to the query as to what [actually] did the burning in the statement "[It] was burnt by fire," it is said: "[The fire's] power burnt [it]; [its] nature burnt [it]; [its] essence burnt [it]" (de la mthu nis pa'i bye brag ste las so| rang bzhin ni chos so| ngo bo nyid ni bdag nyid thob pa stel dper na me'i mthu ni sreg par nus pa'i bye brag las so| rang bzhin ni tsha ba'i mtshan nyid kyis chos so| ngo bo nyid ni de la bu'i bdag nyid thob pa 'byung ba chen po'i rdul phran gyi bdag nyid dbang po'i spyod yul du gyur pa stel sreg pa dang tsha ba'ang [= ba dang]| ngo bo nyid bye brag med do| de la 'di skad du mes 'tshed do zhes bya bar cis 'tshed rgal ba la 'di skad du mthus [B 'thus] 'tshed do rang bzhin gytis 'tshed do ngo bo nyid kyis 'tshed do zhes brjod pa lta bu'o|). The emendation of ba'ang to ba dang is made on the basis of the following sentence in which all three, namely, the fire's power (i.e. combustibility), nature (i.e. heat), and essence, are equated.

Explaining the first of four deviations from the path of [attaining] true reality in his Theg tshul (B, fols. 82b2–83a1; D, p. 506.3–14), Rong-zom-pa advocates the theory of the indivisibility of the two truths, which is fundamental to his establishing what the stage of a buddha implies, and maintains that neither extreme of samsāra and nirvāṇa has an own-nature (here in the ultimate sense), as follows:

Regarding the first, [namely,] deviation from the path of non-duality, [that is,] the search for a 'middle path' (dbu ma'i lam: madhyamā pratipat), it has been stated [in the Nam mkha' che'i rgyud (p. 179.1–2)]:

Attachment (chags: rāga) and non-attachment (ma chags: arāga) is the 'path of words' (tshig gi lam: vākyapatha);
Similarly the middle [path]—[they all] resemble an echo.
Pleasure (sukha) and pain (duḥkha) [have] a common cause.
Thus has [Vajra]sattva, the lord of living beings, spoken.

Attachment [means] abiding in desire, and thus is mundane (i.e. samsāra). Non-attachment [means] release from it, and thus is nirvāṇa. These two are taught as being [merely] the path of words. The path of words is the meaning of words; the meaning of words is the object (or: content) of terms; the object of a term does not have an own-nature. Thus neither extreme of samsāra and nirvāṇa has an own-nature, and so similarly, neither does the middle [path]; hence the phrase "similarly the middle [path]." All [phenomena] are merely the path of words, and thus there is [nothing that can] be objectified. Therefore, it is stated that [they] "resemble an echo." Hence the two, the pain resulting from attachment and the pleasure resulting from non-attachment, are indivisible [as far as their] cause or nature [is concerned]. Thus has the all-supreme one, the glorious Vajrasattva, spoken (dang po lam dbu ma tshol ba gnyis su myed [B med] pa'i lam las [B la] gol ba ni]
transformation. [Thus] how [could] one apply [in this case] the terms annihilationism and eternalism? Within the mode of appearances on the deceptive conventional [level], an own-nature and causes of and conditions [giving rise to] the constituents—ocean-like [in their scope]—of the diverse qualities of Body and gnosis, [both of] which carry out activities for the benefit of sentient beings, do exist. However, a substratum is not necessary.

The conditions for the arising of the myriad qualities are of two kinds: (a) (1) First, qualities suitable to each of the [mental] continua of disciples appear by virtue of the gathering of immeasurable basic virtuous deeds, the generating of never-ceasing great compassion, and the spontaneous achieving of [the objective set by] the never-ceasing great resolution (smon lam: pranidhāna), beginning with the generation of the resolve [to strive for awakening] on the basis of [one's] spiritual disposition and [one's] spiritual friends, [and reaching] up to perfect awakening. (2) Further, [they] also emerge in virtue of the dharmadhātu having become utterly purified, for all continuous connection with residual impressions has been completely exhausted, just as a reflection occurs on account of an object (rdzas) and a clean surface (zhing). These two are ‘dominant conditions’ (bdag po ’i rkyen: adhipatipratyaya). (b) (1) The non-exhaustion of delusions and (2) the existence of favourable residual impressions in the [mental] continuum of disciples are the ‘causal conditions’ (rgyu ’i rkyen: hetupratyaya).

Thus the cause of the emergence of the qualities is the existence of deceptive residual impressions, and the cause of [their] appearing as qualities is the favourable residual impressions. As for a substratum, [it] is not necessary in this [system]. For example, rṣis, upon having acquired the [ability to make] aspirational wishes make aspirational wish [of the kind]: “May in the future so and so—be [it] wholesome or unwholesome—happen in this place.” Later, after a rṣi has died, and when an auspicious (dge shis) [situation] or the like occurs [in accordance with his aspirational wish, his] power arises in that [particular] place without the need for the rṣi as a substratum endowed with [supernatural] abilities, and without any other substratum to which [such] abilities are to be transferred (bsgo bar bya ba).

There are some [cases] in which the result arises at a different time—even though there is no substratum that is the bearer of the qualities—due to the continuity of another substratum to which the qualities have been transferred. For example, there are [cases in which] one who has attained [the power of] the garuḍa mantra (i.e. a gārudika)57 leaves


57 The garuḍa mantra is known to be a remedy for snakebites. For this analogy, see Bodhicaryāvatāra 9.37–38 (Bhattacharya 1960, p. 194); see the translations in Steinkellner 1981, p. 120, and in Crosby & Skilton 1995, pp. 118–119 (here, however, vv. 36–37). Verse 37 is also cited in the passage from Dharmamitra’s Prasphutapada translated below (“Works by Indian Authors,” §2.B). See also the verse in Candraharihīḍa’s Ratnamālā, where this analogy is also found (“Works by Indian Authors,” §1.D).
behind a wooden splint after [first] transferring (btab) to it [this power] by [employing] mantras. If later, hundreds and thousands of years after the mantra master (sngags mkhan: mantrin) has died, persons suffering from poison are tapped (byabs) with that wooden splint, [their] poisoning is cured.

Likewise, compassion is achieved and resolutions are fulfilled as a result of applying (yongs su btab) them when performing practices [leading to] the awakening of buddhas. After one is perfectly awakened, all conventional phenomena are exhausted. Yet when the excellent properties appear at a time suitable for [training] the disciples, there exists nothing such as non-conceptual gnosis [that could serve as] a substratum bearing the qualities. [Buddhas] nevertheless appear to (ngo ga)58 disciples in pure and impure fields in the form (tshul) of the sambhogakāyas or nirmanakāyas of the Victorious Ones, [and] endowed with the compassion that is the hallmark of non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis. Such [appearances] are said to be appearances [of qualities] without a substratum as a bearer of the qualities.

Moreover—regarding the appearances [of the qualities] after [they] have been transferred to another substratum—a buddha, in virtue of [his] appearance—[his] emerging in the world—leaves to the world his [four] mudrās (lit. `seals')—namely, [the mudrā] of pledges, [the mudrā] of the Doctrine, and the rest59—having [first] empowered [them], and then displays the mode of a buddha passing into [parinirmāna]. Later, however, these mudrās will become similar to a buddha [in] the activities [they generate] for the benefit of sentient beings, as stated:60

Various [methods leading to] supernatural attainments have been demonstrated
In accordance with how sentient beings [can best] be trained.
Mudrās are the methods [leading to] these [attainments].
The kind of benefit achieved for sentient beings by buddhas
By means of mudrās [can] not be achieved
Through a whole series of [other] expedient methods,
Such as conduct [conducive to] awakening.

Therefore, the appearance of all excellent qualities of a buddha in the form of (tshul du) causes, conditions, and result is established. Thus neither is the conventional mode employed (byas) [in our system] futile nor are [we] akin to the proponents of annihilationism.

58 See the brDa dkrol gser gyi me long, s.v. ngo ga: snang ngo zhes pa'i ming ste]; and s.v. ngo dga', which has the same meaning.

59 This is a reference to the four mudrās, namely, the mudrā of pledges (samayamudrā: dam tshig gi phyag rgya), the mudrā of action (karmamudrā: las kyi phyag rgya), the mudrā of the Doctrine (dharmamudrā: chos kyi phyag rgya), and the great mudrā (mahāmudrā: phyag rgya chen po). See Rong-zom-pa's rGyud spyi'i dngos po (B, fol. 235b5; D, p. 100.17–18) (see above, chapter two, §4.B, where the entire passage containing Rong-zom-pa's explanation of mudrā is translated). See also Snellgrove 1987a, §III, where the four mūdras are discussed on several occasions in the context of Yogatantra.

60 I have not been able to identify the source of this verse.
(iii) A Response to the Third Point of the Critique

Furthermore, it is not the case that [a buddha] is, according to this system [of ours] (tshul 'di nyid kyi), identical with a Sravaka [saint], whose one and only aim is tranquillity, that is, nirvāṇa. The reason is that, while [he] has become, for his own sake, the purified dharmadhātu, with all ‘negative propensities’ (bag la nyal: anusaya) having been completely exhausted, all [his] basic virtuous deeds [accumulated on the path] have become, for the sake of others, the condition for activities beneficial for sentient beings, and also the condition for the appearing to others under the influence of the purified dharmadhātu. Thus [he] is endowed with the excellence of benefiting others. Therefore, [it] is not that there is generally no difference. There is indeed a difference [in the sense] that Sravaka [saints] attain some inferior unconditioned [state] (’dus ma byas cung zad), whereas tathāgatas attain complete purity. Nonetheless, as far as the term nirvāṇa when used [to designate] the unconditioned state is concerned, there is no difference. It is as stated [in the Vajracchedikā]:

[He] who is characterized by the unconditioned [state] is a Noble One.⁶¹

Hence, none of your allegations (skyon brjod pa) is applicable to our position, so do not make such statements.

2. A Refutation of Positions 2–6 by Position 1

Now we shall proceed to refute your positions, so respond logically.

A. A Refutation of Position 2

First of all, [we] shall pose questions to those who maintain [the existence of] only non-conceptual gnosis.⁶² If [you] maintain that this so-called non-conceptual gnosis, apart from being merely an appearance of the buddhas as ones endowed with great gnosis within the [mental] continuum of disciples, exists within the dominion (dbang) of the continuum of a buddha himself, [in the form of] a cognition that is self-cognizing, free from dual appearances, and characterized by momentariness [and] continuous arising, let us investigate [this] on the basis of an exhaustive list [of possibilities] (brtag grang):⁶³

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⁶¹ The canonical version reads differently (T, fol. 236a1; D, fol. 123a7): ‘phags pa’i gang zag rnams ni ‘dus ma byas kyi rab tu phyé ba’i slad du’o]]. Interesting here is the unusual (probably archaic) formulation ‘dus ma byas instead of the common ‘dus ma byas. This line is also cited in the Sūtrasamuccaya (p. 171.15–17), almost identically with the canonical version: ‘phags pa’i gang zag rnams ni ‘dus ma byas kyi rab tu phyé ba’o]]. The Sanskrit text reads (Vajracchedikā, p. 33.1–2): asamsktaprabhāvītā hy āryapudpāgalāḥ]. See also the note in the glossary (Conze 1957, pp. 98–99). Note that Rong-zom-pa cites this line also in his Theg tshul (B, fol. 31b1; D, p. 449.21–22) and Ita phreng ’grel pa (B, fol. 236a4–5) and D, p. 317.2).

⁶² The word ‘only’ (tsam) here is evidently meant to exclude pure mundane gnosis.

⁶³ The archaic auxiliary grang seems to have several meanings. As noted in Erb 1997, pp. 119–120, n. 181, grang, when found in a conditional sentence at the end of the apodosis (as is the case here), implies that all possible hypotheses have been listed. For a discussion of the meaning of grang as ‘should,’ along with several examples, see Hahn 1994, pp. 291–292. According to modern dictionaries grang signals a question or doubt. See the Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.v. grang: (rnying) dri ba’am the tshom ston pa’i tshig grogs shig; brDa dkrol gser gyi me long, s.v.: ’dri
(i) Do [you] maintain that [this] gnosis exists because [it] is not reducible (gzhig) by means of logical reasoning?
(ii) Or do [you] maintain that [it] exists because [it] is not reducible by means of antidotes?64
(iii) Or is it that, although [this gnosis] is reducible by one of these [two means], the buddhas, having command as they do over phenomena, for some reason singled it out to retain?
(iv) Or is it that, none of these being [the case], the existence of this [gnosis] alone can be established through logical reasoning?

(i) A Refutation of the First Hypothesis

If [any of these were the case], to start with, there is no[thing] that is not reducible by means of the intellect (or: reasoning). The theories of the Yogācāras have already been refuted by the Mādhyamikas, and according to [the latter's] own position it is not possible for [a phenomenon] to be irreducible by means of the intellect (or: reasoning), [not even] on the merely conventional level.

(ii) A Refutation of the Second Hypothesis

There is no[thing] either that is not reducible by means of an antidote. Also, the statement that because non-conceptual gnosis itself is the antidote for eliminating the obscurations, there is no antidote for eliminating [non-conceptual gnosis] itself is untenable. [We] maintain that the term ‘non-conceptualization’ is used for the withdrawal (log pa) of

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64 The terms rigs pas gzhig tu rung ba and gnyen pos gzhig tu rung ba employed here by Rong-zom-pa are apparently equivalent to the more common terms rigs pa'i dgag bya ('that which is to be negated through logical reasoning') and lam gyi dgag bya ('that which is to be negated through the path'), respectively, employed by later Tibetan exegetes. For these terms, see Seyfort Ruegg 2002, p. 241. The identification of the negandum (dgag bya ngos bzung ba) is an important issue for the Tibetan interpreters of Madhyamaka. According to the dGe-lugs analysis, 'that which is to be negated through logical reasoning,' for example, a hypostatized existence (bden grub), should be non-existent, whereas 'that which is to be negated through the path,' for example, intellectual-emotional defilements (kleša: nyon mongs), should be existent. If the former were existent, one could not negate it by reasoning, and if the latter were non-existent, the soteriological path would be superfluous. dGe-lugs exegetes have thus criticized other, earlier Tibetan interpreters of Madhyamaka for defining the negandum either too broadly or too narrowly. For a recent discussion of this issue, see Phuntsho 2005, pp. 55–112. Rong-zom-pa's following discussion indirectly sheds light on some earlier positions on the Madhyamaka issue of the negandum. He evidently proposes that there is nothing that is not reducible through reasoning and nothing that is not reducible through an antidote. The idea of rigs pas gzhig tu rung ba (or rigs pa'i dgag bya) and gnyen pos gzhig tu rung ba (or lam gyi dgag bya) seems to be implied in Abhidharmakośa 6.4 (see de La Vallée Poussin 1988–1990, vol. 3, pp. 910–911), dealing with samvyrtisatya and paramārthasatya, where two different processes are suggested, namely, an act of physical destruction (e.g. the destruction of earthenware with a hammer) and an act of intellectual (or theoretical) deconstruction. The former seems to relate to lam gyi dgag bya and the latter to rigs pa'i dgag bya.
appearances—which are characteristic of the object–subject dichotomy—and further, that the withdrawal of ‘ongoing occurrences’ (mngon du rgyu ba: samudācāra)\(^{65}\) [of conceptual thought (rtog pa)—[again characterized by] the object–subject dichotomy—[can be] called ‘seeing the truth,’ while the complete exhaustion of the negative propensities is called ‘Tathāgatahood’ (de bzhin gshegs [pa] nyid). Therefore, the simple fact is that appearances [and] ongoing occurrences [of conceptual thought, on the one hand,] and the cognitive phenomenon [that undergoes] the gradual withdrawal (ldag pa) of the negative propensities, [on the other,] are set adjacent to each other (sbyar ba) as the unfavourable [factors] and [their] antidote, [respectively]. However, there is no cognitive phenomenon that permanently retains this property of being an antidote. Therefore, if all negative propensities are exhausted, there is no cause that could give rise to a cognition that is self-cognizing, and thus what is called ‘elimination by means of an antidote’ is simply this very principle (tshul) of the non-arising of a result on account of the non-existence of a cause.

Furthermore, as to the assertion that non-conceptual gnosis arises from the accumulation of immeasurable basic virtuous deeds as its cause, mindfulness (dran pa) as its ‘dominant’ [condition], and the [cognitive] apprehension (dmigs pa) of the infallible dharmadhātu as its object,\(^{66}\) this is merely an explanation of the state (gnas skabs) in which the ongoing occurrences of the object–subject dichotomy disappear during meditative absorption as a result of the branch of awakening consisting in proper mindfulness (dran pa yang dag byung chub kyi yan lag: smrtisambodhyaṅga)\(^{67}\) for as

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\(^{65}\) On the term samudācāra, see Chandra 1959 and the Prasannapadā-Index, s.v., in which latter both mngon du rgyu and kun tu spyod pa are provided as its Tibetan rendering. The term has also been rendered into Tibetan as kun tu rgyu ba (see Chandra 1959, s.v. kun tu rgyu). This is apparently the case in the passage from the Kāyatrayavṛtti translated below in which Ānācaprabha comments on verse 16 of Nāgamitra’s Kāyatrayāvatārāmukha (“Works by Indian Authors,” §2.A).

\(^{66}\) According to this explanation, the accumulation of the immeasurable basic virtuous deeds is presented as the cause or the ‘causal condition’ (rgyu’i rkyen), mindfulness as the ‘dominant condition’ (bdag po’i rkyen), and the cognitive apprehension of the dharmadhātu as the ‘objective condition’ (dmigs pa’i rkyen). Compare, however, the explanation above (§IV.1.B.ii), where the proponents of position 1 maintain that the accumulation of the immeasurable basic virtuous deeds and the purified dharmadhātu are dominant conditions, and the non-exhaustion of delusions and the existence of favourable residual impressions in the mental continuum of disciples the causal conditions. Compare Atiśa’s *Ratnakaraṇḍodghāta* (P, fol. 124b3–4; D, fol. 111b1; S, vol. 64, p. 324.17–20; the version in the Jo bo rje’i gsung ‘bum, p. 800.14–16, reads slightly differently): ’o na sangs rgyas la sku dang ye shes dang yon tan dang phrin las kyang mi mnga’ ‘am zhe na| smras pa| rgyu gsum dang rkyen gcig gis gdul bya’i ‘ngo gang la snang ba ste| gdul bya’i dbye bas sku yang sna tshogs su snang ngo|’ \(^{4}\) On the word ngo gang, see below, the edition of the Sangs sa chen mo, n. 53; and ibid. (P, fol. 125a6; D, fol. 112a1–2; S, vol. 64, p. 326.2–4; cf. the version in the Jo bo rje’i gsung ‘bum, p. 801.7–9, which reads slightly differently): de ltar chos kyi sku’i byin rlabs las rgyu gsum dang rkyen gcig gis gsugs kyi sku dang zab pa dang rgya che ba’i chos ston te] sku’i phrin las ’khor ba ma stongs [P sđongs] kyi bar du ’byung ngo]|. It remains to be determined what the three causes and one condition referred to here exactly are.

\(^{67}\) The branch of awakening consisting in proper mindfulness (Mvy, no. 989) is one of the seven branches of awakening (bodhyaṅga: byung chub kyi yan lag) listed in Mvy, nos. 988–995. See also BHSD, s.v. bodhyaṅga.
long as the deceptive negative propensities are not exhausted. Explaining the stage of a buddha—in which all deceptive negative propensities have been exhausted—in this way would be pointless.

Thus, in this [system], there is nothing that is not reducible either by means of logical reasoning or by means of an antidote.

(iii) A Refutation of the Third Hypothesis

If one claims that, although [non-conceptual gnosis] can be reduced, the Victorious Ones, who have command over phenomena, do not exhaust it, at least not [its existence] as an illusory [phenomenon], given that [they] have a certain [ulterior] purpose, what is [then] their [purpose] in not exhausting it? [Neither what is known as ‘one’s own benefit’ nor the benefit for others’ could be the purpose of retaining it]: As to one’s own benefit, [it] is the unstained state (or: nature)—[that is], reality free from manifoldness—and [and] great bliss, since [a buddha] is beyond [all] appearance [that is bound up with] suffering. [It] is tranquillity, for there are no marks [consisting in appearances], [and it] is permanence, for conditioned phenomena have utterly disappeared. Only this, then, constitutes what is called one’s own benefit. This is not to suggest, however, that the sensation of bliss, the aspect (rnam pa) of being tranquil (zhi ba: śānta), and an eternal entity [actually] exist. As to the benefit for others, the constituent qualities emerge unceasingly in accordance with the [karmic] lot of and devotion on the part of every sentient being, without [any need to] rely on this cause (i.e. on non-conceptual gnosis), and therefore there is no purpose to it.

(iv) A Refutation of the Fourth Hypothesis

Further, if [you] claim: “It is not the case that this [non-conceptual gnosis] is irreducible through logical reasoning or an antidote, nor is it the case that the Victorious Ones, who have command over phenomena, have retained this [non-conceptual gnosis] for [a certain] purpose. Nonetheless, [its] mere conventional, illusory existence [can] be established through logical reasoning, [and therefore one] should concede that at least this much exists.” There is no such logical reasoning to [prove] this: If [you] say that this is proved through direct [valid cognition] (mngon sum: pratyakṣa), by what [form of] cognition is it ‘made evident’ (mngon du byas: sākṣāktra)? If [you] say that it is proved through inferential [valid cognition] (rjes su dpag pa: anumāna), what is the definitive ‘logical mark’ (rtags: linga) [that clinches] it? If [you] claim that [it] is made evident (or: proved) by non-conceptual gnosis itself, in this case the gnosis would hardly be non-conceptual, and [you] would also have to claim to be a person [who has access to] the

68 This is a reference to one of the sixteen aspects (rnam pa bcu drug: śoḍaśākāra; Mvy, nos. 1189–1205) of the Four Noble Truths according to the Sarvāstivāda-Abhidharma tradition, or more precisely, the second of the four aspects of the truth of cessation (niruddhasatyā: ‘gog pa’i bden pa). See Kosa-Index, s.v.

69 By arguing that if the existence of non-conceptual gnosis is proved by non-conceptual gnosis itself such gnosis would not be non-conceptual, Rong-zom-pa would not necessarily be denying the fact that non-conceptual gnosis entails direct valid cognition (which is non-conceptual by definition). What he seems to mean is that if non-conceptual gnosis can prove its own existence,
domain of a *buddha*.\footnote{That is, if a *buddha*’s non-conceptual gnosis is proven only through itself, the opponent must be a *buddha* to know this.} If [you] say that it is made evident by pure mundane [gnosis, this gnosis, being mundane,] is not capable [of proving the presence of supramundane, non-conceptual gnosis], and you yourself do not accept pure mundane [gnosis anyway]. Therefore, it is not proved through direct [valid cognition], nor can [it] be proved through inferential [valid cognition] either. If [you] say: “One [can] infer the bearer of qualities (yon tan can) on the basis of the qualities that are perceived,” we have shown above that it is possible for the qualities to appear even without relying on non-conceptual gnosis, [claimed by you to be the bearer of qualities], and therefore it is not proved through inferential [valid cognition].

[On the contrary], it [can] be proven that if [it were taken to] exist, flaws would be entailed. Do [you] not maintain that ‘non-conceptual gnosis,’ or ‘non-dual gnosis,’ are terms applied to something that has arisen [in a way that puts it] on a par with the *dharmadhātu*? If self-cognition arises as [having] the lone characteristic of momentariness, would [this then mean that it is] the characteristic of the *dharmadhātu* [as well] to arise as [something] momentary, analogously to self-cognition?: If this is not the case, then since [self-cognition] has arisen as [having] such a characteristic (i.e. of being momentary), how could [you] maintain that [it] has arisen [in a way that puts it] on a par [with the *dharmadhātu*]? Thus [its] having arisen [in a way that puts it] on a par [with the *dharmadhātu*] is not established either. Moreover, is it not the case, as shown above, that all cognitions, which cognize self-cognitively, [are due to] the influence (*dbang*) of the manifold residual impressions? Since the mere cognition itself is [characterized by] manifoldness (*spros pa: prapañca*),\footnote{That is, manifoldness implies some disquietude, and thus even becoming conscious (as a process) would contain an element of such disquietude.} [one] can hardly maintain [the existence of] cognition in [a state where] manifoldness has come to rest. Also, the expression “arisen [in a way that puts it] on a par with the *dharmadhātu*” does not mean that a cognizing entity (rig pa’i chos) has arisen within the continuum [of a *buddha*]; rather, ‘being thus’ (de lta bur gyur pa: evambhūta, itthambhūta) is [what is being] expressed [with the words] ‘having arisen.’\footnote{Compare the similar argument presented (if only briefly) by sGam-po-pa below, in “Works by Tibetan Authors,” §3.III.}

This being the case, there is no [gnosis] that is irreducible (i.e. here referring to the first and second hypotheses), there is no reason to deliberately cling\footnote{The text reads here *ched du gzhan pa’i dgos pa*, which does not seem to make sense. I have therefore tentatively emended *gzhan* to *zhen* and have translated the passage accordingly. As suggested in the corresponding note in the critical edition, another alternative reading (one requiring a major intrusion upon the text, and therefore suggested only hesitantly) would be: *bdag/rang dang gzhan gyi ched du dgos pa med pa dang*, which would translate “there is no purpose for oneself or others,” and which would contextually make better sense in keeping with the discussion of the third hypothesis above.} [to it] (i.e. here referring to the third hypothesis), and there is no logical reasoning either that

\[\text{this would be a process involving analytical thought, which by definition can be neither direct valid cognition nor non-conceptual.}\]
provisionally proves [it] to be mere illusion (i.e. here referring to the fourth hypothesis). [On the contrary], there is even logical reasoning that disproves [its existence]. Therefore, do not claim that non-conceptual gnosis exists within the continuum of buddhas. Moreover, this has been taught in the sūtras, [as] follows:74

The undefiled wholesome constituent (chos) of a tathāgata
Is the supreme dharmakāya, and in the latter
There exists neither true reality nor a tathāgata;
[And yet a tathāgata] appears (kun tu snang) [like] a reflection in the worlds.

A tathāgata is the dharmakāya, and no characteristics of either true reality or a tathāgata exist. Yet, as for the emergence of buddhas in the world, [these] are appearances [resembling] reflections. Thus it has been taught. The reflections appear [to sentient beings] on account of (dbang) [manifold residual impressions in the latter].75 This same reality, which is freedom from manifoldness, is taught as being the essence of mantras, as being non-dual gnosis, and as being empowered as well [with the ability to manifest] as various means (cho ga: vidhi) [of gaining access to itself]. [As] explained in the *Tattvasamgrahamatatantra (De nyid 'dus pa'i rgyud chen po), in the context of [expounding] the means [afforded by] Tantric methods (gsang sngags kyi thabs kyi cho ga):76

[The inhabitants of] this world who have fallen away from the truth Will not acquire the supernatural attainments (dngos grub: siddhi) of a mantra;

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74 This verse is again cited by Rong-zom-pa in his *Theg tshul* (B, fol. 31b4; D, p. 450.2–4), and also in his dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 20a6–b1; D, p. 47.15–17), where he identifies the Ratnakūṭa (dKon brtsegs pa) as the source. In fact, it is found in the Jānālokālaṃkāra, that is, not in the dKon brtsegs but rather in the mDo sde section of the bKa’-gyur. Note that the canonical version reads somewhat differently (T, fol. 287a2–3; D, fol. 284b4–5): Lines 1 & 2 read de bzhin gshegs pa zag med dge ba yi’lchos kyi gzugs brnyan yin te ‘di la ni’ instead of our de bzhin gshegs pa’i dge chos zag med ni’ cho kyi sku mchog yin te de la ni’. Line 3 has pa’ang med instead of our med de. Line 4 has kun tu instead of our dag na. A significant difference is the reading of the first two lines, which, in the canonical version, has “a tathāgata is the reflection of the undefiled wholesome factors....” instead of our “the undefiled wholesome constituent of a tathāgata is the supreme dharmakāya.” The Sanskrit text (which is in conformity with the canonical version) reads as follows (Jānālokālaṃkāra, Skt. ed., p. 37, v. 2; cf. translit., p. 54):

tathāgato hi pratibimbabhūtah kuśalasya dharmasya anāsravasyaI
na cātā tathātā na tathāgato ‘sti bimbaṃ ca samādyatī sarvaloke ||. 8 Ms. reads anāsravasya.

For the Chinese translation, see *ibid.* (translit., p. 55). Compare the citation of this verse in Bhavya’s Madhyamakapradīpa (P, fol. 357a4–5; D, fol. 283a7; S, vol. 57, p. 1547.2–4). This verse is also cited by Buddhaguhya in his Vairocanābhisambodhitantrapiṃḍārtha (p. 308.18–21), where the reading seems to be somewhere between ours and that of the canonical version; for an English translation, see Hodge 2003, p. 469.

75 My interpretation of this elliptical sentence is based on the preceding passage.

76 Rong-zom-pa is referring here to the *Tattvasamgrahasūtra*. The canonical version (T, fols. 473b7–474a1; D, fol. 134a4) reads identically. Note that the first two lines are cited by him also in the rGyud spyi’i dngos po (B, fol. 234a6–b1; D, p. 99.5–7); for a translation of the entire passage, see above, chapter two, §4.A.
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[The results achieved] by means of manifoldlessness
Are the supreme of all attainments.

The essential nature (dngos po) of a mantra is freedom from manifoldness. The means [afforded by Tantric] methods for [gaining access to] it (i.e. reality free from manifoldness) consist in generated phenomena. That which is called a mantra is also taught as being that same reality free from manifoldness, which is empowered [with the ability to manifest] as any generated means [afforded by Tantric] methods [for gaining access to] itself. The VairocanâbhisaJ1bodhitantra states:??

As for the characteristics of a mantra, O Guhyapati (i.e. Vajrapâni), no [mantra] has either been created by any of the tathâgatas or caused to be created by them, nor has [the creation of any mantra] been sanctioned (rjes su yi rangs pa, lit. 'rejoiced at') by them. Why is this so? Because [a mantra] is the true reality of all phenomena. For whether tathâgatas do or do not appear, the true reality of all phenomena abides primordially, and so does the true reality of mantras.

And.??

When a buddha, an Exalted One, appears in the world, [he] expounds the Mantra system, in various ways and with various motives, to sentient beings with various mental

?? Note that the canonical version (T, fol. 130b4–6; D, fol. 170a7–b2) reads slightly differently (variant or additional words are underlined): gsang ba pa'i bdag po gezan yang gsang sngags rnams kyi mtshan nyid ni, sangs rgyas 'thams cad [T rnams] kyis ma byas byed du ma bcug l rjes su yi rangs pa [T ba] ma yin no| de ci' phyir zhe na| 'di ni chos rnams kyichos nyid 'de' [T do]| 'di [T de] litar de bzhin gshegs pa rnams byung yang rung| ma byung yang rung| chos rnams kyi chos nyid de ni ye nas gnas pa ste| de yang 'di litar gsang sngags rnams kyi gsangs sngags kyi chos nyid do]. See Hodge 2003, pp. 131–132, §81, where an English translation of this passage and the corresponding passage from Buddhaghuya’s commentary is given. As noted in Wangchuk 2007, p. 78, n. 24 (containing several references that solidify the idea that the true reality of all phenomena is always present regardless of whether the tathâgathas appear or not), the passage from the VairocanâbhisaJ1bodhitantra cited here by Rong-zom-pa is also cited in Aryadeva’s Caryaâmelâpakanaprâdipa (Skt.: p. 33.3–6 & Tib.: p. 220.3–8). The notion that the true reality of all phenomena is primordially present irrespective of whether the tathâgathas appear or not is found also in the Jñânâloklâmkâra, which, as we have already seen, was known to Rong-zom-pa (ibid., Skt. ed., p. 68.17–19; cf. translit., p. 138.6–8): tenocytate utpādād vâ tathâgatânām anutpâdâdâ vâ sthitavaisâ dharmatâ | dharmasthititâ dharmadâhârur yathâ dharmadhâsthitis...; 4 Ms. reads anutpâdād. The canonical translation reads (T, fol. 308b4; D, fol. 299a4): de'i phyir [T de ci' phyir zhe na] de bzhin gshegs pa rnams byung yang rung| ma byung yang rung| chos nyid dang| chos gnas pa nyid dang| chos kyi [T om.] dbyings 'di ni gnas pa kho na zhes bya ste| .... For the Chinese translation, see ibid. (translit., p. 139). The same notion is already evident in the Pâli canon, as in the passage from the Saññyuttaniâkâya translated in Yamada 1980, p. 282 (for the Pâli text, see p. 291, n. 70).

?? Note that the canonical version (T, fol. 130b7–131a2; D, fol. 170b2–3) reads slightly differently and has some phrases which are missing in Rong-zom-pa’s citation (variant or additional words are underlined): gang gi tshe yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas thams cad mkhyen pa| thams cad gzigs pa| 'jig rten du byung ba de'i tshe; chos nyid de tshul sna tshogs dang dgongs pa sna tshogs kyi| sems can bsam pa sna tshogs pa rnams la tshig sna tshogs dang [D pa rnams]| yig 'bru sna tshogs dang| yul gyi nges pa'i tshig tu brjod pa sna tshogs dang| dbyangs sna tshogs su go ba rnams su byin gyis brlabs te| gsang sngags kyi tshul 'cha'd do|. Cf. the English translation of this passage in Hodge 2003, p. 132, §82.

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[capacities]—by empowering true reality [to manifest as things] that can be understood, [whether] in the form of various words, various syllables, various verbal expressions [that help one to] ascertain objects (yul nges pa'i tshig tu brjod pa), or as various tones. Therefore, [we] have not seen any logical reasoning [that is able to] establish the existence of what is called non-conceptual gnosis—which has cognition and realization as its characteristics—in the tathāgatas.

(v) A Counter-argument and a Response to It

A counter-argument (lit. 'question') in this regard: If gnosis, which is the basis of [all other] qualities, were non-existent, [then] the cause of the appearance of the qualities for the sake of sentient beings would [have to] be the resolution and compassion generated during the bodhisattva phase. If this were the case, [they] would not be the qualities of tathāgatas, but rather the qualities of bodhisattvas [alone].

[Reply]: This [same] criticism (skyon, lit. 'fault') [applies] to you in a similar way, for [you, too] maintain that [a buddha's qualities] arise effortlessly and spontaneously—just as [things emerge by the power of] the great wish-fulfilling jewel—on account of previous resolutions and great compassion, and [you, too] do not maintain that even after awakening, [a buddha] needs to struggle (brtsal dgos) [in order to] benefit sentient beings. It has been taught that a buddha is the very essence of the result [attained by] those [on the path of] training (slob pa: śaikṣa) and those [on the path of] no more training (mi slob pa: aśaikṣa). Therefore, the mere presence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, [as postulated in this [position of yours], is of no use with regard to [the problem] that the previous compassion and resolution ought [logically] not to be the [direct] cause of the benefit to others.

(vi) A Question and a Response to It

A further question: How is it possible that gnosis, after gradually increasing during the gradual elimination of the obscurations at [successive] stages of a bodhisattva, ceases abruptly at the phase of the Diamond-like Samādhi (rdo rje lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin: vajropamasamādhi)?

Response: Has it not been taught that after one has attained the first stage, appearances withdraw gradually: at the fifth stage, appearances [identified] as one's own and as others' [mental] continua disappear, and at the sixth stage, one automatically (ngang gis) enters into [the state of] signlessness, and consequently appearances disappear gradually? Is it not the case that just as appearances disappear, so too cognition, the basis of

79 For the passages from the Śrāvakabhūmi on Vajropamasamādhi (Sanskrit and Tibetan), see Schmithausen 1982b, pp. 460–463. See also Seyfort Ruegg 1989, p. 167, n. 336, where further references are given. Also note Mi-pham's definition according to which the Vajropamasamādhi is "the path that is immediately followed [by its result] (ānantaryamārga), namely, an antidote that is unhindered in eradicating the ultimate of that which is to be abandoned, that is, that which hinders the attainment of the ultimate results of the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna paths" (mKhas 'jug, pp. 132.6–133.1: rdo rje lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin zhes pa gang zhe na theg pa che chung so so'i lam gyi 'bras bu mthar thug thob pa'i gugs su gyur pa'i spang bya mthar thug 'joms pa la thogs pa med pa'i gnyen po bar chad med lam mo||).
appearances, disappears? Thus what cognition, [what] basis of [appearances], remains in [a state where] all appearances have disappeared? Therefore, the expression ‘gnosis arose’ is nothing but [an expression] applied to the extreme (ches) coming to rest of the marks [consisting in appearances] (mtshan ma: nimitta). So do not find fault with this [position of ours].

B. A Critique of Positions 1 and 2 by Positions 3–6

A critique directed by those who maintain [the existence of] pure mundane gnosis against [the proponents of the first] two [positions], who do not maintain [it].

(i) The First Point of the Critique and a Response to It

Critique: Supposing your statement were true (bden du chug) that pure mundane gnosis is not necessary for the emergence of the host of excellent qualities for the sake of oneself and others, is it not [true] that you yourselves accept the explanation that the intensifying of the [six kinds of] clairvoyance and the [ten] strengths proportionally corresponds to the attainment of non-conceptual [gnosis]? Thus the [abrupt] cessation of gnosis, which had been increasing during the stages of a bodhisattva, at the stage of a buddha is not logical. Furthermore, if there were no gnosis on the basis of which the buddhas know the [mental] continua of sentient beings, this would lead to the undesired consequence of [the buddhas] being partially disoriented.

Response: There is logical reasoning [to support] this [position of ours]. For example, from the [time] someone attains the samādhi of the first dhyāna until [he] attains the samādhi of the fourth dhyāna, the clairvoyances would intensify on the basis of these samādhis, but after [he] attains the Field of Limitless Space (nam mkha’ mtha’ yas skye mched: ākāśāntāyayatana), which is much more tranquil than the [preceding ones], the ‘recognitive and notional consciousness of manifoldness’ (sna tshogs kyi ’du shes: nāmātvasantaja) will not emerge. Similarly, it is reasonable that the samādhis become [increasingly] tranquil from the first to the tenth stage [of a bodhisattva], and that the clairvoyances and the strengths intensify, but it is not reasonable that a cognition that cognitively apprehends marks [consisting in appearances] (mtshan ma la dmigs pa’i shes pa) should [still] arise once the ‘mind which is [the result of] the maturation [of previous

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80 See Mvy, no. 46, where ‘being endowed with six kinds of clairvoyance’ (mngon par shes pa drug dang ldan: sadabhijña) is given as one of the characteristics of a tathāgata. See also ibid., nos. 201–209, where six or five kinds of clairvoyance are listed. For further references, see Nakamura 2004, p. 62, n. 44.

81 Compare the somewhat similar argument put forward in the passage from Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo translated below (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §2).

82 The Field of Limitless Space is the first of the four fields of the Immaterial Realm (or: realm where matter does not exist) (gzugs med khams: ārūpyadhātu).

83 Translating santaja here as ‘notion’ or ‘ideation,’ as in other instances in this study, does not yield the exact sense. I have therefore opted in this case for ‘recognitive and notional consciousness,’ following Schmithausen 2007, p. 95.
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 karma] (rnam par smin pa'i rnam par shes pa: vipākavijñāna) has been transformed by means of the Diamond-like Samadhi. Nor are [buddhas] partially disoriented, for [they] cognize fully the thorough purity—that is, the freedom from manifoldness—[of all phenomena].

(ii) The Second Point of the Critique and a Response to It

Further critique: The stage of a buddha is an inconceivable phenomenon, and although it might appear to contradict (gnod pa) the logic of an ordinary person, it cannot be definitively (nges par) assessed in epistemological terms, and therefore it is not appropriate for you to reject [pure mundane] gnosis.

[Response]: We, too, accept this. Because the constituents of a buddha are inconceivable, we do not commit the offensive (or: ill-considered) [act] of rejecting them. Therefore, neither should you depreciate the above explanations [given in the first two positions].

[Even] if one establishes [one's conclusions] on the basis of logical reasoning, [I] see no point in engaging arrogantly in dispute regarding this highly transcendental [matter]. Therefore, [the matter] should be understood in the following way: There are [different types of] logical reasoning, with varying degrees [of conclusiveness], regarding the inconceivable constituents of a buddha. Yet these [theories], generally known from the scriptures of all the doctrinal [schools], need to be explained in a common language (spyi skad), that is, in the language spoken by ordinary people. It is rational to hold [to a position] that is most [consistent] within the framework of one's own philosophical system. Since [Buddhahood] is an inconceivable phenomenon, however, [one] should not categorically flout the position which maintains the existence of the two kinds of gnosis in the continuum of a buddha. Even masters of past times, such as Buddhaguhya

84 The vipākavijñāna is equated by Vasubandhu with the ālayavijñāna (Schmithausen 1987, vol. 2, pp. 257ff n. 78.

85 The idea that a buddha is omniscient, presupposed in this critique and its response, is perhaps chiefly noteworthy for apparently being the main argument put forward by the proponents of the existence of pure mundane gnosis. See, for example, Nagamitra's work on the three kāyas entitled Kāyatrayaāvatāramukha and the commentary on it by Jñānacandra cited below (“Works by Indian Authors,” §2.A). The issue of a buddha's omniscience is, however, not dealt with in this study.

86 The meaning of the expression guz bo byed (lit. 'to make straight') is not clear here. See TSD, s.v. guz bo, where the following meanings are provided: I.1. = drang po, sarala (cf. MW, s.v. saralikarana: 'making straight'); I.2. sthalastha (MW, s.v.: 'standing on dry ground'), or Ii. satya (MW, s.v. 'true, real, actual, genuine, sincere, honest'). I take the word guz bo here in the sense of the term guz lum. The third meaning of this term given by the Tshig mdzod chen mo is 'ill-considered/rash behavior' (see ibid., s.v. guz lum: (1) tshul 'chos (i.e. hypocrisy), (2) rang bzo (i.e. fabrication), (3) ma brtags pa'i spyod pa). Cf. TSD, s.v. guz lums: sāhasa (MW, s.v.: 'over-hasty, precipitate, rash, inconsiderate, foolhardy,' but also 'violence, force' and 'felony, aggression, cruelty').

87 Interpreting na here as a conditional particle does not yield a clear meaning. I therefore suggest reading gzhag na'ang, that is, "even if one establishes."

88 For a translation of a passage from Rong-zom-pa's dKon cog 'grel where a similar statement is made as to the legitimate status of the various Buddhist doctrines while discussing the authenticity of the *Guhyagarbhatantra, see Wangchuk 2002, pp. 284–285.
and Sūryaprabha, made such distinctions; [these two] further stated that such [issues] are beyond the cognitive reach [of people] like us, and therefore should be left open (gzhag par bya). Similarly, other individuals should establish (gzhag par bya) these [issues] merely according to what [appears] logical in their own mind. But [they] should not insist upon the standpoint categorically.

C. A Refutation of Positions 4–6

[The positions containing] extreme inconsistencies (shin tu 'gal ba che ba) should be refuted.

(i) A General Refutation

[These are] the following:

(a) [The position that] maintains that iathāgatas have material Bodies appropriated (bzung) by their gnosis-continuum and controlled (byin gyis brlabs) by it as its abode (gnas) (i.e. bodies as an abode for the mental continuum).

(b) [The position that] maintains that these Bodies in turn partake of the sensation of bliss.

(c) [The position that] maintains that these Bodies have the physical form of a male (skyes pa'i gzugs: puṣrūpa).

(d) Further, [the position that] maintains that [buddhas, although they enjoy a sensation of bliss], do not [enjoy the bliss of] sexually indulging in a woman.

(e) [The position that] maintains that [they] do sexually indulge in a woman and thus partake of permanent, unchanging bliss [of different kinds]. And relying on tantras and instructions as its source, [this position] maintains [the existence of] constituents such as the following: [Buddhas] have an ocean of unchanging bliss, that is, (1) [they first] partake of two [kinds of bliss, namely], (i) the bliss of the Mind and (ii) the bliss of the [material] Body, which are based on experiencing the taste of true reality, [and] (2) [they] partake of two [other

89 The text reads here yod in all versions, which makes no sense. I therefore suggest reading yang, assuming an initial misreading of yang as yad, which was then 'corrected' to yod.

90 I have not searched the works of Buddhaguhya or Sūryaprabha carefully for explicit statements of this kind.

91 This passage does not necessarily contain the viewpoint of the proponents of position 1, but it does seem to reflect Rong-zom-pa's personal opinion and personal philosophy regarding the various Buddhist systems. In other words, whereas up until now Rong-zom-pa has simply presented the various positions, here he personally interposes himself in the discussion.

92 Note that Rong-zom-pa differentiates here between five different positions, though on the whole they correspond to the last three positions presented by him above.

93 See TSD, s.v. skyes pa (II.2). The idea that a woman cannot attain Buddhahood is expressed, for example, in the Bodhipatāla of the Bodhisattvabhūmi (see below the translation of the passage from the dKon cog 'grel, §§II.1, n. 10, regarding the interpretation of the compound puruṣadamyāṣāraṇī included in the list of epithets of a buddha). For a discussion of eight statuses that a woman is said to be incapable of attaining, see Wangchuk 2007, pp. 137–138, where the Abhidharma work Kāraṇaprajñapti is referred to.
kinds of bliss], (iii) bliss [based on sexual] enjoyment and (iv) bliss [based on] external [non-sexual] objects, [both of] which are based on bliss [resulting from agreeable] objects such as goddesses. [They possess] the ‘six branches,’ [comprising] numerous [types of] bliss of this kind, which are (i) immutable and (ii) devoid of defilements such as desire, and (iii) [of the nature of] compassion, and the rest.

As to these claims, if [the proponents of these positions] maintain that [these constituents] actually exist in the continuum of a buddha himself—instead of [taking them to be mere] appearances to disciples—they should by all means be refuted.

In this regard, [I] put forward the following chain of reasoning: Is it not maintained by you that the appropriation (len pa) of a body by the mental element (rnam par shes pa'i khams: viññānadātu) of ordinary persons occurs as a result of ‘thirst’ (sred pa: trṣṇā) accompanied by the view of a self? Moreover, regarding the cause of the attainment of a [mind-made] conglomerate ([yid kyi rang bzhin gyi] lus: [manomaya]kāya), which [comes about] through the resolutions [of] bodhisattvas, [a mind-made conglomerate] arises on account of the ‘place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance’ (gnas kyi sa'i ma rig pa) as a result of the ‘negative propensities’ (bag la nyal: amisay) that relate to the view of a self. Do you yourself not

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94 The constituent of being endowed with the ‘six branches’ is found in Mvy, no. 424: yan lag drug dang ldan pa: sadaṅgasamānivāgata, as the 74th of 93 terms found under the list of the great constituents of a tathāgata (Mvy, nos. 350–443). I have not been able, however, to identify what these six branches are. It may well be that the quality of ‘being endowed with six branches’ referred to in the Mvy is not identical with the one mentioned here by Rong-zom-pa. As his presentation of the constituents of a buddha maintained by this position seems exclusively to concern the notion of a buddha’s partaking of various kinds of bliss, it may be that the ‘six branches’ referred to by him are the above-mentioned (§III.5) ‘six attributes pertaining to bliss’ (bde ba'i chos drug), which, I have suggested, are equivalent to the six attributes listed in the dKon cog 'grel, §III.4.B.a. The first two mentioned here clearly correlate with two of these six, namely, immutable bliss and undefiled bliss. The quality of compassion mentioned here as one of the six may be equivalent to the ability to generate bliss in all disciples, being the sixth attribute mentioned in the dKon cog 'grel.

95 The term gnas kyi sa'i ma rig pa is no doubt identical with the term ma rig pa'i gnas kyi sa: avidyāvāsabhūmi (also found as ma rig pa'i bag chags kyi sa: avidyāvāsanābhumī), which is rendered by Takasaki, in his translation of the Ratnagotravibhāga, as ‘Dwelling-Place of Ignorance.’ Takasaki notes that according to the Śrīmāladeviśūtra there are five vāsabhūmis: (i) ma rig pa'i gnas kyi sa: avidyāvāsabhūmi, which is considered the basis and the strongest of the five, (ii) ita ba geig la gnas pa'i gnas kyi sa: *ekadrṣṭisthitavāsabhūmi, (iii) 'dod pa'i 'dod chags[ς] la gnas pa'i gnas kyi sa: *kāmarāgasthitavāsabhūmi, (iv) gzugs kyi 'dod chags la gnas pa'i gnas kyi sa: *rūparāgasthitavāsabhūmi, and (v) srid pa'i 'dod chags la gnas pa'i gnas kyi sa: *bhavarāgasthitavāsabhūmi. The last four are said to be the basic kleśas, from which all defilements emerge in the form of intense outbursts (paryavasthāna- or paryutthānakleśa). It is also said that, while these four are momentary (ksanika), the first one, that is, avidyāvāsabhūmi, exists throughout beginningless time (anādikālika) and can be destroyed only by a tathāgata’s gnosis, which is grounded in awakening (bodhiñāna), and thus is the strongest. Takasaki remarks that in one passage of the Ratnagotravibhāga the avidyāvāsabhūmi is linked with the defilements of a bodhisattva, and in another passage with those of arhats. As to the meaning of the term vāsabhūmi, Takasaki states that there are two traditional interpretations. These interpretations are reflected in two different renderings in Tibetan: The first one is found in the Tibetan translation of
claim as much? As for the tathāgatas, all [their] residual impressions relating to the view of a self are exhausted, so [they] do not possess the ‘place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance.’ Since there is thus no grasping for a support, what cognition would appropriate a body? This is taught [in the Mahāyānasamgraha].

Because the view of a self is abandoned,
There is no differentiation regarding the support.

Do you depreciate such [teachings] as well, or do you rather interpret (‘dren pa) [them] otherwise? And even if you claim that [these constituents] arise owing to a cause, namely, the beneficial resources, it is [indeed] taught that [one] relies upon and possesses the accumulation of beneficial resources—which is the boat for [traversing] the path (lam gyi gru)—[only] so long as [one] has not [yet] crossed the river of samsāra. But it is not

the Śrīmāladevīśūtra, which reads ma rig pa'i gnas kyi sa (in conformity with the Chinese translation of the same sūtra), and the second one in the Tibetan translation of the Ratnagotravibhāga, which reads ma rig pa'i bag chags kyi sa. These go back to the two interpretations of the term vāsa, which in turn go back to the Sanskrit vāsas, ‘to dwell,’ or vāsas, ‘to perfume.’ See Takasaki 1966, pp. 214–215, n. 112. See also ibid., p. 278, where the ‘defilement contained in the Dwelling-Place of Ignorance’ (avidyāvāsabhumisāmyagratkleśa) is listed as one of the nine defilements that are the impurities of the mind. See also the corresponding note to the passage from Bhayya’s Madhyamakapradīpa cited below (“Works by Indian Authors,” §1.E, n. 58), where the theory of the mind-made conglomerate and the causes and conditions pertaining to it are briefly discussed.


97 The phrase bsod nams kyi rgyu is obviously to be understood here in the sense of ‘a cause, namely, the beneficial resources’ and not ‘the cause of beneficial resources,’ as one is wont to understand.

98 The analogy of a boat (kolopama: gzings lta bu, gzings dang 'dra ba) that one leaves behind after crossing the river to the Teachings, which are considered as mere aids with the help of which one is to cross the river of samsāra, and in no case as objects of attachment, is found in various sources. See, for example, Majjhimanikāya 1.134–135 (an English translation is found in Nāgamoli & Bodhi 1995, pp. 228–229); Vajracchedikā (p. 32.3–5; T, fol. 235b1–2; D, fol. 123a2–3; an English translation is found in Conze 1957, p. 68); Anavataptanāgarājaparipṛcchā (T, fol. 253a3–4; D, fol. 225b6), which cites as its source a certain gzings lta bu'i mdo; Ratnagotravibhāgaavyākhyā (Johnston 1950, p. 18.15–16; Takasaki 1966, p. 182); Jñānakūṭī’s Bhāvanākramopadeśa (P, fol. 84a3–5; D, fol. 77a7–b1; S vol. 64, pp. 221.20–222.3). Two further references to this analogy made by Nāgāmitra and Jñānacandra are cited below. For a detailed explanation of it, see Rong-zom-pa’s Theg tshul (B, fols. 24b4–25a6; D, pp. 442.13–443.3). See also Schmithausen’s remark in Bsteh 2000, p. 278; Gethin 1998, pp. 71–72, 283, n. 23; Seyfort Ruegg 1989, p. 145.

The analogy of a boat is also employed in the Tantric context, though somewhat differently. See Dasgupta 1962, pp. 44–45, where a song by the Tantric adept Kambalāmbarapāda in which this analogy is employed is cited, translated, and discussed. Here, however, the boat stands for the body, which plays an important role in the attainment of the spiritual goal in Tantric practices. Also cited and translated by Dasgupta is a song by Saraha where the body is explicitly

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comprehensible for people [such as ourselves] that [a buddha], having attained awakening, should still have a body (lus) along with [its] enjoyments (or: [objects of] enjoyment, longs spyod). So claim you yourselves to be buddhas and assert [such a thing]. Furthermore, there is no way to establish that a buddha [has] a male body (skyes lus). On the contrary, [such a claim], being similar to the description of Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), is not in the least different from the claim that an unchanging Ishvara, who is called the ‘completely pure ātman’ and who enjoys all objects of desire and possesses all sensations of bliss, exists. So if you are not interested in giving up this view, there is no need [for you] to strive for the Doctrine taught by the Buddha; indeed [you] should rather take interest (spro bar gyis) in the teachings taught by Ishvara.

(ii) A Counter-argument and a Response to It

A counter-argument (lit. ‘question’) put forward by the [proponent of these positions]: Our position is not a self-fabrication. It is to be found in the Teachings of the Tathāgata, and hence it is not faulty.

Response: Occurrences [of] such [statements] in the Teachings of the Buddha and such appearances to disciples with pure karma are not false, for [they] do exist. Therefore, the appearances in this realm of Śākyamuni, the Exalted One, of Śākyamuni, the Exalted One, [being born into] a royal family as a male, renouncing home for [the state of] homelessness, becoming fully awakened, and then turning the Wheel of the Dharma of the various Vehicles amidst the circles of close followers—four in kind and of the general followers, including the eight classes of spirits (lha ma srin sde brgyad), are said to be the boat (ibid., p. 44), and one by Kāñhapāda where the same analogy is employed (ibid., p. 90). On the importance of the body in Tantric practices, see ibid., pp. 88–92; Almogi (forthcoming).

The four kinds of followers are (1) male and (2) female lay practitioners, that is, upāsaka and upāsikā, and (3) male and (4) female ordained disciples, that is, bhiksu and bhikṣuṇī (Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.v. ‘khor rnam bzhi: ston pa’i ‘khor rnam pa bzhi ste] khyim pa pho mo gnyis dang] rab tu byung ba pho mo gnyis te] dge srong dang] dge srong ma] dge bsnyen] dge bsnyen ma bcas so]).

The term lha ma srin literally means ‘neither god nor demon but, in a way, both’ (cf. expressions such as ra ma lug, i.e. ‘neither goat nor sheep but, in a way, [resembling] both’). Note that the expressions lha ma srin sde brgyad and lha srin sde brgyad refer to the same thing. The Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.v. lha srin sde brgyad, states that there are sundry ways of enumerating the eight classes of spirits, and lists three of them as follows (the first enumeration is according to the *Yamāritantra): (a) gshin rje gshed kyi rgyud las] (1) gshin rje dang] (2) ma mo] (3) srin po] (4) gnod sbyin] (5) mi'am ci] (6) sa bdag] (7) btsan] (8) bdud bcas bshad pa dang] (b) yang bshad srol gcig la] (1) lha dang] (2) klu] (3) gnod sbyin] (4) dri za] (5) lha min] (6) nam lding] (7) mi'am ci] (8) blo phyis chen po bcas bshad pa] (c) yang bshad lugs gshan zhig la] (1) gshin rje dang] (2) ma mo] (3) bdud] (4) btsan] (5) rgyal po] (6) klu] (7) gnod sbyin] (8) gza' bcas lugs mi'дра ba mang po yod]. See also ibid., s.v. sde brgyad, where only the second list is provided. NSTB, vol. 2, pp. 158–159, relying on gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas-ye-shes's sDe brgyad gser skyes, translates the term sde brgyad as “eightfold groups of spirits” and lists six such groups. These six eightfold groups are listed and explained in Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 254ff. The first of these six eightfold groups, designated the ‘outer eightfold group’ (phyi yi sde brgyad) is almost identical with the second eightfold group listed above. Mi-pham gives yet a different list of eight: (1) gshin rje, (2) ma mo, (3) lha, (4) gza', (5) klu, (6) gnod sbyin, (7) srin po, and (8) bdud (see his bKa' brgyad rnam bshad, fols. 152ff.).
not false. Similarly, the appearances of the glorious Vairocana, causing the maturation of disciples amidst a circle of bodhisattvas, and of the glorious Vajrasattva, causing the maturation of disciples by indulging in objects of desire amidst a gathering of goddesses, are likewise not false. Yet in none of these cases is there a common appropriation of a material Body by a gnosis-continuum, but rather all [appearances] appear in this manner 'either in virtue of the purified dharmadhātu and [previous] resolutions or, in addition to these, also in virtue of the great gnosis.'

Thus, for example, although the reflection in a mirror appears on account of the cleanness of the mirror and on account of a cause, that is, a face, it never steps outside the mirror, and is thus considered as an attribute of the mirror. And although it seems to be held by the mirror, which [thus appears to function as] a substratum, the reflection does not have the [four] supporting gross elements, and thus it is not [actually] held by the mirror. Similarly, the material Bodies (gzugs kyi sku: rūpakāya) of a buddha appear in virtue of the dharmakāya, and [they] are not separated from it. Consequently, the dharmakāya is [also] explained in this way and is counted as a buddha's Body. Yet the dharmakāya offers no support (gnas) for the view of a self. Thus it is not reasonable to maintain that the gnosis-continuum has appropriated material Bodies, for it [merely] rests on [these] material Bodies (i.e. like the vijñāna of an ordinary sentient being). For this very reason (de nyid kyis na), although one may [try to] grasp all the constituents of the material Bodies with the intellect, one finds no substratum. It is similar to a child who, being carried away by water, holds on to uprooted grass, [which is, in this case, analogous to a buddha's Bodies].

V. The Concluding Statement

Such a presentation of the analysis of these differences regarding the theories of the stage of a buddha is certainly not within the scope of [people] like us. Nonetheless, [I] see many individuals who, suffering under the impact of time, engage [in such discussions] by relying on the mere words of the Teachings of the Victorious One, and, following persons, hold to inferior views as superior and subsequently, not [being able to resort to] logical reasoning, engage [in the activities of] false imputation and depreciation. Thus

101 The term 'great gnosis' here clearly refers to the gnosis acquired as a result of spiritual practices on the bodhisattva's path and not to self-occurring gnosis, which Rong-zom-pa equates with the dharmadhātu. See also Rong-zom-pa's use of the term 'great gnosis' above in the same manner, and also in the passage from the Theg tshul (B, fol. 30a3-4; D, p. 448.8-11) cited above, n. 45.

102 Rong-zom-pa clearly refers here to the reverse of what is called the 'four [kinds of] reliance' (Mvy, nos. 1545-1549: rton pa bzhis: cavāri pratisaranā). These four are: relying (1) on the meaning and not on the words (don la rton par bya’i] tshig ‘bru la rton par mi bya: arthapratisāraṇaḥ bhavitaḥyam na vyañjanapratisāraṇaḥ), (2) on the Doctrine and not on the person (chos la rton par bya’i] gang zag la rton par mi bya: dharmapratisāraṇaḥ bhavitaḥyam na pudgalapratisāraṇaḥ), (3) on gnosis and not on [ordinary] perception (ye shes la rton par bya’i rnam shes la rton par mi bya: jñānapratisāraṇaḥ bhavitaḥyam na vijñānapratisāraṇaḥ), and (4) on definitive meaning and not on provisional meaning (nges pa’i don gyi mdo sde la rton pa bya’i] drang ba’i don gyi mdo sde la rton par mi bya: nītārthasūtrapratisāraṇaḥ bhavitaḥyam na neyārthasūtrapratisāraṇaḥ). While the reverse of the first two, that is, relying (1) on the words instead of the meaning and (2) on the person instead of the Doctrine, is obvious, that of the remaining two is not made explicit. One may put it in the following terms: (3) holding to inferior
I have written [this work] as a ‘memorandum’ (brjed byang) that may be of some benefit to them, and in order that the students who follow me hold to logical reasoning of this kind.

The composition by the Tibetan translator Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po is [herewith] completed.¹⁰³

views that conform to ordinary perception rather than to superior views that conform to gnosis, and (4) engaging in the irrational acts of false imputation and depreciation instead of resorting to logical reasoning by means of which the definitive and provisional meanings can be determined.

¹⁰³ This last sentence is obviously not an integral part of the text, but rather an addition by a scribe or an editor. See Almogi 1997, pp. 119–120.
The Discussion in the *dkon 'grel*

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   5. Position Four: Maintaining the Purified *dharmadhātu* as the Sole Constituent of Buddhahood
2. An Annotated Translation

I. Introductory Passage

All [teachings] are offshoots of the *Guhyagarbhatattvaviniscaya (gSang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa), which is the secret of all tathāgatas and the universal [aspect] (spyi) of all [teachings of the Vehicle of] Characteristics, the tantras, and the āgamas, [and which was extracted] from the 100,000-chapter Illusionary Net of Vajrasattva.1 The mode of these ‘turnings of the Wheel [of the Dharma]’ (’khor lo bskor ba) [is as follows]:

The various manifestations of [a buddha’s] Body, Speech, and Mind appear to individual disciples as a result, [on the one hand,] of the spontaneous fulfilment of [his] previous resolutions (smon lam: pranidhāna) and [his] great compassion (thugs rje chen po: shes rab: prajñā), and due to [the fact that] the dharmadhātu has been purified, and, [on the other hand,] on account of the disciples’ residual impressions (bag chags: vāsana) that are [associated with] wholesome karma. [These manifestations arise] from the state that is the Great Nature (bdag nyid cheri po), namely, the nature of all phenomena without exception—a nature that is neither one nor many, the adamantine nature [of] the Body, Speech, and Mind of all tathāgatas of the ‘four times’ (dus bzhi)2 [and] of the ten directions, [and which manifests in the form of] the Teacher (ston pa: śāstr), the Awakened One (sangs rgyas: buddha), the Exalted One (bcom ldan ’das: bhagavat), the One Endowed with Great Enjoyment (mahāsāṃbhogika) without any effort [in the form] of [mental] agitation and conceptual thought.3

[This is illustrated as follows]: For instance, in the abodes of the higher existences—from the abode of the ‘sovereign king of gods’ (lha’i rgyal po dbang sgyur = dbang sgyur gyi lha’i rgyal po: vaśavartidevarāja)4 to Jambudvīpa—the different ways of the falling of rain, which is a condition for the [attainment of] desirable objects (’dod pa’i yon tan: kāmaguṇa), are, as it proves to be, different [types of] rainfall [that vary] under the influence of the ocean deity, the atmospheric [conditions] of each abode, and the karma of the individual living beings. Nevertheless, the ocean deity does not think [thus]: “I am going to gather clouds in such and such a way in these [different] places in accordance with the karmic lot of the individuals [in question], produce such and such

1 The concluding part of the dKon cog ’gre! (B, fol. 211b4–6; D, pp. 248.21–249.2) contains a similar statement.

2 The transcendence of present, past, and future—that is, atemporality—is often described in the rNying-ma literature as the ‘fourth time’ (dus bzhi pa). For other instances of the term dus bzhi, see the dKon cog ’gre! (B, fol. 333a–3, 58a6, 60b4, 208a–b1 & 211a–b1; D, pp. 61.20–23, 88.21–22, 91.10, 245.8–14 & 248.13–14; in the first two cases it occurs in the expression dus bzhi mnyam pa nyid kyi dbyings). Cf. Maṇjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti 8.10b: tryadhvānadhvagatiṁ gataḥ |; Tib.: dus gsun dus med rdogs pa po|.

3 This description of a buddha is drawn from a passage at the beginning of the *Guhyagarbhatantra (P, fol. 108a4ff.; D, fol. 110b1ff.).

4 In his ITa phreng. ’gre! pa (B, fol. 231a2; D, p. 311.8), Rong-zom-pa refers once again to this ‘sovereign king of gods’ and identifies his abode as Paranirmitavasavartin (gzhan ’phrul dbang byed), which is the sixth and highest field in the Kāmadhātu (see the chart in Grönböld 1984, p. 394).
Neither conceptualizes nor makes any effort along these lines. Nor does the atmosphere think thus: “I am going to make rainfall—which gives rise to objects desired by these living beings—possible.” [It] neither conceptualizes nor makes any effort along these lines. As a result of the coming together of the causes and conditions, [all these]—starting from the gathering of the clouds and ending with the [actual] rain—occur differently in the [successive] locations according to individual karmic lot. This is how it is from the abode of the sovereign king of gods—in which clouds that are like the ‘essence of gold’ gather, and in which lightning bolts and rolls of thunder likewise arise in [their own] distinct manner, and also the rain falls in [its own] unique way—to Jambudvipa. [Everything] occurs differently in accordance with the karmic lot of individuals: The clouds resemble [different things, ranging] from a red pearl to a massif of black mountains. The lightning bolts resemble [different things, ranging] from a purified gold mine (gsar kha sbyangs pa) to the radiant precious stone sapphire (indranīlā). The rolls of thunders resemble [different things, too, ranging] from the song of the Indian cuckoo (ka la ping ka) to the sound of a turbulent ocean. And the rain itself [ranges] from a rain of various precious stones to one of weapons or one of clear water.

II. The Five Modes of Conceiving Buddhahood

Similarly, the [beneficial] influence (byin rlabs: adhisthāna) [of a buddha] appears in different ways to individual disciples, and [thus they] see the nature of the Three Jewels in different ways, as follows:

5 The term gser gyi snying po (suvarṇagarbha) seems to refer here to the colour of the clouds. See MW, s.v. suvarṇa: ‘name of a good or beautiful colour, brilliant in hue, bright, golden, yellow.’ Suvarṇagarbha, however, is also the name of a bodhisattva and of a former buddha (see MW and BHSD, s.v. suvarṇagarbha).

6 The term ka la ping ka (Mvy, no. 481) is the Tibetanized Sanskrit word kalāpin, which denotes the Indian cuckoo (see MW, s.v.).

7 This example by Rong-zom-pa recalls the analogy of the cloud expressed in the third of nine illustrations found in Ratnagotravibhāga 4.42–52. For a translation of this passage, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 364–367. Although the Ratnagotravibhāga was translated into Tibetan during Rong-zom-pa’s lifetime, and although one of the six translations of this work reported by ‘Gos-lo-tsa-ba gZhon-nu-dpal (1392–1481) in his Blue Annals (see Roerich 1949–1953, p. 350; Kano [forthcoming], p. 147, n. 74) is said to have been made by Mar-pa-do-ba Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug (1042–1136), who is known to have studied under Rong-zom-pa (see Almogi 1997, p. 90), it is doubtful that Rong-zom-pa knew the Ratnagotravibhāga, given that he makes no mention of it in his extant works. He must have therefore had on hand the Jñānālokaḷaṃkāra, from which the illustrations found in the Ratnagotravibhāga are taken and which he certainly knew, as his source. See the Jñānālokaḷaṃkāra (Skt. ed., §8, pp. 32–34; for a transliteration of the Sanskrit manuscript and the Tibetan and Chinese translations, see ibid., translt., pp. 40–45). See also Abhisamayālaṃkāra 8.10 for a similar analogy based on rain. Note that Rong-zom-pa employs this analogy once again in his dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 59a1–5; D, p. 89.11–20), in order to explain what is referred to as yi ge'i sgyu 'phrul.
1. The Three Jewels according to the Common Vehicle

The Jewel that is the Buddha as known in the common Vehicle: He who is designated by [the following] epithets, which name [his different] qualities: 8 (1) One Who Has Thus Gone (or: Thus Come) (de bzhin gshegs pa: tathāgata), (2) Worthy One (dgra bcom pa: arhat), 9 (3) Fully Awakened One (yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas: samyaksambuddha), (4) One Endowed with [Perfect] Knowledge and [Perfect] Conduct (rgig pa dang zhas su ldan pa: vidyācaraṇasampamSpeech/Text
Teacher of Gods and Humans (lha dang mi rnams kyi ston pa: šāstā devamanusyaśānām); who is endowed with a gnosis-Body of liberation (rnam par grol ba’i ye shes kyi sku: *vimuktiśānākāya), with a natural basic Body and with a manifested apparitional Body; who shares the ‘spiritual disposition’ (rigs: gotra) of the Fully Awakened Ones, who has the attire (cha byad) of a renunciant; who exists in the form of a male; who is a ‘single leader’ (gtso bo gcig pu: ekanāyaka); [and whose] perfected activities are contained within [his mental] continuum is said to be the Jewel that is the Buddha.

The Jewel that is the Dharma: The sublime Doctrine that is wholesome in the beginning, wholesome in the middle, [and] wholesome in the end; that is excellent in meaning (or: content); that [contains] excellent words; that is not contaminated, is utterly pure, [and] is utterly cleansed—the Doctrine that has been taught well by the Exalted One to disciples—that is endowed with a path [and] is endowed with nirvāṇa is said to be the Jewel that is the Dharma.
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

[The Jewel that is] the Samgha: It is said to be the noble Samgha. [It] conducts itself in a good, appropriate, and righteous manner; [its] view and faith are inseparable; [it] is an object of worship that is a field of richness; [it] is worthy of veneration, [is] an object of reverence, and includes the four pairs of [noble] beings, that is, the eight kinds of [noble] beings.

2. The Three Jewels according to the Uncommon Mahāyāna

[The Jewel that is the Buddha] as known in the scriptures of the uncommon Mahāyāna:

He who is designated by the epithets [that express the different] qualities of the Jewel that is the Buddha, such as those mentioned above; who is characterized by five constituents, namely, the four gnoses and the purified dharmadhātu, who is endowed

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18 See the description of the Samgha in the Samghānusmrītvākhyā attributed to Asaṅga (Ōtani 5484, Tōhoku 3984, Sichuan 3215, vol. 65).

19 'Four pairs of [noble] beings' is a collective designation for all the saints of the Śrāvakas. See Rong-zom-pa’s Ita phreng 'grel pa (B, fol. 232a5–6; D, p. 312.20–21): de la nyan thos zhes bya ba ni skyes bu zung bzhi’ [B bzhī] dang gang zag ya brgyad kyis bs dus pa'i 'phags pa'i gang zag rnams so]. For his explanation of the four results obtained by these four pairs of persons, see ibid. (B, fol. 236b1–6; D, p. 317.8–19). These four pairs are listed in Dharmasamgraha 102 as (1) one who has entered upon [the phase whose] result is a stream-enterer (srotā-āpnaprātiprāpaka: rgyun zhugs kyi 'bras bu la zhugs pa), (2) one who has entered the stream (srotā-āpna: rgyun zhugs), (3) one who has entered upon [the phase whose] result is a once-returner (sakrdāgāmiprātiprāpaka: lan gcig phiyir 'ong ba'i 'bras bu la zhugs pa), (4) one who returns once more [to the Realm of Sensual Desire (kāmadhātu)] (sakrdāgāmi: lan gcig phiyir 'ong ba), (5) one who has entered [the phase whose] result is a non-returner (anāgāmiprātiprāpaka: phiyir mi 'ong ba'i 'bras bu la zhugs pa), (6) one who no longer returns [to the Realm of Sensual Desire] (anāgāmi: phiyir mi 'ong ba), (7) one who has entered [the phase whose] result is an arhat (arhatprātiprāpaka: dgra bcom pa'i 'bras bu la zhugs pa), and (8) an arhat (arhat: dgra bcom pa). For a discussion of these eight kinds of saints, see Nyanatiloka 1989, s.v. Ariya-puggala. One would expect here arhattva(phala); cf. Mvy, no. 5137.

20 I understand the term bdag nyid here, as in other instances in this text, in the sense of bdag nyid can.

21 The term sangs rgyas kyi chos lnga is found in Rong-zom-pa’s writings on several occasions. See, for example, the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 69b4–5; D, p. 100.20–21): thun mong du brags pa'i ye shes bzhis cho kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa dang lnga ni sangs rgyas kyi sa'i chos lngar brags so]. The mDo snags grub bs dus (B, fol. 196a4–6; D, p. 63.20–24) contains a further occurrence of the term, which is explicitly said there to be related to the Sūtra system: ... mtskan nyid las chos kyi sku mtsad pa dang beas pa dang| sangs rgyas kyi chos lnga zhes gsungs pa mtshungs par shes par bya'o]. Rong-zom-pa is obviously alluding here to scriptural sources such as the Buddhābhūmīśūtra (T, fol. 153a6–b1; D, fol. 37a4–6), which states: de nas bcom ldan 'das kyi byang chub sems dpa' shin tu 'dus [T add. pa] la bka' stsal pa| shin tu 'dus [T add. pa] 'sangs rgyas kyi sa ni chos lngas'] [T chos lngas sangs rgyas kyi sa] bs dus pa yin te lnga gang zhe na| 'di lta ste, chos kyi [T kyi] dbyings rnam par dag pa dang| me long lta bu'i ye shes dang| mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes dang| so sor rtog pa'i ye shes dang| bya ba sgrub pa'i ye shes kyi so]. See the annotated translation of the pertinent section in the Buddhābhūmīyupadesa in Keenan 1980, pp. 541–781. See also *(Mahāyāna)sūtrālakāravākhyā 9 (pp. 109.13–110.8), where this passage from the Buddhābhūmīśūtra is cited and commented upon, and ibid. (pp. 5.4–6, 149.10–12 & 128.6–7), where the notion that Buddhahood comprises these five constituents is again asserted.

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[with two material Bodies, namely,] the sambhogakāya and the manifested apparitional Body (i.e. the nirmānakāya); who is comprehended in the designations One Who Has Thus Gone (or: Thus Come), Awakened One, and One Who Has Blissfully Gone; who, [as a sambhogakāya], has the attire of a universal king and, [as a nirmānakāya,] the attire of a renunciant; who exists in the form of a male; who [can manifest as] a single leader or multiple leaders; and [whose] great and small buddha-fields are contained within [his mental] continuum is said to be the Jewel that is the Buddha.

The Jewel that is the Dharma: [It] is as has been stated [above], and [in addition it] is said to be that which is the scriptures, the path, and the nirvāṇa of Mahāyāna.

The Jewel that is] the noble Samgha: [This] is said to be that which [consists of] the Samgha of the Śrāvakas and that of the bodhisattvas.

3. The Three Jewels according to the Common Esoteric Vehicle

The Jewel that is the Buddha as known in the common esoteric, unsurpassable Vehicle:22 He who is designated by the [above]-mentioned epithets [that express] the qualities [of a buddha]; who is characterized by five gnoses and three or four Bodies, and has [the forms of] the ‘deity who equates to pure reality’ (chos nyid dag pa'i lha), the ‘deity who equates to manifestations’ (rnam par 'phrul pa'i lha), and the ‘deity who equates to [signs that have] been empowered’ (byin gyis brlabs pa'i lha),23 who is comprehended in three

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22 For a brief discussion of the identity of this system, see the overview of Rong-zom-pa's presentation in chapter one, §3.

23 The meaning of these terms is somewhat unclear. These three types of deities seem to be different aspects or expressions of a deity in general, as can be inferred from Rong-zom-pa's short definitions of the term deity as found, for example, in his dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 43b4–5; D, pp. 72.23–73.1): de yang chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa dag don la phyin ci ma log pa'i ye shes dang| de dag gi dbang gis [B gi] snang ba'i gzugs kyi sku cha shas dang bcas pa la lha shes bya bai sgrar brjod pa yin la|; rGyud spyi'i dngos po (B, fol. 228b5–6; D, p. 93.11–12): de la lha shes bya ba ni chos kyi dbyings dang| ye shes kyi bdag nyid dang| de dag gi byin gyis brlabs kyi [= pa'i?i] mtshan ma rnam las bya ste.

The meaning of the term ‘deity’ (lha) in general is explained by Rong-zom-pa on several occasions. See, for example, his rGyud spyi'i dngos po (B, fol. 729a4–230b6; D, pp. 93.20–95.15), where he gives a remarkable and detailed explanation of the meaning of ‘deity’ according to various Tantric systems; Theg tshul (B, fol. 78a1–b6; D, pp. 501.11–502.9), where he discusses
families (rigs: kula), namely, [those of] the Tathāgata, Padma, and Vajra;24 who has the attire of a sambhoga[kāya] and a nirmāṇa[kāya], and [both] peaceful and wrathful forms; who exists in the form of vidyāś and mantras; who [can be] a leader, [can be a member of] a retinue, and [can be] single or multiple;25 and [whose manifestations, in the form of] deities of great purity in large and small mandalas—which [can be] subcategorized into (bye brag gis) [various types], such as primary mandalas (rtsa ba'i dkyil 'khor: mūlamandala) and innermost (?) mandalas (snying po'i dkyil 'khor: garbhamanḍala)26—are contained within [his mental] continuum is said to be the Jewel that is the Buddha.

The Jewel that is the Dharma: [It] is as has been stated [above], and in addition it is said to [include] the scriptures and the path of the esoteric, unsurpassable [Vehicle].

[The Jewel that is] the noble Saṃgha: [This] is said to be the saṃgha of the Śrāvakas, that of the bodhisattvas, and that of the vidyādhāras.

4. The Three Jewels according to the Yogatantra System

[The Jewel that is the Buddha] as known in the scriptures of the Yogatantra [system]: He who is designated by the above-mentioned epithets [that express] the qualities [of a buddha]; who is characterized by five gnoses and three or four Bodies, and on account of pure reality, miraculous manifestations, and [beneficial] influence has [the forms of] deities of a special nature and a non-special nature; who is comprehended in four or five families, namely, the tathāgatas [and] their family (i.e. the Tathāgata ‘family’), and the Vajra, Padma, and Mani families;27 who has the attire of a sambhoga[kāya] and a

the ‘true reality of a deity’ (lha'i de kho na nyid) in the context of the three realities (i.e. bdag gi de kho na nyid, lha'i de kho na nyid, and bzlas byod kyi de kho na nyid); ibid. (B, fols. 124a5–126a5; D, pp. 551.24–554.4), where he expands on the ‘nature of a deity’ (lha'i rang bzhin) in terms of the ‘five constituents’ (chos lnga) of a deity referred to above.

24 These three families are also known as sku'i rigs, gsung gi rigs, and thugs kyi rigs, respectively. See, for example, Rong-zom-pa’s Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fols. 296b1–297a1; D, p. 166.6–20).

25 For a discussion of this phrase, see the parallel passage in the fourth mode described below, n. 28.

26 The terms mūlamandala and garbhamanḍala are attested in Kalkin Śrī Punkārika’s Vimalaprabhā (see, for example, vol. 2, pp. 51.17 & 23; Tib. P, fols. 39a4 & 39b2; D, fols. 123b1 & 123b7; S, vol. 6, pp. 968.9 & 969.10). Note that the latter term is also cited in TSD, s.v., which relies on the same source. These terms, however, require further study. The term garbhamanḍala may be related to the term garbhagrha, which refers to the most sacred part of a temple (see MW, s.v.: ‘sanctuary or adytum of a temple (where the image of a deity is placed)’), and thus may denote the innermost circle of a mandala. See also Rong-zom-pa’s Rab gnas cho ga (B, fol. 308a3–4; D, pp. 180.23–181.1), where the term snying po'i dkyil 'khor also occurs and where the context seems to support such a meaning. Note that the Tshig mzdod chen mo gives for the term rtsa ba'i dkyil 'khor the meaning ‘spontaneously existent foundation,’ with reference to the ‘circle of luminous gnosis’ (gzhis lhun grub rtsa ba'i dkyil 'khor te ye shes 'od gsal gvi 'khor lo). This meaning, which seems to be taken from the rDzogs-chen context, does not, however, seem to fit here.

27 The reason for putting it as ‘four or five’ seems to be Rong-zom-pa’s predicament in the face of his source, which counts the tathāgatas and those deities belonging to the Tathāgata family separately. His ‘five’ here should not, therefore, be equated with the generally known scheme of
nirmāṇa[kāya], and [both] peaceful and wrathful [forms]; who exists in the form of hrdayas (lit. ‘heart’ [mantras]), mudrās, mantras, and vidyās; who [can be] a leader, [can be] a member of] a retinue, and [can be] single or multiple; and [whose manifestations in the form of] deities of great utter purity in large and small mandalas—which can be subcategorized into [various types], such as the great basic mandala; the mandalas of [the three mudrās, namely, those of] samaya, dharma, and karma; [the mandala] of the fourth mudrā (i.e. mahāmudrā); and [the mandala of] a single [mudrā]—are contained within is said to be the Jewel that is the Buddha.

The way [in which the Jewels that are] the Dharma and the Samgha [are viewed here] is like the mode [viewed] in the general esoteric (gsang ba spyi'i tshul) [Vehicle].

five families. See his Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 213a5–6; D, p. 319.15–18), where, referring to the Tattvasamgrahasūtra, he repeats this scheme of counting: gang gi phyir rgyud der ni lha rnam pa lnga gsungs pa'i phyir te de ltar de bshin gshegs pa rnam dang| de dag gi rigs dang| rdo rje dang| padma [B pad ma] dang| rin po che las byung ba'i rigs te| de ltar lha rnam pa lngar grags te. His source for this way of counting is obviously Buddhaguhya's Tāntrārthavātāra (P, fol. 13a5–7; D, fol. 11a6–7; S, vol. 27, p. 1007.14–19): gshung 'dir ni lha [P om.] so sor nges pa'i dam tshig bstan pas na dam tshig rnam pa lngar gsungs so| gang gi phyir 'di la lha rnam pa lnga ste| thams kad kyi bdag po bde bar gshegs pa rnam dang| de las byung ba'i rigs dang| rdo rje dang padma dang rin po che las byung ba'i rigs rnam pa gsum mo| de ltar 'di dag ni lha rnam pa lnga'i bye brag bstan pa ste| de nas na 'di ni bs dus te bstan pa'o]. As for why the Karma family has not been counted separately in the Tattvasamgrahasūtra, Rong-zom-pa states that it is because the doer and action are not considered there separately (Dam tshig mdo rgyas, B, fol. 213a6–b1; D, p. 319.18–20: rgyud der ni 'dul ba'i dbang gis las kyi rigs gud du ma bstan te| byed po po dang las tha mi dad par dgongs pa'i phyir ro zhes grags so|) Note, however, that later on he attempts to reformulate “four or five families” to “five deities and four families.” See ibid. (B, fol. 215a5; D, p. 321.23–24): ta twa sam gra ha las rigs bzhi lha lnga'i bye brag gis dam tshig rnam pa lngar grags pa nyid yin te.

Unlike the similar phrase in the previous paragraph, which ends with the particle dang (gshegs pa rnam dang| de dag gi rigs dang| rdo rje dang| padma [B pad ma] dang| rin po che las byung ba'i rigs te| de ltar lha rnam pa lngar grags te), the phrase here ends with la in one version, or pa in another version (gshegs pa rnam dang| de dag gi rigs dang| rdo rje dang| padma [B pad ma] dang| rin po che las byung ba'i rigs te| de ltar lha rnam pa lngar grags te) and thus as ‘and,’ since, as I have already stated, Rong­zom-pa seems to use la in the sense of ‘and’ in connection not only with verbs but also with nouns (see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo, n. 2). Also to be noted is the fact that the similar phrase in the following paragraph reads gshegs pa rnam dang| de dag gi rigs dang| rdo rje dang| padma dang rin po che las byung ba'i rigs rnam pa gsum mo| de ltar 'di dag ni lha rnam pa lnga'i bye brag gis dam tshig rnam pa lngar grags pa nyid yin te. The Discussion in the dKon cog 'grel

28 See Dam tshig mdo rgyas (B, fol. 319.15–18), where, referring to the Tattvasamgrahasūtra, he repeats this scheme of counting: gang gi phyir rgyud der ni lha rnam pa lnga gsungs pa'i phyir te de ltar de bshin gshegs pa rnam dang| de dag gi rigs dang| rdo rje dang| padma [B pad ma] dang| rin po che las byung ba'i rigs te| de ltar lha rnam pa lngar grags te. His source for this way of counting is obviously Buddhaguhya's Tāntrārthavātāra (P, fol. 13a5–7; D, fol. 11a6–7; S, vol. 27, p. 1007.14–19): gshung 'dir ni lha [P om.] so sor nges pa'i dam tshig bstan pas na dam tshig rnam pa lngar gsungs so| gang gi phyir 'di la lha rnam pa lnga ste| thams kad kyi bdag po bde bar gshegs pa rnam dang| de las byung ba'i rigs dang| rdo rje dang padma dang rin po che las byung ba'i rigs rnam pa gsum mo| de ltar 'di dag ni lha rnam pa lnga'i bye brag bstan pa ste| de nas na 'di ni bs dus te bstan pa'o]. As for why the Karma family has not been counted separately in the Tattvasamgrahasūtra, Rong-zom-pa states that it is because the doer and action are not considered there separately (Dam tshig mdo rgyas, B, fol. 213a6–b1; D, p. 319.18–20: rgyud der ni 'dul ba'i dbang gis las kyi rigs gud du ma bstan te| byed po po dang las tha mi dad par dgongs pa'i phyir ro zhes grags so|). Note, however, that later on he attempts to reformulate “four or five families” to “five deities and four families.” See ibid. (B, fol. 215a5; D, p. 321.23–24): ta twa sam gra ha las rigs bzhi lha lnga'i bye brag gis dam tshig rnam pa lngar grags pa nyid yin te.

29 The term ‘mandala of a single mudrā’ seems to mean a ‘mandala consisting of the mudrā of a single deity.’ See the mNyam sbyor 'grel pa (B, fol. 56a4–5; D, p. 520.10–12), where Rong­zom-pa refers to the attainment of the ‘mudrā of Vajrasattva alone’ in the context of a simple ritual relating to a small mandala: gang yang dkyil 'khor chen po la spro ba med cing cho ga mang po la mi dga' ba rnam spro pa med pa'i spyod pas le'u gnyis pa las gsungs pa bshin du| dpal rdo rje sems dpa' 'ba' zhig gi phyag rgya bsgrub par 'dod pa rnam s kyis bsgrub pa'i cho ga ni|....
5. The Three Jewels according to the Greater Yoga Systems

The Jewel that is the Buddha as known according to the mode of the Greater Yoga systems: He who is designated by epithets [that express] the qualities [of a buddha], such as One Who Has Thus Gone (or: Thus Come), Fully Awakened One, Exalted One, One Endowed with Great Enjoyment (mahāsambhogika), the Adamantine Nature (rdo rje'i bdag nyid), [which is] the Body, Speech, and Mind of all tathāgatas of the four times [and] the ten directions, the Great Nature (bdag nyid chen po)—that is, the nature of all [phenomena] without exception—which is neither distinct nor identical nor separable and which is neither one nor many, who is [further] characterized by six great gnoses and five Bodies; who has the divine [nature] of all stained and unstained phenomena, which are without distinction primordially and spontaneously present in [his] diamond-like mandalas of Body, Speech, and Mind; who has the attire of a sambhoga[kāya]—which is comprehended in five families, namely, [those] of Body, Speech, Mind, Qualities, and Activities, or, with [the addition of] Bodhicitta, six families—of a nirmāna[kāya], and of peaceful and wrathful [deities]; who exists in the form of great indulgence in the great ornament that is the indivisibility of method and insight; who [can be] a leader, [can be a member of] a retinue, and [can be] single or multiple, and [can enjoy] Body, abode, and perceptible objects; who abides as the ornament of Ghanavyūha—which is the spontaneously [present] Body, Speech, and Mind in the sphere of the ‘fourth time of equanimity,’ owing to [the fact that] all phenomena are inseparable as to [their] nature, which is primordially fully awakened, and are characterized by [their] being neither one nor many—is said to be the Jewel that is the Buddha.

The mode of the Jewel that is the Dharma and the Jewel that is the Saṃgha: The common teachings are the same as the explanation in the context of the general esoteric [Vehicle]. As for the uncommon teachings, [these are as follows]: That which is the very nature of a Saṃgha to consist of Śrāvakas saints, bodhisattvas, and vidyādharas. As shown in chapter one, Table 3, Rong-zom-pa considers the Kriya and Caryā/Ubhaya Tantric systems to be ‘general Tantra’ (spyi'i rgyud).

For a brief discussion of this system, see the overview of Rong-zom-pa’s presentation in chapter one, §3.

This clearly refers to the passage from the *Guhyagarbhatantra cited above.

Compare Rong-zom-pa’s sNang ba lhar bsgrub, where again he seeks to impress upon the reader that all phenomena are primordially awakened, as in statements like (B, fol. 129b4–5; D, p. 559.21–23): de bas na mtshan ma sna tshogs su snang ba’i chos rnam sku gsung thugs rdo rje’i dkyil ’khor nyid yin te’i rnam par dag pa’i ngo bo nyid las ma ’das pa dus gsum gyi sangs rgyas nyid dang ’dra ba’o’.

The Ghanavyūha is occasionally equated with Akaniṣṭha, which is commonly considered the realm of the sambhogakāya (see the Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.vv. stug po bkod pa’i zding kham, ’og min, and nges pa Inga, and also TSD, s.v. stug po bkod pa’i zding kham). Here, however, Ghanavyūha seems to be the abode of the dharmakāya. This is also the case in a passage from Rong-zom-pa’s Grub mtha’i brjed byang provided below (“Works by Indian Authors,” n. 86), where Ghanavyūha, Akaniṣṭha, and Jambudvīpa are named as abodes of the dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmānakāya, respectively. See also the passage from Klong-chen-pa’s Yid kyi mun sel translated in the appendix (§3.2.2.3).
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buddha is the Dharma, and the nature of the Samgha, too, is the very same thing. Therefore, the indivisibility of the cause,\textsuperscript{35} the result, and the path and practices\textsuperscript{36} is called Samantabhadra-Bodhicitta. And the latter is he who is known as the Exalted One, the Great Vajradhara, Vajrasattva, the Primordially Awakened One, the Core of the Dharma (chos kyi snying po), and the Chief of All Yogins (rnal 'byor thams cad kyi gtso bo).\textsuperscript{37}

Speaking in terms of miraculous manifestations, a buddha may manifest as the Dharma and as a samgha. Such are, for instance, the excellent manifestations of the bhūmis, the pāramitās, and the dhāraṇīs as buddhas and bodhisattvas. The Samgha for its part may manifest as the Dharma and as a buddha. Such are, for instance, the activities of a buddha performed by those abiding on the ‘stages of training.’\textsuperscript{38}

Such a presentation and others [like it] constitute merely brief presentations, from the perspective (bzung nas) of the scriptures of the uncommon Mahāyāna, of the mode in which the buddhas’ manifestations appear to disciples as described in treatises of the various Vehicles.\textsuperscript{39}

III. The Four Doctrinal Positions regarding the Substratum of the Appearances of a Buddha’s Constituents

There are in general four [doctrinal positions] regarding the substratum of the appearances that are [a buddha’s beneficial] influence [in the form] of Body, Speech, and

\textsuperscript{35} The term rgyu is to be understood here as synonymous with the term gzhi (‘foundation’).

\textsuperscript{36} The ‘practices’ or ‘attainments’ (sgrub pa) are commonly subsumed under the path. Therefore, the term sgrub pa should probably be understood here as complementing the term lam just mentioned and not as something completely separate from it. The notion that the foundation (gzhi), path (lam), and result (bras bu) are in reality identical can be found elsewhere in Rong-zom-pa’s writings. See, for example, the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 152a2; D, p. 187.21–24).

\textsuperscript{37} Compare the epithet Great Lord of Yogins (rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po: mahāyogīśvara) found in the passage from Bhavya’s Madhyamakapradīpa translated below (‘Works by Indian Authors,” §1.E).

\textsuperscript{38} The notion of the indivisibility of the Three Jewels deserves further study. See for one the passage from Rong-zom-pa’s Sāstsha gdab pa (B, fols. 316b1–317a5; D, pp. 373.16–374.14) translated above (chapter two, towards the end of §4.B). See also sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs’s gSung rab rin po che (P, fol. 259b6; D, fol. 346b7): sangs rgyas nyid chos kyang yin dge 'dun kyang yin te].

\textsuperscript{39} Compare the description of the Three Jewels in Ye-shes-sde’s Sangs rgyas gtsos bo’i rgya cher 'grel pa, where the Jewel that is the Buddha is described under five points (don), the Jewel that is the Dharma under four, and the Jewel that is the Samgha under five, all of which are expressed in terms of ‘excellences’ (phun sum tshogs pa). The five excellences of the Jewels that are the Buddha and Samgha are defined by Ye-shes-sde as those of (1) cause (rgyu phun sum tshogs pa), (2) result (bras bu phun sum tshogs pa), (3) nature (rang bzhin phun sum tshogs pa), (4) one’s own benefit (bdag gi don phun sum tshogs pa), and (5) others’ benefit (gezan gyi don phun sum tshogs pa). The excellences of the Jewel that is the Dharma are defined in the same manner, excluding, however, the excellence of one’s own benefit. See also the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo, §II.2.B, n. 19. For a general discussion of buddhology that goes into some detail on the different types of buddhas, see Wangchuk 2007, pp. 22–30.
Mind. Some positions (gzhung) are undisputed and some are disputed. The four [positions regarding] the substratum [of the appearances are the following]:

1. Position One: Maintaining the Existence of Numerous Constituents

The first [position] maintains that a tathāgata himself is endowed with [all the constituents specified in] the five modes explained above, exactly as stated [in the scriptures], and that [these constituents] are not merely appearances [perceived by] disciples.\(^{40}\)

2. Position Two: Maintaining the Existence of Two Kinds of Gnosis

The second [position] maintains that a tathāgata himself is not endowed with [anything that] appears as a body (lus), abode, or perceptible objects, [but] that he does partake of the gnosis that knows these [phenomena] as [they actually] are and the gnosis that knows [phenomena] to the full extent, [that is,] non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis, respectively, which are [in turn] the respective subjects of the absolute and conventional truths.\(^{41}\)

3. Position Three: Maintaining Only the Existence of Non-conceptual Gnosis

The third [position] maintains that a tathāgata is not even endowed with pure mundane gnosis.\(^{42}\)

4. The Doctrinal Background of the Above Three Positions

A. Undisputed Positions

The undisputed [positions are as follows]:

(a) According to Hīnayāna

Those who hold to the scriptural system of Hīnayāna maintain that the body of a bodhisattva in [his] final saṃsāric existence is the body of an ordinary person which is produced by the view of a self (bdag tu lta ba: ātmadṛṣṭi) and by thirst (sred pa: trṣṇā) [for existence], and that the [bodhisattva], having become fully awakened in that existence, [first] performs the activities of a buddha and then passes into [pari]nirvāṇa. Therefore, there is no basis for dispute in regard to this [position, since it] is postulated in accordance with what has been taught [in this scriptural system].

(b) According to Common Mahāyāna

According to the system (tshul) of Mahāyāna that [has features] in common with the Śrāvakas, it is maintained that the body of a bodhisattva in his last existence is a body attained through [previous] resolutions. As for the cause of [him] assuming such a body, [it is maintained that this body] is produced by the residual impressions of the view of a

\(^{40}\) This position corresponds to positions 4–6 in the Sangs sa chen mo.

\(^{41}\) This position corresponds to position 3 in the Sangs sa chen mo.

\(^{42}\) This position corresponds to position 2 in the Sangs sa chen mo.
self and by the ‘place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance’ (gnas kyi sa'i ma rig pa = ma rig pa'i gnas kyi sa: avidyāvāsabhūmi). Thus there is no basis for dispute because the claims [regarding what] a buddha himself is endowed with are in accordance with what has been taught [in this scriptural system].

(c) According to the Sākāravāda of Yogācāra

According to the scriptural system of Yogācāra that propagates the existence of images (rnam pa dang beas par smra ba: sākāravāda), it is maintained that although there are no external objects (phyi rol gyi don: bāhyārtha) that are separate from the mind, the mind itself arises [in such a way that it] appears as images resembling a body, place, and perceptible objects, and that even after becoming fully awakened, a gnosis that is free from defilements, ignorance, and attachment appears as [images that] exist in the form of material Bodies, buddha-fields and their embellishments (rgyan), and so forth. Therefore, there is no basis for dispute [regarding this position].

(d) According to the Nirākāravāda of Yogācāra

According to the scriptural system of Yogācāra that propagates the non-existence of images (rnam pa med par smra ba: nirākāravāda/anākāravāda), [what] is maintained [is as follows]: Even the minds [of the sentient beings] of the three [sāṁśāric] realms is devoid of images that appear in the form of [external physical] objects. As to the appearances [themselves, they are the result of] residual impressions, which can be expressed neither as the mind itself nor as [something] other [than the mind]. When one has become fully awakened and the residual impressions have been completely purified, a gnosis that is devoid of images and is characterized by momentariness arises uninterruptedly. As for the special features [considered to be] the qualities [of a buddha], such as the material Bodies, it is maintained that [these] are qualities that [spontaneously] appear for the benefit of living beings on account of previous resolutions and great compassion, and in virtue of the great gnosis, just like [the spontaneous fulfilment of wishes by] a wish-fulfilling tree and a precious wish-fulfilling jewel. Therefore, there is no basis for dispute in regard to this [position] either.

B. Disputed Positions

The disputed [positions are as follows]:

Those who hold to the scriptural systems of Madhyamaka and Mantra[yāna] maintain that, on the ultimate level, all phenomena are [characterized by] tranquillity [on account of their being free from] manifoldness, and [they] also postulate that, on the mere conventional level, the characteristic of illusory [phenomena] is [that they] are unceasing. Thus relying on these theories (tshul), [they nevertheless] formulate the

43 On the term avidyāvāsabhūmi, see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.2.C.i, n. 95.
44 See also Rong-zom-pa’s mDo sngags grub bsdus (B, fol. 196a2–3; D, p. 63.16–18), where he has summarized the view common to the ‘adamantine Vehicle’ and the ‘Vehicle of characteristics’ in the same manner: de la chos thams cad don dam par spros pa dang bral bar ‘dod pa dang| kun rdzob sgyu ma tsam du ‘dod pa spyi mthun no][]. In the following passage (ibid., B, fol. 196a6–b2; D, pp. 63.24–64.3), however, he remarks that the difference between the Mantra and the Sūtra Vehicles is that in the case of the former, which adheres to the indivisibility of the two truths and
mode of existence of the stage of a buddha [each] in [their own] different way, while also formulating [each] in [their own] different way [theories] regarding its substratum. In this regard, the way the Sautrāntika-Mādhyamikas formulate the conventional is in agreement with that of the Sautrāntikas of the Śrāvakas, so that [I] shall not analyze [here] the dispute concerning this [position].

(a) The Position Maintaining the Existence of Numerous Constituents

The first ground of dispute among those who hold to the theories of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and Mantra[yāna]: Tathāgatas [are said to] possess [numerous constituents] in their continuum, as explained in the context of the five modes of conceiving Buddhahood. Some, holding to the scriptural system known as Mantra[yāna], maintain that a buddha is endowed with the following constituents, as stated [in the Vajrasattvasādhana]:

Homage to the lord Vajrasattva, he who is the generator of bliss [that is] great bliss,
For [he] experiences (rig) the supreme [form] of all [forms of] bliss [and] is the embodiment of unparalleled gnosis,
[Experiences no] desire, aversion, confusion, arrogance, or jealousy,
[Is one whose] nature is ever abiding [and who] is the embodiment of the Three Supreme Ones of the three [realms of] existence,
And [his] glory is immeasurable and [his] ocean of bliss unchanging—
[Homage to him,] because [he] is inclined to companionship with the three [kinds of] sentient beings [who inhabit the three realms].

In this way, [they] assert (nges par 'dzin pa) that the buddhas called Samantabhadra Bodhicittavajra, the great Vajradhara, [or] Vajrasattva are characterized by five or six maintains that the nature of mind is self-occurring gnosis, the illusionary conventional phenomena are conceived as deities and as primordially pure.

45 Rong-zom-pa emphasizes again and again that the differences in the view regarding the constituents of Buddhahood are the result of the different claims made with regard to the substratum (gzhi or rten) of these constituents, that is, whether a substratum is at all necessary, and if so what form it takes. See, for example, the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 163a3–5; D, p. 199.11–14): de la thugs rje dang mdzad pa 'byung ba'i gzhi gang yin zhe na| gong du bstan pa bzhi du kha cig ni gzhi mi 'dod do|| kha cig ni mi rtog pa'i ye shes kyi dbang gis gdul bya la snang ngo zhe 'o|| kha cig ni mnyam par bzhag [D gzhag] pa nyid kyi mthu mngon par shes pa chen po drug 'byung ngo zhes zer ro|]. As we have seen, the different postulations regarding the substratum result in different views regarding the existence of appearances at the stage of a buddha, which is crucial to the way Buddhahood is conceived in the end. See also the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 77b2; D, pp. 108.23–109.1): 'khrul pa thams cad yongs su chad pa'i sangs rgyas kyi sa la ni| snang ba mnga 'am mi mnga ba ni rtso pa'i gzhi can yi| cung zad gong du bstan par zad do|.

46 Vajrasattvasādhana (P, fol. 345a5–7; D, fol. 300a3–4; S, vol. 14, p. 805.3–8). The canonical version reads almost identically: Line 1 has rig, which I have emended our rigs to. Line 3 reads as in D, whereas P erroneously omits the phrase mchog gsum (obviously due to aberratio oculi, the preceding phrase being srid gsum). Line 4 has 'gyur ba instead of our 'gyur bas. Line 6 in P has gyis instead of our gyi, which is found also in D, and gyur instead of our 'gyur, which I have emended.

47 The epithet Three Supreme Ones (mchog gsum) probably refers to the Three Jewels (dkon mchog/cog gsum: triratna/ratnatreya).
gnoses; are endowed with the Body which is eternally as if it had just arisen; are endowed with great enjoyment (mahāsāṃbhogika); are the source of all emanations; eternally abide in an utterly pure [buddha]-field without undergoing change; and abide inseparable from all [kinds of] bliss in a mandala containing an uncountable retinue of female consorts. The bliss is of the following [kinds]: (i) the bliss [of the Body] that is gratification [generated] by the samādhi that realizes the dharmadhiatu, [and so] focuses on true reality,  
(ii) mental bliss, (iii) the bliss [that arises in the presence of] desirable external objects (i.e. non-sexual bliss), such as [agreeable] visible matter, (iv) the bliss that [arises as a result of] copulating with [another] material [body] (gzugs) (i.e. sexual bliss), and the like. This is because (‘di ltar) [they] are endowed with (i) supreme bliss, (ii) undefiled bliss, (iii) immeasurable bliss, (iv) immutable bliss, and (v) great bliss, and with (vi) the [ability to] generate bliss in all disciples as well. Therefore, [a buddha] has been designated [by them as] ‘one endowed with great bliss.”

(a.1) Some, holding to the Pāramitā scriptural system, assert that buddhas do not partake of the enjoyment of a circle of consorts, for that is a reproachable matter, but that [they] are endowed with the bliss of perfectly enjoying the Body of Maturation, which has been attained through immeasurable accumulations of beneficial resources, is characterized by a substratum, namely, the great gnosis, and is accompanied by utterly pure [buddha]-fields; and that they abide in the midst of a circle [formed by his] retinue [of disciples] in accordance with [their individual capabilities].

Both of [the systems] rely, for [their treatment of] the conventional level, on scriptures of the adherents of Yogācāra who maintain the true existence of images, as follows: [They] speculate that there is no object–subject dichotomy with respect to objects (don: artha)—that is, that arises on [account of] external objects (yul: viṣaya)—even when [one is] an [ordinary] sentient being; rather, it is the mind itself that arises in the form of an apparent object–subject dichotomy. In the same manner, there exist arrays of Bodies and [buddha]-fields, [both of] which are the self-manifestations of the gnosis, even at the level at which the transformation of the basis [has already taken place].

(b) The Position Maintaining the Existence of Two Kinds of Gnosis

The second ground of dispute: [Others] believe that tathāgatas are not endowed with material Bodies, but that [they] do partake of the two kinds of gnosis, which are the subjects of the absolute and the conventional truths. Some [of them] also maintain that on the basis of these gnoses [they] experience samādhi that is characterized by bliss. This system (tshul: naya) is based on the scriptures of the adherents of Yogācāra who postulate the false existence of images, as follows: They speculate that, on the level of sentient beings, the mind arises as objective and subjective images, but that [these images] do not truly [exist] as such, [and] that on the level of a buddha, although [the

48 My understanding of the first bliss named here to be the bliss of the Body is based on the description of this bliss in the Sangs sa chen mo (§III.5), according to which a buddha’s material Body indulges in great bliss that results from focusing on the essence of gnosis that is occurrent during samādhi.

49 The term ‘great bliss’ in the phrase ‘one endowed with great bliss’ is to be understood as a general description of a buddha’s bliss as opposed to the ‘great bliss’ listed as one of the six features attributed to a buddha’s bliss. Regarding these six attributes, see also the Sangs sa chen po (§§III.5 & IV.2.C.i.).
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latter] partakes of pure mundane gnosis, [its corresponding images] do not truly [exist] as such either.

(c) The Position Maintaining Only the Existence of Non-conceptual Gnosis

The third [ground of dispute]: [Others] assert that a *buddha* merely [partakes of] non-conceptual gnosis and that all appearances, [definable in terms of] qualities, arise on account of it. This system is in turn based on [scriptures of] the adherents of Yogācāra [who postulate] the non-existent of images.

These three grounds of dispute arise from taking all phenomena as [manifesting] the characteristics of the two truths, as follows: It is speculated that, on the level of sentient beings, all entities that appear simply [possess] the characteristics of the two truths, and that, at the stage of a *buddha*, too, [they therefore] share in [both] modes of the two truths.

5. Position Four: Maintaining the Purified *Dharmadhātu* as the Sole Constituent of Buddhahood

The fourth [position regarding the substratum of appearances]: It is maintained that the stage of a *buddha* is merely the purified *dharmadhātu*, and that all the arrays of Bodies and gnoses—which have arisen on the strength of previous resolutions and great compassion, as a result of the *dharmadhātu* having become purified, and on account of the seeds of disciples’ favourable residual impressions—arise without a substratum. For instance, [it is] just as there is no need for a substratum in order for aspirational wishes pertaining to a future time that were made by a *rṣi* accomplished in aspirational wishes to be fulfilled, even a long time after the *rṣi* has died.

This position is based on the special scriptural system that maintains the indivisibility of the two truths, as follows:50 It is not only that there is no substratum at the stage of a *buddha*, but that there is no substratum underlying the appearances of [any of] the various things even on the level of sentient beings, for in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra*, in a context where incorrect conceptualizations are shown to be causes of suffering, [Mañjuśrī] asks [Vimalakīrti]:51

50 See the dKon cog ’grel (B, fol. 144a2; D, p. 179.8–10): kun rdzob dang don dam pa dbyer med par rtogs pa ni lung zab mo las grags pa’i thun mong ma yin pa’o]; lTa phreng ’grel pa (B, fol. 253b5–6; D, p. 336.22–23): nges pa don gyi [B kyi] mdo sde dang gsang sngags kyi tshul ni bden pa gnyis dbyer myed par lta’ zhing[phung po in ga yang sangs rgyas su lta]; Teg tshul (B, fols. 52a4–5 & 55b6–56a1; D, pp. 472.20–22 & 476.21–23).

51 The canonical version presents on the whole a different translation; the order, too, is different in one instance, and there is one extra phrase (see the notes in the following citation). The text of the canonical *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra* reads (T, fol. 357a4–b1; D, fol. 210b3–6):

```mermaid
graph LR
  A[m] --> B[r]
  B[r] --> C[d
  C[d] --> D[sh]
  D[sh] --> E[es]
  E[es] --> F[do]
  F[do] --> G[rta]
  G[rta] --> H[ba]
  H[ba] --> I[an]
  I[an] --> J[al]
  J[al] --> K[da]
  K[da] --> L[da]
  L[da] --> M[da]
  M[da] --> N[da]
  N[da] --> O[da]
  O[da] --> P[da]
  P[da] --> Q[da]
  Q[da] --> R[da]
  R[da] --> S[da]
  S[da] --> T[da]
  T[da] --> U[da]
  U[da] --> V[da]
  V[da] --> W[da]
  W[da] --> X[da]
  X[da] --> Y[da]
  Y[da] --> Z[da]
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As stated [here], samsāric phenomena, too, arise without a substratum. This is also stated in [Ratnagotravibhāga 20.5]:

Space supports air, the latter supports the aggregate of water, the latter supports this great earth, [and] the latter supports sentient beings. Such is the cause of sentient beings' engagement in actions. On what does space abide? Reflect upon this matter!

That which arises out of the absence of a substratum is itself without substance. [It is] just like the bluishness and rippling of water of an optical illusion—which lack the great element [of water] as a substratum, much less any manifestation of an own-nature that resembles [their] appearance—or like the [apparent] darkness [experienced by] the blind. Therefore, that which appears as the various phenomena of samsāra and nirvāṇa has neither of the two, that is, neither a substratum nor an own-nature. Both sentient beings

dpal gang rten med pa de'i rtsa bar 'gyur ba ci zhig yod de| de ltar chos thams cad ni rten med pa'i rtsa ba la gnas pa'o [T pa'i]]]. ⁴ Ṛong-zom-pa has here yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa'i, the cause of which is termed 'false notions' in the canonical version. ⁵ This portion is missing in Ṛong-zom-pa's citation.

The Sanskrit text reads as follows (Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra, Skt. ed. p. 68.4–16; cf. ibid. (translit.), p. 268.2–16):


For the Chinese translation, see ibid. (translit.), p. 269. This passage is also translated in Wangchuk 2007, p. 212.

⁵² The satkayadrṣṭi is one of the five drṣṭis (BHSD, s.v. satkāya-drṣṭi). See also Mvy, nos. 1955 (reading 'jigs) and 4684, which is the collective entry for the following twenty entries (4685–4704) pertaining to the view of a self.

⁵³ A similar thought is found in Ratnagotravibhāga 1.55–57. For English translations, see Takasaki 1966, p. 236, and Wangchuk 2007, p. 212.

⁵⁴ The reading of the canonical version is almost identical (T, fol. 220a5–6; D, fol. 11b4–5): line 3 has ste instead of our zhes, while line 4 has yin instead of zhes and bsam par gyis instead of brtag par byyi. Cf. the Dunhuang recension as found in Yuyama 1976, p. 177, the fourth line of verse, which reads yet differently: don de mkha' la gnas pa yin par bsam par bya|. The Sanskrit text reads (Yuyama, pp. 75–76; cf. Obermiller, p. 72):

\[ākāśaniśrayi samāruta āpaskandho tahi niṣritā ima mahāprthivī jagac ca | sattvāna karma-upabhoganīdānam evam ākāśasthānu kutu cintayi etam arthaṃ ||.

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and buddhas, then, [can] be said to be of the same nature. This is the position of the special Mahāyāna.55

As for the special characteristics [of this system, they are the following]:

(a) All phenomena are said to merely have the characteristic of manifesting to [one] (nye bar gzhag pa: pratyupasthāna) [as a result of one’s mental] construction (rnam par bsgrub pa: vithapana).56 It is maintained that these [phenomena—namely], (i) those which [have] the two truths as the characteristic mark [underlying their] establishment (rnam par gzhag pa: vyavasthāna), (ii) [those which have] the three svabhāvas as the one [underlying their] establishment,57 (iii) [those which have] the two kinds of sense-bases (skye mched: āyatana)—that is, external and internal ones—as the characteristic mark [underlying their] establishment, and (iv) [those which have] miraculously born (brdzus te ’byung ba)58 persons [or] sentient beings as the one [underlying their] establishment—

As noted by Yuyama, this verse is cited by Candrakīrti in his Prasannapadī (pp. 166.11–167.2). An English translation is contained in Wangchuk 2007, pp. 212–213, where other references to the notion that phenomena have no substratum is provided, including a translation of Ratnagotrāvibhāga 1.55–57, a passage very similar to the above-cited one from the Ratnagunāsāṃcaya (see also the English translation found in Takasaki 1966, p. 236).

55 See also the Theg tshul (B, fols. 33b5–35b5; D, pp. 452.10–454.16), where Rong-zom-pa forcefully argues that no phenomenon has a substratum.

56 The expression chos thams cad rnam par bsgrub pa nye bar gzhag pa ’i mtshan nyid seems to be identical with the expression chos thams cad rnam par bsgrub pa/pas nye bar gnas pa’i mtshan nyid: sarvadharmaṃ vithapanapratyupasthānalakṣaṇāḥ. See Mvy, no. 185, which has the longer expression chos thams cad ni rgyus nye bar ’gro ba ste bsgrub pas nye bar gnas pa’i mtshan nyid: kāraṇopaghāṇaḥ sarvadharmaṃ vithapanapratyupasthānalakṣaṇāḥ (the edition by Sakaki erroneously reads viṭṭhā), which may be translated as “all phenomena occur [due to] causes (lit. ‘follow [their] causes’) and have the characteristic of manifesting to [one as a result of one’s mental] construction”; and also no. 7233: rnam par bsgrub pa nye bar gnas pa’i mtshan nyid: vithapanapratyupasthānalakṣaṇa. By contrast, Edgerton (BHSD, s.v. vithapana) translates the phrase sarvadharmaṃ vithapanapratyupasthānalakṣaṇaḥ as “all states of being are characterized by involvement in (illusory) creation.” He also discusses the meaning of the term vithapana and its occurrence in similar phrases, drawing attention in particular to the phrase māyākṛtāṃ sarvasaṃkṛtāṃ vithapanapratyupasthānalakṣāṇam found in the Śikṣāsāṃcaya (Bendall, p. 180.4), within a quotation from the Ugradattaparipṛcchā (śūtra); Tib. (P, fol. 118a8–b1; D, fol. 101a3–4; S, vol. 64, p. 1246.18–20): ‘dus byas thams cad ni sgyu ma’i rnam pa lta bu rnam par bsgrubs [D bsgrub] pas so sor nye bar gnas pa’i mtshan nyid do], which may be translated as “all conditioned [phenomena] are fashioned [like] an illusion, having the characteristic of manifesting to [one as a result of one’s mental] construction.” The translation in Bendall & Rouse 1922, p. 176 runs: “All that is composite is made of illusion, its mark is that it is in a state of flux.” Nattier in her translation of the Ugradattaparipṛcchā (based on several Chinese and Tibetan versions) translates the sentence as follows (Nattier 2003, p. 246): “All conditioned things are illusory and are marked by involvement in fabrication.” Note also the similar expression buddhivithapanapratyupasthāpana (blo’i sgrub par so sor ’jog pa) used by Dharmakīrti (Śvāyrtti ad Pramāṇavārttika 1.268 (Gnoli, p. 141.13–14)).

57 Compare Rong-zom-pa’s discussion of the three svabhāvas (mtshan nyid) in his Grub mtha’i brjed byang (B, fols. 346a6–348b3; D, pp. 224.3–226.11).

58 ‘Miraculous birth’ (brdzus te skye ba: upapāduka, aupapāduka) is one of the four types of birth (see Mvy, nos. 2278–2282).
do not differ, inasmuch as, based on [their] mere appearance, [they are seen to] have the characteristics of manifesting to [one as a result of one’s mental] construction. 59

(b) Similarly, it is special in regard to [its view of] liberation as well, for the defilements are [considered to be] liberated [by] their very nature. 60

(c) It is also special in regard to [how it views] the seeing (or: realizing) the gnosis through which liberation [is attained], for the mind and mental factors of [the sentient beings of] the three realms are themselves [considered to be] self-occurring gnosis. 61

(d) It is also special in regard to the [buddha]-fields and perceptible objects, for even the utterly impure [buddha]-field of Śākyamuni, the Exalted One, [is considered to be] an utterly pure [buddha]-field. 62 How so? For example, [even] when the pretas see a river as

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59 In this passage Rong-zom-pa seems to be referring to the various ways in which the individual tenet systems hold phenomena to be established, namely, Madhyamaka, Yogācāra, the main conservative non-Mahāyāna Buddhist schools (i.e. Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika), and systems that posit the notion of person, such as the Vātsīputrīya, respectively. In the case of the last of these, Rong-zom-pa’s reference to miraculously born sentient beings is doubtless premised on an acceptance of how the Vātsīputrīya’s argument for the existence of the person is explained in some Madhyamaka works: the Buddha taught the existence of the person in order to counter the misconception that his teaching of the non-existence of a self is related to views such as the non-existence of this world, non-existence of a yonder world (jig rten pha rol: paraloka), miraculously born sentient beings, or the like. See, for example, the Akutobbhayā (P, fol. 82a2–7; D, fol. 70a6–b2; S, vol. 57, p. 184.1–14): ‘dir smras pa| bdag ni yod pa kho na yin te| bcom Idan ‘das kyi| bdag yod par [P pas] gsums pa| i phyir ro| ‘dir bshad pa| bdag go zhes kyang btags gyur cing|| bdag med ces kyang bstan par [gyur]| sangs rgyas rnams kyi| bdag dang ni| bdag med [P add. pa] ’ga| yang med par bstan|| sangs rgyas bcom Idan ’das sms can rnams kyi| bsam pa| dang bag la| nyal mkhyen pa| la mkhas pa| rnams kyi| gdul ba de| dang de| dag la| yang dag| par gzigs| ni| gdul ba| gang dag| la ‘jig rten ’di med do| ‘jig rten pha rol med do| sms can rdzus te| skye ba med| do snyam pa| i lta ba| de lta| byung gar| gyur pa| de| dag gi| bdag med par| lta ba| bzhog pa| i phyir| bdag go| zhes kyang btags| par| gyur to| gdul ba| gang dag| la| las| de| dang mi| de| rnams kyi| byed pa| po| dang de| dag gi| ’bras ba| za| po| dang [P dag] beings| pa| dang thar| pa| dag ston| po| hyed pa| i| bdag| ces| bya| de| ni| ‘ga| zhig| yod| do| snyam| pa| i lta| de| lta| byung| gar| gyur| pa| de| dag gi| bdag| tu| lta| ba| bzhog| pa| i| phyir [D add. ro]| ] bdag med ces| kyang| bstan| par| gyur| to|]. Rong-zom-pa is clearly seeking to advance the idea that all phenomena, regardless of the convention employed to establish them, have one thing in common, namely, that, being mere appearances, they come into existence as and when their specific causes and conditions come together, and they subsist as a construct as long as these causes and conditions are present. In his Theg tshul (B, fol. 13b6–17a1; D, pp. 430.12–433.24), he discusses this idea in more detail, on the basis of five analogies illustrative of illusion, employing similar terminology throughout.

60 See also Rong-zom-pa’s Theg tshul (B, fol. 58a6–b1; D, p. 479.15–17): don ‘dis rdzogs pa| chen po| tshul las| nyon mong| pa| nyid| rnams| par| grol| ba|’ lam| chen| po| las| nyid| rang| byung| gi| ye| shes| sdu| bhsgal| nyid| byang| chub| bo| zhes| gsums| pa| i| [B pa]| don| yang| ‘di| lta| byu| yin| no|]; dKon cog ‘grel (B, fol. 53b4; D, p. 81.17): nyon mong| pa| i| rang| bzhin| rnams| par| grol| ba| yin| pa| dang|.

61 For references to where Rong-zom-pa advances the notion that the mind of sentient beings is primordially pure and thus not different from the buddhas’ gnosis, see chapter four, §3.B, n. 100. For a translation of the wider passage from the dKon cog ‘grel, where this and the previous ideas, along with other similar ones, are expressed, see Wangchuk 2002, p. 281.

62 Here Rong-zom-pa is obviously referring to the Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra, §§14–19 (Skt., ed., pp. 11–13; cf. ibid. (translit.), pp. 40–51, where the Tibetan and Chinese translations are also
[a stream of] pus, [the fact that] the shared appearance of that given phenomenon (chos can)—that is, [its] appearing as [something that] serves to [provide] moisture and liquid in a certain location, that is, a place with an atmosphere—does not go away is common [to other beings as well]. Nevertheless, that appearance appears variously (so sor) in pure and impure ways, as follows: (i) For the pretas, [that shared appearance known to humans as water] appears to be extremely impure. It appears as [something that] serves to [provide] moisture, but also [something that has] a smell and taste that [can] impair the continuous [functioning] (rgyun) of the sense organs [of smell and taste]. (ii) For human beings and other [beings], [it] appears to be [something that is] somewhat impure. [It] serves to [provide] moisture, but [it is not able to] mar the continuous [functioning] of the [corresponding] sense organs. (iii) For those individuals who abide in pure realms, [it] appears to be [something] pure. [It] appears to be [something that] serves to [provide] moisture, and to be a drink of nectar with smell, taste, and [other] excellent qualities that enhance the [sensitivity of the corresponding] sense organs. [It] serves as nutrition, [it] generates the sublime teachings in [their mental] continuum and even—does the work of a buddha. (iv) For vidyādharas who have gained command over phenomena, [it] appears to be [something] extremely pure. That very same water appears to be the Body of the female [Buddha] Māmaki. [It] serves to satiate [one who] is moistened by [its] touch, and [it] causes [one] to experience the bliss of enjoyment and non-conceptual samādhi to be generated in [one’s mental] continuum. (v) For those [whose] ‘negative propensities’ (bag la nyal: anusaya) have been completely exhausted, [it does not appear at all, since they] are free from all appearances, and [indeed] all manifoldness has completely come to rest.63

Therefore, one should know that these [phenomena] merely have the characteristic of manifesting to [one as a result of one’s mental] construction, and that the mere appearances—[as something that] serves individual functions [with regard to the different living beings of the various realms]—are not deceptive (mi bslu ba) (i.e. are undeniable), while from an objective point of view (gzu bo’i bIos gzhal na), the purer these perceptions (snang ba) are, the more accurate they are.64

(e) It is also special in regard to the minds of individuals who engage in such [doctrinal] matters (don): Some follow the training method [used by] the great Śrāvaka [saints], provided). The pertinent passage is also cited in sKa-ba-dpal-brtsegs’s gSung rab rin po che (P, fol. 234a2–235a1; D, fol. 322b5–323b4).

63 Rong-zom-pa repeats the example of the perception of what is known to us ordinary human beings as ‘water’ in the dKon cog ’grel (B, fol. 72b1–74a2; D, pp. 103.15–105.7), where he also narrates the debate between Jatin Brahmā (tshangs pa ral pa can) and Śāriputra regarding their different perceptions of Śākyamuni’s field, as recounted in the Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra, §§15–18 (Skt. ed., pp. 12–13; cf. ibid. (translit.), pp. 42–49, where the Tibetan and Chinese translations are also provided). Rong-zom-pa employs this example also in his sNang ba lhar bsgrub (B, fol. 132b4–136b2; D, pp. 563.1–567.6)—there elaborating on it in great detail—and also refers to it briefly in his Theg tshul (B, fol. 11a5–b2; D, p. 427.14–20) and Rang byung ye shes (B, fol. 261b2–262a2; D, pp. 124.22–125.9). In the latter he clearly refers to the stage of a buddha.

64 Concerning this theory (designated by Wangchuk the “relativity theory of the purity and validity of perception”) as found in Rong-zom-pa’s writings, along with its Indian background and its impact on the later rNying-ma author Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, see Wangchuk (forthcoming).
The Discussion in the *dKon cog 'grel*

...some follow *bodhisattvas* who abide in [one of] the higher stages, and some follow the *buddhas*.\footnote{This distinction is often explained in the context of the three vows. See, for example, Rong-zom-pa's *lTa phreng 'grel pa* (B, fols. 265b2–266a1; D, p. 350.2–12).} In this way, [the last of these] engage in the mode of non-duality.\footnote{For a summary of this passage, in which Rong-zom-pa provides five reasons why this form of Mahāyāna is special, see Wangchuk (forthcoming), §4, where the five reasons are identified as its proposing a special kind of ontology, epistemology, soteriology, gnoseology, and individuality of persons, respectively.}

The training in and practising of special doctrines such as these should be known as the fourth position [regarding the substratum of appearances].\footnote{This position corresponds to position 1 in the *Sangs sa chen mo*.}

These are an explanation of the four bases of the [previously] expounded five modes of the [Three] Jewels.
The translations of Rong-zom-pa's discourses on traditional buddhology will now be followed by translations of discussions of the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* that were carried on in Indian sources. Some of these sources were clearly used by Rong-zom-pa, although he does not always explicitly mention them by name. The cited passages are arranged according to the position taken by the authors, starting with those who assert that the *dharmadhātu* is the sole constituent of Buddhahood (position 1)—namely, *Madhyamaka-Simha*, Mañjuśrīmitra, Atiśa, Candraharipāda, and Bhavya—continuing with those who postulate, in addition, the existence of non-conceptual gnosis (position 2)—namely, Nāgamitra, Jñānacandra, and Dharmamitra—and concluding with those who also postulate the existence of pure mundane gnosis (positions 3–6), in which case only one author has been identified—namely, Śrīgupta.

1. Proponents of the Purified *Dharmadhātu* as the Sole Constituent of Buddhahood

A. *Madhyamaka-Simha's Drṣṭivibhāga*

In his *Drṣṭivibhāga*, *Madhyamaka-Simha*, as is common in works which present the various existing views, starts with a refutation of the positions that he considers to be false. First the non-Buddhist theories of a self are negated. This is followed by a refutation of the Buddhist theories of atoms propagated by the Vaibhāṣikas (*bye brag tu smra ba*) and the Sautrāntikas (*mdo sde pa*). Then the author goes on to refute the proponents of Vijñaptimātra (*rnam par rig pa tsam*), who, while negating the existence of a self and of atoms, maintain the existence of a momentary mind on the level of an ordinary being and gnosis on the level of a *buddha*. Having argued for the non-existence of a momentary mind, he proceeds to discuss the existence or non-existence of such a gnosis:

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1. *Drṣṭivibhāga* (P, fols. 58a3–59b2; D, fols. 1b2–3a5; S, vol. 63, pp. 867.4–870.15).
2. *Drṣṭivibhāga* (P, fols. 59b2–60b3; D, fols. 3a5–4a4; S, vol. 63, pp. 870.16–873.3).
Further, the existence of a continuously arising gnosis will be analyzed. Have you [ever] heard of a future without a past and present? If the mind to be transformed is itself nonexistent, how could gnosis, which is the transformation of it, exist? According to the position of those [who admit] a cognition which is accompanied by images (sākāra[vādin]), there exists a gnosis which possesses pure [entities as its] object (dmigs pa). If this is so, [they] will have to disprove (bzlog) the following teaching [found in Lankāvatārasūtra 2.169 & 9.128]:

If marks [consisting in appearances] had come to arise,
Even after all errors have been eliminated,
It would be a pure error,
Like the ‘floaters’ (rab rib: timira)⁶ [of one who has not been] cured [of his eye disease].

Those who admit a cognition that is not accompanied by images (nirākāra[vādin]) maintain the existence of a gnosis that is free from all residual impressions and that is merely self-cognition. Even in this case, what is the use of such a gnosis, which still does not transcend the shortcomings shown above? What would be lost if it did not exist? So give up these unnecessary mere conceptual thoughts! [In] this [way], the successive steps of eliminating

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⁵ The canonical versions read somewhat differently (T₁, fol. 217b–218a1 & T₂, fol. 314b4–5; D₁, fol. 99a2–3 & D₂, fol. 163b7):

nor pa thams cad spangs nas [T₂ pas] kyang||
gal te mtsan ma [D, mar] skyer [T, skyed] zin na||
de nyid de yi nor pa stel||
rab rib yongs su ma dag bzhin||.

The Sanskrit original reads:

bhṛāntīṃ vidhūya sarvāṃ hi nimittam jāyate yadi .
śaiva tasya bhaved bhṛāntir aśuddhaṃ timiraṃ yathā ||.

Compare the English translation in Suzuki 1932, p. 95.

⁶ The term timira (rab rib), literally meaning ‘darkness,’ is used, among other things, in connection with a certain eye disease associated with blurred vision. Timira has often been understood to be the name of the disease itself, but in our case—as in numerous other instances (if not always)—it is clearly referring to the shapes themselves, or perhaps more precisely to the perceived shapes, while the disease itself is referred to by *Madhyamaka-Sūtra in the following passages as ‘yellow eyes’ (mig ser). The Tibetan mig ser in this context is probably a rendering of the Sanskrit word kāmala (TSD, s.v.), which, among other things, means ‘excessive secretion or obstruction of bile’ (MW, s.v.), apparently referring to jaundice or a similar liver disorder that causes yellow eyes. (The actual connection between yellow eyes–related diseases and the perception of floaters is, however, unclear and deserves further study.) The English term ‘floater’ is a general designation for different kinds of particles of different shapes and sizes within the eye. While the presence of such floaters in eyes is a natural phenomenon, any extended appearance of them within a person’s field of vision is a disorder. Since the floaters are present in one’s eyes, however, the images of them that appear are not, strictly speaking, optical illusions. But as one could have not possibly known of the presence of these particles in ancient India (or in other regions), a distinction between such entoptic phenomena (i.e. images based on objects in one’s eyes) and pure optical illusions could not have been made.
the clinging of those who maintain [the existence of] 'representation-only' (vijñaptimātra)\(^7\) have been briefly pointed out.

Then *Madhyamaka-Simha goes on to present the stance of the proponents of Madhyamaka, who propose the non-existence of gnosis, and to refute criticism against them, as follows:\(^8\)

The following are the objections raised (brtsad) against the Mādhyamikas of Mahāyāna:

1. If you maintain the non-existence of gnosis, what is [then the nature of] the nirvāṇa [proposed by] you?
2. How does [a buddha] act for the sake of sentient beings?

These [objections] will be responded to [in the following manner]:

1. For example, an oil lamp will continue to burn as long as sesame oil and a wick are present, and when the wick and the sesame oil are exhausted, the stream of lamp light will completely cease. Likewise, when ignorance, which is analogous to the wick and the sesame oil, is exhausted, the stream of perception, which is analogous to the lamp light, will automatically cease—that is, the stream [of it] will cease completely in all respects—without [leaving behind even the slightest trace of it, be it] as small as the hundredth split of a hair.\(^9\) Thus a transformed gnosis has nowhere to arise from. Nirvāṇa, then, should be understood as that which is total emptiness. [Objection]: In that case, how can [your position] not help but be annihilationistic. Answer: [I] shall give an illustration. Listen!

If a person says: "There is no space," does [he] propose an annihilationistic [view]? Similarly, for those who do not realize that mind, which is analogous to space, is nonexistent, [although it] is indeed primordially non-existent, we negate [the existence of the mind and thus also that of gnosis] by saying: "[It] does not exist." We Mādhyamikas do not eliminate what is existent by making it non-existent. Hence how could [our position] be annihilationistic?\(^10\)

2. [I] shall also answer the question regarding how [a buddha] acts for the sake of living beings: A spiritual son of the Victorious One, a lord of the tenth stage, who has attained command over all resolutions (smon lam: pranidhāna), views the totality of sentient beings (sems can gyi khams: sattvadhatu) and thinks: "Those who [wish to] fulfil the objective of all sentient beings cannot [do so] without attaining the dharmakāya."

Thereupon he actualizes the dharmakāya instantaneously and then gains complete control over a resolution (smon lam byin gvis rlob, i.e. in a way that its realization is secured even beyond his own existence in the world) of the following kind: "From the very moment I become fully awakened and until [beings in] samāsāra have been entirely rescued (yongs su

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\(^7\) In my translation of the term vijñaptimātra as 'representation-only' I follow Schmithausen, who in a recent publication provides the following reason for his choice: "I prefer this rendering because it is noncommittal as to whether vijñapati is used for the act of cognition or for the contents appearing in it. Moreover, it does not preclude subconscious mental processes and their contents." See Schmithausen 2007, p. 98, n. 2. See also above, chapter three, n. 36.

\(^8\) Drṣṭiśvibhāga (P, fols. 62a8–63a5; D, fols. 5b6–6b2; S, vol. 63, pp. 877.6–879.1).

\(^9\) Compare the similar example of firewood (or other fuel) found in the passage from Candrabahipāda’s Ratnamalā translated below and in the passage from Rong-zom-pa’s Teg ishul translated above in chapter three, §4.B. See Seyfort Rueegg 1989, pp. 94–95, n. 179, 114 & 206, where this analogy is discussed with reference to Kamalāśīla’s Bhāvanākrama 3—which cites in this connection the Kāśyapaparivarta, Ghanavyūha, and a work by *Mahāsukhanātha—and to Bhavya’s Madhyamakapradīpas.

\(^10\) Compare the similar statement found in the Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.1.B.ii.
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‘drongs), may manifold [buddha]-Bodies and manifold [buddha]-Speeches unceasingly arise as infinitely as the sphere of space in accordance with the [diverse karmic] lots of sentient beings, [and] may splendid sambhogakāyas appear to the bodhisattvas.” Having gained complete control over such a resolution, [he] becomes one whose nature is emptiness, like the vault of the sky (nam mkha’i dkyil: gaganatala) at noon in autumn, completely free from all the dust of appearances. That [we] call nirvāṇa.

The explanations [regarding the existence of] gnosis, strengths (stobs: bala), powers (dbang: vaśa), and the like, as well as self-cognition and the like were taught simply in order to prevent [sentient beings from] becoming frightened. Therefore, on the strength of the resolution of those who have power over [their] resolutions, and thanks to [the presence of] worthy sentient beings, there arise various [buddha]-Bodies, [buddha]-Speeches, and miraculous manifestations (cho ‘phrul: prāthārya), and yet there is absolutely not the least [thing that exists] as an entity. If [there is something at the stage of a buddha that] exists as an entity, then what difference would there be between [Buddhahood and] all those [phenomena that have] the characteristic of being conditioned? Thus the analogies employed by some—such as the wish-fulfilling jewel and the pillar [empowered by] a gāruḍika—cannot be analogies in the full sense (tshul thams cad pa) [of the word], because [the constituents of a buddha] are not entities like these [objects].

*Madhyamaka-Sīllha continues with a refutation of the general validity of the notion of existence with the following argumentation:12

Now, a further objection: [If] nothing is existent, how should one view coming into existence, existence, and cessation?

Question: Which [of the three] occurs first?

[First hypothetical] answer: Coming into existence.

Counter-argument: How would a coming into existence that is devoid of existence and cessation occur? If [you] postulate a coming into existence that is devoid of existence and cessation, who would [be able then to] negate the coming into existence of a rabbit’s horn?

[Second hypothetical] answer: Existence occurs first.

Counter-argument: How would existence that is devoid of coming into existence and cessation occur? If [you] postulate a coming into existence that is devoid of existence and cessation, then [the following applies]: [at some] first [instant], [a phenomenon x] has not [yet] come into existence, [by some] second [one it] has come into existence, and [by some] third [one it] has disintegrated; therefore, existence is simply non-existent.

[Third hypothetical] answer: Cessation [occurs first].

Counter-argument: If you maintain a cessation that is devoid of coming into existence and existence, who would [be able to] negate the cessation of the child of a barren woman.

[Fourth hypothetical answer]: Coming into existence, existence, and cessation are simultaneously existent.

Counter-argument: [Could] darkness and light simultaneously exist? Since coming into existence, existence, and cessation are mutually exclusive, how could [they] occur simultaneously? Therefore, coming into existence, existence, and cessation are simply non-existent.

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11 For the use of these analogies, see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo above, §§IV.2.A.vi. and IV.1.B.ii, respectively. It is perhaps important to emphasize here that *Madhyamaka-Sīllha is not rejecting per se what seem to be standard analogies employed by the proponents of position 1, but merely pointing out to that the similarity or point of comparison should not be overstretched.

12 Drśṭivibhāga (P, fol. 63a5–b2; D, fol. 6b3–7; S, vol. 63, p. 879.2–17).
In the following passage, *Madhyamaka-Siṣṭha proceeds with a refutation of the opponents’ critique that it is futile to encourage the striving for a form of Buddhahood that, following the logical reasoning of the Madhyamikas, is as non-existent as anything else:  

Objection: According to [your postulation], everything is simply non-existent, and therefore [spiritual] practices such as giving (ṣbyin pa: dāna) would be pointless, while the so-called awakening (byang chub: bodhi) to be attained would also end up being simply non-existent. Thus [your theory] would throw the established convention into total disarray.

Counter-argument: [For example]: The eyes of a certain person are afflicted with the disease [called] ‘yellow eyes.’ As a result, [the person] sees in the space [in front of him] strands of tangled hair, clumps of wool, and [other] ‘floaters’ (rab rib: timira). But since this person is wise, the following thought occurs [to him]: “These [objects] perceived by me are non-existent. [They] appear as such because [my] eyes have been impaired by an eye disease.” Does this person, thinking thus, nourish a misconceived notion? Would not that person strive to eliminate (or: treat) [his] eye disease, which [gives rise to] false perceptions (log par snang bo)? Likewise, is there any fault in eliminating false conceptions, [that is], the occurrence of conceptions relating to appearances of non-existing [things]—[such conceptions] being analogous to the [vision of eyes impaired by] yellow eye disease—and thus [in revealing true reality, which] in the end is the nature of entities, namely, the non-existence of entities, [and] similar to space in being free from all the ‘diseases’ of appearances, just like [the vision of] eyes free from diseases? We maintain that [wholesome activities] such as giving and their results are [respectively] like the giving of alms by an illusory person to [another] illusory person, and so forth, and the attaining of what is called awakening [by that illusory person]. Therefore, we do not propose throwing convention into disarray, the way the Materialists (jig rten rgyang ’phen pa: lokāyata) [do]. Hence, first of all, one should determine the non-existence of a self—[an issue] examined previously on the basis of efficient (mkhas pa?) logical argumentation—and thus abide in mere (i.e.

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13 Drṣṭivibhāga (P, fols. 63b2–64a7; D, fols. 6b7–7b3; S, vol. 63, pp. 879.17–881.11).

14 As noted above (n. 6), the English term ‘floaters’ is a general designation for the various kinds of particles of different shapes and sizes that can be present within the eye; hence the addition of the word ‘other’ in my translation. Whether the word timira, too, is a generic term designating all floaters or only a particular type is unclear.


16 The text initially read here ’das pa. The phrase sngon nyid du ’das pa’i rigs pa dag does not yield a proper sense. I therefore tentatively suggest emending ’das pa to mkhas pa. The misreading can be explained graphically, at least in part, the presence of the phrase sngon nyid du (which is semantically close to ’das pa) in the immediate vicinity having perhaps also been a contributing factor.
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essenceless) phenomena. Then the mere phenomena, such as the psycho-physiological complex (phung po: skandha), also need to be made to ‘disappear’ through logical argumentation, as presented [above], and one should then abide in the [notion of] mind-only. In the same way, the mind should be made to ‘disappear’ by means of extensive chains of logical argumentation, and should be viewed as the transcending of all extremes, as the coming to rest of the ‘dust’ of the marks [consisting in appearances], as the non-being of a self, sentient beings, life-force, or the like, [and] as being devoid of the force (rlabs) of self-cognition. For example, the more often a person relies on eye medication, the more [his] eye disease recedes. Likewise, the more [one] reflects upon non-existence, the more the disease of conceptualization recedes. And after a while, even the thought of non-existence will be abandoned.

In conformity with this [idea], it has been explained:

Once the entity being analyzed
Is no longer perceived, [by virtue of one's] reflecting “It is non-existent,”
The notion “There is not even
The slightest [entity] existent” is also eliminated.17

Therefore, constantly strive with great diligence [and] with conscientiousness to realize the teachings thus explained. Thus the teachings have been given, and the following summarizing verses have been taught [in Bodhicittavivarana 25 & 27]:

\[
\begin{align*}
gang\text{tshe} & \text{gang zhig med do zhes}\big| \quad 33d \\
\text{brtag bya'i dngos po mi dmigs pa} & \big| \\
de\text{tshe dngos med rten bral ba} & \big| \\
\text{blo yi mdun na ji ltar gnas} & \big| \\
gang\text{tshe dngos dang dngos med dag} & \big| \quad 34 \\
\text{blo yi mdun na mi gnas pa} & \big| \\
de\text{tshe rnam pa gzhans med pas} & \big| \\
\text{dmigs pa med par rab tu zhi} & \big| \quad 35.
\end{align*}
\]

The Sanskrit text reads:

\[
\begin{align*}
yadä na labhyate bhāvo yo nāsti ti pra[kalpyate ]
& \quad 34 \\
tadā nirārāya v 'bhavah katham tiṣṭhaṇ mateḥ purah ]
& \quad 34 \\
yadā na bhāvo nābhāvo mateḥ saṃtiṣṭhate purah & \\
tadānyagatyabhāvena nirālambā praśāmyati & \quad 35.
\end{align*}
\]

For a translation of these lines into German and English, see Steinkellner 1981, p. 120, and Crosby & Skilton 1995, p. 118 (there vv. 33–34), respectively.

18 The canonical version presents a slightly different translation (Lindtner 1997, pp. 40 & 42):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bdag tu 'dzin pa bzlog pa'i phyir} & \big| \\
\text{phung po khams sogs bstan pa yin} & \big| \\
\text{sems tsam po la gnas nas ni} & \big| \\
\text{skal chen rnam kyi de yang 'spangs} & \big| \quad 25 \\
\text{‘di dag thams cad sems tsam zhes} & \big| \\
\text{thub pas bstan pa gang mdzad de} & \big| \\
\text{byis pa rnam kyi skrag pa ni} & \big| \\
\text{spang ba'i phyir yin de nyid min} & \big| \quad 27.
\end{align*}
\]
It was in order to avert the grasping at a self
That the aggregates, the elements, and the like were taught.
Then, abiding by [the notion of] mind-only,
The much worthy ones (i.e. yogins) should destroy\(^{19}\) that too.
The teaching by the Sage
That all these [phenomena] are ‘mind only’
Was aimed at removing worldlings’ fear.
But it does not [conform to] true reality.\(^{20}\)

The work concludes with the following statement regarding the circumstances in which it was composed and transmitted:\(^{21}\)

These [teachings] were proclaimed to a host of disciples. The *Brief Differentiation of Diverse Views*, an exposition by the master *Madhyamaka-Simha*, is [now] completed. These are explanations given by the great scholar *Madhyamaka-Simha* during a great debate, and were committed to memory by the scholars [present there]. Famous as oral instructions communicated from one to another, [they] later on were written down. The transmission from one to another was carried out by the diligent lay practitioner Tāraśrīmitra. [The text] was edited, translated, and finalized by the Indian preceptor (*mkhan po: upādhyāya*)\(^{22}\) Tāraśrīmitra himself and the fully ordained monk Lo-tsa-ba Chos-kyi-shes-rab.

These two verses are among the few the Sanskrit text of which has survived (*ibid.*, p. 172):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ātmagrahanivṛtyartham skandhadhātvādideśanā} & \\
\text{sāpi dhvastā mahābhāgaś cittamātravyavasthayā} & || 25 \\
\text{cittamātram idam sarvam iti yā deśanā muneh} & \\
\text{uttṛasapurihārārthaṁ bālānāṁ sā na tattvataṁ} & || 27.
\end{align*}
\]

For Lindtner’s English translation, see *ibid.*, pp. 41 & 43.

\(^{19}\) The Sanskrit original has dhvastā (‘destroyed’), and the canonical translation spangs (‘eliminated’).

\(^{20}\) Cf. Śantaraksita’s *Madhyamakālāṃkāra* 92; *Madhyamakālāṃkāravyṛtti* (P, fol. 79a3–b7; D, fol. 79a5–b7; S, vol. 62, pp. 963.11–964.20), where reference to various works, such as the *Lāṅkāvatāraśūra*, is made.

\(^{21}\) *Drṣṭīvībhāga* (P, fol. 64a7–b2; D, fol. 7b3–5; S, vol. 63, p. 881.11–19).

\(^{22}\) Note that the two titles by which Tāraśrīmitra is referred to, namely, dge bsnyen, which designates a lay practitioner, and *mkhan po*, which can be held only by fully ordained monks, are contradictory. Perhaps the standard expression ‘Indian preceptor’ (*rgya gar gyi mkhan po*) in the translation colophons was simply being applied loosely, as in the case of o/u rgyan gyi mkhan po referring to Padmasambhava.
B. Mañjuśrimitra’s Bodhicittabhiivaniinirdesa

This work, I have already mentioned, is said to be Mañjuśrimitra’s autocommentary on his Bodhicittabha\’vanānirdeśa. 23 As is evident from the full title, Bodhicittabha\’vanādvādaśārtha-nirdeśa, the author comments upon twelve points raised by the basic text. The fifth point, concerning what is required to be examined in order to realize emptiness, first deals with the examination of pollution (kun nas nyon mongs pa: samkleśa) 24 and then with the examination of purification (rnam par byang ba: vyavadāna). 25 After negating the existence of the mind in the first part, Mañjuśrimitra comments on six lines of the basic text (marked here in bold letters) and goes on to negate the existence of both non-conceptual and pure mundane gnoses in the second part, as follows: 26

5.2. There are two [points to be made] regarding the examination of the nature (ji lta bu yin pa) of purification. [They are] (1) showing that purifications appear only to deluded ones, and (2) showing that [the existence of] these appearances themselves [cannot] be established.

5.2.1. Which [line of verse] shows that purifications appear to deluded ones? It is shown by the [following line]:

There exists no awakening of a sugata, and therefore his miraculous manifestations appear like magical apparitions to deluded ones. 27

Nor is the Buddhahood of a sugata in reality established. Therefore, it is evident that miraculous manifestations of him appear to deluded ones as magical apparitions. And that is why it is stated in the Vajracchedikā: 28

23 See, however, the discussion of this work and its author in chapter three, §6.A.i.b.

24 The term samkleśa is said to be a general term for kleśa (defilement), karman (volitional action), and janman (birth), and is the antithesis of vyavadāna, purification. For details, see Ahn 2003, pp. 42ff. & 158, nn. 1–3.

25 Bodhicittabha\’vanānirdeśa (P, fols. 58b5–64b8; D, fols. 47b3–52b1; S, vol. 33, pp. 187.20–200.2; Bg, pp. 278.6–292.1).

26 Bodhicittabha\’vanānirdeśa (P, fol. 64a3–b8; D, fols. 51b7–52b1; S, vol. 33, pp. 198.11–200.2; Bg, pp. 290.3–292.1). An English translation of the six lines of the basic text is found in Norbu & Lipman 1987, pp. 61–70 (vv. 79–84). This translation differs considerably from mine, in that, as explained in his preface, Lipman opted for “a language that ‘opened out onto’ common usage” and avoided what he calls ‘Buddhist tribal language’ or ‘tribal jargon.’

27 Citing the Bodhicittabha\’vanā (P, fol. 4a1–2; D, fol. 3a7; S, vol. 33, p. 813.2–3; Tb, pp. 565.7–566.1; Tk, p. 504.1; Bg, p. 320.3). The reading of the verses cited in the commentary occasionally differs from the reading in the basic text, but in most cases the differences are negligible. The reading of the basic text will be provided in corresponding footnotes, and the words or phrases that present a reading different from the commentary will be underlined. This line reads in the basic text as follows: bde gshegs byang chub med phyir ‘de yi [TkBg de’i] rdzu ‘phrul sgyu [P rgyu] ’dra [TbTk ‘drar] ‘khrul la snang]. The parallel line in the Byang chub sems bsgom pa’i rgyud (Tb, p. 653.3–4; Tk, p. 101.7) also has bde instead of bder in the commentary, de’i instead of de yi, and ‘dra, as in the canonical versions and Bg.

28 For references to this verse, along with a remark on the translation of the word spong and a brief discussion of the term dharmakāya occurring in it, see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo (§IV.1.B.i), nn. 46 & 47.
Whoever sees me as visible matter,
Whoever comprehends me as sound,
Has entered a wrong [path to] abandoning.
That person will not see me.
The 'leaders' (dren pa: nāyaka) are the dharma-kāya.
[One] should regard a buddha as true reality.

5.2.2. Showing that appearances of purification do not exist [is undertaken in] two [parts]: (1) showing that non-conceptual gnosis does not exist, and (2) showing that pure mundane gnosis does not exist.

5.2.2.1. Of the [two], in what sense is non-conceptual gnosis non-existent?

Likewise, as for those pure gnoses,29 which are conceived of as arising
[From] a series of particularly wholesome factors and [from] contemplating the dharmadhātu, [...]30

Just as the mind is not existent, so too is gnosis not existent. How can that be? These non-conceptual gnoses of a buddha, which are free from all manifold marks [consisting in appearances]31 and are thought to arise—are [so] imagined—in virtue of a continuum [of]

29 The commentary interprets the phrase 'those pure gnoses' (dag pa'i ye shes de dag) as 'those pure non-conceptual gnoses' (dag pa'i rnam par mi riog pa'i ye shes de dag). Whether this is the intention of the basic text is unclear. If it is indeed an autocorrection, as claimed by the tradition, the intention could hardly be otherwise. However, as pointed out above (see chapter three, §6.A.i.b), the basic text and its commentary may well have been composed by different authors. If one reads 'those pure non-conceptual gnoses,' there is the problem of understanding the plural. If the plural does not refer to the two kinds of gnosis (i.e. non-conceptual and pure mundane gnoses), the only other apparent option is 'multiple instances of non-conceptual gnosis.'

30 Citing the Bodhicittabhāvanā (P, fol. 4a2; D, fol. 3a7; S, vol. 33, p. 813.3–5; Tb, p. 566.1–2; Tk, p. 504.1–2; Bg, p. 320.3–4). The basic text shows some variants: de bzhin dag pa'i ye shes de dag 'shin tu' [TbTk om.] 'dge ba'i [Bg dag pa'i] rgyun [TbTkBg rgyu] nyid dang|| cho kyis byings nyid la ni de dag dmigs shing skye bar brtags [Tk brtag] pa yang||. As noted in the critical edition, the second line in the canonical version apparently underwent slight corruption during the textual transmission. The variants found in the versions from the rNying ma rgyud 'bum and the Bai ro rgyud 'bum are obviously erroneous. The parallel passage in the Byang chub sems bsجام pa'i rgyud (Tb, p. 653.4; Tk, p. 101.7) has in the first line de bzhin gshegs pa'i instead of de bzhin dag pa'i. The reading gshegs pa'i is very probably erroneous, for the reading dag pa'i is represented in the commentary. This line does not contain the faulty variants found in the other two rNying ma rgyud 'bum versions and reads like the canonical versions and the commentary (i.e. it does not omit shin tu and correctly reads rgyun). Unfortunately, the second line is missing in the Byang chub sems bsجام pa'i rgyud.

31 I have opted here for the reading in Bg, which has a genitive particle. The ergative kyis found in the canonical versions does not make much sense here. One possible solution would be to emend kyis to kyi sa, thus reading spros pa'i mtshan ma thams cad cannot be explained. One might consider emending yang to dang, thus reading dang dag pa instead of yang dag pa, the former in the sense of dang bral ba, that is, 'free from.' But Bg omits yang altogether—a reading that makes better sense both syntactically and semantically, and the one I have accepted. Finally, Bg has spros pa'i bag chags instead of spros pa'i mtshan ma, and it, too, makes good sense. In
immeasurable wholesome basic virtues, and because [one] perceives and conceives the infallible dharmadhātu\textsuperscript{32}—

[Their] nature is similar [to that of the mind, that is, they] exist on a par [with the mind], for [there] is no basis (gnas) for the vajra (i.e. [non-conceptual?] gnosis).\textsuperscript{33}

As for the word ‘vajra,’ the mind of sentient beings is the cause, or ‘base,’ of non-conceptual gnosis. This being the case, [and] since it has already been shown above that the mind itself [can] not be established and [so] is non-existent—the cause, [that is,] is non-existent—no result would come into being either. Therefore, [they] exist as equals, in that neither is established. Thus just as the mind is not established, so too is gnosis not established. Nor is momentary non-conceptual gnosis, which is claimed by the Vījñāṇavādin to be existent on the absolute level, established either. Why is this so?

The vajra pinnacles of the dharmadhātu, being indivisible (phyogs nyid med pas), are not momentary.\textsuperscript{34}

Those pinnacles or supreme [parts]—the vajra-like non-conceptual gnoses, which contemplate the dharmadhātu—[can] not be seen as [admitting] division (phyogs nyid) of any kind, and so how could [one] say that [they] are momentary?

5.2.2.2. Why\textsuperscript{35} is pure mundane gnosis non-existent?

The pure, basic wholesome virtues, [being merely] reflections, do not [actually] exist, and thus pure mundane gnosis does not exist [either].\textsuperscript{36}

that case the text would translate as: “These non-conceptual gnoses of a buddha, which are free from all residual impressions associated with manifoldness....”

\textsuperscript{32} This may be a rendering of a compound in Sanskrit (something like *abhriintadharma­dhiitupalabdhi), in which the word abhriinta was meant to qualify upalabdhi, not dharmadhātu. In that case, the compound can be translated as “correct perception and conception of the dharmadhātu.”

\textsuperscript{33} Citing the Bodhicittabhiivanā (P, fol. 4a2–3; D, fol. 3a7–b1; S, vol. 33, p. 813.5–6; Tb, p. 566.2; Tk, p. 504.2; Bg, 320.4). The reading of the basic text of the canonical versions is identical with the reading found in the commentary. Tb and Tk, however, have rje’i instead of rje, while Bg, like the D and Bg versions of the commentary, has gyur instead of ‘gyur. Like the Bai ro rgyud ‘bum version of the commentary, all of them have med phyir na instead of med pa’i phyir na of the canonical versions of commentary, and thus only thirteen rather than fifteen syllables. The parallel passage in the Byang chub sems bsgom pa’i rgyud (Tb, p. 653.4–5; Tk, pp. 101.7–102.1) reads slightly differently: rdo rje gnas med [Tk byed] phyir na mnyam gnas rang bzhiṅ ‘drar gyur nas], having rje (like the canonical version), and gyur nas instead of gyur dang. The reading byed in Tk can be explained orthographically if we assume an original archaic reading myed for med.

\textsuperscript{34} Citing the Bodhicittabhiivanā (P, fol. 4a3; D, fol. 3b1; S, vol. 33, p. 813.6–7; Tb, p. 566.2; Tk, p. 504.2–3; Bg, 320.4). The basic text, whose versions display no variants among themselves, reads identically. The parallel passage in the Byang chub sems bsgom pa’i rgyud (Tb, p. 653.5; Tk, p. 102.1) has rje’i instead of rje.

\textsuperscript{35} Or, according to Bg, which reads ji ltar, “How....”

\textsuperscript{36} Citing the Bodhicittabhiivanā (P, fol. 4a3–4; D, fol. 3b1; S, vol. 33, p. 813.7–8; Tb, p. 566.2–3; Tk, p. 504.3; Bg, pp. 320.4–321.1). Like the Bai ro rgyud ‘bum version of the commentary, the basic text has med pas (except Bg, which has med phyir) instead of med pa of the canonical version of the commentary. The Byang chub sems bsgom pa’i rgyud (Tb, p. 653.5–6; Tk, p. 102.1)
The basic wholesome virtues that are ‘pure as regards the three spheres’ (‘khor gsum yongs su dag pa: trimandala pariśuddha'),\(^{37}\) are like reflections and thus non-existent. Therefore, how could pure mundane gnosis that depends on them exist?

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\(^{37}\) As noted in chapter three, n. 83, ‘three spheres’ refers to (1) the actor, (2) the act, and (3) the recipient.
C. Atiśa’s Ekamṛtyupadeśa

We have seen that Mi-pham, in his *Me tog phreng ba*, mentions Atiśa as having postulated the non-existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*. As already stated, there exist several works by (or ascribed to) Atiśa in which the issue is addressed, including the *Ekamṛtyupadeśa*, *Ratnakarāṇḍodghāta*, *bDen gnyis kyi 'bum*, and *sPyod 'jug lam rim*. Because the latter three works came to my attention only shortly before the publication of this study, I shall merely present here a translation of the short passage from the *Ekamṛtyupadeśa*:

38 *Ekamṛtyupadeśa* (P, fol. 105a1–4; D, fol. 95a3–6; S, vol. 64, pp. 280.15–281.2). For the exact references in the other three works, see chapter three, n. 105.

39 On the reading of this sentence, see the corresponding note to the edition of the Tibetan text. Compare the English translation in Sherburne 2000, p. 417, which, having introduced no emendations to the text, reads: “there is no object to not objectify.”

40 Compare the *Suvikrāntavikrāmiparipṛcchā* (p. 8.12–14): *na hi jñānām vacanīyām nāpi jñānām kasyacid viśayāḥ | sarvaviśayavyatikrāntam hi jñānām | na ca jñānām viśayam |; Tib. (T, fol. 8b6–7; D, fol. 24a2): *de bas na ye shes ni brjod par bya ba ma yin zhing yul thams cad las rab tu ’das pa ste| ye shes ni gang gi yul yang ma yin no|| ye shes kyi yul yang gang yang ma yin no||. The Tibetan translation of this verse here differs from the canonical version:

\[
\text{mdor na sangs rgyas rnams kyi} \text{ni}| \\
\text{gzhis par ma gyur gzhis mi} \text{’gyur}| \\
\text{rang bzhin med pa’i rang bzhin can|} \\
\text{ji lta bur na gzhis par ’gyur|}.
\]

No Sanskrit text of this verse has survived. Compare the translation in Lindtner 1997, p. 47.

41 Compare the translation of this passage in Sherburne 2000, p. 417.
Works by Indian Authors

D. Candrabhairipāda’s Ratnamālā

Candraharipāda, in his Ratnamālā, divides Buddhist thought into seven systems, namely, those of the Vaibhaśikas, Sautrāntikas, Pratyekabuddhas, Sākāravādins, Nirākāravādins, Māyopamavādins, and Apratīṣṭhānāvādins. He presents in verse their main philosophical views, drawing mainly upon known Buddhist sources. In the passage dealing with the view of the Māyopamavāda and Apratīṣṭhānāvāda branches, he alludes to the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha. Candrabhairipāda, evidently making use of Yuktiśaṣṭikā 46 and 50, seems to consider the Māyopamavādins’ view (according to which a form of gnosis that is like illusion exists at the stage of a buddha) as one involving dispute, and the Apratīṣṭhānāvādins’ view (according to which gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha) as one beyond dispute. This is reminiscent of Rong-zom-pa’s categorization of some of the positions presented in the dKon cog ‘grel as disputed (rtsod gzhi dang bcas pa) and others as undisputed (rtsod gzhi med pa). Like Candrabhairipāda, Rong-zom-pa considers the first three positions (representing the different views among the proponents of Yogācāra-Mahāyāna, or Māyopamavāda, according to which gnosis does exist at the stage of a buddha) to be disputed. In contrast to Candrabhairipāda, however, he categorizes all other views concerning Buddhahood within conservative Buddhism, early Mahāyāna strands, and Yogācāra-Mahāyāna on which there is a consensus of opinion within the individual systems as undisputed. Although Rong-zom-pa does not explicitly refer to the fourth position (representing the Apratīṣṭhānāvāda view according to which gnosis does not exist at the stage of a buddha) as being undisputed, one can argue that he does so implicitly, inasmuch as he presents only one view for this branch without hinting at any dispute among its followers. In the verses cited below, which deal with the view of the Apratīṣṭhānāvāda, the existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha is denied with the set phrase that “there is nothing to be added and nothing to be removed.” There conceptual constructs are again compared to firewood, and the fire-like gnosis is said to become extinct once the fuel, that is, conceptual thought, is consumed. This position clearly favours the notion that the buddha-Bodies and the activities for the sake of sentient beings come about spontaneously on account of previous beneficial resources, compassion, and resolutions, just as wishes are fulfilled by means of a wish-fulfilling jewel and similar objects:

There is no difference
Between samsāra and nirvāṇa.
The absolutely correct cognition of samsāra
Is called nirvāṇa.45

43 For the Tibetan text and an English translation of Yuktiśaṣṭikā 46 and 50, see Lindtner 1997, pp. 86–89. The Sanskrit text of verse 46 has fortunately survived (ibid., p. 175).

44 Ratnamālā (P, fols. 69b4–70a3; D, fols. 71b2–72a1; S, vol. 63, pp. 1046.10–1047.9).

45 This verse is virtually a reproduction of Yuktiśaṣṭikā 6, which reads:

\[
\text{srid pa dang ni mya ngan 'das||}
\text{gnyis po 'di ni yod ma yin||}
\text{srid pa yongs su shes pa nyid|}
\text{mya ngan 'das zhes bya bar brjod|}
\]

The verse is one of the few for which the Sanskrit text has survived (Lindtner 1997, p. 174):
There is not even the slightest bit [in the way of] nirvāṇa.
Apart from samsāra.⁴６
In this regard, there is not even the slightest [thing] to be removed,
Nor is there the slightest [thing] to be added.
True [reality] should be perceived correctly.
Upon perceiving [it] correctly, [one] becomes liberated.⁴⁷
Once the fuel—that is, the world—is burnt up
In the fire—that is, emptiness—
The fire of true reality (i.e. emptiness) also dies out.
For example, just as the fire that has been ignited
Upon rubbing two [pieces of] wood burns this very [wood and then dies out],
So does the fire of gnosis itself die out
After [it] has consumed the fuel of conceptual thought.⁴⁸

nirvāṇam ca bhavaś caiva dvayam etan na vidyate |
parijñānām bhavasyaiva nirvāṇam iti kathyate ||.

For an English translation, see Lindtner 1997, p. 75.
⁴⁶ This is a slightly modified quotation of Hevajratantra II.iv32cd (p. 66):
samsārd rde nanyan nirvāṇam iti kathyate ||.

The Tibetan text reads (p. 67):
'khor ba spangs nas gzhed du ni|
mya'ngan 'das pa rtogs mi 'gyur[.]

⁴⁷ This is obviously a citation of Abhisamayālaṃkāra 5.21 (= Ratnagotravibhāga 1.154). For further references, see Wangchuk 2007, pp. 199–200, n. 11.

⁴⁸ Compare Bhavya's Madhyamakapradīpā (P, fol. 352b3–5; D, fol. 279b6–7; S, vol. 57, p. 1538.14–18), where the following two verses from the Ghanavyūha are cited:

ghzan yang 'phags pa rgyan stug po'i mdo las kyang|
ji ltar sreg par byed pa'i me[|
bsreg [P sreg] bya med pas mi gnas so[|
de bzhin bsreg bya lta tshig na[|
stong nyid me yang 'gag par 'gyur[|
ltu ba 'gog pa'i dus su yang[|
ye shes me yang mi 'byung stel|
nyon mongs thams cad sreg [P bsregs] par byed[|
nyon mongs bsregs [P bsreg] na rnam par mdzes[.]

These two verses from the Ghanavyūha are also cited in sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs’s gSung rab rin po che (P, fol. 181b1–2; D, fol. 273b3–4). The reading there, however, varies slightly, while the seventh line is missing, obviously due to aberratio oculi (both the seventh and eighth lines start with the word nyon mongs):

ji ltar bsreg [P sreg] bya tshig pa'i me[|
bsreg bya med pas mi gnas so[|
de bzhin bsreg bya lta tshig na[|
stong nyid me yang 'gag par 'gyur[|
ltu ba 'gog pa'i dus su yang[|
yang dag ye shes mi [D me] 'byung stel|
nyon mongs bsregs nas rnam par mdzes[.]
Nirvāṇa is neither an entity,  
Nor a non-entity, nor is [it] both,  
Nor does it exist as neither of the two.⁴⁹  
Its nature (lus) is inconceivable, unobstructed, and manifoldless.  

[Objection: In that case buddhas would] not [be able] to act for the benefit of sentient beings.  

[Answer]: Through the power of the accumulation of beneficial resources (bsod nams [kyi] tshogs: punyasambhāra),  
Of compassion, and of previous resolutions,  
The Victorious Ones—although [the thoughts] “[I] shall do” [or] “[I] do” do not occur to [them]⁵⁰—  
Are identical (lit. ‘of one taste’) in benefiting sentient beings,  
Just as the waters of the ocean [are one in taste].⁵¹  
[They are], for example, like a skilful carpenter  
Who performs the acts of carpentry.  
Activities for the benefit of sentient beings  
Constantly occur on account of the three Bodies,  
In the same way as [wishes are fulfilled on account of] a wish-fulfilling jewel, a wish-fulfilling tree, [or] a vase of fortune (bum bzang: bhadrghata).  

[The effects of a buddha] are like—[to take another] example—  
[The effects of a garudika] who has empowered a pillar  
[So that it can] cure diseases and the like long after his death.⁵²  
The buddhas of the non-contaminated sphere  
Are neither one nor many.  
As [they], like space, have no body,  
[They] are not many.  
As [they are conceived of] in analogy to (or: as a continuation of) [their] previous bodies,  
[They] are not one either.⁵³

See the similar example given by *Madhyamaka-Siṃha in his Drṣṭivibhāga (the pertinent passage is translated above, §1.A) and that given by Rong-zom-pa in his Theg ışhul (a translation is found in chapter three, §4.B).

⁴⁹ Compare the analysis of nirvāṇa in Mūlamadhyamakakārikā 25, a German translation of which is found in Frauwallner 1956, pp. 195–199.

⁵⁰ For the notion that buddhas act without conceptualizing the fact, see Mahāyānaśūtrālāmākāra 9.52. For an annotated English translation of this verse along with Vasubandhu’s Bhāṣya, see Jamspal 2004, p. 92.

⁵¹ For the notion that the buddhas are one in their salvific activities, and their being compared in this regard to rivers that merge once they have entered the ocean, see Mahāyānaśūtrālāmākāra 9.82–85. For an annotated English translation of these verses along with Vasubandhu’s Bhāṣya, see Jamspal 2004, pp. 103–104.

⁵² The verses stating that the salvific activities of buddhas occur spontaneously, like a wish-fulfilling jewel and similar objects, and comparing their effectiveness to that of a garuda pillar even after the ṛṣi who has empowered it has died are clearly based on Bodhicaryāvatāra 9.36–38. For annotated translations into German and English, see Steinkellner 1981, p. 120, and Crosby & Skilton 1995, pp. 118–119 (here, however, vv. 35–37), respectively. See also the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo (§IV.1.B.ii) above and the passage from Dharmamitra’s Prasphuṭapadā below (§2.B), where the analogy of the garuda pillar is also found.
When [they] perform salvific activities,
[They] are identical (lit. ‘of one taste’) in [their activities for] the benefit of sentient beings,
Just as the rays of one thousand suns shining in the sky
Blend into one [light].

53 For the notion that the buddhas are neither one nor many, see Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra 9.26, the formulation of which is very similar to this verse by Candraharipāda (see also ibid. 9.77). For an annotated English translation of this verse along with Vasubandhu’s Bhāṣya, see Jamspal 2004, p. 83.

54 For the notion that the salvific activities of the various buddhas are identical, and their being compared to rays of light that merge together to yield a unified effect, see Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra 9.29–30. For an annotated English translation of these verses along with Vasubandhu’s Bhāṣya, see Jamspal 2004, p. 84.
E. Bhavya’s *Madhyamakapradīpa*

In the seventh chapter of his *Madhyamakapradīpa*, which is devoted to the stages of meditation (*bsgom pa'i rim pa'i skabs*), Bhavya\(^{55}\) discusses the progress of *bodhisattvas* on the path (*lam: mārga*) and at the stages (*sa: bhūmi*), and their gradual perfecting of the qualities of a *buddha*, and comes to reject the existence of both pure mundane gnosis and non-conceptual gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*. He supports his argument that pure mundane gnosis does not exist at that stage by referring to the generally accepted notion that a *buddha*, being as he is constantly in meditative absorption, never descends to a post-meditative state during which pure mundane gnosis is said, in the case of *bodhisattvas*, to be occurring. His negation of non-conceptual gnosis is based on the argument that since the mind is non-existent, a mental element that some claim is a transformation of it could not exist either. The non-existence of non-conceptual gnosis is also employed by him to support his negation of pure mundane gnosis, since the latter is said to be a reflection of the former. Moreover, pure mundane gnosis is clearly conceived by him as subject to delusion and the processes of arising and ceasing, and thus can hardly be existent at the stage of a *buddha*. It is significant, however, that although Bhavya negates these two kinds of gnosis cultivated on the path, he uses the term self-occurring gnosis in connection with a *buddha*. But like Rong-zom-pa, he understands self-occurring gnosis to be another designation for true reality, which undergoes no change, and not to be referring to a mental element of any sort:\(^{56}\)

When [a *bodhisattva*] is at the Unshakable Stage (*sa mi g.yo ba: acalā bhūmiḥ*) (i.e. the eighth *bodhisattvabhūmi*), [the state marked by] the absence of characteristics is spontaneously attained, and thus [he] does not possess a material body (*gzugs kyi lus*), for the causes of the existence of [such] a body are eliminated.

**Question:** In that case, how could [a *bodhisattva*] act for the ripening of sentient beings and how could [he] perfect the qualities of a *buddha*?

**[Answer]:** The [*bodhisattva*] at the Unshakable Stage is one [who is at] the Youth Stage (*gzhon nu'i sa: kumarabhūmi*),\(^{57}\) and thus [he] is in no respect shaken or stained by the contamination of the womb, but is rather born miraculously manifesting a mind-made conglomerate (*yid kyi lus: manomayakīya*), under the influence of four causes and one condition.\(^{58}\) [He uses this birth] to act for the benefit of others and to perfect the qualities of *bhūmi*, see Dayal 1932, pp. 275, 277, 282 & 290.

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\(^{55}\) For a brief discussion of the authorship of this work, see above, chapter three, §6.A.i.e.

\(^{56}\) *Madhyamakapradīpa* (P, fol. 356a1–6; D, fol. 282a7–b4; S, vol. 57, pp. 1544.18–1545.9).

\(^{57}\) The *Dasabhūmikasūtra* explains the terms *acalā* and *kumarabhūmi* for the eighth stage as follows (as cited in *TSB*, s.v. *gzhon nu'i sa*): “This is the eighth stage of the gnosis of a *bodhisattva*. Because [the *bodhisattva*] cannot be drawn back [from it], it is called Unshakable. ... On account of its irreproachability, it is called the Youth Stage” (*‘di ni byang chub sems dpa'i ye shes kyi sa brgyad pa stel mi 'phrags pa'i phyir mi g.yo ba zhes bya'o’i ... kha na ma tho ba med pa'i phyir gzhon nu'i sa zhes bya'o’i]; *iyan bho jinaputra bodhisattvasya aștamś jñānabhūmiti acalety ucate ‘samhārīyatvat ... kumārabhūmiti ity ucyate anavadyavāt*). For general descriptions of the eighth *bhūmi*, see Dayal 1932, pp. 275, 277, 282 & 290.

\(^{58}\) Systems that argue for the *ekayāna* theory maintain that all beings possess the Buddha Nature and can one day become *buddhas*. Such doctrinal claims entail problems, such as how an *arhat*, who has eliminated the causes and conditions relating to rebirths in *samsāra*, could take birth again and proceed on to a *bodhisattva* career. To resolve this problem, the Tathāgatagarbha literature seems to have resorted to the idea of a birth by way of a *mind-made conglomerate,* that
is, a conglomerate that has been produced through the power of the mind or will and not of karma (a notion found already in Dīghanikāya I 77; for an English translation, see Walshe 1987, p. 103). The Tibetan, however, seems to understand the compound to mean ‘a conglomerate consisting of mental factors.’ This mind-made conglomerate is said to be of three kinds, namely, those characteristic of arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and advanced bodhisattvas (all of whom have eliminated the causes of ordinary birth). The so-called mind-made conglomerate is said to be free of the five (defiled) aggregates of appropriation (upādānaskandha: nye bar len pa ’i phung po) that define ordinary beings. It is unclear to me what the four causes and one condition for the arising of the mind-made conglomerate are that Bhavya mentions. The Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā explicitly names only one condition and one cause in this connection. It states (pp. 32.14–33.3; Tib. P, fols. 94b7–95b8; D, fols. 92a3–93a2; S, vol. 70, pp. 1028.9–1030.15) that even for those who abide in the immaculate sphere (anāsravadhātu: zag pa med pa ’i dbyings)—namely, arhats, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas who have obtained [the ten] powers—there are four hindrances (paripanţha: gegs) to the attainment of the four perfections of the dharma$kāya of a tathāgata, that is, the perfections of permanence (nityapāramitā: rtag pa ’i pha rol tu phyin pa), of bliss (sukhāpāramitā: bde ba ’i pha rol tu phyin pa), of self (ātmapāramitā: bdag gi pha rol tu phyin pa), and of purity (subhāpāramitā: gtsas ba ’i pha rol tu phyin pa). (See Takasaki 1966, p. 209, n. 77, where it is stated that these four perfections are peculiar to the tathāgataagarbha theory and that the first appearance of this theory is probably in Śrīmālavīśûṭra). The four hindrances are identified there as follows: (1) The ‘characteristic relating to a condition’ (pratyayalakṣaṇa: rgyen gyi mtshan nyid), namely, the ‘place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance’ or the ‘place of residual impressions associated with ignorance’ (avidyāvāsvābhāmi: ma rig pa ’i gnas kyi sa; avidyāvāsva$nābhūmi: ma rig pa ’i bag chags kyi sa). It is said to be analogous, in the case of an ordinary being, to ignorance, which in turn is the condition leading to the impulses (sambhāra: ‘du byed). (2) The ‘characteristic relating to a cause’ (hetulakṣaṇa: rgyu ’i mtshan nyid), namely, ‘immaculate actions’ (anāsravakarman: zag pa med pa ’i las); it has the ‘place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance’ as its conditioning factor. It is said to be analogous to the impulses in the case of ordinary beings. (3) The ‘characteristic relating to arising’ (sambhavalakṣaṇa: ‘byung ba ’i mtshan nyid), namely, the coming into being of the three kinds of mind-made conglomerates (manomaya$makha$ma$manomayākāya: yid kyi rang behin gyi lus); it has immaculate actions as its cause, which in turn have the ‘place of residual impressions associated with ignorance’ as their conditioning factor. It is said to be analogous to the coming into being (abhinivṛtti: mgon par ‘grub pa) in the three existences (tri$bhava: srid pa gsum), which in turn has stained actions (sāsravakarman: zag pa dang bcas pa ’i las) as its cause, and they in turn have the four appropriations (upādāna: nye bar len pa) as their conditioning factor. (4) The ‘characteristic relating to cessation’ (vibhavalakṣaṇa: ‘jig pa ’i mtshan nyid), namely, inconceivable transformatory death-and-rebirth (acintyā pārīṇāmi$kṛ cyutth: bsam gyis mi khyab par [= pa ’i?] yongs su bsgyur ba ’i ’chi ’pho ba); it has the existence of the three kinds of mind-made conglomerates as its conditioning factor. It is said to be analogous to aging and dying (jātarmanasa: rga shi) in the case of ordinary beings, and these two in turn have birth (jāti: skye ba) as a conditioning factor. For an annotated translation of this passage, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 214–216. Perhaps of relevance, too, is the passage from the Sāgaramātiparipṛccā, cited in the Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā (p. 47.7–16; Tib. P, fol. 103a5–8; D, fol. 99b3–6; S, vol. 70, p. 1046.6–15), in which the eight ‘defilements endowed with virtuous roots’ (kusalamālasamprajñātā klesāh: dge ba ’i rtsa ba dang mshungs par ldan pa ’i nyon mongs pa) are given as the causes of the bodhisattvas’ residing in the world. For a translation of it, see Takasaki 1966, p. 245. See also the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo (§C.1), n. 95, where the term ‘place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance’ (ma rig pa ’i gnas kyi sa, or, as Rong­zom­pa has it, gnas kyi sa ’i ma rig pa) is discussed.

Seyfort Ruegg touches on the term ma rig pa ’i bag chags kyi sa (translated by him as ‘the plane consisting of the Impregnations-belonging-to-Ignorance’) in his brief assessment of
a buddha by means of the subsequently attained pure mundane gnosis. Once [he] has attained the Diamond-like Samādhi (rdo rje lha bu'i ting nge 'dzin: vajropamasamādhi), that is, the stage of a buddha, [he] does not partake of a post-meditative state, for the Great Lord of Yogins (rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po: mahāyogīśvara) is constantly in meditative absorption, and [his] self-occurring gnosis, which is true reality, that is, the great bodhicitta,59 undergoes no change; [it] neither arises nor arises-and-continues ('jug pa: pravṛtti).

After citing the Jhānālokālaṃkāra (referred to by him as Sangs rgyas thams cad kyi yul la 'jug pa: Sarvabuddhaviśayāvatāra) in support of this last statement that at the stage of a buddha self-occurring gnosis neither arises nor arises-and-continues,60 Bhavya continues his refutation of the existence of the two gnoses with the following logical argumentation:61

Thus how can pure mundane gnosis exist when [one] has practised principles [of conduct] such as the five perfections62 and the four ‘means of gathering (or: attracting) [disciples]’ (bsdu ba'i dngos po: samgrahavastu),63 by [remaining] pure as regards the three spheres over a long period of time; has properly woken up from the deep slumber of ignorance; has [become] receptive to [the fact] that the general and specific characteristics of all phenomena are that [they] are unarisen [even] for one moment; and has passed into complete nirvāṇa in the sphere where there are no remains of the psycho-physiological complex? Moreover, if there were an entity called mind that is essentially existent and [whose existence can] be established, then there would indeed also exist gnosis [as] its (i.e.

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Guenther’s translation of the Dwags po thar rgyan. Referring to the passage from the Ratnagotravibhagavyākhya paraphrased above, he comments upon the two variants of this expression and the Tibetan translation of them, and briefly alludes to the theory of the ‘mind-made conglomerate’ as “one of the most fundamental doctrines of Mahāyāna, especially as it is understood in Tibet,” since it underpins the theory of the “universal Bodhi and the ekayāna” (Seyfort Ruegg 1962, pp. 327–328).

59 On the notion of bodhicitta as gnosis and as true reality, see Wangchuk 2007, chapter six, where various concepts of bodhicitta are discussed, including what Wangchuk designates gnoseological bodhicitta (pp. 198–205) and ontological bodhicitta (pp. 205–217).

60 For the passage cited, see the Jhānālokālaṃkāra (Skt. ed., p. 68.19–21; see also translit., p. 138.8–9 (Sanskrit) and p. 138.19–21 (Tibetan)).

61 Madhyamakapradīpa (P, fol. 356a7–b5; D, fols. 282b5–283a2; S, vol. 57, pp. 1545.12–1546.5).

62 It is probably the perfection of insight (prajñāpāramitā: shes rab pha rol tu phyin pa) that is meant to be excluded here.

63 The four ‘means of gathering (or: attracting) [disciples]’ are (1) giving (sbyin pa: dāna), (2) pleasant speech (snyan par smra ba: priyavacana or the like), (3) conduct for the benefit [of others] (don spyod pa: arthacaryā), and (4) [the adoption of] the same [spiritual] goals [for oneself and others] (don mthun pa: samānārthata). For references, see BHSD, s.v. samgraha-vastu, and TSD, s.v. bsdu ba'i dngos po. According to BHSD, s.v. samānārthata (which remarks that the Pāli equivalent is samānattā, as if *samānāmatā), the fourth means is defined by the Mahāvastu as samānaskhādūkhathā, that is, ‘having the same joys and sorrows (with others),’ or simply ‘sympathy,’ which may have been the older interpretation. For a translation of the passage in the 18,000-line Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra concerning the four means, with a focus on that of giving, see Conze 1975, pp. 578–580.
the mind's) transformation into a completely pure basis [of existence]. However, since it [can] be established that the mind is [something that] from the very beginning has not existed in the form of a substantial entity, how could so-called non-conceptual gnosis exist? Because it (i.e. non-conceptual gnosis) is non-existent, so-called pure mundane gnosis, which [is supposed to] exist as a reflection of it, cannot be existent either. If a *buddha* were to be endowed with it (i.e. pure mundane gnosis), it would lead to [the undesired consequence] that [he] would suffer delusions, would not be meditatively absorbed in [the state of] equanimity, and would not be [one whose] essence is the *dharmakāya*, and also that a *tathāgata* would undergo [the processes of] arising and ceasing.

This passage is followed by citations from various authoritative scriptures that appear to confirm the validity of the undesired consequences just put forward. Bhavya then concludes this paragraph with the following two verses:64

*Buddhas* are constantly
Absorbed meditatively in true reality.
In that inexpressible state
There is neither arising-and-continuing nor ceasing,
How could then gnosis [generated on the path exist],
Much less [the two phases of] absorption and post-meditation?
If they (i.e. *buddhas*) partook of them,
How would [they] differ [from *bodhisattvas*] who have entered the stages?

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2. Proponents of the Existence of the Purified Dharmadhātu and Non-Conceptual Gnosis

A. Nāgāmītra’s Kāyatrāyāvatāramukha and Jñānacandra’s Commentary, the Kāyatrāyavrūti

Nāgāmītra’s work on the three kāyas entitled Kāyatrāyāvatāramukha and the commentary on it by Jñānacandra entitled Kāyatrāyavrūti are examples of works in which the position maintaining the existence of both the dharmadhātu and non-conceptual gnosis at the stage of a buddha is propagated. In the following, I shall cite relevant passages from Nāgāmītra’s work and from Jñānacandra’s commentary, which is often very helpful in understanding the verses of the basic text, containing as it does extended explanations relevant to our discussion.65

Nāgāmītra makes his position very clear right at the beginning of his work, in the following verse:66

Except for unstained true reality67
And non-conceptual gnosis,
No constituents of the buddhas
Whatsoever exist. (6)68

Although Nāgāmītra’s work does not display the formal characteristics of a debate, it is clear that his statements are to a great extent aimed at warding off any possible critique. This is confirmed by Jñānacandra, who, in his commentary, often explicitly formulates hypothetical objections by opponents to which the verses of the basic text ‘reply.’

Having made his position clear, Nāgāmītra goes on to state the following verses, which are intended to explain how the various expressions of a buddha are possible despite the existence of only non-conceptual gnosis:69

65 The numbers indicating the location of the verses in the text are mine. The verses of the basic text are not reproduced in the translation of the commentary—being only indicated by their numbers—in order to avoid repetition. They are included (in bold letters) in the edition of the Tibetan text, however, since the reading in the commentary occasionally differs from that of the basic text. As a translation of them has not been provided within the translation of the commentary, they are enclosed within square brackets. The words or phrases in the verses cited in the commentary that present a reading different from the basic text are underlined. Moreover, since Jñānacandra’s commentary was generally consulted and its explanations were taken into consideration during the translation of the basic verses, references to the corresponding passages in the commentary are given even in cases where the commentary itself was not cited.

66 Kāyatrāyāvatāramukha (P, fol. 2a6–b1; D, fol. 2a1–2; S, vol. 63, p. 4.2–4).

67 The term ‘unstained true reality’ (dri med de bzhin nyid: nirmalā tathatāḥ) is employed in the Ratnagotravibhāga in opposition to ‘stained true reality’ (dri bcas de bzhin nyid: samalā tathatāḥ). The latter refers to the Buddha Nature (tathāgatagarbha)—that is, true reality in its stained state—and the former to a buddha’s dharmakāya (tathāgatadharmaṃkāya), the same reality in its purified state. See Takasaki 1966, p. 187.

68 For the commentary on this verse, see the Kāyatrāyavrūti (P, fol. 11a5–b1; D, fol. 10a3–6; S, vol. 63, p. 25.10–20).

69 Kāyatrāyāvatāramukha (P, fol. 2b3–6; D, fol. 2a4–b1; S, vol. 63, p. 4.9–15).
Just as conceptuality is referred to
As [the underlying factor of] all phenomena [associated with] pollution (śamkṛśa),
So [can it be established that non-conceptuality
] as the underlying factor of all [ostensible] constituents of a buddha. (10)
The Fully Awakened Ones, who do not have
Any constituent other than that,
Are called Great Sages (11)
On account of it (i.e. their non-conceptual gnosis).
He who [can be Buddhahood can] be established purely on the basis of it (i.e. non-conceptual
gnosis)
Is described [by sentient beings] in different ways.
Like the arrangement of different [patterns] in space,
[He] is said to be very amazing. (12)

Nāgamitra further refers to a possible critique regarding the question how a buddha can
act if conceptual thoughts do not exist, and argues that the salvific activities of a buddha
result from the impetus of his previous resolutions, just as one rises from the meditative
state of cessation, where no conceptual thoughts exist, on account of a decision made
before entering that meditative state: (13)

Just as [the manifold manifestations] are said
To be [objects that] have been brought under control (byin rlabs: adhisthāna) by buddhas,
who [have attained] nirvāṇa,
So are also the salvific activities said
To [arise] because of those who are free from conceptual thoughts. (15)
In this way, although conceptual thoughts do not exist,
[The activities come about] on account of an earlier impetus; (14)
This is similar to
The rising from [the meditative state of] cessation ('gog pa'i snyoms par 'jug pa):
niruddhamāṇā). (16)
In his commentary on verse 15, Jñānacandra responds to another hypothetical critique: 76

[Objection]: If gnosis is non-conceptual, would not all these [salvific] actions (tha snyad) [that concern] objects that are entities [subject to] manifoldness be impossible? How could [gnosis] be non-conceptual and [at the same time work] as a cause upon a conceptual entity? [Only] if it were conceptual would this be [possible]. In view of this, how could [your premise] be tenable in the absence of conceptual thoughts?

[Response]: [In response], the following [verse] is stated:

[...verse 15...]

How can [the effects of] all those [objects] that—for the purpose of benefiting future disciples—have been brought under control by those who have [already] entered the state of nirvāṇa without remains of the psycho-physiological complex (phung po: skandha), and 77 [by other saints] including [those of] the Śrāvakas, such as Mahākāśyapa, still be perceived as existing even now? If [you] maintain that [the objects] brought under control for [their] future [effect] are apparent to [living] Śrāvaka [saints] as a result of pure mundane cognition (i.e. gnosis), which was previously attained subsequent to [their attaining non-conceptual gnosis] and had been actualized by them, [then the situation] is similar [in the case of a buddha]. The [buddhas'] salvific activities, too, appear because of the tathāgatas, who abide in the sphere of non-conceptuality and manifoldlessness, solely by the power of the ripening of the seeds of resolutions implanted while [they were] still cultivating the way of a bodhisattva. Thus it is made clear that if even the power of those who possess minute wholesome karmas, such as the Śrāvaka [saints], is exceptional, how much more is the power of the buddhas, who have been gathering a great many accumulations of gnosis and beneficial resources for numerous eons.

With regard to the ability of a buddha to act in comparison with that of a meditator to rise from the meditative state of cessation, Jñānacandra states the following: 78

The following [verse] is stated in order to establish this point on the basis of another example:

[...verse 16...]

Those who have entered the meditative state of cessation ('gog pa la snyoms par 'jug pa: nirodhasamāpatti) do not have even the smallest activity in the mind—"movements" (yongs su g.yo ba) of conceptual thought—during samādhi. Still, "on account of an earlier impetus," [that is,) when [they] wish to enter the meditative state of cessation, [they] mark out [to themselves] a sound such as that of a gong (gandī) in advance, thinking: "I shall rise from this meditative concentration as soon as I hear the sound of a gong." Thus they enter the meditative state [of cessation] having consciously made [this] a sign (mtshan mar


77 The particle dang suggests that phung po lhag ma med pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa'i gnas skabs brnyes pa rnams seems to refer only to buddhas. This is probably not meant to imply, however, that other saints, such as Mahākāśyapa, have not entered the state of nirvāṇa without remains, but merely to foreground the buddhas. This interpretation conforms to the verse, which reads sangs rgyas rnams kyis byin rlabs. If we assume, though, that the particle dang is an interpolation, this and the following phrase can be taken in apposition to one another: "those who have [already] entered the state of nirvāṇa where there are no remains of the psycho-physiological complex, that is, Śrāvaka [saints], such as Mahākāśyapa, and so forth (i.e. pratyekabuddhas and buddhas)."

78 Kāyatrayavrtti (P, fol. 14a2–7; D, fols. 12b5–13a2; S, vol. 63, pp. 31.11–32.4).
Nägamitra argues further that multiple emanations of the buddha-Bodies are possible despite the absence of conceptual thought, the accepted cause of manifoldness, and despite the fact that the dharma-kāya is homogeneous. To this end he employs the popular example of the sun, which, for all its lacking conceptual thought, still shines—and whose light is reflected—in the world; and the example of space—or rather the sky, which, although homogeneous in nature, is reflected in water in different ways.80

For example, on account of [objects], such as the sun,

Which lack conceptual thought,

There appear [in] the world

Reflections arising in vessels containing water. (17)

Likewise, on the strength of the buddhas,

Who are characterized by non-conceptuality,

The reflections of the two [material buddha]-Bodies Constantly appear to worthy ones.81 (18)

Although reflections of the sky

Appear in different [ways],

Given the diversity of water and vessels,

There is no diversity within the sky itself. (19)

Likewise, although different reflections

Appear from the dharma-kāya

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79 The term mtshan mar 'dzin pa: nimittodgrahana is to be understood here as bkra bar 'dzin pa: citrikāra (see Mvy, no. 7563). The term citrikāra, literally meaning ‘making variegated,’ ‘decorating,’ ‘painting’ or ‘making into a picture’ (MW, s.v. citri; BHSD, s.v. citrikāra), is used to denote the conscious cognitive process of ‘conceiving as a sign or an image,’ ‘taking for a sign’ or ‘marking out.’ Note that nimittodgraha is also the defining characteristic of ‘ideation’ or ‘recognitive and notional consciousness’ (śaṅjñā: ‘du shes). See, for example, TSD, s.v. mtshan mar 'dzin pa: 'du shes ni yul la mtshan mar 'dzin pa'o], śaṅjñā viśayanimittodgrahanam (referring to the Triṃśikāvijñaptibhaṭṭasya). See also Tshig mdzod chen mo, s.v. 'du shes, where śaṅjñā is explained as bsam pa'am] mtshan mar 'dzin pa, that is, ‘thinking or taking as a sign,’ and s.v. rtog bcas 'du shes, where ‘conceptual, recognitive and notional consciousness’ is explained as yid kyi 'du shes lta bu bkra bar 'dzin pa, that is, ‘conceiving as or taking for a sign, as in the recognitive and notional consciousness of the mind.’

80 Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 2b8–3a3; D, fol. 2b3–5; S, vol. 63, p. 5.1–9).

81 The analogy of the sun is the fifth of the nine illustrations found in the Ratnagotravibhāga (which are based in turn on the Jiānālokālamkāra); see Ratnagotravibhāga 4.58–66. For a translation of this passage, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 369–371. The simile of vessels containing water is also found there (Ratnagotravibhāga 4.62; Takasaki 1966, p. 370). See also the Jiānālokālamkāra (Skt. ed. §11, pp.’37–40; and translit., pp. 56–63, where the Tibetan and Chinese translations are also provided).
Due to the diversity of thought in disciples,  
The [\textit{dharmak\text{\^{a}}ya}] itself lacks diversity.\textsuperscript{82} (20)

With regard to the examples of the sun and the space, Jñ\={a}nacandra comments that the example of rising from the meditative state of cessation after first creating a previous impulse—employed by analogy with a \textit{buddha}'s ability to rise from \textit{nirv\=ana} in order to act for the sake of sentient beings—may well be too difficult to comprehend. Therefore, he states, N\={a}gamitra employs the example of the sun, one plain to all. Here there is clearly a shift from the conservative model regarding a \textit{buddha}'s ability to act, which is found, as already stated, in earlier Yog\={a}c\=ara works and exemplified by analogies such as the rising from the meditative state of cessation and the accomplishments of a \textit{\textit{r\=si}} long after his death, to the later model found in the \textit{Ratnagotravibh\=aga} and related works:\textsuperscript{83}

Or, for the time being, you should leave aside such [analogies like] the rising [from meditation] due to a previous impulse, which are not directly accessible to all ordinary beings, and instead look at the sun: although [the sun] does not conceptualize, [its] reflection still arises and separately appears in different vessels containing water. In order to [demonstrate] this, [the following verse] is stated:

\[\ldots\text{verse 17}\ldots\]

It is taught that [the arising and appearing of the \textit{buddha-Bodies}] is not determined due to the existence of conceptual thought [at the stage of a \textit{buddha}]; rather, [the Bodies] appear even without conceptualization. As for [expressions] such as 'the sun,' these occur in \textit{s\=utra}s, [in] analogies involving the sun, a jewel, and the like. This is spoken with these \textit{s\=utra}s in mind.\textsuperscript{84} In this context, the following has been stated: The sun does not conceive the thought "May my reflection arise in such and such a vessel containing water. May [it] not appear in such and such [a vessel that lacks water]." Yet [its reflection] appears in this manner, given the extremely diverse [\textit{modi operandi} of the principle of] dependent origination, even without [its] having so conceived. Why should not also these [\textit{buddha-Bodies}] appear in a similar manner, on account of the excellent gnosis (i.e. non-conceptual gnosis)? In order to demonstrate this, [the following verse] is stated:

\[\ldots\text{verse 18}\ldots\]

Why does it matter whether [the basis for the appearance is] conceptual or non-conceptual? Two reflections, designated \textit{nirm\=ana[k\=\text{\^{a}}ya]} and \textit{sambhoga[k\=\text{\^{a}}ya]}, arise in accordance with the [karmic] lot [of disciples], on account of such power on the part of gnosis. This is a brief explanation. For example, if the reflection of Śakra (\textit{brgya byin})\textsuperscript{85} appears to arise on the surface of lapis lazuli, living beings whose nature is such that [they] are tamed by seeing him (i.e. Śakra) generate basic wholesome virtues [by thinking], "How we wish ourselves to become like him!" Likewise, these two reflections of the \textit{sugatas} appear to living beings in accordance with [the latter's] basic wholesome virtues, and upon seeing them, those

\textsuperscript{82} The analogy of space is the eighth of the nine illustrations found in the \textit{Ratnagotravibh\=aga}; see \textit{op. cit.}, 4.73–74. For a translation, see Takasaki 1966, p. 373. See also the Jñ\={a}n\=alokālām\=k\=āra (Skt. ed. §15, pp. 45.14–46.20; and translit., pp. 74–77, where the Tibetan and Chinese translations are provided as well), which, as already noted by Takasaki, has space as the ninth illustration.

\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Kayatrayavṛtī} (P, fol. 14a7–15a5; D, fol. 13a2–b7; S, vol. 63, pp. 32.4–34.5).

\textsuperscript{84} Jñ\={a}nacandra may have been thinking here in particular of the Jñ\={a}n\=alokālām\=k\=āra.

\textsuperscript{85} The epithet Śakra, literally meaning 'strong,' 'powerful,' 'mighty,' is employed in the Vedic context to designate various gods, but especially Indra (\textit{MW}, s.v. \textit{sakra}). In the Buddhist context Śakra invariably refers to Indra.
sentient beings who are [destined] to be tamed by a buddha (i.e. by a sambhogakāya), or else those who are [destined] to be tamed by [a buddha in] the form of a sentient being (i.e. by a nirmānakāya), gather exalted basic wholesome virtues. 86

[Objection]: If you maintain this, how could the uniform dharmakāya be the cause of two different reflections. 87 If the cause is uniform, how could the result (lit. ‘that which has arisen from the cause’) be diverse?

[Response]: In order to explain this, [the following verse] is stated:

[...verse 19...]

For example, although the sky is not of a heterogeneous nature, [its reflections] appear as if it were of a heterogeneous nature, [that is,] in diverse [forms], such as long, short, or yellow, on account of the diversity of the water and vessels. If there were no such diversity of water and vessels on earth one would not perceive [the reflections], even though one might try to perceive [them] with much concentration, but as far as the sky is concerned, there is no diversity whatsoever. Likewise, though the dharmakāya, which has no nature that diverse reflections are inherent to, appears as if it had a heterogeneous nature, there is not the subtlest diversity whatsoever. In order [to show this, the following verse] is taught:

[...verse 20...]

One should certainly accept that the deeds accomplished [by the buddhas] for the sake of all sentient beings do exist even without [the buddhas having to] conceptualize.

Nāgamitra continues by arguing that a buddha’s gnosis must be non-conceptual in order for that buddha to be omniscient and to be able to act for the benefit of others: 88

If [a buddha's gnosis] were not non-conceptual, A buddha would not [be able] to act for the sake of others.

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86 Concerning the accessibility of the different buddha-Bodies to the various living beings, Rong­zom-pa, in his Grub mtha'i brjed byang, states that the dharmakāya is perceptible to tathāgatas, the sambhogakāya to bodhisattvas at all ten stages, and the nirmānakāya to (a) worthy ordinary living beings, (b) those (bodhisattvas) at the stage at which one practises by means of believing trust (adhimukticaryābhūmi), (c) Śrāvaka [saints] and (d) pratyekabuddhas (ibid., B, fol. 346a1–3; D, p. 223.18–21: chos kyi sku ni de bzhin gshegs pa'i spyod yul du snang la| longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku ni sa bu'i byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyi spyod yul du snang zhing| sprul pa'i sku ni so so'i skye bo skal pa dang [dan pa dang| mos pas spyod pa'i sa dang ryan thos dang rang rgyal ba rnam kyi spyod yul du snang bas] ....). See also ibid. (B, fol. 345a5–b2; D, pp. 222.24–223.7), where he makes a similar statement and additionally names Ghanavyūha, Akanśtha, and Jambudvīpa as the places where the three Bodies respectively appear (de la chos kyi sku ni de bzhin gshegs pa'i spyod yul du yod de| stug po bkod pa'i zhung kham na| sangs rgyas thams cad kyi spyod yul du mshan ma med par lhun gyis grub par yod la| longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku ni byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyi spyod yul du yod de| 'og min gyi gnas na byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyi 'khor gyi [D gi, B kyi] dkyil 'khor chen po la ting nge 'dzin gyischos ston par mzung do| sprul pa'i sku ni mos pas spyod pa'i sa pa dang| 'gro ba skal ba [D pa] dang ldan pa rnam kyi spyod yul du yod de| 'dzam bu'i gling bye ba phrag bgyar snang bas yod do]].

The idea communicated in this example is embedded in the first of the nine illustrations found in the Ratnagotravibhāga, in which the analogy with Indra is drawn (ibid., 4.14–30). For a translation of it, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 356–359. See also the Jñānālokałākāra (Skt. ed. §6, pp. 25–28; and translit., pp. 20–29, where the Tibetan and Chinese translations are provided as well).

87 It is unclear what the function of the word ji ltar at the beginning of this objection is. Could ji ltar ... ji ltar be a rendering of yathā katham ("how?")?

88 Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 3a3–4; D, fol. 2b5–6; S, vol. 63, p. 5.9–11).
In such a case, [a buddha’s] omniscience could not be established, and thus [the prospects of a buddha’s activities for] the sake of others would be ruined. (21)

In his comment on this verse, Jñānacandra argues that a buddha’s salvific activities are not possible if a buddha possesses conceptual thoughts. He does so by posing three questions to his opponents, as follows: 89

If this were not the case (i.e. if a buddha’s salvific activities were not carried out without conceptualization), (1) how could [a buddha’s] gnosis simultaneously engage in (a) the different sets of cognitions (shes pa ’i tshogs) which result from various conceptual thoughts—[namely, those of] the limitless ‘varieties’ (ris kyi rnam pa) of [sentient beings] to be tamed, which result from the diversity of dispositions (khams), 90 destinations (’gro ba), and modes (lit. ‘place’) of birth (skye gnas), and [the notions of] past, future, and present, subtle and gross, permanent and impermanent, existent and non-existent, and the like—and (b) all objects of knowledge? (2) How could [a buddha] be called omniscient if [he] did not simultaneously cognize [all objects of knowledge] on the basis of a positive determination (yongs su bcad pa: pariccheda)? 91 And (3) how could he perceive the thoughts of [sentient beings] to be tamed at different times? In order to explain these [points, the following] has been taught:

[...verse 21ab...]

[In] this [verse] the following is expressed: It will be shown 92 that not to accept this would be to do away with the omniscience of the Exalted One, the Tathāgata, the Guru of the Three Realms, and [thus] to admit that [the prospects of a buddha’s activities for] the sake of others are ruined. Therefore, [the following] is stated:

[...verse 21cd...]

In the passage that follows Jñānacandra goes on to present arguments for and against the position that only non-conceptual gnosis exists at the stage of a buddha. These arguments primarily involve the concept of omniscience as understood by him and his opponents (who assert the existence of conceptual thoughts, obviously referring to pure mundane gnosis). (As already stated, however, the various conceptions of omniscience, despite their connection with the question regarding the existence and nature of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, are beyond the scope of the present study.) The main point that Jñānacandra seems to make is that omniscience, which he takes to be a simultaneous

89 Kāyatrayavṛtti (P, fol. 15a5–b2; D, fols. 13b7–14a4; S, vol. 63, p. 34.5–19).
90 Contextually, khams seems to refer to spiritual dispositions in the sense of gotra, not to the three realms of existence (i.e. Kāmadhātu, Rūpadhātu, and Ārūpyadhātu), the latter being subsumed under ’gro ba.
91 For a brief remark on the terms positive determination (pariccheda: yongs su bcad pa) and negative determination (vyavaccheda: rnam par bcad pa), see chapter four, n. 141.
92 See the corresponding note in the critical edition, where it is suggested that the text here might be corrupt due to dittography.
93 In the following passages, Jñānacandra comments on verses 22 and 23 of the basic text, which address the question of how a buddha’s omniscience arises-and-continues, that is, whether it cognizes all phenomena simultaneously or sequentially. As the nature of a buddha’s omniscience and the debate surrounding it do not directly concern our discussion, I do not cite these passages.
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direct cognition of all objects of knowledge in a non-dual manner (i.e. free from the object–subject dichotomy), is possible only if a Buddha is devoid of conceptual thoughts. The underlying reason for this is that for him conceptualization automatically implies sequential cognition (e.g. in the case of the cognition of the existence or non-existence of given phenomena, the latter are mutually exclusive and thus cannot be cognized simultaneously), and sequential cognition by definition cannot be omniscience.

In the following verses, Nagamitra presents his understanding of non-conceptual gnosis as the transformation of conceptual thought, as the subject of the dharmadhātu, and as being non-dual.⁹⁴

Because non-conceptual gnosis
Cognitively penetrates, eliminates, and actualizes
The three svabhāvas,⁹⁵
The [Buddha]-Bodies, which are the result of this [process], are attained. (66)
There is no other sublime gnosis [at the stage of a Buddha]
Apart from non-conceptual gnosis;
There is no other sublime object of knowledge
Than the object of knowledge that is the dharmadhātu. (67)
The duality resulting from the distinction between the object of knowledge and gnosis
Is transformed into non-duality;
The conceptual [into] the non-conceptual.
Such is [the nature of] transformation. (68)
Just as the conceptual [mind is in reality non-conceptual],
So too should unstained gnosis be considered non-conceptual.
Just as dual [phenomena are in reality non-dual],
So [should] the essence of true reality⁹⁶ be considered non-dual in nature.⁹⁷ (69)

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⁹⁴ Kāyatrayāvartāramukha (P, fol. 5a3–6; D, fol. 4b1–4; S, vol. 63, p. 9.9–18).
⁹⁵ Apparently, the three processes of yongs su shes pa (‘cognitively penetrate’), spong ba (‘eliminate’), and mngon du mdzad pa (‘actualize’) correspond to the three svabhāvas (‘natures’), namely, respectively to parikalpita: kun brtags (the ‘imagined’), paratantra: gzhan dbang (the ‘dependent’), and parinispanna: yongs grub (the ‘perfect’); that is, non-conceptual gnosis cognitively penetrates the ‘imagined’ (e.g. as unreal), eliminates the contaminated ‘dependent,’ and actualizes the ‘perfect’ (i.e. true reality). See also Jñānacandra’s commentary cited in the following passage and the corresponding note to the translation. Cf. Rong-zom-pa’s Grub mtha’i brjed byang (B, fol. 347b2–3; D, p. 225.8–11), where the three svabhāvas are explicitly identified as the three kāyas: parinispanna as the dharma-kāya, paratantra as the sāṃbhogakāya, and parikalpita as the nirmāṇakāya (sku gsun dang sbyar ba ni yongs su grub pa ni dbyings dang ye shes yin pa chos kyi sku’o|| gzhan dbang ni ting nge ’dzin gyi ngo gang la snang bsa| longs spyod rdzogs pa’i sku’o|| kun brtags ni med pa rnams yod par brtags pas sprul pa’i sku’o||).
⁹⁶ I understand the word chos here in the sense of chos nyid.
⁹⁷ This verse is very elliptic, and my translation is simply one attempt to make sense of it. Another way of reading this verse would be to take the analogies expressed by the word bzhin to be ‘opposite analogies’ (mi mthun pa’i dpe), as follows:

Just as [the stained mind is considered] conceptual,
So should unstained gnosis be considered non-conceptual.
Just as [conventional phenomena are considered to be] dual,
So [should] the essence of true reality be considered non-dual in nature.

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Just as the dharmadhātu is held
To be characterized by non-duality,
So too is non-conceptual gnosis
Characterized by non-dual perception. (70)

Jñānacandra comments on these verses as follows:98

[Objection]: It is taught [according to your system] that the three kāyas are attained through the cognitive penetration, elimination, and purification (i.e. actualization) of the three svabhāvas (i.e. parikalpita, paratantra, and parinispāna).99 If this is the case, how can [you] maintain that this result is [merely] one of non-conceptual gnosis?100

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 66a-c...]
Supramundane, non-conceptual gnosis cognitively penetrates, eliminates, and actualizes these [three] svabhāvas simultaneously, and therefore it is said that the three kāyas are the results of this. Therefore, [the following] is stated:

[...verse 66d...]
[Objection]: Why are the [three kāyas] said to be the result of non-conceptual gnosis and not of any other [cognition]?

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 67...]
[In] this [verse], the following is expressed: Any other cognition is based on a superimposed entity, and any other object of knowledge exists as a false image (rnam pa: ākāra). Therefore, there are no other realities apart from these two.101

[Objection]: How is it, then, that the dharmakāya is said to be characterized by transformation?

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 68b...]
The two, that is, the object to be grasped (gzung ba: graṇya) and the grasper ('dzin pa: graḥaka), which are the characteristics of the false ‘imagined nature’ (parikalpitasvabhāva), are transformed into non-duality, for they no [longer] appear in accordance with their [misleadingly dualistic] nature. Regarding the statement [...verse 68cd...], paratantra is of the nature of conceptual thought. When it no longer appears in a dual form, it [may] be thought of as transformed.102 Moreover, if one analyzes this transformation, [one

Jñānacandra’s commentary, however, does not clearly support this rendering, at least not that of the first analogy (i.e. rnam rtog bzhin), although his use of the word ‘reversed’ (bzlog pa) may be hinting in this direction. For the second analogy (i.e. gnyis bzhin), he does not provide any explanation at all.

98 Kāyatrayavṛtti (P, fols. 25b4–26b2; D, fols. 23a6–24a2; S, vol. 63, pp. 56.15–58.9).

99 As I have already stated in the note to my translation of the basic text, I am not sure whether these three processes are to be understood in a one-to-one correspondence with the three svabhāvas. If this is the case, the three kāyas referred to here by Jñānacandra should be similarly paired to these three processes as well.

100 That is, if only non-conceptual gnosis is existent, what is the status of the three kāyas, which are taught by you as attained on account of it?

101 That is, the gnoseological reality (non-conceptual gnosis) and the ontological reality (the dharmadhātu).
realizes that] even it is [in reality a mere convention derived from] hypothetical considerations (yongs su brtag pa) on the basis of the distinction between the object of knowledge and the cognition (i.e. gnosis). Therefore, [the following] is stated:

[...verse 68a...]

[Objection]: How [can it be conceived as] non-dual? And how [can it be conceived as] non-conceptual?

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 69ab...]
The expression ‘just as the conceptual...’ [should be understood as follows]: For example, although conceptual thoughts are false, if [they are] stripped of this [false nature] according as one demonstrates (i.e. makes one’s self conscious of the fact) [that they have] a nature of that kind, they become non-conceptual gnosis. As for the statement

[...verse 69ed...],
the non-dual dharmadhātu, too, should be considered as [something that] is characterized by thorough purity. 103

[Objection]: Regarding the statement that non-conceptual gnosis is the reverse of that (i.e. of conceptual thought), how are we able to know that [such gnosis] exists?

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 70...]
Just as the dharmadhātu is characterized by the absence of the ‘falsely imagined’ (yang dag pa ma yin pa kun brtags pa: abhūtāparikalpita),104 so is this gnosis characterized by perception free from grasper and object to be grasped. 105

Nāgamitra proceeds on with his argument for the oneness of true reality and non-conceptual gnosis as follows: 106

For example, just as duality and conceptual thought
Cannot be separated,
So true reality and [non-conceptual] gnosis
Do not exist separately from each other either. (75)
Jñānacandra comments on this verse in the following manner: 107

[Objection]: It has been stated that, [at the stage of a buddha,] there exists nothing but non-conceptual gnosis and the dharmadātu. Hence it is clear that since both cognition and the object of knowledge have been spoken of separately, the two are different. If [non-conceptual gnosis] were the apprehending [subject] of the dharmadātu or the dharmadātu the apprehended [object (ālambana) of the gnosis], this very [fact] would entail that [both of] these are superimposed as entities [within] manifoldness, because so long as there is conceptual thought (yongs su rtog pa = kun tu rtog pa) there is manifoldness. 108 If, on the other hand, [the gnosis] does not apprehend [the dharmadātu] or [the dharmadātu does not serve as] the apprehended [object of the gnosis], how could you then determine (rnam par bzhag pa) [non-conceptual gnosis and the dharmadātu] to be the cognition and the object of knowledge, [respectively]?

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 75...]

[In] this [verse] the following is explicated: In order to distinguish [non-conceptual gnosis and true reality] for the sake of aspirant (don du gnyer ba)—[which can only be done] by means of a false imputation—the two are expressed thus. Nonetheless, this convention, which gives rise to the labelling of entities, does not [actually] exist in non-conceptual gnosis itself.

In order to illustrate how non-conceptual gnosis comes to arise-and-continue (jug pa: pravṛtti), Nagamitra employs the analogy of an arrow. At the same time, he also addresses the question whether non-conceptual gnosis is permanent or impermanent, a question apparently motivated by his argument that it arises-and-continues as a result of a previous impulse, which implies that it is conditioned. Nagamitra argues that it is both impermanent and permanent: impermanent since it is conditioned, permanent since it perceives unconditioned reality, which is unchanging. 109 That is (as Jñānacandra states in

107 Kāyatrayāvṛtti (P, fol. 27a8–b4; D, fols. 24b6–25a2; S, vol. 63, p. 60.6–18).
108 Cf. the Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.2.A.iv, where in refuting the existence of non-conceptual gnosis, it is argued that even self-cognition would be an instance of manifoldness, diversity, or diversification (prapāhā: spros pa).
109 In verses 55–57 (P, fol. 4b3–5; D, fol. 4a2–4; S, vol. 63, p. 8.9–14), Nagamitra touches upon the three types of permanence (rtag pa: nityatā), namely, (a) permanence on account of continuity (rgyun: prabandha), that is, new (different) ‘moments’ of x occur repeatedly, (b) permanence on account of constancy or uninterruptedness (mi chad pa: asramaṇa), that is, x is a never-ceasing chain of ‘moments,’ and (c) permanence by nature (rang bzhin: prakṛti), that is, x is an unchangeable, permanent entity (i.e. it does not consist of ‘moments’). In these verses the nirmāṇakāya is described as permanent on account of its continuity; the sambhogakāya, on account of its constancy or uninterruptedness; and the dharmakāya, by nature—that is, as being unchanging (‘gyur med gyi rtag pa):

de lta de ltar de dang der||
rgyun gyi [= gyis?] 'jug pa yin pas na||
sprul pa de ni rtag pa ste||
rtag par zas sbeyin 'dra bar 'dod| 55
chos la longs spyod rdzogs 'jug pa||
'khor ba sril du mi 'chad pas||
longs spyod rdzogs pa rtag pa ste||
rtag tu bde spyod bzhin du 'dod| 56

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his commentary), Nāgamitra proves the permanency of non-conceptual gnosis on the basis of the nature of its object:110

- For example, just as an arrow that has been shot
  Flies from a string having previously been pulled,
  So too does non-conceptual gnosis arise-and-continue
  As a result of a previous impulse. (77)
  Because [it] engages [in] perceiving what is permanent,
  And because [it] possesses [the quality of] changelessness,
  Non-conceptual [gnosis] is permanent.
  [Yet] because [it] is conditioned, [it] is impermanent. (78)
  [It is taught that] in order to attain all sovereignty111
  [Even wholesome phenomena] such as giving [should] be ‘destroyed.’
  Thus [one finds] the expression ‘like a boat’ (gzings [dang] ’dra [ba]: kolopama) [in]
  sūtras.
  [However,] its [true] meaning [lies in that it] has been articulated by112 the buddhas [with] a
  [certain] purport.113 (79)

In this regard, Jñānacandra makes the following comments:114

[Objection]: If non-conceptual gnosis is beyond manifoldness, then how does it
[cognitively] ‘affirm and distinguish’ (rmam par bzhag) phenomena? How would
engagement [with phenomena] be tenable without conceptuality?
[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:
[...verse 77ab...]

This notion of threefold permanence is found in Mahāyānasūtra-parākrama 9.66 (see also *(Mahāyāna)sūtra-parākrama 9, pp. 127.7–128.3) and in the Suvarnaprabha-sūtra as well (for the Tibetan texts, see Nobel 1944, pp. 205.25–206.7; Nobel 1958, vol. 2, pp. 47.24–48.9). See also the Grb mtha'i brjed byang (B, fols. 344b2–346a6; D, pp. 222.7–224.3), where Rong-zom-pa discusses whether the three Bodies are permanent or impermanent, existent or non-existent, and identical or different. This discussion is evidently based on Ye-shes-sde’s ITa ba’i khyad par (P, fols. 261b–263a1; D, fols. 221b2–222b4; S, vol. 116, pp. 581.7–584.2).

110 Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 5b2; D, fol. 4b7; S, vol. 63, p. 10.8–14).

111 Jñānacandra interprets the expression ‘byor ba of the basic text as dbang ‘byor pa. See MW, s.v. vibhūti, where ‘great power’ is given as one of the several meanings of vibhūti, and TSD, s.v. dbang ‘byor ba. Compare, however, Mvy, no. 7480, dbang ‘byor pa: vabhitūka, and BHSD, s.v. vābhitūka, where it is translated as ‘splendor,’ ‘magnificence’ (or, as in Tibetan, ‘lordly wealth,’ and, as in Chinese, ‘sufficient,’ ‘independent’).

112 The particle la is problematic here, but unfortunately the two versions of the basic text, and the commentary as well, have it. The particle las in the sense of kyis would have been preferable.

113 On the comparison of wholesome phenomena to a boat, and for further references to it, see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.2.C.1, n. 98.

114 Kāyatrayāvrtti (P, fol. 28a2–b5; D, fols. 25a7–26a1; S, vol. 63, pp. 61.11–63.2).
As for the statement

[...verse 77cd],
just as an arrow, for example, flies so long as [the effect of the impetus lasts that is created by] drawing back (gzas) [the bowstring] with an effort (rtsol ba) by [one's] hand [and letting go], so too does non-conceptual gnosis arise-and-continue so long as [there is] an impetus [created] on the strength of previous resolutions.

[Objection]: Is this so-called non-conceptual gnosis permanent or impermanent? It must be either permanent or impermanent since one [phenomenon can] not possess [these] two [conflicting] properties.

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 78a...]

[Objection]: If this is the case (i.e. if non-conceptual gnosis is permanent), it would entail that all cognitions are permanent.115

[Response]: The [other cognitions] are not [permanent], because [they] arise-and-continue in virtue of false imputation. As to [non-conceptual gnosis], since [it] cognitively perceives true reality, it sees the dharmadhātu correctly. As for the statement

[...verse 78bc...],
this is the second logical proof (gtan tshig). That which possesses [the quality of] change is necessarily impermanent. But non-conceptual [gnosis] itself does not possess [the quality of] change. Thus both reasons are the object,116 and therefore non-conceptual [gnosis, which is the subject,] is permanent.

[Objection]: How is it then also impermanent?
[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 78d...]
Since all conditioned phenomena are evidently impermanent, [non-conceptual gnosis] is said to be impermanent.

[Objection]: [The Buddha] stated: “O monks, if you, knowing that [wholesome] phenomena (chos: dharma) are like a boat, should eliminate even these [wholesome] phenomena, what need [is there] to talk about [eliminating] unwholesome phenomena (chos ma yin pa: adharma)?” So if, [as you assert,] non-conceptual gnosis exists [at the stage of a buddha], and if so-called true reality (de bzhin nyid: tathatā) actually exists, how would [your thesis] not contradict [the Buddha's statement]?117

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 79...]
In order to attain the sovereignty endowed with all modes of excellence,118 the buddhas, the Exalted Ones, ‘destroyed’ [even wholesome phenomena], such as giving. Nonetheless,

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115 The reason for this logical consequence is not given.

116 It is unclear what Jiñānacandra actually meant by this statement. At first glance it seems that while the first reason is indeed concerned with the object (i.e. true reality), the second is concerned with the subject (i.e. non-conceptual gnosis itself). Conceivably, Jiñānacandra wished the second argument, that non-conceptual gnosis does not possess the quality of change, to be understood in the sense that such gnosis has the unchangable true reality as its object.

117 While the previous objections were made from the point of view of those who maintain the existence of pure mundane gnosis (i.e. the proponents of positions 3–6 presented in the Sangs sa chen mo), this argument is obviously put forward by those who merely maintain the existence of the dharmadhātu (i.e. the proponents of position 1 in the Sangs sa chen mo). Here the opponent clearly rejects a hypostatic existence of true reality.

118 The term rnam pa thams cad kyi mchog dang ldan pa is the Tibetan rendering for sarvākāravatopeta (Mvy, no. 2533). Seyfort Ruegg, discussing the notion that śūnyatā is endowed
[they] did not ‘destroy’ non-conceptual gnosis, because the tathāgatas [themselves] are characterized by it. Therefore, I know that the purport behind [the expression] ‘like a boat’ occurring in sūtras is [that it has been] taught exclusively in regard to giving and the like.\(^{119}\)

Nāgamitra later argues that only non-conceptual gnosis is a genuine form of saṃādhi, and states that any other types of saṃādhi, involving other cognitions (apparently he is referring to pure mundane gnosis), are in fact mental distraction.\(^{120}\)

Only non-conceptual gnosis,
The supreme ones assert, is saṃādhi.
All types of saṃādhi other than it
Do not exist as genuine ones and are [actually mental] distractions. (97)

Nāgamitra then states that the various salvific activities come about in virtue of non-conceptual gnosis:\(^{121}\)

Just as one wish-fulfilling jewel
Fulfils various wishes,
So does one non-conceptual saṃādhi
Tend variously to the benefit of sentient beings. (100)

Jñānacandra comments on this verse as follows:\(^{122}\)

[Objection]: Why are [all types of saṃādhi] taught as being included in that [great saṃādhi], and [why] is no [kind of saṃādhi] other than it taught as being separate?\(^{123}\)

[Response]: In order to [answer this, the following] is stated:

[... verse 100...]

Or, [objection]: How can conventions relating to [other spiritual practices] as prevailing (gnas pa) [in the form of] heterogeneous entities exist in homogeneous non-conceptual gnosis?

[Response]: In order to [answer this, the following] is stated:

[... verse 100a...],

and so forth. A wish-fulfilling jewel, which is capable of showering down numerous and various excellent requisites (yo byad) of an inconceivable nature [on account of one’s]

with all excellent modes (sarvākāraṇavatopetā śūnyatā), remarks that the expression sarvākāraṇavatopeta was earlier used as an epithet of saṃbuddha. For references, see Seyfort Ruegg 1981, p. 84, n. 273.

\(^{119}\) Compare the Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.2.A.iii, where Rong-zom-pa refutes the argument that the buddhas have purposely retained non-conceptual gnosis.

\(^{120}\) Kāyatrāvyāvatāramukha (P, fol. 6a7–8; D, fol. 5b4; S, vol. 63, p. 12.4–5). For the commentary on this verse, see the Kāyatrāvṛtti (P, fol. 32a1–5; D, fol. 28b7–29a2; S, vol. 63, p. 70.1–11).

\(^{121}\) Kāyatrāvyāvatāramukha (P, fol. 6b1–2; D, fol. 5b5–6; S, vol. 63, p. 12.9–11).

\(^{122}\) Kāyatrāvṛtti (P, fol. 29b1–5; S, vol. 63, pp. 71.12–72.5).

\(^{123}\) This question refers to the line of verse khongs su chud par bstan pa yin (99d) cited by Jñānacandra in the previous passage, where he states (P, fol. 32b4–5; D, fol. 29b1; S, vol. 63, p. 71.10–13): gang gi phyir sms can gyi byed dus pa'i cha ltar snang ba dag yod pa 'di ni rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes de'i mthu yin te| de'i phyir khongs su chud par bstan pa yin| zhes bya ba smos so||.
karmic beneficial resources, fulfils the wishes of those known to have the great ability to build on the results of [their] karmic beneficial resources, and is readily available (mdun na 'dug pa) [to fulfil their wishes]. Similarly, this gnosis, too, although it does not conceptualize, produces various benefits for sentient beings on account of [the buddhas'] previous resolutions. Therefore, there is nothing incongruous about various conventional [properties existing] in one gnosis.

In the following verses, Nāgamitra makes his affiliation to the tradition known as Vijñāpatimātra explicit: \( ^{124} \)

Non-conceptual gnosis,
Which has arisen from the Middle Way,
Cannot be attained
By those espousing the view of eternalism or nihilism. \( ^{125} \) (102)
In regard to what is called the Middle Way,
If one analyzes with logical reasoning,
Nothing other than vijñāpatimātra
Is admissible here at all [as the Middle Way]. (103)

Jñānacandra comments as follows. \( ^{126} \)

[Non-conceptual] gnosis, as has been explained, cannot be attained by those holding to eternalistic or nihilistic views. For if [it] were conceptualized as existent, one would consequently fall into the extreme of holding to eternalism. If, on the other hand, [it] were conceptualized as non-existent, one would in that case fall into the extreme of a nihilistic view. Therefore, since this [non-conceptual gnosis] has the characteristic of having arisen from the Middle Way, this gnosis cannot be attained by those who hold to such views. Thus, in order to demonstrate that [one] should strive along the Middle Way, [the following] is stated:

\[ ... \text{verse 102...} \]
If one analyzed [what] that Middle Way [actually is], [one would realize that it is] vijñāpatimātra. [The principle of] vijñāpatimātra is mainly illustrative of the theme (dngos po) of dependent origination. The 'dependent' (gzhan gyi dbang: paratantra) [nature] appears as [objects] to be grasped and a grasper because it is deluded, so that if [something indeed] exists as it appears, this would lead to an eternalistic view. If nothing exists, this would lead to the position of nihilism. Therefore, one must accept the existence of a basis for designation [or labelling]. Thus [the following] is stated:

\[ ... \text{verse 103...} \]

\( ^{124} \) Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 6b3–4; D, fol. 5b6–7; S, vol. 63, p. 12.13–17).

\( ^{125} \) Although chad pa (uccheda) usually means annihilationism, the rendering of the term here as nihilism surely better suits the context, for the idea expressed by it here in connection with the interpretation of the Middle Way, particularly as expounded in the commentary, is certainly in line with the position of a nihilist (nāstika: med par lta ba), as suggested in the Tattvārthapatāla of the Bodhisattvabhūmi (Wogihara, p. 46.14–19; Dutt, p. 31.14–19). For a German translation of this passage, see Frauwallner 1956, p. 278.

\( ^{126} \) Kāyatrayavṛtti (P, fol. 33a4–b4; D, fol. 29b6–30a6; S, vol. 63, pp. 72.10–73.11). Jñānacandra’s commentary on these two verses is reproduced in his Yogacarabhūvanā, which is in fact an excerpt from his Kāyatrayavṛtti, namely, the passage where he comments on these two and the following two verses (i.e. vv. 102–106).
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

[Objection]: How [would you then interpret the following] statement in the *Vatsasagotrāśūtra (Bad sa dang rigs mthun pa’i mdo):127 “O Ānanda, if [one] conceptualized [the self] as existent, this would lead to eternalism. If [one] conceptualized [the self] as non-existent, this would lead to nihilism. Therefore, the Tathāgata teaches the Doctrine by means of the Middle Way.”

[Response]: There is nothing wrong with this [statement]. [The teaching that the concept of existence implies eternalism] was taught mainly to counteract (’gegs pa) [the notion of] the person (i.e. the self). [The Exalted One] is not making any other [issue] the main [point]. That he is not making any other [issue] the main [point] has been stated (i.e. confirmed) by the Exalted One [himself] when [expressly] rejecting the person [on many other occasions128].

Nāgamitṛa clearly propounds the existence of what is called mental bliss, or the bliss of the Mind, at the stage of a buddha. He explains this mental bliss, called by him ‘supreme bliss,’ as follows:129

Buddhas, who have attained the dharmakāya,
Are ones all of whose conceptualizations have ceased
In all respects, and therefore
[They] are said to be [endowed with] supreme bliss. (35)

127 The phrase bad sa dang rigs mthun pa is a rendering of the name Vatsasagotra (cf. Pāli: Vacchagotta), the first component of which, bad sa, is a phonetic transcription of the Sanskrit word vatsa, and the second, rigs mthun pa, a translation of the word sagotra. The same name is also rendered as gnas pa dang rus mthun pa, gnas pa standing for vatsa and rus mthun pa for sagotra. See Kośa-Index, s.v. Vatsagotra (also s.v. Vātysāṣṭra); TSD, s.vv. gnas pa dang rus mthun pa, rus mthun pa, and rigs mthun pa. (Note that the editors of the Kośa-Index seem to have linked the phrase gnas pa dang in the expression kun tu rgyu gnas pa dangI rus mthun pa with the preceding word, kun tu rgyu (parivṛjaka), and not with the following one, rus mthun pa (see ibid., s.v. kun tu rgyu gnas pa).) See also Lee 2005, p. 18.15–22, where the name Vatsasagotra occurs three times (in the second occurrence, the second syllable sa has been rubbed out in the manuscript), and p. 102.5–11, where the name also occurs three times; and the verse in ibid, p. 19.8, n. 53, and pp. 106.7/107.13, where gnas pa equates to *vāṣṭyena (Ms. vāṣṭyena). I have been informed by Prof. Schmithausen that Paramārtha’s translation of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya supports the reading Vatsagotra over Vatsasagotra.


128 There is, for example, a passage quoted in Abhidharmakośabhāṣya 9, where the existence of the person is explicitly rejected (Pradhan, p. 466.6–13; an English translation is found in de La Vallée Poussin 1988–1990, vol. 4, p. 1325, §5). Prof. Schmithausen has pointed out to me that the author may have had in mind Mahāyāna sūtras from the (Mālava)sarvāstivāda canon (probably their Pārānyāna). In the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (for references, see the previous note), the Buddha’s teaching referring to both existence and non-existence as extremes is explained as a tack taken out of consideration for the audience—comparable to the manner in which a tigress treats her cubs. The rejection of a self is regarded as the Buddha’s actual position, that is, as the correct teaching.

129 Kāyatrāyāvatārāramukha (P, fol. 3b5–6; D, fol. 3a5–6; S, vol. 63, p. 6.14–15).
In his comment on this verse, Jñānacandra links the issue of the existence of bliss at the stage of a *buddha* with the question whether the three *kāyas* are existent or non-existent, and whether they are identical or different, a topic discussed by him in the preceding lines:

[Objection]: If it is stated in the scriptures that the *buddhas*, the Exalted Ones, are endowed with supreme bliss, how would this statement be tenable in view of the fact that they are said to have entered [the state] beyond manifoldness?

[Response]: In order to [explain this, the following] is stated:

[...verse 35...]

Or,

[...verse 35a...],

and so forth is stated in order to demonstrate [the following point]: What is the use of speculating [whether the *buddha*-Bodies are] different [or identical], and the like, [for one cannot say anything about such an issue]? What [one] can say in this regard is merely that [buddhas are endowed with] 'supreme bliss.' This [can] be explained as follows: Because no sensation exists [at the stage of a *buddha*], the [common] sensation of bliss does not exist. Rather [the supreme bliss] is nothing but the bliss of extreme tranquillity.

[Objection]: In what respect, [then, can] it be called bliss?

[Response]: This very coming to rest of all pain is genuine bliss. The sensation of bliss does not actually exist as bliss, associated as it is with suffering; it is [merely] thought, in a state of delusion, to be bliss.

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130 *Kāyatrayavṛtti* (P, fols. 18b7–19a4; D, fol. 17a6–b2; S, vol. 63, p. 42.4–17).
B. Dharmamitra’s Prasphuṭapadā

Another Indian who touches upon the question of gnosis at the stage of a buddha is the Nirākāravadīn scholar of the Yogācāra-Madhyamaka school Dharmamitra. In the first chapter of his Prasphuṭapadā, while discussing the attainment of the accumulations (tshogs kyi sgrub pa), he comes up against the term ‘knowledge of all aspects’ (rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa (nyid): sarvākāraññatā). He presents three different interpretations of this term, the third one being obviously his own. He maintains that this issue is connected with the question of whether or not a buddha has a type of gnosis that is accompanied by appearances (snang ba: ābhāsa, i.e. images), and presents three positions in this regard. The first one, which corresponds to the third interpretation of the term ‘knowledge of all aspects’—the one he adopts himself—rejects the existence of such a gnosis. This position corresponds to the second position listed by Rong-zom-pa in his Sangs sa chen mo, and said to be propagated by the Nirākāravadīns. The second position presented by Dharmamitra maintains the existence of such a gnosis, and thus corresponds to the third position (and possibly also to the following ones, i.e. the fourth to sixth) listed by Rong-zom-pa. The third position presented by Dharmamitra argues that a buddha’s gnosis is inexpressible. Like Rong-zom-pa, Dharmamitra appears to regard this view as defensible. It is notable that Dharmamitra does not follow the progressive approach

131 See Makransky 1997, pp. 204-205, where Ārya Vimuktisena’s presentation of various persons’ interpretations of the term sarvākāraññatā based on their different understanding of the component ākāra is summarized as follows: Sarvākāraññatā is (1) “the knowledge perceiving the Four Noble Truths (catvāry āryasatvānī), which includes knowledge of all sixteen of their aspects (impermanence, suffering, selflessness, etc.),” (2) “the gnosis (jñāna) that realizes the ultimate aspects of phenomena: their lack of self-existence, their nonorigination, noncessation, primordial peace, etc.,” (3) “Buddha’s capacity, based on his gnosis, to fulfill the highest aspirations of sentient beings [in all their aspects], like the wish-fulfilling jewel,” (4) “the gnosis that has eliminated the obscurations in all their aspects,” and (5) “the quintessence (snying po: sārā) contained in [all] objects of knowledge in their ten aspects: basal consciousness [i.e. fundamental mind] (ālayavijñāna), etc.” The last of these, the view of one Bhadrapāla, was considered by Vimuktisena to be the preferable interpretation, as he himself states: “This is the very best [interpretation of sarvākāra-ññatā], because it [i.e. knowledge of all aspects] perceives the perfect (parinispama).” Makransky adds, however, that he is not sure what the ‘ten aspects’ referred to by Bhadrapāla are, but as the term ālayavijñāna is a Yogācāra term, it is likely that Bhadrapāla was a follower of this school, and his statement “may indicate that he understood sarvākāra-ññatā (knowledge of all aspects) primarily as the Buddha’s citta-prakṛti-viśuddhi, the primordial, quintessential purity of mind at the stage of enlightenment” (which Makransky claims to be a theory “prevalent in Yogācāra tradition”). This is not the case, though. Since Haribhadra specifies the first two as the support (gnas) and the characteristics (mtshan nyid) of the objects of knowledge, these ten aspects clearly correspond to the ten topics of the Mahāyānasamgraha (see the related note to the translation below) and have nothing to do with the theory of “the quintessential purity of the mind.” As I have already mentioned, the notion of pure mind in most Mahāyāna traditions including Yogācāra, which simply denotes a ‘moment’ of a pure mind that is momentary by nature and is a replacement of the previous ‘moment’ of a defiled mind after it has ceased, is different from the notion of prakṛtirprabhāsvaracitta of the Tathāgatagarbha tradition or the teachings of the amalavijñāna found in Paramārtha’s works, which denote something unconditioned and eternal, a distinction that Makransky, as far as I can tell, does not make.

132 Note thereby the use of the terms zer and ‘dod.
found, for example, in the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, but rather the more conservative *Yogācāra* one.\(^{133}\)

(1) Some state (zer): At this stage of a *buddha* there is no distinction between the two, the antidote and the unfavourable factors, and therefore [a *buddha*] possesses no conventional knowledge [resulting in dualistic notions] such as knowing and not knowing, pure and impure, good and bad. Still, the wishes of living beings are fulfilled [by him] without any conceptualizing, just as [wishes are fulfilled by] a wish-fulfilling jewel and the like, and thus he is said to know all aspects merely on the basis of others’ perspectives (lit. ‘the appearance of others’ cognitions’). For they propagate statements such as [the one found in Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 9.37].\(^{134}\)

> Just as when a *gārūḍika* has died
> After first empowering a pillar,
> [The latter] eradicates poisoning and the like
> Even long after the [*gārūḍika*]’s death, [...]\(^{135}\)

(2) Others say (zer) that one should take ‘knowledge of all aspects’ in its literal sense, [namely, as] a variegated gnosis [that cognizes] all [phenomena] as illusionary, like [one cognizes] a fruit on the palm of [one’s] hand—[that is, the result of having attained freedom from nescience (*mi shes pa: aṃśa*) after eliminating all obscurations, whether associated with defilements (*nyon mong: klesā*), objects of knowledge (i.e. all phenomena), or residual impressions\(^{136}\)\(^{137}\)\(^{138}\). (3) Further, some maintain (*'dod*) that the supreme object of

\(^{133}\) *Prasphutapadā* (P, fol. 64a3–b6; D, fols. 55b6–56a7; S, vol. 52, pp. 833.19–835.6).

\(^{134}\) The canonical reading is slightly different (Bhattacharya 1960, p. 194):

```
dper na nam mkha' lding gi [= gis] nil[
 mchod stong [= sdong] bsgrubs nas 'das gyur pa][
 de 'das yun rin ring lon yang de][
 dug la sogs pa zhi byed bzhin].
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The Sanskrit text reads:

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yathā gārūḍikaḥ stambham sādhayitvā vinaśyat|
 sa tasmimś cīranaśte 'pi viśādīn upaśāmayer||
```

See also the translations in Steinkellner 1981, p. 120, and in Crosby & Skilton 1995, pp. 118–119 (here v. 36). As we have seen, the analogy of the *garūḍa* pillar found in the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* has been employed by various authors to communicate the idea that the salvific activities of a *buddha* occur spontaneously without the need for a support, whether mental or otherwise. See the translation of the *Sangs sa chen mo*, §IV.1.B.ii, and of the related passage from Candrarahipāda’s *Ratnamālā* above, §1.D.

\(^{135}\) This interpretation of the term *sarvākāraṃśa* clearly corresponds to the third interpretation presented by Vimalkṣeṇa referred to above, n. 131.

\(^{136}\) This translation is merely an attempt to make sense of very elliptical phrasing. Compare the similar understanding of a *buddha*’s gnosis in Ye-shes-sde’s *Sangs rgyas gtsos bo’i ’grel pa*, referred to below (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §1), and in the explanation of the first position presented in sGam-po-pa’s *Thar rgyan*, translated below (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §3.II).

\(^{137}\) The specification of *vāsanās* along with *klesas* and *jñeyas* in connection with obscurations (sgrīb pa: aṃśa) is unusual. One should perhaps take *vāsanāvāraṇas* to be aṃśa consisting of *vāsanās* that are associated with both *klesāvāraṇas* and *jñeyāvāraṇas*. 337
knowledge is the ālayavijñāna itself. On the basis of this, and since [a buddha] knows the 'ten aspects'—the support and characteristics of the objects of knowledge and the rest—[he] is said to 'know all [aspects].'

Here, too, one should know that [the discussion] concerns the question whether a buddha possesses gnosis that is accompanied by appearances or not: (1) Some maintain ('dod) that if (lit. 'when') [a buddha] were to possess a [type of] gnosis that is accompanied by images, this would result in the fault of [being subjected to] the object–subject dichotomy. Thus the only gnosis [to exist] is devoid of appearances [and] has merely a conventional [nature], that is, self-cognition. [These scholars] maintain the third position explained above. (2) Others state (zer): How could appearances be dual for one who has become accustomed to the false nature of duality over many eons? It is stated [by Śāntideva in his Bodhicaryāvatāra 9.26].

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138 This interpretation of the term sarvākāraññatā seems to correspond to the fourth interpretation presented by Vimuktisena referred to above, n. 131.

139 The 'ten aspects' referred to here are the ten topics presented in the ten chapters of the Mahāyānasamgraha. They represent what the text calls the buddhas' 'teachings that excel in virtue of [their] tenfold excellence' (gsung khyad par rnam pa bcos khyad par du 'phags pa), which are the special teachings (of Mahāyāna) on: (1) the support (gnas: āśraya) of the objects of knowledge, that is, the ālayavijñāna, (2) the characteristics (mtshan nyid: laksāna) of the objects of knowledge, that is, the three svabhāvas, (3) the entrance into the characteristics (mtshan nyid la 'jug pa: laksanapravṛṣeṣā) of the objects of knowledge, that is, viśīptimātratā, (4) the cause (rgyu: hetu) and result ('bras bu: phala) of this entrance, that is, the six pāramitās, (5) the different cultivations (bsgom pa rab tu dbye ba: bhāvanāprabheda) of the latter's cause and result, that is, the ten bodhisattvabhūmīs, (6) the superior ethico-spiritual discipline (lhag pa'i tshul khrims: adhiśīla) involved in these different cultivations—that is, the ethico-spiritual discipline of a bodhisattra, (7) the superior mind (lhag pa'i sems: adhicitta) associated with the different cultivations—that is, his samādhi(s), (8) the superior insight (lhag pa'i shes rab: adhiprājñā) associated with the different cultivations—that is, non-conceptual gnosis, (9) the abandonment (spangs pa: prahāṇa) which is the result of these [latter three]—that is, unfixed nirvāṇa (apratisūṣṭhatirvāṇa), and (10) the gnosis (ye shes: jñāna) which is the result of these [same three]—that is, the three buddha- Bodies. For a list and an explanation of these ten topics, see the Mahāyānasamgraha, Introduction (prastāvāṇa) §§2 & 3 (the Tibetan text is found in Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, pp. 1–2; his annotated translation into French is found in ibid., vol. 2, pp. 5–9; a translation into English based on the Chinese translation by Paramārtha is found in Keenan 1992, pp. 11–12).

140 This interpretation of the term sarvākāraññatā corresponds to the fifth interpretation presented by Vimuktisena referred to above, n. 131, that is, Bhadrapāla's interpretation, the one Vimuktisena is said to have preferred personally.

141 The canonical version reads slightly differently (Bhattacharya 1960, p. 191):

\[
\begin{align*}
ji \text{ itar mthong thos shes pa dag} & \\
'dir ni dgag par bya min te & \\
'dir ni sduŋ bsngal rgyur gyur pa & \\
bden par rtogs pa bzlog bya yin & \\
\end{align*}
\]

The Sanskrit text reads:

\[
\begin{align*}
yathā drṣṭaṁ śrūtaṁ jñātāṁ vaiśeṣa pratisīḍhyate & \\
satyataḥ kalpanā tv atra duḥkhaḥetuter nīvāryate & \\
\end{align*}
\]
All that is thus heard and seen
Is not what is negated here;
Rather, what is rejected is the notion of real existence,
Which is the cause of suffering.

Thus if there is definitely no gnosis attended with appearances, how could [a buddha] be designated as ‘one with knowledge of all aspects’? (3) [Others] maintain (‘dod) [the following]: Considering [its] mere luminous nature, [gnosis] exists [as something whose] nature is inexpressible. Thus [they hold] another position (phyogs gzhian: pakṣāntara).

[But] why elaborate much? [I] shall [thus] put off (nye bar gzhag pa) [further discussion of] this.142

Dharmamitra returns to this issue in the seventh chapter of his Prasphuṭapadā. There he identifies the position (his own, in fact) that accepts the existence of non-conceptual gnosis but not that of a gnosis endowed with images with that of the Nirākāravādins, and then concludes with the statement that although neither external objects nor cognition exists, the appearances of tathāgatas, which are possible in virtue of the dharmadhātu, are undeniable:143

Therefore, [the position of] those maintaining [the existence of] only non-conceptual gnosis and rejecting [the existence of] gnosis that is endowed with images (i.e. pure mundane gnosis) at the stage of a buddha, that is, Samantabhadra,144 is no different than the teachings of the Yogācāras of the Nirākāravāda [branch], who state (Mahāyānasamgraha 8.§20.f):145

Given, too, that there is no appearance of any [external] object
When non-conceptual gnosis operates (rgyu ba: carati),

For German and English translations, see Steinkellner 1981, p. 118, and Crosby & Skilton, p. 177 (here v. 25), respectively.

142 I take the word nye bar bzhag/gzhag pa here to be equivalent to bzhag/gzhag pa, which, in the context of discussions, is used in the sense of ‘to put off.’ Nye bar bzhag pa is, however, the Tibetan rendering of pratypasthāna, which means ‘manifesting to [one],’ as it is the case in the passage from the dKon cog ‘grel (§III.5) translated above, n. 56.

143 Prasphuṭapadā (P, fol. 108a8–b5; D, fol. 93a6–b3; S, vol. 52, p. 926.9–21).

144 The common designation of the stage of a buddha is Samantaprabhā. See, for example, the BHSD, s.v. samantaprabhā; Dayal 1932, p. 291. Dharmamitra, however, seems to be referring here to Buddhahood in the sense of the svābhāvikakāya/dharmakāya, and it is this he applies the name Samantabhadra to (see Makransky 1997, p. 266).

145 Note the slightly different reading of the canonical version (Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, p. 79):

ye shes rgyu ba rtog med la\|  
don rnams thams cad mi snang phyir\|  
don med khong du chud par bya\|  
de med pas na rnam rig med\|.  


jñānacāre 'vikalpe hi sarvārthākhāyānato 'pi ca |
arthābhāvopagantavyo vijñaptes tadabhāvatah ||.
One should know that there are no [external] objects.
Since these [objects] do not exist, there are no ‘representations’ (rnam rig: vijñāpti) [either].

And (Mahāyānasamgraha 8.§20.c):146

If [the apparent] objects were to [actually] exist as [external] objects, 
Non-conceptual gnosis would not exist.
If it did not exist, the attainment of Buddhahood 
Would not be possible.

Therefore, the tathāgatas, in [their] great compassion, deliberately (ched du) do not actualize the absolute truth, which is the coming to rest [of all manifoldness].147 [There] truth is not divisible into two, and neither one of the pair [consisting of] external object148 and cognition [can] be verified anywhere. Yet it is certain that [the tathāgatas] abide in a mode in which the ‘dynamic waves’ (mthu rlabs) of the dharmadhātu appear in various ways, revealing all its facets, just like [images] depicted in paintings.

146 Note the slightly different reading of the canonical version (Lamotte 1973, vol. 1, p. 79):

don ni don du grub pa ni||
ye shes rtog pa med mi ‘gyur||
de med pas na sangs rgyas nyid||
‘thob par ‘thad pa ma yin no||.


arthasyārthatvanispattau jñānaṁ na syād akalpakam |
tadabhāvāc ca buddhatvaprāptī naivyopadāyate ||

As Dharmamitra states, these two verses from the Mahāyānasamgraha are commonly cited as scriptural support by Nirākāravādins. See, for example, Kajiyama 1965, p. 424, where a passage concerning the difference between the two branches of Yogācāra (i.e. Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda) is cited and translated from Bodhibhadrā’s Jñānasūrasamuccayanibandhana, in which these same verses are cited in support of the Yogācāras of the Nirākāravāda branch.

147 Here Dharmamitra clearly advocates a rather conservative buddhological conception, according to which a buddha must postpone or even relinquish his complete awakening in order to be able to act for the sake of living beings. Compare the first position presented by Dharmamitra regarding the interpretation of the term ‘knowledge of all aspects’ (rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa (nyid): sarvākāraśāñjata) translated above, which maintains that a buddha acts without conceptualizing, like a wish-fulfilling jewel and the like—a concept which Dharmamitra obviously disagrees with.

148 The term pha rol gyi don here is obviously identical in meaning with the term phyi rol gyi don, which is the common Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term bāhyārtha.
3. Proponents of the Existence of Pure Mundane Gnosis

A. Śrīgupta’s *Tattvāvatārārvtti*

Śrīgupta, in his *Tattvāvatārārvtti*, explicitly maintains that a *buddha* is endowed with ‘conceptual gnosis’ (*rnam par rtog pa’i ye shes*). Although he does not make it clear what he actually means by this term, and although Rong-zom-pa does not employ it either, at least not in the context of the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*, it is obvious that ‘conceptual gnosis’ is another name for pure mundane gnosis. Śrīgupta’s position seems to conform to one of the positions that maintain the existence of constituents other than mental elements presented by Rong-zom-pa in his *Sangs sa chen mo* (i.e. positions 4–6). The former states:

There is no fault in [the notion that a *buddha*] possesses conceptual gnosis
[As] an efficient means of acting for the sake of sentient beings,
Because his striving for omniscience
Is for their (i.e. sentient beings’) sake.
It is not correct that [the notion that a *buddha*] possesses conceptual gnosis, [which is] the cause of [his] bestowing instructions (śādāma) [pertaining to] salvific release (*byang grol: apavarga*) and the like, is based on a fault, since the essence of its nature is to benefit sentient beings.

It is taught by [those holding to] the view of [the existence of] external [objects]
That if an entity exists,
[It] appears vividly [as] an object to an omniscient [cognizer].
A purely erroneous [perception] has no basis,
Who would think, then, [in its case in terms of] vivid and non-vivid [perception]?
[Indeed] the appearance of an object is not vivid
In [a cognition] involving conceptual thought.
[But] such [a view] has no place in this [case].
Thus, [on the absolute level,] all objects are [characterized by] emptiness,
Speaking on the conventional level, [though,]
What fault is there if the Sage carries out activities
For the sake of sentient beings, even as [he] conceptualizes.

These are intermediate verses (*bar skabs kyi tshigs su bcad pa: antaraśloka*).

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149 See the passage in sGam-po-pa’s *Thar rgyan* translated below (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §3), where one of the positions presented by that author is also said to maintain the existence of conceptual thoughts (*rnam rtog*) at the stage of a *buddha*. See also the translation of the passage from Ye-shes-sde’s *I′a b′a’i khyad par* below (“Works by Tibetan Authors,” §1), where pure mundane gnosis is clearly regarded to be conceptual.

150 *Tattvāvatārārvtti* (P, fol. 47b2–6; D, fol. 42a6–b2; S, vol. 63, p. 108.3–13).

151 I translate here the word *rtsom pa* in the sense of *brtson ’grus rtsom pa* (see Jäschke 1881, s.v. *rtsom pa*).

152 See *Mvy*, no. 1730, where the term *apavarga: byang grol* is given as one of the synonyms of *nirvāṇa*.
Works by Tibetan Authors

This last section includes the translation of passages from works of three early Tibetan authors—Ye-shes-sde, Gro-lung-pa, and sGam-po-pa—on whether gnosis exists at the stage of a buddha. These three sources, which represent positions 2, 3, and 1, respectively, are arranged here chronologically.

1. Ye-shes-sde’s ITa ba’i khyad par

Ye-shes-sde (eighth/ninth cent.), in his ITa ba’i khyad par, does not question the existence of non-conceptual gnosis at the stage of a buddha. He does, however, bring up two issues, namely, whether the two material Bodies (rūpakāya) of a buddha have conceptual thoughts (rtog pa: vikalpa) and whether a buddha possesses pure mundane gnosis. After answering the first question negatively, he goes on to negate explicitly the existence of pure mundane gnosis, which he regards as wholly conceptual in nature:

Do the two Bodies (i.e. the sambhogakāya and nirmānakāya) have conceptual thoughts or not? Given that the two have arisen from the dharmakāya, which does not have conceptual thoughts, [they] do not have conceptual thoughts [either]. What is the evidence for such [a claim]? The Āryasuvaprabhāsāsūtra has taught:

It may seem as though [the dharmakāya] has conceptual thoughts, but true reality (tathatā) has no conceptual thoughts. [Buddhahood] may be counted as three [Bodies], but [in reality] there do not exist three entities (dngos po).

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1 ITa ba’i khyad par (P, fols. 259b1–260a5; D, fols. 219b4–220a6; S, vol. 116, pp. 576.16–578.6).


3 Compare the readings in the canonical version translated from the Chinese mentioned in the previous note. This version has ngo bo nyid la (i.e. ‘in essence’) instead of dngos po. Nobel
It has also been taught in numerous sūtras that a tathāgata is constantly in meditative absorption.\(^4\) [Questions]: Does a tathāgata possess pure mundane gnosis or does [he] not? Does [he in his] omniscience cognize the particulars (rang gi mthsan nyid: svalaśāna) of entities, or does [he cognize only their] universals (spyi'i mthshen nyid: sāmānyalakṣaṇa)? Does [he] cognize conceptually or non-conceptually? [Answers]: A buddha cognizes all particulars and universals non-conceptually.\(^5\) Previously, while [still] a bodhisattva and [so not] yet having purified [all] obscurations, [achieved] effortlessness (lhun gyis grub), and acquired inconceivable might, [a future buddha could nevertheless,] by means of [his] non-conceptual gnosis during meditative absorption, realize that the universals of all entities is emptiness, and after rising from that [meditative state], [he could] cognize the particulars [of entities] as mere illusion by means of [his] subsequently attained pure mundane gnosis. With the increasing purification [from obscurations], conceptual thoughts are [increasingly] eliminated, while the resulting [total] purification from obscurations is spontaneously accomplished at the stage of a buddha. [Then,] since there is no [longer any distinction between] meditative absorption and the rising [from it],\(^9\) the entire gamut of objects of knowledge is simultaneously actualized [through direct perception]. A buddha has no conceptual thoughts, and so even though he cognizes the particulars [of entities] as mere illusions, [he does not] apprehend [them] as entities. Since [he] does not perceive [them] as marks [consisting in appearances] (mthshen ma: nimitta), the error [consisting in dichotomizing] the grasping and the grasped does not occur. The Buddhāvatamsaksūtra states [this] in great detail:\(^7\)

The attention (dgongs pa: ābhoga) of the buddhas, the Exalted Ones, is unobstructed (chags pa med pa: asanga). [It] has been completely purified over inexpressibly billions (bye ba khrag khrig brgya stong) of aeons. All the world realms, without exception, are the object [of his omniscience]. The entire element comprising the dharmas, without exception, is the object [of his omniscience]. [He] has [cognitive] objects [at his disposal] (yul dang ldan pa) [which he] cognizes and internalizes in all three times unobstructedly by [merely] directing [his] attention [to them] once.\(^8\) And so forth. The Āryasarvadharmasamgītisūtra states:\(^9\)

For example, a magician
Attempts to free a magically created [being by removing its magical power].

remarks that in an earlier passage the translation by Ye-shes-sde has ngo bo nyid for the same Chinese character (Nobel 1958, vol. 1, p. 66, n. 4).

\(^4\) For references to Indian works in which this notion is advanced, see above, the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo, §III.3, n. 30.

\(^5\) This statement implies that Ye-shes-sde posits non-conceptual gnosis at the stage of a buddha.

\(^6\) Saying that a buddha's meditative and post-meditative states are indivisible is another way of saying that he is always in meditative absorption.

\(^7\) No attempt had been made to identify this citation.

\(^8\) For similar statements, see below (§2), the paraphrased passage from the Bodhipaṭala of the Bodhisattvabhumi, as found in Gro-lung-pa's bsTan rim chen mo.

\(^9\) The canonical version (Dharmasamgītisūtra, T, fol. 254b1–2; D, fol. 43b4–5) reads almost identically, and the few variants are more or less negligible: in the first line D has ma instead of our ma'i; in the second line T has bar instead of par; in the fifth line T and D have bar instead of ba; in the eighth line D has dag instead of ltar.
Since he already knows [that this being is an illusion],
He faces no obstruction in [correctly perceiving] that magically created [being].
The wise, who are fully awakened, perceive
The three [realms of] existence to be like a magical apparition.
They put on attire (go bgos) for the sake of sentient beings,
But already know sentient beings to be the way they are (i.e. like magical apparitions).\textsuperscript{10}

Therefore, [the fact that a buddha perceives all phenomena] does not imply that pure mundane gnosis exists at the stage of Buddhahood.

Ye-shes-sde also touches briefly upon the absence of conceptual thought at the stage of a buddha in his Sangs rgyas gsdo bo'i 'grel pa when explaining the third of five points pertaining to the Jewel that is the Buddha, namely, the ‘excellence of [his] nature’ (rang bzhin phun sum tshogs pa). There he describes this excellence as a buddha’s ability to cognize all phenomena vividly and correctly, as they actually are—as when one cognizes an āmalaka fruit on the palm of one’s hand—even though he has no conceptual thoughts.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10} Cf. Mūlamadhyamakakārikā 17.31:
yathā nirmātakām śāstā nirmimūtaarddhisampadā |
nirmito nirmimūtyānām sa ca nirmātakah punah ||.
The Tibetan translation reads (P, fol. 12b5; D, fol. 10b4; S, vol. 57, p. 25.13–15):

\texttt{ji ltar ston pas sprul pa ni|}
\texttt{rdzu 'phrul phun tshogs kyis sprul zhing||}
\texttt{sprul pa de yang sprul pa ni [D na]|}
\texttt{slar yang gzhán ni sprul pa ltar|}.


The example of the clear cognition of the āmalaka fruit on the palm of one’s hand as an analogy of a buddha’s cognition of the various phenomena is also drawn on in the description of the second position regarding the expression ‘knowledge of all aspects’ (\textit{rnam pa thams cad mkhyan pa (nyid): sarvākārajñatā}) in the passage from Dharmamitra’s \textit{Prasphutapadā} translated above (“Works by Indian Authors,” §2.B; there, however, simply ‘fruit’) and in the description of the first position presented by sGam-po-pa translated below (§3), where the āmalaka fruit is described as ‘fresh.’ Unlike in the case of Ye-shes-sde, however, this analogy has been employed in both of these cases to illustrate the position that accepts the existence of pure mundane gnosis at the stage of a buddha. Note that sGam-po-pa employs the phrase \textit{rnam rtog mi mnga’ ci yang sa ler mkhyan} in connection with the second position, whose proponents, including Ye-shes-sde, do not accept the existence of pure mundane gnosis. The employment of a (fresh) āmalaka fruit for this purpose is explained, at least according to the Tibetan tradition, by the fact that a fresh āmalaka is transparent, and when it is placed on the palm of one’s hand displays not only its
surface but also its flesh. See Mi-pham’s *dBus ma rgyan ’grel* (p. 302.1): ...
lag mthil du skyu ru ra rlon pa’i ’bras bu bzhag na phyi nang mi sgrib par mthong ba bzhin du....
2. Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo

Gro-lung-pa Blo-gros’byung-gnas (fl. second half of the eleventh century to the early twelfth century) addresses the issue surrounding the existence of gnosis in the tenth chapter of his work, which is devoted to a discussion of the stage of a buddha (‘bras bu sangs rgyas kyi sa la ‘jug pa’i rnam par bshad pa). There he explicitly asserts the existence of the two kinds of gnosis, that is, both non-conceptual and pure mundane gnoses,12 as follows:13

Therefore, all absolute and conventional objects, in whatever manner they are present (ji ltar grub bo cog)—be [they] existent or non-existent, true or false, permanent or impermanent, material (gzugs can) or immaterial, and the like—can appear as [they] actually are (ji lta ba bzhiin du) to these two [kinds of] gnosis (i.e. the non-conceptual and pure mundane types). Thus, on the absolute level, [phenomena] are in no way existent (ji lta ji ltar yang grub pa med pa), and therefore nothing is perceived (dmigs pa) [there]. As for the conventional [level] (kun rdzob pa), [phenomena,] even all the minute atoms of earth, [water,] and the like of all world realms, and all subtle mental fluctuations (rgyu ba) (i.e. activities) of all sentient beings, simply (kho na) appear as they are. In this regard, some maintain:14

Because in this state [of awakening a buddha] has attained freedom from all manifoldness—[be it in the form] of cognition (shes pa) or cognitive objects (shes bya)—even the subsequently attained pure mundane gnosis is simply non-existent. If [a buddha] had a mind (blo) accompanied by appearances, this would lead [to the undesired consequence] of [him] being subject to delusion (‘khrul pa), since deceptive objects would be perceived (snang ba) [by him], and it would also contradict many authoritative scriptures containing teachings such as that the Great Sages are always in meditative absorption.

[Such] statements are a ‘symptom’ (rnam ‘gyur) of not having understood the issue (don). Just because [pure mundane gnosis occurs during] the post-meditative state, this does not imply that [if a buddha is endowed with it he] becomes distracted (gzhan du g.yengs pa)—or the like. Therefore, it is far from being contradictory to [the authoritative scriptures in which] it is taught that [a buddha] is permanently in meditative absorption. Also, asserting that [pure mundane gnosis] is deluded just because [one] would perceive (snang ba) deceptive objects [on the basis of it] is nonsensical (bab col nyid). Just as the mind (blo) that refers (’jog) to figuratively expressed objects (nye bar brtags pa’i don: upacāra) and to fancied kingdoms (yid kyi rgyal srid) [as opposed to actual ones knows both the former to

12 Gro-lung-pa employs the terms non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis on several occasions (see, for example, bsTan rim chen mo, fols. 452b3 & 457a5–6). He also employs the respective terms ‘knowing [phenomena] as [they actually] are’ (ji lta ba’i mkhyen pa) and ‘knowing [phenomena] to the full extent’ (ji snyed pa’i mkhyen pa) (see ibid., fol. 446b).

13 bsTan rim chen mo (fols. 51a6–51b2).

14 It is not clear whether this passage is an exact citation or simply a paraphrasing or a summary of this position, corresponding to position 2 in Rong-zom-pa’s Sangs sa chen mo—a position advocated by scholars such as Nāgāmitra, Jñānacandra, and Dharmamitra in India and Ye-shes-sde in Tibet.
be delusions], so a buddha perceives everything as mere deceptive objects [that appear] within the cognitive field of others (i.e. ordinary beings), and yet, knowing all minds (blo) that comprehend them to be [themselves] delusions, [he] simply (zad pas) counts on [these delusions] to be causes of higher existences and salvific release (byang grol: apavarga). Thus how can [a buddha's pure mundane gnosis] be deluded? This being the case, it has been taught:

Understanding that [phenomena] are mere delusions should be regarded as non-delusion.

[This can] also [be taken as] the sense [of the following] teaching:

Having assumed the gazing manner of an elephant, [The Buddha] maintained a state of equanimity regarding external phenomena (phyi rol don).

Furthermore, there is no beginning and no end to the characteristics of cause and result pertaining to the appropriation (nye bar len pa) and what is appropriated ([nye bar] blang bya) which are associated with mere cognition (rig pa tsam). And their association with the

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15 This part of the sentence is elliptical, and the author's intent is not very clear. The translation is thus merely an attempt to make sense of this phrase. Note that sGam-po-pa, who reproduces this passage in his Thar rgyan almost word for word, omits this phrase (see the translation below).

16 The source of this citation is unknown. For a similar idea, see Yuktiṣṭhikā 6cd:

\[
\text{parijñānam bhavasyaiva nirvāṇam iti kathyate}.\]

The Tibetan translation reads:

\[
\text{srīd pa yongs su shes pa nyid|}
\text{mya ngan 'das zhes bya bar brjod|}.\]

For an English translation, see Lindtner 1997, p. 75. See also Atiśa's Satyadvāvatāra (P, fol. 71a4–5; D, fol. 73a2; S, vol. 63, p. 1052.13–14; Sherburne 2000, p. 356):

\[
\text{kun rdzob ji ltar snang ba 'di|}
\text{rigs pas brtags na 'ga' mi rnyed|}
\text{ma rnyed pa nyid don dam yin|}
\text{ye nas gnas pa'i chos nyid do|.}\]

An English translation is found in Sherburne 2000, p. 357, v. 20.

17 The conditional particle na as it stands does not seem to make much sense. I therefore translate the phrase shes na tentatively as if it read shes ni. Compare the reading of the verses cited in the preceding note which convey a similar idea.

18 Cf. Jitāri's Sugatamatavibhaṅgaḥ bhāsyā (P, fol. 352a6–8; D, fol. 63a6; S, vol. 63, p. 1021.15–17), where a similar verse attributed to Dharmakīrti is cited: slob dpon chos kyi grags pa'i zhal snga nas kyi:

\[
\text{des de nyid don btang snyoms can|}
\text{glang chen gzik stangs mdzad nas ni|}
\text{'jig rten thugs ni 'ba' zhig gis|}
\text{phyi rol spyod pa spros pa yin|}
\text{zhes gang gsungs pa'o|}.\]

19 See Mvy, no. 6371: glang po che'i lta stangs kyi lta/ltas nas: nāgavilokitenāvalokyā.
flaws (nyes pa) and merits (yon tan) of [respectively] impurity and purity, and so forth, are states of affairs (yul) that are triggered by [appropriate] conditions. Thus, while [it is true that at the stage of a buddha] all flaws and obscurations brought about (shyar ba) owing to false imagination (yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa: abhūtarpakalpa) have been exhausted, how could [pure mundane] gnosis, which is endowed with all qualities and has pure wholesome [attitudes and actions] as [its] causes, logically come to an end? It is as taught [in the following]:

That which is of a cognitive nature (rig pa yi bdag [nyid]) [and] suffers no interruption
Has no beginning and no end.
The adventitious demerits and merits
Are samsāra and nirvāṇa, [respectively].

Moreover, if it were so (i.e. if pure mundane gnosis ceased), then there would be no distinction between [Buddhahood] and nirvāṇa without remains—[that is, remains] of the psycho-physiological complex—[which is attained by] Śrāvakā [saints] and pratyekabuddhas and is propounded by the conservative Buddhist schools (sde pa: nikāya). Since [in that case Buddhahood] would be a mere coming to rest (zhi ba) of imperfections (nyes pa) and suffering, and no gnosis endowed with bliss and all supreme qualities would exist, it would follow that all [past] immeasurable resolutions and accumulations of wholesome [resources] would be superfluous. And because there would be no substratum (i.e. gnosis), it would follow that [the buddhas'] activities for the sake of others would cease completely and in all respects (rnam pa thams cad kyi thams cad du). The Svāraṇaprabhāsottama states:

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20 False imagination suffuses all minds and mental factors within the bounds of samsāra, in that they are characterized by the false object–subject dichotomy. For references to this term, see TSD, s.v. yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa, and s.v. yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa rnam pa bcu, where two lists of ten types of false imagination are provided. For abhūtarpakalpa as the result of a beginningless ignorance of true reality, and as containing all seeds and being the cause of the appearance of the object–subject dichotomy, see Schmithausen 1987, pp. 98–99.

21 Compare the first critique of positions 1 and 2 by Positions 3–6 provided in the Sangs sa chen mo, §IV.2.B.i.

22 The source of this citation could not be identified.

23 For a similar critique, see the Sangs sa chen mo, §§IV.1.A.ii&iii.

24 This is an abridged citation (i.e. merely referring to the analogies of gold, water, and space) of a passage from the third chapter of the Svāraṇaprabhāsottama which deals with the three kāyas (a chapter not included in the extant Sanskrit version or in the first Tibetan translation). The Tibetan translation by Ye-shes-sde reads as follows (Nobel 1944, pp. 209.29–210.15): de bzhin gshegs pa'i sa ni rnam par dag pa gsum pa'i phyir rab tu rnam par dag pa zhes bya'o gsum gang zhe na' di lta stel nyon mongs pa rnam par dag pa dang sdo dang bsgal rnam par dag pa dang mthun ma rnam par dag pa stel ji ltar gser bzang po bzhu zhi ngang btsul te shyangs pa la rdul dang dri ma phyir mi gos shing rang bzhin rnam pa dang pa'i gser nyid du sngags stel gser gyi sngags po rnam par dag pa yang med par gyur pa ma yin pa bzhin no dap na chu rnyog pa can dangs te rnam par dangs nas chu'i rang bzhin nyid gsal bar gyur pa yin gyi chu de nyid med par gyur pa yang ma yin no de bzhin du chos kyi sku yang nyon mongs pa dang sdo dang bsgal sna tshogs 'dus pa spangs nas bag chags ma lus par bsal te sangs rgyas kyi ngo bo nyid rnam par dag pa nyid sngags bar gyur pa yin gyi sngags po med par gyur pa ni ma yin no yang dper na nam mkha' la 'du ba dang sprin dang rdul dang na bun gyis bsgrigs pa med par gyur na nam mkha'i kham de
Buddha[hood] comprises three [kinds of] purity, namely, purity as regards defilements (nyon mongs pa: klesa), suffering (sdug bsngal ba: duḥkha), and all characteristic features (mtshan ma: nimitta). Like pure gold, water, and the like, it is pure for being devoid of obscurations, and not on account of [its own] absence. Therefore, the purity of the dharmadātu is due to the non-arising of any conceptual thoughts and ‘negative propensities’ (bag la nyal ba: amuṣaya), not to the absence of a buddha’s perfect Body.

Thus the two [kinds] of gnosis are unquestionably existent, as stated.\textsuperscript{25} The former, [the gnosis that] knows [phenomena] as [they actually] are (ji lta mkhyen pa), Is not subject to delusions (‘khrul med), [occurs during] meditative absorption, [and] involves no cognitive activity. The latter, [the gnosis that] knows [phenomena] to the full extent (ji snyed mkhyen pa), Is [subject to] deceptive appearances (‘khrul snang), [occurs during] the post­meditative state, [and] involves cognitive activity.

These two, the excellence of elimination and the excellence of gnosis, are the sum (mdor bsdus pa) of a buddha’s constituents. [Mahāyānasūtraālamkāra 9.2] states:\textsuperscript{26}

Buddhahood, which is The attainment of the knowledge of all aspects, [And] which is free from the stains of all obscurations, Is taught as being like an opened casket of jewels.

And [Ratnagotravibhāga 2.4] states:\textsuperscript{27}


\textsuperscript{25} I was not able to identify the source of this citation.

\textsuperscript{26} The canonical version reads almost identically (P, fol. 9b3–4; D, fol. 8b4; S, vol. 70, p. 820.18–19): in the second line P erroneously has \textit{khyen} instead of \textit{mkhyen}, and D has \textit{’thob} instead of our \textit{thob}, which is found also in P. The Sanskrit text reads as follows:

\textit{sarvākārajñatāvāptih sarvāvaranānirmalā | vivṛtā ratnapīṭeva buddhatvam samudāhytām ||.}

\textsuperscript{27} Note that the third and fourth lines in the canonical version read somewhat differently, as a result of interpreting the Sanskrit original (see the following note). The canonical version reads (P, fol. 63a3; D, fol. 62b2–3; S, vol. 70, p. 953.13–15):

\textit{sangs rgyas nyid ni dbyer med pa||} 
\textit{dag pa’i chos kyi sras phyi ba||} 
\textit{nyi [D add. ma] mkha’ bzhi te [D om.] ye shes dang||} 
\textit{spangs pa gnyis kyi mtshan nyid do||.}

The Sanskrit text reads:

\textit{buddhatvam avinirbhāgaśukladharmaprabhāvītam | ādityākāśavaj jñānaprahaṇadvayalakṣanam ||.}
Buddhahood is made up of Pure constituents which are indivisible.  

[It] is like the sky and the sun  
In being characterized by the two [respective features] elimination and gnosis.²⁸

The Bodhisattvabhumi also states:²⁹

In brief, two [kinds of] elimination (spangs pa: prahāna) and two [kinds of] gnosis are called awakening: These are the eliminations of (1) obscurations pertaining to defilements, and (2) obscurations pertaining to objects of knowledge, and (1) gnosis that is free from the stains of defilements, and (2) gnosis that is uninhibited in regard to all objects of knowledge. Or, [alternatively,] three [kinds of] gnosis and two [kinds of] eliminations are [called] awakening: (1) purified gnosis (dag pa'i ye shes: śūddhajñāna), [resulting from] the elimination of all defilements together with [their] residual impressions, (2) omniscient gnosis (thams cad mkhyen pa'i ye shes: sarvajñāna), which is uninhibited when it comes to knowing all spheres (khams: dhātu),³⁰ all entities (dngos po: vastu),³¹ all aspects (rnam pa: prakāra),³² all times (dus: kāla), and all natures (rang bzhin),³³ and (3) unobstructed gnosis (chags pa med pa'i ye shes: asangajñāna), that is, a [type of] gnosis that arises-and-continues uninhibited, swiftly, and unobstructed, with a mere directing of its attention (dgongs pa: abhoga)³⁴—once and not repeatedly—and (1) the complete demolishing of all residual impressions related to defilements, and (2) the elimination of all undefiled (nyon mongs pa can ma yin pa: akliṣṭa) ignorance (ma rig pa: avidyā).

For an annotated English translation, see Takasaki 1966, pp. 314–315.

²⁸ On the interpretation of the compound jñānaprahāṇadvaya in the Chinese and Tibetan translations, see Takasaki 1966, p. 315, n. 7. Note in this regard Gro-lung-pa’s citation, which reads spangs pa dang ye shes gnis.

²⁹ This is not an exact citation but rather a paraphrasing of the opening passage of the seventh chapter of the Bodhisattvabhumi, that is, the Bodhipatala (Wogihara, p. 88.1–26; Dutt p. 62.1–17), but without the passage explaining the details regarding omniscient gnosis (for which see the relevant notes below). For editions of the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts and an annotated German translation, see Nakamura 2004, pp. 22–23, 35–36 & 46–50 (§§ 1–1.2.3), respectively.

³⁰ The spheres are explained as being of two types, namely, that of the outer world (lokadhātu: 'jig rten gyi khams) and that of the sentient beings (sattvadhātu: sems can gyi khams). See Nakamura 2004, pp. 23, 35 & 49 (§1.2.2.a).

³¹ The entities are explained as being of two kinds, namely, conditioned (samskṛta: 'dus byas) and unconditioned (asamskṛta: 'dus ma byas). See Nakamura 2004, pp. 23, 35 & 49 (§1.2.2.b).

³² The phrase ‘all aspects’ is explained as referring to the various above-mentioned conditioned and unconditioned phenomena, which differ in their particulars (svalaṁakaṇa: rang gi mtshan nyid), universals (sāmānyalakṣaṇa: spyi'i mtshan nyid), cause (hetu: rgyu), result (phala: 'bras bu), spheres (dhātu: khams), forms of existence (gati: 'gro ba), and in the division into wholesome (kusaḷa: dge ba), unwholesome (akuṣala: mi dge ba), neutral (avyākṛta: lung du ma bstan pa), and so forth. See Nakamura 2004, pp. 23, 36 & 49 (§1.2.2.c).

³³ Note that neither the canonical Tibetan translation has here rang bzhin, nor does the original Sanskrit have any equivalent for it.

³⁴ See Nakamura 2004, p. 49. Cf. BHSD, s.v. ābhoga.
3. sGam-po-pa’s *Thar rgyan*

sGam-po-pa bSod-nams-rin-chen (1079–1153) discusses the issue whether a *buddha* is endowed with gnosis in the twentieth chapter of his *Thar rgyan*. In this chapter—which deals with the result, that is, the stage of a *buddha*—sGam-po-pa basically presents three positions, which correspond sequentially to the third (and possibly also to the fourth to sixth), second, and first positions in Rong-zom-pa’s *Sangs sa chen mo*. Rather than immediately defining the positions themselves, he first (§I) provides citations from several authoritative scriptures (including both *sūtras* and *śāstras*) in which a *buddha*’s gnosis is described. He then (§II) goes into the two positions that propound the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*, namely, the one hypothesizing both kinds of gnosis and the other that accepts only the existence of non-conceptual gnosis. He also includes a fictive debate between these two positions. Finally (§III) he concludes with the position that denies the existence of gnosis. This position is ascribed by him to one or more spiritual teachers (*dge bshes pa*) and is regarded by him as felicitous (*bde ba*).

Interestingly, we find in four (i.e. BTRN) of the five versions within his presentation of this latter position a passage referring to Mi-la-ras-pa’s stance in this regard, according to which a *buddha*’s gnosis is inconceivable. From the small portion of text edited and translated by me, it appears that S presents an older version which, among other things, lacks the glosses found in the other four versions (given in the edition and the translation found below within braces and in smaller script). While the citation from the *Lalitavistara* found in §II is marked as a gloss by all four versions, the passage dealing with Mi-la-ras-pa’s stance is not indicated as such in any of them, but appears to form an integral part of the main text. Yet, apart from the fact that contextually this latter passage does not fit comfortably into the text, the fact that it, like the previous gloss, is missing in S, and that in B and T it is inserted in a spot different than in R and N are indications that it was originally a gloss added later with the clear aim of integrating Mi-la-ras-pa’s position into sGam-po-pa’s work, and that too right within (or immediately following) the passage where his own favoured position is presented. As is well known, interpolations probably resulting, at least in part, from the practice of deliberately integrating earlier glosses into the main text, are not seldom in sGam-po-pa’s works.\(^{35}\) As it is obvious that the passage containing Mi-la-ras-pa’s view was originally a gloss, I have treated it as such in both the edition and the translation (i.e. I have put it within braces, which in turn have been put within brackets to indicate that this is not the original reading). As for the location of this gloss, I have followed R and N rather than B and T, since in the case of the former the reading of the main text is less disrupted. sGam-po-pa’s expounding of the matter is as followed:\(^{36}\)

I. Introductory Passage

There are different claims concerning the excellence of gnosis. Among these, some state that a *buddha* has conceptual thoughts (i.e. pure mundane gnosis) as well as gnosis (i.e. non-conceptual gnosis); some claim that a *buddha* does not have conceptual thoughts but


\(^{36}\) *Thar rgyan* (B, pp. 302.1–308.5; T, fols. 206a3–211a2; R, fols. 167b1–171b2; N, pp. 620.4–631.1; S, pp. 331.2–338.2).
[does have] the gnosis of knowing everything vividly (ci yang sa ler); some state that the gnosis ceased [upon his attaining awakening]; some say that [a buddha] has never had gnosis.\textsuperscript{37}

The gnosis of a buddha is explained in the scriptures of both sūtras and śāstras. Ārya[ratnaguna]śamcayagāthā 7.7ab states:\textsuperscript{38}

Therefore, if one wishes to come into contact with the supreme gnosis [of] a buddha, One should have faith in this ‘mother’ (i.e. the Prajñāpāramitā) of the Victorious Ones.

It is also stated in the Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā:\textsuperscript{39}

The Perfectly Awakened One has attained gnosis that is unobscured in regard to all phenomena.

Furthermore, in the twenty-first chapter of the same [work] it is stated:\textsuperscript{40}

There exists the gnosis of the unsurpassable buddha;
There exists the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma;
There exists the ripening of sentient beings.

There are numerous discourses on gnosis also in other sūtras. Considered from the perspective of the śāstras, Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra [9.31] states:\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{37} The difference between the last two positions, both of which maintain the non-existence of gnosis at the stage of a buddha, is not explained by sGam-po-pa, who seems to deal with them together in the passage below in which he presents the position preferred by him ([III]). Tentatively, I suggest to take the position according to which the gnosis ceases upon one’s attainment of Buddhahood to be that of authors such as Candrakīrti, who advocate that the mind and mental factors cease upon awakening, and the position according to which a buddha has never had gnosis—that is, also prior to his attaining Buddhahood—to be that of the Apratīśṭhānavādins, who maintain that phenomena, having no substratum whatsoever, are mere appearances and thus reject the existence of all phenomena not only on the absolute level but also on the conventional one—that is, even as illusory entities—in the case of both ordinary beings and awakened ones. For more on these positions, see chapter four, §5.

\textsuperscript{38} The canonical version reads identically (T, fol. 212b5–6; D, fol. 6b2–3). The Sanskrit text reads as follows (Yuyama, p. 37; cf. Obermiller, p. 37):

\begin{center}
tasmā hu śraddhādhata eta jīnāṇa mātām |
\end{center}
\begin{center}
yadi icchatā sprśitu uttamabuddhājñānam ||
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{39} No attempt has been made to locate this citation due to the enormous length of the Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā. Exactly the same statement (including, in addition to yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas, two more epithets of a buddha) is found, however, in the Pañcaviṃśatisūtrasāhāsrika (P, vol. ca, fol. 364b7–8; D, vol. ca, fol. 310b7; S, vol. 51, p. 769.16–19):

\begin{center}
de bzhin gshigs pa dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas ni chos thams cad la sgrib pa med pa'i ye shes brnyes pa stel.
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{40} Although Gro-lung-pa mentions the twenty-first chapter of the Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā as the source, the lines cited by him could not be found in that chapter. See, however, the Pañcaviṃśatisūtrasāhāsrika (P, vol. ca, fol. 364a7–8; D, vol. ca, fol. 310b2; S, vol. 51, p. 768.17–19):

\begin{center}
... rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa nyid thob par byed do|| rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa nyid thob par byas nas chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ro|| chos kyi 'khor lo bskor te sms can rnam s kyi don byed do||
\end{center}
One should know that
Just as the emission of all rays of light [automatically follows]
From the emission of one ray of light,
So is the emission of the buddhas' gnosis.

And so forth, and [further, verse 9.67]:

The mirror-like gnosis is unwavering.
The three [other] gnoses, that is, the gnosis of equality,
The discerning gnosis, [and] the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities,
Are based on it.

Other śāstras, too, expound a buddha's gnosis.

II. A Presentation of the Positions Maintaining the Existence of Gnosis

Relying on these scriptures, some claim that a buddha has gnosis. In this regard, if one were to explain the line of thought (lugs) [regarding] the existence [of a buddha's gnosis, it would be as follows]: In sum, that gnosis is of two [kinds], namely, the gnosis that knows [phenomena] as [they actually] are and the gnosis that knows [phenomena] to the full extent. Of these, the gnosis that knows [phenomena] as [they actually] are is the one that cognizes the absolute. When the entire manifoldness of objects has been eliminated as a result of the repeated practice of [realizing] true reality (de kho na: tattva), that is, the culmination of the Diamond-like Samādhi, as explained earlier, all mental activities completely come to rest, and thus both the manifoldless dharmadhātu and the manifoldless gnosis are of one taste. Therefore, [they] are indistinguishable, like a mixture of water with water or [melted] butter with [melted] butter, or [it is] just like not seeing any visible matter being referred to as seeing space; or the great insight devoid of appearances being the substratum of all precious qualities. Similarly, it is stated:

Like adding water to water
And like [melted] butter entering into [melted] butter,
The synthesis of the object of knowledge, free from manifoldness, And gnosis, which is indistinguishable from it, Is called dharmakāya, [Which is] the nature of all buddhas.

And [Ratnagunasamcaya 12.10] states:

Sentient beings say, "[We] see space." How does one see space? Analyze this matter!

The Tathāgata taught that such is likewise the case with seeing [the true nature of] phenomena. [Such] seeing cannot be verbally expressed by [employing] other examples.

The gnosis of knowing [phenomena] to the full extent is the knowledge of all aspects [of] conventional relative truth. By means of the Diamond-like Samādhi all seeds of obscuration are demolished, and consequently great insight arises. On the basis of the latter, one knows and perceives all entities, [that is] the [entire] assemblage of objects of knowledge included in the three times, as if [directly perceiving] a fresh āmalaka (skyu ru ra) in the palm of [one’s] hand. It is taught in the sūtras that a buddha cognizes conventional [phenomena], as follows:

The different causes
Of a single eyespot of a peacock[’s tail]
Are not an object of knowledge for those who are not omniscient;
That which knows them is the power of omniscience.

And the Uttaratantra (i.e. Ratnagotravibhāga 2.53ab) states:

The knower of the world,
Seeing the entire world with great compassion, […]

yathā jalam jale nyastam ghṛtam caiva yathā ghṛte |

44 The canonical version reads almost identically (T, fol. 215b5–6; D, fol. 8b3–4). The Sanskrit text reads as follows (Yuyama, p. 52; cf. Obermiller, p. 50, here v. 9):

ākāśadṛśtu iti satṭva pravīśhāranti khanidarśanam kutu vimūrṣyata etam arthaṁ |
tathā dharmadarśanam nidīṣṭu tathāgatena na hi darśanaṁ bhaṇitu śakya nidarśanena ||

45 This verse is cited in the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, where it reads slightly differently (P, fol. 106a1–2; D, vol. khu, fol. 92b4; S, vol. 79, p. 903.4–5):

rma bya’i mdongs ni gcig la yang||
gryu [P rgya] yi rnam pa thams cad ni||
kun mkhyen min pas shes bya min||
de shes kun mkhyen stobs yin no||

The Sanskrit text reads (Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, p. 474.21–22):

sarvākārakāraṇam ekasya mayūracandrakasyāpi |
nāsarvajñayār jheyaṃ sarvajñabalam hi tajjñānam ||

See also the English translation in de La Vallée Poussin 1988–1990, p. 1345.

46 The canonical version reads identically (P, fol. 65a5; D, fol. 64b2–3; S, vol. 70, p. 958.9–10). The Sanskrit text reads:

mahākaraṇayā kṛtṇam lokam ālokya lokavit |
Moreover, the way [a buddha] knows and sees is not like holding [entities] to be substantial. He knows and sees [them] as an illusion. Likewise, the *Dharmasamgītisūtra* states:

For example, some magicians
Attempt to free a magically created [being by removing its magical power].
Since they already know [that it is an illusion],
They face no obstructions to [correctly perceiving] that illusion-[like being].
Likewise, the wise, who are fully awakened, perceive
The three [realms of] existence to be illusion-like.

Also, in the *Pitāputrasamāgamasūtra* it is stated:

Because a magician knows
The magical apparition created [by him] to be an illusion;
[He] is not confused by it.
You, [too,] see the entire world ('gro ba: jagat) in this way.
[I] pay homage to and praise the one who sees everything [in this way].

Further, some say: The Fully Awakened One possesses the knowledge of the absolute, [namely], the so-called gnosis of knowing [phenomena] as [they actually] are, but does not possess the knowledge of the conventional, the so-called gnosis of knowing [phenomena] to the full extent. It is not that something knowable (*mkhyen rgyu yod pa*) is not known [by a buddha]. But since conventional knowable [phenomena] are non-existent, there is no gnosis of perceiving them [either]. How is it that conventional [phenomena] are non-existent? Conventional [phenomena] appear to ordinary beings as they are, namely, caused [in their case] by defiled ignorance (*nyon mongs pa can gyi ma rig pa*). They appear to the three [types of] nobles (i.e. Śrāvaka saints, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas) as they are, namely, caused [in their case] by undefiled ignorance (*nyon mongs pa can ma yin pa'i ma rig pa*). It is, for example, like the appearance of strands of hair and [other] ‘floaters’ (*rab rib: timira*) to a [person] suffering from an eye disease. [Immediately] after the Diamond-like Samādhi [has arisen in him], a buddha discards [even undefiled] ignorance, and he sees true reality, in that [he] does not see any phenomena. Therefore, these deceptive conventional [phenomena] do not exist in a buddha’s field of perception. For example, it

For an annotated English translation, see Takasaki 1966, p. 329.

47 The canonical version (*Dharmasamgītisūtra*, T, fol. 254b1–2; D, fol. 43b4–5) reads somewhat differently. See the translation of the same passage in Ye-shes-sde’s *īTa ba'i khyad par* above, n. 9, where the differences in the reading of the canonical version are recorded.

48 Only the first four lines are found in the *Pitāputrasamāgamasūtra* (T, fol. 233a7; D, fol. 111a3–4), which reads slightly differently:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sgyu ma'i mkhan pos [T po] sgyu sprul kyang|} \\
\text{sgyu ma langs par 'tshal bas na|} \\
\text{de la rmongs par 'gyur ma mchis|} \\
\text{de bzhin khyod kyis 'gro ba gzigs|}.
\end{align*}
\]

According to Candrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvatāraḥbhasya*, defiled ignorance seems to be the ignorance included within the ‘branches of existence’ (*srid pa'i yan lag: bhavāṅga*), that is, the twelve links of dependent origination (* pratīyāsamatpādā*), while undefiled ignorance is ignorance that merely consists in obscurations pertaining to objects of knowledge (*shes bya'i sgrīb pa: f应急预案*). For more details, see *Madhyamakāvatāraḥbhasya* (pp. 106.19–108.20).

49 Regarding my addition of the word ‘other,’ see “Works by Indian Authors,” n. 14.
is just like strands of hair and [other] ‘floaters’ no [longer] appearing to a person whose eye
disease has been cured.\footnote{51} Therefore, the appearance of conventional [phenomena] is caused
by ignorance, and thus [can] be established from a worldly perspective only, while from the
perspective of a \textit{buddha} it does not exist. Nor, then, does any gnosis of knowing it exist
either. If a \textit{buddha} had a mind (\textit{blo}) that is subject to appearances, deceptive objects would
appear [to him], and this would lead to the undesired consequence that a \textit{buddha} himself is
subject to delusions.\footnote{52} It also contradicts authoritative scriptures such as [those that teach]
that the Great Sages (\textit{thub pa: muni}) are constantly in meditative absorption. \textit{(The Lalitavistara
states:)}

\begin{quote}

\textbf{The Fully Awakened One}
\par
\textbf{Is constantly in meditative absorption.}
\end{quote}

With regard [to such a position], the proponents of the previous position say:\footnote{54} Just because
it (i.e. pure mundane gnosis) [occurs during] the post-meditative state, it does not
[necessarily] imply that [if a \textit{buddha} is endowed with it he] becomes distracted—or the like.
Nor, therefore, does it contradict authoritative statements such as [those that teach that a
\textit{buddha}] is constantly in meditative absorption; while asserting that the mere perception of
deceptive objects is delusion is also inadmissible. All deceptive objects [that appear] within
the cognitive field of others (i.e. ordinary beings) appear [also to a \textit{buddha}]. Yet knowing
all minds that comprehend them to be [themselves] delusions, [he] simply counts on [these
delusions] to be causes of higher existence and salvific release. Therefore, how could [a
\textit{buddha}'s pure mundane gnosis] be deluded? It has been stated:\footnote{55}

\begin{quote}

Understanding that [phenomena] are mere delusions
Should be regarded as non-delusion.
\end{quote}

Furthermore, some also claim that [one] does not invalidate [the standards of] valid
cognition in taking conventional [phenomena] as objects [of perception so long as one] does
not cling to [them] as real. The fact that there is no [such] invalidation [would imply that] a
\textit{buddha} does not become deluded even though [such conventional phenomena] are
cognitively appropriated by him. Therefore, [the proponents of] the first position maintain

\footnote{51}{See the passage from *Madhyamaka-Simha's \textit{Drśṭivibhāga} translated above ("Works by Indian
Authors," §1.A), where the same example is used.}
\footnote{52}{A similar argument is put forward in the \textit{Sangs sa chen mo}, §III.2.}
\footnote{53}{I have not been able to locate this citation in the \textit{Lalitavistara}. The notion that a \textit{buddha} is
constantly in a state of meditative absorption is nevertheless expressed in it on several occasions.
This gloss may thus be a reference to the following line of verse (T, fol. 303b5–6; D, fol. 204b2):
\textit{rtag tu mnyam par bzhag pa zhes bya'o;}; Skt. (p. 351.27): \textit{satatasamāhīta ity ucyate}. The phrase
\textit{yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas}, which forms the first line of verse in the gloss, is often
employed in the work. The immediately preceding occurrence of it is found one folio earlier (\textit{ibid.},
T, fol. 302a5; D, fol. 203b1): \textit{yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas zhes bya'o;}; Skt. (p. 350.26–
27): \textit{samyaksambuddha ity ucyate}. On the notion that a \textit{buddha} is constantly in meditative
absorption, see above, the translation of the \textit{Sangs sa chen mo}, §III.3, n. 30.}
\footnote{54}{The following passage, including the citation of the two lines of verse, is virtually a
reproduction of a passage from Gro-lung-pa's \textit{bsTan rim chen mo} (see the translation above).
\textit{sGam-po-pa}, however, omits the phrase containing the analogy to a kingdom, presumably because
he, too, found it unclear.}
\footnote{55}{On the idea conveyed in this verse, see the pertinent note in the translation of the passage from
Gro-lung-pa's \textit{bsTan rim chen mo} above.}
that a *buddha* possesses the gnosis of the post-meditative state—called knowledge [of phenomena] to the full extent. For as has been stated:56

The former, [that is, the gnosis of] knowing [phenomena] as [they actually] are, Is not subject to delusion, [occurs during] meditative absorption, [and] involves no cognitive activity.  
The latter, [the gnosis that] knows [phenomena] to the full extent, Is [subject to] deceptive appearance, [occurs during] the post-meditative state, [and] involves cognitive activity.

[The proponents of] the second position claim that a *buddha* does not have post-meditative gnosis. As stated in the *Āryānantamukhasādhaka(nirīhāra)sūtra*:57

A *tathāgata*, being perfectly awakened, does not realize and does not perceive any phenomena. Why is this so? Because there is no object whatsoever to be perceived.

Elsewhere (i.e. *Viśeṣastava* 50.ab & 49.cd) it is stated:58

Some non-Buddhists (*mu stegs: tīrthika*)  
Claim that liberation is a destination;  
You [assert that] the attained [state of] tranquillity  
Is unfathomable, like an extinct fire.

Herewith is the explanation of the various positions [of others] (i.e. positions that maintain the existence of some kind of gnosis) completed.

### III. A Presentation of the Position Maintaining the Non-Existence of Gnosis

The spiritual teacher(s) taught:59 The Fully Awakened One himself is the *dharmakāya*. *'Dharmakāya'* is nothing but a designation for [the state in which] all errors have been exhausted or [all phenomena] have been reversed [to their actual] nature. In reality, the *dharmakāya* is unarisen [and] manifoldless. *Mahāyānasūtraālamkāra* [6.2d] states:60

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56 This citation has also been taken from Gro-lung-pa's *bsTan rim chen mo.*

57 This is probably a reference to the *Āryānantamukhasādhaka(nirīhāra)nāmadhāraṇī* (Skorupski 484; Tōhoku 140, 525 & 914), but I have not been able to locate this citation in any of its canonical versions.

58 Given that the lines of verse as cited by sGam-po-pa are in pairwise reverse order, the first two lines cited by him, which present the view of some non-Buddhists on *nirvāṇa*, are juxtaposed to the two last lines of the previous verse, which present the Buddha's view regarding *ātman* in the state of *nirvāṇa* and not his view on *nirvāṇa* itself—unlike in the *Viśeṣastava*. Apart from that, the canonical text reads almost identically, the only variant being *pa* instead of our *par* in the second line (i.e. 50b). Compare the translation in Naga 1998, p. 58.

59 It is unclear whether sGam-po-pa is referring here to a specific teacher of his or whether it is a general reference to some unspecified teachers, presumably of the bKa’-gdams tradition. As pointed out earlier (chapter three, §6.B.c), a close examination of the passages found in some of Atiśa’s works and early bKa’-gdams masters may reveal sGam-po-pa’s sources for the portions where he did not rely on Gro-lung-pa.

60 The canonical version reads (P, fol. 7a3; D, fol. 6b1; S, vol. 70, p. 815.16):

\[
\text{de phyir thar pa nor tsam zad pa yin}||
\]

The Sanskrit text reads:
Liberation is nothing but [the state in which] errors have been exhausted. Therefore, a *buddha* is the *dharmakāya*, and the *dharmakāya* is unarisen [and] manifoldless, and thus [he] has no gnosis. Well then, does this not contradict [the fact that] the two gnoses have been taught in the *sūtras*? It does not contradict it. It is just like when one says, "I see blue" when a visual perception arises in the form of a blue image (*sngo snang*); one [can] maintain that the knowledge of [phenomena] as [they actually] are is the gnosis itself, which assumes [the state of] the *dharmadhatu* (i.e. in being unarisen and manifoldless). And because the knowledge [of phenomena] to the full extent is a conventional [phenomenon], it [can] be established that it is [mere] appearance to disciples. Therefore, this system is felicitous.

[1] The position of the venerable Mi-la-ras-pa: "So-called gnosis is nothing but this very mind (*shes pa*), which is [in reality] untouched by fabrications and [so] transcends words (*shing* and thoughts (*blo*), such as [ones relating to] existence [and] non-existence, eternalism [and] annihilationism. There is no contradiction, no matter what one calls this [nature of the mind]. And similarly, too, in the case of gnosis. If, in hopes of [acquiring] learnedness, one had asked the Buddha himself, I do not think that he would have given a one-sided answer. The *dharmakāya* is inconceivable (*blo 'das*), unarisen, and manifoldless. Do not ask me! Look at [your own] mind; that is how it is." [Thus Mi-la-ras-pa taught. Therefore no [one particular] stance was [categorically] adopted [by him].]

In this way, the excellent eliminations and the excellent gnoses are the essence and the nature of a *buddha*, respectively. The *Uttaratantra* (i.e. *Ratnagotravibhāga* 2.4) states:

Buddhahood is made up of Pure constituents which are indivisible.

[It] is like the sky and the sun

In being characterized by the two [respective features] elimination and gnosis.

[Mahāyāna]*sūtrālāṃkāra* [9.12a–c], too, states:

(tataś ca mokṣo bhramamātrasaṃkṣayah |)

61 A similar argument is presented in more detail in the *Sangs sa chen mo*, §IV.1.B.i.

62 See the similar argument in the *Sangs sa chen mo*, §IV.2.A.iv.

63 As noted above, this passage, which is missing in S but is found in two different locations in the other versions, is very probably not an integral part of the main text but a gloss that was at some point integrated into it.

64 Note that the employment of the genitive particle *kyi* in the phrase *rje btsun mi la'i bzhed kyi* is unusual.

65 The particle *la* in the phrase *shes pa bzo bcos ma phog pa 'di la* makes no apparent sense here. It may be a later addition based on a misunderstanding of the following phrase *yod med*.

66 This verse is cited also in Gro-lung-pa's *bsTan rim chen mo*. See the translation above.

67 On the problem surrounding the interpretation of the compound *jñānaprahaṇadvaya* in the Chinese and Tibetan translations, see Takasaki 1966, p. 315, n. 7. Note in this regard Gro-lung-pa's citation, which reads *spangs pa dang ye shes gnyis*.

68 The canonical edition reads slightly differently (P, fol. 10a5–6; D, fol. 9a4–5; S, vol. 70, pp. 821.21–822.4): in the second line D has *gyi*, which is shared by S, instead of *gyis*, which is found in most manuscripts, and is indeed preferable; while P has *zhing*, D, in consideration of the archaic *da* suffix, has *cing*; in the third line PD read *mchog rab ldan pa* instead of our *mchog ldan*, thus yielding the fifteen syllables required. The Sanskrit reads:

\[\text{klesajñeyavṛtīnāṃ satatāṃ anugatāṃ bijam uktṛṣṭakālam yasminn astaṃ prayātaṃ bhavati} \\
\text{suvipulaiḥ sarvahāniprakāraīḥ |}\n
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The state of great and comprehensive abandonment in which the seeds of obscurations related to defilements and [those pertaining to] objects of knowledge, [Both of] which have accompanied [one] continuously over a long period of time, have been completely destroyed—[destroyed] in every respect—And the attainment of the wholesome supreme qualities of transformation constitute Buddhahood.

buddhatvam śuklādhamapravaraṇagunayutā āśrayasyānyathāptis....
Part Three

The Tibetan Texts: Critical Editions
Introductory Remarks on the Critical Editions

This section contains critical editions of the Tibetan texts cited and translated in this study. The Tibetan texts of short passages cited in the introductory part are given in accompanying footnotes. The Tibetan texts of longer passages have been assembled here separately. Texts cited from the bKa'-'gyur have been critically edited on the basis of the sTog and sDe-dge editions, and those from the bsTan-'gyur, on the basis of Peking and sDe-dge. In the case of the bsTan-'gyur, the location of the passages in the modern Chengdu, Sichuan edition (for which the sDe-dge, Co-ne, Peking, and sNar-thang editions were consulted) is additionally provided.

For citations of rNying-ma tantras, I have primarily employed the mTshams-brag edition of the rNying ma rgyud 'bum, but in some cases also the gTing-skyes edition or the Bai ro'i rgyud 'bum. In the case of other rNying-ma canonical texts, I have employed bDud-'joms Rin-po-che's edition of the rNying ma bka' ma rgyas pa. As for citations from Rong-zom-pa's works cited in the introduction (and in the notes to the translations found in part two), two complete versions of his collected works have been generally drawn upon, namely, the three-volume xylographic edition prepared by mKhar-legs-sprul-sku Padma-kun-grol (1916–1984) in Khams, apparently in the early 1980s, and the two-volume set published in Chengdu in 1999, both based on the original Shri-seng two-volume edition edited by Mi-pham at the beginning of the twentieth century (with an additional third volume that was compiled sometime later). For the critical editions of the longer passages found below, the incomplete one-volume collected works published in Thimphu in 1976 under the title Rong zom bka' 'bum, said to have been reproduced from a manuscript copy of an incomplete print from the Zhe-chen blocks (one wonders whether this print may actually have been the original Shri-seng edition) has also been consulted when applicable. For the editions of the Sangs sa chen mo and the passage from the dKon cog 'grel, I used, further, the complete edition of the Rong zom gsung 'bum published in Berkeley by Tarthang Tulku during the 1980s and 1990s. This edition has apparently relied on two incomplete editions of Rong-zom-pa's collected works published in exile—including the one published in Thimphu and another one titled Selected Writings (gsun thor bu) of Roṅ-zom Chos-kyi-bzan-po, published in Leh in 1974; on prints of single works; and, for the remaining texts, on the edition prepared by Padma-kun-grol, which became available to the editor after Pad-nor Rin-po-che brought a copy of it from Khams sometime in the 1990s.
The following are sigla and abbreviations employed in the editions (sigla used only for specific texts will be given separately in the pertinent introductory remarks; a complete list of sigla is provided in ‘Abbreviations and Bibliography’):

(1) Rong-zom-pa’s collected works
   A = Rong zom bka’ 'bum: A Collection of Writings by the Rñih-ma-pa Master Ron­
zom Chos-kyi-bzan-po (= RZKB), published in Thimphu in 1976
   B = Rong zom gsung 'bum (= RZSB), published in Khams in the early 1980s
   C = Rong zom gsung 'bum, the Yeshe De Project Edition (= RZSB-YDPE),
   published in Berkeley during the 1980s and 1990s
   D = Rong zom chos bzang gi gsung 'bum (= RZChZSB), published in Chengdu in
   1999

(2) Canonical Collections
   D = sDe-dge bKa’gyur and bsTan-’gyur
   P = Peking bsTan-’gyur
   T = sTog bKa’gyur
   S = Chengdu, Sichuan bsTan-’gyur

(3) rNying-ma Canonical Collections
   Bg = Bai ro'i rgyud 'bum
   NyK = rNying ma bka’ ma rgyas pa
   Tb = mTshams-brag edition of the rNying ma rgyud 'bum
   Tk = gTing-skyes edition of the rNying ma rgyud 'bum

(4) Abbreviations
   add. = addidit
   conj. = coniecit
   exp. = expansion (of orthographical abbreviations, bskungs yig)
   om. = omisit

The ‘Wylie’ transliteration is the one generally employed, including in the case of Sanskrit words transliterated in Tibetan script. The character i has been employed to denote the reversed vowel sign ī. For a gter tsheg, the sign % has been used. Old orthographies found in Rong-zom-pa’s works have been recorded faithfully. In the case of orthographical variation, I have generally opted for the older original readings, since later editions (for example, the sDe-dge edition of canonical works or the Sichuan edition of Rong-zom-pa’s collected works) usually attempt to standardize orthography, especially that of verb forms, but also in such features as the effect of the archaic da drag suffix on following conjunctions, and the use of zhés instead of the archaic shes after a final s or s suffix. For the verb forms, I commonly rely on Jäschke rather than on modern Tibetan dictionaries, which by and large follow a uniform scheme of verb conjugations not attested in earlier sources. In the case of orthographical abbreviations (bskungs yig) found in Tibetan texts, the abbreviated forms have been faithfully transliterated, and their expansions given in the apparatus.

As for the readings in Rong-zom-pa’s works, all collected works rely more or less on the first ShrT-seng two-volume xylographic edition, so that the different versions display no major variants. D seems generally to follow the original ShrT-seng edition, to which the editors apparently had access, but it occasionally adopts emendations from B, which is clearly the version that reflects the most editorial treatment. D sometimes also adopts modern orthography. It generally has ba instead of pa after an implicit da drag suffix, and instead of the archaic shes (in the older versions of the collected works), it has
Introductory Remarks on the Critical Editions

zhes after an s final or s suffix. The reading of version A must be very close to that of the Shrī-seng edition. Of all editors, that of B took the greatest liberties, introducing frequent changes to the text, though most of these are what is called 'accidentals' (i.e. modernized orthography, punctuation, and the like). The quality of the prints is relatively good, except that at times it is difficult to differentiate between pa and ba; occasionally a tsheg is missing; in some cases there are slight errors (e.g. the rtsa riags, or rtsa lag, is missing, thus yielding cha instead of tsha); and some blocks seem to be slightly damaged. In most cases, I have opted for the readings in A or D, unless B provided a reading that is semantically better. Version C proved to be in most cases of little help. I have made no attempt to emend the Sanskrit words contained in the text in Tibetan transliteration. Whenever it was possible to identify a misspelled Sanskrit word, the correct spelling has been given in the translation, together with comments and conjectures where called for. Usually no abbreviations are employed in any of the editions of the collected works. B occasionally has an s suffix underneath the final consonant in order to save space, often at the end of the line. Such occurrences are not recorded in the present critical edition.

As for the punctuation, I usually follow A, unless that of B or D seems better. In the case of those works which are not found in A, I follow the punctuation of D, since, unlike B, it seems normally to reflect the original punctuation. Variations in punctuation have generally not been specified in the edition, unless deemed necessary or in cases of non-standard punctuation. While all versions use more or less the same punctuation, B has a different punctuation system, being more liberal, for example, in the employment of shads. Specifically, B adds shads after the particles ni and yang as markers of the subject, after the so-called semi-final particles (lhag bcas) or any other particles marking subordinate clauses (e.g. nas or dang), often after la, after the instrumental particle following verbs or verbal nouns, at the end of citations preceding the particle zhe (a single or a double shad, as required), after the particle dang in enumerations, in cases of apposition, after phrases such as 'di snyam du, and the like. This has clearly been done in order to facilitate the reading of long sentences. In a few cases, however, B seems to have omitted shads that existed in the original version. It also conveniently employs a double shad after each line of verse. In one peculiar feature, when a shad appears at the end of a line, B occasionally employs the borderline as a shad; thus, in the case of a single shad, the stroke is missing, and in the case of a double shad, one finds only one stroke. For both single and double shads after a final g, it has a single shad separated by a space, but in the case of a single shad, it occasionally takes the stroke of the final consonant as a shad. The punctuation in C is often irregular. It not infrequently has a single shad where a double shad is expected, that is, after a final particle (where in most cases it indeed has a double shad) and at the end of a line of verse (throughout, unless the line ends with a final particle). It more or less consistently uses after a final g only one stroke for both a single and double shad. As stated above, D normally follows the same punctuation system as A, with the exception of lines of verse, after which it, too, conveniently places a double shad. In the case of a shad after a final g, D is inconsistent, in that it sometimes takes the stroke of a g as a shad and sometimes not. Occasionally, too, D has non-standard punctuation.

In the citations from Rong-zom-pa’s rGyud spyi’i dngos po, the text is sporadically accompanied by glosses, commonly written in smaller script. In A they are in most cases inserted beneath the relevant phrases, to which they are connected with dotted lines (as probably was the case in the original Shrī-seng edition). B customarily inserts glosses containing identifications of sources before the citation, and those
containing clarifications after the target words or phrases, connecting them to the main text by means of dotted lines. D integrates glosses into the pertinent passages at the point where in A the dotted lines connecting the glosses to the corresponding phrases touch the main text: glosses containing an identification of sources have been inserted somewhere near the beginning of the citation, and those that contain clarifications, in a more or less suitable place within or immediately after the glossed word or phrase. In the critical editions below, I have consistently inserted, for the sake of convenience, glosses indicating sources before the citation and those presenting clarifications immediately after the word or phrase. The glosses are typed in smaller script and enclosed within braces.
Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction

1. Passages Cited in Chapter Two

A. Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fols. 271a6–272a1; D, pp. 140.1–17):

de la dam pa chos kyi sku gzugs dang ri mo'i rgyud dang| mchod rten dang| glegs bam dang|¹ dri gtsang khang dang bcas pa rams kyang dngos su na ’phags pa dkon mchog gsum gyi rten btsugs pa yin pas lha rten gyi khongs su gtogs so|| de yang ji lta zhe na| sangs rgyas ’jig rten du mngon du byung ste| dam pa chos kyi ’khor lo mngon du bskor nas ’phags pa’i dge ’dun mang po’ang zhal bzhugs tsam na² mchod pa’i rten gud du bca’ mi dgos te| ’phags pa nyid la mchod pa las| de nas sangs rgyas mya ngan las ’das nas ’phags pa’i dge ’dun rnam kyang mya ngan las ’das te| ’jig rten na ’phags pa zhal mi bzhugs pa’i ’og tu rten la mchod pa byed par ’gyur te| de yang ’di ltar (1) ston pa nyid kyis byin gyis brlabs pa’i byang chub kyi shing dang| rdo rje gdan lta bu| (2) ston pa mya ngan las ’das nas sku gdung brgyud du bgos nas mchod rten byas pa rnam dang| (3) ston pa mya ngan las ’das nas lo sum brgya lon nas rgyal po dharmā a sho ka zhes bya ba byung bas| byang chub kyi snying po rdo rje gdan du³ bcom ldan ’das kyi sku gzugs, bzhengs su gsol ba dang| (4) sde snod gsum gyi chos kyang de yan chad du gang zag gi blo la gnas pa las rgyal po des dag cing yun du brtan par bya ba’i phyir| (bka’ bsdu nas⁴) glegs bam la bkod de dri gtsang khang du bzhugs su gsol lo|| ’di ni thun mong gi mchod pa’i rten gyi⁵ tshul lo||

B. Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fols. 290b4–291a3; D, p. 160.6–15):

de la chos kyi sku zhes bya ba yang| phal cher gnyis su med pa’i ye shes la bya bar bzhed la| ye shes de yang lam dang ’bras bur bcas pa’i chos thams cad kun nas bsags shing yongs su rdzogs pa’i lus yin pas| chos kyi sku zhes kyang bshad do| ye shes chen po de nyid| sngon gyi smon lam dang thugs rje chen po’i shugs kyis gdul bya rams la longs

¹ || D
² || D
³ om. D
⁴ D omits shad after glosses throughout.
⁵ om. D
spyod rdzogs pa dang sprul pa’i gzugs kyi mtshan nyid| dbang po’i spyod yul du rung bar byin gyis brlabs pas| gzugs kyi sku zhes bya’o| de ltarchos kyi sku dang gzugs kyi sku gnyis phan tshun mtshon byed du ston pa’i tshel res ’ga’ ni chos kyi sku’i yon tan gyi chos de nyid mtshan ma’i gzugs su byin gyis brlabs so|| zhes chos kyi sku’i rtags su gzugs kyi sku ston to|| res ’ga’ ni gzugs kyi sku’i mtshan ma’ dang ’dra bar chos kyi sku la ’di lta bu’i yon tan gyi chos mnga’ ’o|| zhes gzugs kyi sku dper ston to||

C. Grub mtha’i brjed byang (B, fols. 342b4–343a2; D, p. 220.7–14):
de la chos kyi sku zhes bya ba la| chos ni thog ma med pa nas rigs su gyur pa| ye nas byang chub kyi snying po can| rang bzhin gyis’ rnam par dag par gnas pa las| rtog pa ni glo bur ba yin te| rtag pa glo bur de ni dper na snang ba byung na mun pa rang dwangs pa dang ’dra bar| rtag pa glo bur ba chos nyid kyi ngang du dwangs pa’i dus na| lhag par ngan pa cig bzang por gyur pa med de| ye nas rnal mar gnas pa’i don de nyid rtag bzhin rnal mar gyur pa la bya’o| ssku sbya ba ba ni yon tan ’phel ‘grib med par gnas pa la yang sku zhes bya la| ssku gnyis ‘byung ba’i rgyur gyur pa la yang sku zhes bya ste| de ltarchos kyi sku’o||

D. Grub mtha’i brjed byang (B, fols. 340a6–341a6; D, pp. 217.17–218.18):
ye shes bzhi la don brgyad kyis bstan te| (1) ye shes kyi rgyu dang| (2) grogs dang| (3) ye shes kyi las dang| (4) ye shes kyi yul dang| (5) ye shes kyi rang bzhin dang| (6) ye shes kyi mtshan nyid dang| (7) ye shes kyi grangs dang| (8) ye shes kyi ’bras bu’o| de la (1) ye shes kyi rgyu ni tshogs brgyad de| kun gzhis thes thams cad kyi gzhis ’am’ rgyur gnas pa de| gnas gyur pa ni me long lta bu’i ye shes so| nyon mongs pa can gyi yid bdag du ’dzin pa spangs nas| bdag dang gzhans du mnyam pas na mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes so| yid kyi rnam par shes pa yul rig cing gcod pa de gnas gyur pa ni so so so kun tu rtag pa’i ye shes so| sgo lnga rang gi yul tha dad pa la ’byung ba de ni gnas gyur pa las bya ba na tan grub pa’i ye shes so| sgo lnga yul so sor nges pa bzhin du| bya ba grub pa’i ye shes kyi kyang| smon lam gcig pa i sems can thams cad smin cing grol bar mdzad do|| (2) grogs ni yid ’phags pa’i lam la dmigs pa la bya ste| dper na bskyod legs pa dang ’dra’o| de yng phyung bus bskyod na me long gi g.ya’ dag pa dang ’dra bar| yid ’phags pa’i lam la dmigs na| bdag gi kun gzhis’i dri ma dag ste| yid ’phags pa’i lam la dmigs nas| kun gzhis la dge ba’i bag chags kyi sa bon gnas par ’gyur ro| (3) las ni sgrib pa gnyis spong ba’o|| (4) yul ni thun mong dang thun mong ma yin pa’i yul lo| de la thun mong gi yul ni chos kyi dbyings so| thun mong 9 ma yin pa’i yul ni gsal la mi sgrib pa dang [me long ye shes] mnyam la ma ’dres pa dang [mnyam nyid] ’gro ba’i rgyud mkhyen pa dang [sor rtag] gdul bya tha dad pa’o [bya grub]|| (5) rang bzhin nii ji snyed pa’i10 chos thams cad mkhyen pa stel| lta ba ni ‘spyi’i mtshan nyid11 ma12 skyes pa13 yang mkhyen| ji snyed pa ni rang rang gi mtshan

^6 gyi B
^7 ’am conj., lam BD
^8 rtags D
^9 add. {me long} D
^10 It seems that the text here is corrupt. One probably should read ji lta ba dang ji snyed pa’i instead of only ji snyed pa’i. See also the note to the translation.
^11 nyid conj., ma BD.

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nyid ma lus pa'i chos thams cad mi sgrib par mkhyen pa'o|| (6) mtshan nyid ni skad cig ma ste|

ye shes ye shes zhes brjod pa||
ye shes brjod pa nyid kyang gsog||
brjod du med pa'i ye shes ni||
don dam pa yi ye shes so||

zhes gsungs pa'o|| (7) grangs ni bzhi'o|| (8) 'bras bu ni sku gsum ste| me long lta bu'i ye shes chos kyi de kho na nyid dang dbyer med pa ni chos kyi sku'o|| mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes thugs rje chen po 'byung ba'i rgyur gyur pa dang| so sor rtog pa'i ye shes gzungs dang ting nge 'dzin la sogs pa'i gzhir gyur pa gnyis ni longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku'o|| bya ba nan tan gyi ye shes gdul bya chud mi za ba ni sprul pa'i sku'o||

E. rGyud spyi'i dngos po (A, pp. 514.2–518.1; B, fols. 233a6–235a2; D, pp. 98.4–99.21):
sngags zhes bya ba ni thabs dang shes rab zung du 'brel ba'i bdag nyid la bya ste| de yang rab tu dbye ba'i sgo nas| gsang sngags dang rig sngags dang gzungs sngags zhes bya bar grags so|| de la rig,| sngags rang gi ngo bo ni| shes rab dang ye shes kyi bdag nyid do|| de bzhin du gzungs sngags ni| dran pa dang shes rab kyi bdag nyid do||

'di rnam kyi las ni| gsang sngags kyis ni log par rtog cing 'khrul pa| rnam las shes pa skyob par byed do|| rig sngags kyis ni ma rtogs| pa bcom zhi ng bsal te dngos po'i don rig par byed do|| gzungs sngags kyis ni dran pa nyams pa bsal te| dam pa rnam kyi gdams ngag gi ltar thos| pa don dang bcs pa| yon tan dang bcs pa 'dzin par byed do|| 'di dag gis ni mi mthun pa'i phyogs dang| gnyen po'i don rnam kyang bstan pa yin no||

'di rnam kyi rtogs ni rgyal ba rnam kyi gzugs kyi skur snang ba cha shas dang bcs pa'am| cha shas su snang ba rnam yin te| de la gsang sngags ni| lha pho'i dbyibs dang kha dog dang phyag rgya lta bur snang ba'o|| lha ma gnyis ni lha mo'i dbyibs dang

12 ma conj., la BD. On this and the previous emendation, see the following note.

13 It is probable that the text originally read here spyi'i mtshan nyid ma skies pa and that at an initial stage of the transmission process the particle nyid was erroneously omitted, thus yielding (i.e. together with the negation particle ma) mtshan ma instead of mtshan nyid. A later scribe or editor may have added the particle la, resulting in the reading spyi'i mtshan ma la skies pa, which makes no sense here, since semantically we need a negation for the verb skies pa. One wonders whether the text originally actually read spyi'i mtshan nyid ma lus pa, in which case, however, the intended meaning of the phrase containing spyi'i mtshan nyid—namely, the universal characteristic of all phenomena being their unarisenness—would not be explicit.

14 D seems to have taken this citation to be prose. It has a single shad after the first and third lines and no shad at all after the second.

15 rigs A
16 ba D
17 rtog A
18 thob B
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kha dog dang phyag rgya lta bur snang ba ste| ’di dag kyang rtags kyi sgo nas| rig sngags dang gsang sngags dang gzungs sngags su\(^{19}\) bzhed do||
de rnam kyi sgo ni yig ’bru dang sgrar snang ba ste| ’di rnam kyang don gyi sgor gyur pas sngags su gsungs so||
’di rnam la chos mthun pa ni| (1) thun mong dang thun mong ma yin pa’i dngos grub kyi ngo bo nyid du yang bshad pa dang| (2) de’i rgyur yang bshad pa dang| (3) las bskul bar bshad pa dang| (4) bden pa’i tshig tu bshad pa rnam s so| (1) de la sngags nyid thob cing bsgrub\(^{20}\) par bya ba’i lha yin par bshad pas| chos kyi sku mdzad pa dang bcas pa la ’jug ste| des na dngos grub kyi ngo bo nyid yin no| de ltar yang bya ba’i rgyud las kyang| rig sngags dang gsang sngags kyi ngo bo lha drug tu gsungs la| mal ’byor gyi rgyud las kyang| gsang sngags lha dang dngos grub la gsungs so| (2) de’i rgyur bshad pa yang| nges pa’i tshig gi tshul gyis lam gyi chos la gsungs la| sgor gyur pa’i sgo nas| bshad pa’i chos la yang gsungs pa’i phyir ro| (3) las bskul bar bshad pa yang| ’di skad du| (’jig rten
snang byed las)|

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{zhi ba la stogs las rnam la} & |^{21} \\
\text{so so’i bskul bar rig pa yin}\]
\end{align*}
\]

zhes bya ba dang| (gsang ba ’dus pa las)|

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{gsang ba’i sngags kyis bskul nas su|}
\end{align*}
\]

zhes bya ba la sogs pa gsungs pa’o| (4) bden pa’i tshig tu bshad pa ni|\(^{22}\) (sang gra ha las)|

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bden las ’jig rten ’di nyams pas|}
\text{snags kyi dngos grub thob mi ’gyur|}
\end{align*}
\]

zhes bya ba la stogs pa lta bu’o|\(^{23}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nges pa’i tshig ni} & (1) \text{gsang sngags zhes bya ba| (i) }^{24} \text{mantra zhes bya ba’i sgra las ’di snyed la}
\text{’jug) gsang ba dang| mkhas pa dang| mchog tu gyur pa dang| bden pa rnam la yang bya| (ii) rnam pa gcig tu gsang ste brjod pa| zhes kyang bya| (iii) yang na mantra zhes pa man ni yid dam shes pa| tra ni skyabs sam dpung gnyen yin te| de bas shes skyobs zhes bya ste| shes pa dang dpung gnyen du ldan pa’i don| (2) rig sngags ni bi dya|^{25} \text{zhes pa| (i) biddhu}\(^{26}\) dha ste| ’joms shing sel ba la bya bas| ma rig pa’i nyon mongs pa ’joms shing sel ba la bshad| (ii) biddhu|^{27} \text{ma dhi ste thob pa la bya bas phun sum tshogs pa thob } \text{pa ’am|^{28}}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{19}\) om. A
\(^{20}\) sgrub A
\(^{21}\) A has only a single shad for the lines of verse throughout.
\(^{22}\) BD mistakenly take the phrase bden pa’i tshig tu bshad pa ni as a line of verse, and thus have here a double shad.
\(^{23}\) | AD
\(^{24}\) manta B
\(^{25}\) bidya D
\(^{26}\) biddhu A
\(^{27}\) birddhu A
\(^{28}\) pa’am B
Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction

ngag gi rig pa thob pa la yang bya| yang na (iii) bidyā swa bhā ba ste| ngo bo nyid rig pa la yang bya ba dang| spyīr bden pa grub pa’i don du yang ston pas rig sngags zhes bya’o||
(3) gzungs sngags ni| dāh ri ni bya ba gzungs sam ’dzin pa’i don te|29 tshig dang don dang yon tan ’dzin pa ’am30 spyīr bden pa’i tshig grub par ston pas gzungs sngags zhes bya’o||
de mams las gsang sngags zhes bya ba’i sgra la| gzhān la mi bstān pa’i don dang| bden pa’i don lhag par ston to| gnyis po la ni zhar la ston te|

rang gi ngo bo dbye ba dang||
las dang rtags dang de yi sgo||
mi mthun gnyen por bcas pa dang||
chos mthun pa dang tha dad chos||
ji snyed ’jug pa bstān pa dang||
nges pa’i tshig gis bshad pa’o||

F. rGyud spyī’i dngos po (A, fols. 518.1–525.1; B, fols. 235a2–238a2; D, pp. 99.21–103.1):

phyag rgya ni bdag nyid chen po rnams kyi mtshan ma’i gzugs la bya ste mtshan ma med pa’i bdag nyid kyang yin no| de la mtshan ma’i gzugs kyi phyag rgya de dag ni| (a) rang gi gzugs gzhīg par bya ba ma yin pa dang| (b) rang gi dgos pa’i don las mi ’da’ ba dang| (c) bdag nyid chen po rnams kyi31 rtags su ston par nus pa dang| (d) chos kyi rgyal po nyag gcig gi phyag rgya yin te| gzhān la med pa dang| (e) rgyal po’i phrin las thams cad byed par nus pa’i mtshan nyid rnams dang ldan no| de ltar yang gzungs pa|

(1=b) ’da’ dka32 de bzhin (2=a) mi shigs pa||
(3=d) rgyal ba’i phyag rgya mchog gi rtags||
(4=c) bdag nyid chen po mtshan ma’i gzugs||
de bas phyag rgya zhes bya’o||

zhes gzungs pa dang| gzhān las kyang| [[byang sems bsgom pa las]]33

(5=e) rgyal po’i las thams cad phyag rgyas byed pa dang ’dra bar| sangs rgyas kyi phrin las thams cad phyag rgyas byed34 de|

29 || AD
30 pa’am BD
31 kyi conj., kyis ABD
32 dka’ conj., ka ABD. The reading ’da’ dka’ is attested in other sources (see the pertinent note in the translation). That Rong-zom-pa, too, read ’da’ dka’ and not ’da’ ka (i.e. ‘the moment of death,’ which does not make sense here) is clear from the following explanation of the verse, which has ’da’ bar dka’ ba.
33 The phrase byang sems bsgom pa las is found in all versions in the following passage between ... mi ’da’ ba’o| and mi shigs..., where it is written in normal size and not marked in any other way as a gloss. There is no doubt, however, that it was originally a gloss identifying the source of the citation, and was later erroneously integrated into the main text, and that too within the following line, where it apparently originally stood connected by a dotted line to the pertinent phrase in the above line. This must have occurred at the latest during the preparation of version A. Note that the citation itself is not from the Bodhicittabhāvanā but from the commentary on it, the Bodhicittabhāvanānirdeśa.

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zhes gsungs te| de la (1) 'da’ bar dka’ ba ni| rang gi dgos pa’i don sgrub pa la thams cad mi ’da’ ba’o|| (2) mi shigs| pa ni| rang gi mtshan ma’i gzung gzhans gyis gzhom par mi nus pa ste| 'di gnyis kyis ni btshans| pa’i don gyis phyag rgyar bstan to|| (3) rgyal po phyag rgya mchog gi rtags zhes bya ba ni| gzung la med par ston te| thun mong ma yin pa’i don no|| (4) bdag nyid chen po mtshan ma’i gzung zhes bya ba ni| mtshon par nus pa’i rtags su gyur pa’o|| (5) las thams cad byed pa zhes bya ba ni| dgos pa’i bya ba sgrub pa la chos kyi rgyal po nyid dang khyad par med cing| thabs sla ba bang tshogs| chung bas byed par ston to||

’di’i rab tu dbye ba ni (1) mtshan ma dang bcas pa dang| mtshan ma med pa’i bye brag gis rnam pa gnyis so| rnam pa gcig tu na (2) mtshan par byed pa’i thabs dang| mtshon par bya ba’am| byas pa’i bye brag gis shes rab kyi bdag nyid la ’jug pa’i sgo nas rnam pa gnyis so| de la (a) thabs kyi sgo nas ni| phyag rgya chen po dang| dam tshig dang| (3) thams cad gnyis su med pa’i sgo nas ni| lhun gyis grub pa’i phyag rgya zhes kha cig las grags te| ’di ni dbye ba bsdus pa’o||

nges pa’i tshig gi tshul gyis ni (1) mu dra zhes bya ba mtshan ma’i don te| ’dis mtshon pas sam| ’dis ’debs pas na phyag rgya’o| yang (2) mo da ni dga’ bar byed pa’i tshig ste| dga’ ba bskyed pa’i don no|| yang (3) mu ni sgrol ba| da ra ni bcings ba| sten’ ching ba dang ’grol ba’i las byed ’pa ’am| bcings pa las ’grol ba’i phyir phyag rgya’o| yang (4) mu ni chen po da ra ni ’joms pa ste| de’i phyir phyag rgya’o| yang (5) mu da ra zhes pa’i yi ge gsum so sor phra’| te bshad na| mu (mula) ni rtsa ba| da (he tu)| ni rgyu| ra (smi ra) ni bstan pa ste de la rtsa ba ni| dam tshig gi rtsa bar bstan te| ’di skad du|

sangs rgyas kun gyi dam tshig ni||

34 bye A. The final consonant da seems to have been mistakenly omitted here, given that the word is followed by the semi-final particle de. It is unlikely that the text originally had an orthographical contraction of the verb and the semi-final particle into byede, for, as far as I can see, orthographical contractions do not seem to have been employed by the scribe in this edition.

35 The phrase byang sems bsgom pa las, which is marked in the edition as a gloss on the previous citation, is found in all versions in the same location as part of the main text.

36 shig A

37 brtson B

38 no conj., to ABD

39 tsheg AB

40 || D

41 no conj., to ABD

42 pa AB

43 pa’am B

44 bral A

45 du AB

46 na D

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phyag rgya 'di la rab tu gnas||

zhes gsungs pa lta bu ste| gang phyag rgya bsrung ba dangeldon pa47 dam tshig dangeldon par 'gyur ro| de la rgyu ni| dbang bskur ba'i rgyu ste| 'di skad du| mnyam sbyor las| phyag rgyas dbang bskur ba'i skabs nas
dbu rgyan bcings bas bcings nas48 ni||
'gying zning mtha' nas dgrol bar bya||
 dar gyi mtha' ma 'phyang ba ltar|
 byas nas that mo brdab50 par bya||
zhes gsungs pa lta bu'o|| brtan pa ni byin gys brlabs pa ste| 'di skad du| {de nyid las} 
rgya 'di bcings pa tsam gis ni||
sangs rgyas thams cad byin rlobs 'gyur||
 shin tu byin gys brlabs na ni||
sangs rgyas thams cad 'du bar 'gyur||
zhes gsungs pa lta bu'o|| de dag gi don bsdus pa yang {a ba tà ra'i khungs drangs pa}
'di ni dam tshig rtsa ba stei51
dbu rgyan bcings pa rgyu yi mchog||
gang gis lus kun brtan pas na||
phyag rgya zhes ni bya ba yin||
zhes gsungs pa lta bu'o|| 'di lta bu52 ni 'debs shing mtshon par byed pas phyag rgya'i don du sbyar ba ste| 'di skad du| {rgyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa las}
jī ltar rgyal po rang gi rgyas||
rgyal pos rtsigs53 ni btob pa ltar||
bdag nyid chen po mtshan ma'i gzugs||
'thams cad'54 kun la de bzhin 'debs||

{gzhan las| skye bo kun la zhes 'byung}

47 || B
48 nis B
49 D has here only a single shad, the implication being that this line is not part of the verse.
50 brdab conj., gdab ABD
51 Here, too, D has only a single shad, thus signalling that this line is not part of the verse.
52 yu A
53 The common reading is gtsigs, not rtsigs, the past form of rtsig pa, which commonly means 'to build.' The former reading is found in both the Tantrārthāvatāra and the sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa (for the reading in these works, see the pertinent note in the translation). Nonetheless, since the dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 41b1; D, p. 70.11) also reads rtsigs, it seems that this was the original reading. According to the brDa dkrol gser gyi me long (s.v. rtsigs byas) rtsigs and gtsigs are employed interchangeably in older sources, so that no emendation has been proposed here.
54 B underlines the words thams cad kun la to indicate that the remark in the gloss that elsewhere the text reads skye bo kun la refers to them. See also the following note.
55 B underlines the words skye bo kun la. See the preceding note.
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bde chen snying la gnas pa dang
dbang chen dus la stogs pa yis
thams cad kun la de bzhin ‘debs|

zhes gsungs pa lta bu’o||mtshan nyid med pa‘i phyag rgya yang|’debs pas na phyag rgya
zhes bya ba’i don du yang gsungs te|’di skad du (le’u lhag las)
ngo bo nyid med mtshan nyid med|
myam pa chen po’i phyag rgya yis|
phyogs bcu dus bzhì thams cad dang|
’jig rten ’das dang ’jig rten pa’i|
yon tan skyon mams skye ’gag med|

ces\58 bya ba la stogs pa lta bu’o||mtshan mar bya ba’am|byas pa’i don gyis phyag rgya
zhes gsungs pa yang|’di skad du| (he badzra las)
rgya yis btab cing mtshon pa’i phyir|
phyag rgya zhes ni bya ba ste|
redo rje rgya yis btab phyir ro|
zhes gsungs pa lta bu dang|
ye shes rgya yis btab pa’i phyir|

zhes gsungs pa lta bu’o||’di dag ni spyi’i nges tshig go||
so so’i bye brag tu gsungs pa rnam s las| (1) dam tshig gi phyag rgya ni|angs
rgyas kyi thugs gsang ba’i ye shes kyi mtshan mar gyur pa’9 rnam s te|’di ni dam tshig
bskul zhi ng rtogs pa’am|mtshon pas na| dam tshig dang Idan pa’i phyir dam tshig phyag
rgya zhes bya’o||yang ’di nyid mi ’da’ ba yin pas na dam tshig gi phyag rgya’o|| (2) chos
kyi phyag rgya ni|rgyal ba rnam s kyis bshad pa’i chos kyi mtshan mar gyur pa ste|’di
yang Idan pa dang|yin pa’i don gyis chos kyi phyag rgya zhes snga ma bzhin no|| (3) las
kyi phyag rgya ni|rgyal ba rnam s kyi phrin las kyi mtshan ma’i gzugs te|nges tshig ni
snga ma bzhin no|| (4) phyag rgya chen po ni|yongs su rdzogs pa’i mtshan ma ste| lha
dran pa’i rgyur che ba’i phyir chen po zhes brjod do|| de yang rang gi ’dod pa’i sku’i
mtshan ma rdzogs na chen po zhes bya ba ste| thams cad kyi thams cad ma rdzogs kyang
phyag rgya chen po zhes brjod\60 do||
gzhan yang rgyas gdab par bya ba’i sgo nas gsungs pa rnam s las| (1) rang bzhin
gyis grub pa’i phyag rgya ni|1 bud med kyi lus te|’di la ye shes kyi rdo rjes gdab cing
mtshan par bya ba’am|byas pa yin pas na|phyag rgya zhes bya’o|| (2) ye shes kyi phyag
rgya ni|ye shes las bkhyed pa’i lha mo’i sku ste|nges pa’i tshig ni snga ma bzhin no|| (3)
phyag rgya chen po zhes bya ba ni|mtshan ma thams cad las ’das pa’i chos kyi sku ste|

56 las AD
57 Here, too, D has only a single shad, this line thus being considered not to be part of the verse.
58 zhes A
59 ba AD
60 The middle stroke in the letter ja in brjod is missing in B, resulting in the reading brngod. This
could be due either to a mistake on the part of the scribe or carver or to damage to the woodblock.
61 || D
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1. 'di la ye shes kyi mtshan mas gdab par bya ba yin pa dang mchog tu gyur pa'i sgo nas phyag rgya chen po zhes bya'o de ltar yang gsungs pa ('jam dpal thabs kyi 'khor lo las)

las dang ye shes chen po ni|  
bud med dang ni brtags pa dang||  
mchog med shes rab pha rol phyin|  
zhes bya ba la stogs pa gsungs pa lta bu'o|| yongs|  
mtshan nyid med pa'i phyag rgya ches zhes po dang| phyag rgya chen po 'di don gcig ste| phyag rgya thams cad kyi
rgyur gyur pa dang| phyag rgya thams cad kyis mtshan par bya ba yin pa dang| chos thams cad la khyab pa'i phyir| phyag rgya chen po zhes gsungs te| mtshan ma thams cad kyang de'i dbang gis rgyal ba'i sku gsung thugs nyid du lhun gyis grub par 'gyur bas| lhun gyis grub pa'i phyag rgya zhes bya'o||

rang gi ngo bo mtshan nyid dang||
rab dbye ba dang nges tshig gis||
gsang ba'i phyag rgya brjod par bya||

G. Rab gnas bshad sbyar (B, fols. 272a1–273b4; D, pp. 140.17–142.13):

Gsang sngags kyi tshul las| sags rgyas spyod yul du mi 'gyur ba rnam kyi don du phyag rgya 'jig rten du bzhag ste sms can gyi don byed do| de yang| phyag rgya ji

snyed pa rnam kyang sku gsung thugs kyi phyag rgya tsam du 'dus te| de yang (1) phyi

ros gyi dbang po'i spyod yul du gyur pa la byin gyis brlabs pa ni| rdu lshan gyi dkyil 'khor dang| sku gzugs dang| ri mo'i rgyud dang| mchod rten dang| glegs dam lta

bu'i mig dang lus kyi spyod yul du gyur pa dang| (2) gsang sngags kyi sgra dang| dam pa

chos kyi yi ge dang ming dang tshig tu phyung ba'i sgra lta bu rna ba'i dbang po'i spyod yul du gyur pa dang| gzhan yang (3) yid kyis bsam shing dmigs pa'i phyag rgya lta bus

bsdus pa| lag na 'od 'bar sna ba po| zhes pa| cha shas yongs su rdo rgi gsungs pa'am| ma rdo rgi pa'am

'dra ba'am| mi 'dra ba'am| mdo na bzo byas pa dang| tshul du lag gi 'du byed kyis| ba dang| brjod pa dang bsam pas bsdus pa thams cad kyang| lha dang sngags dang phyag rgya gsun du 'dus te 'di gsun tshogs| pas sms can gyi don byed do| ji skad du phyag na rdo rje dbang bskur ba'i tan tra las|

'jam dpal gsang sngags kyi| gsangs dang yi ge gsun| chos nyid des| dpe don dam pa'i| chos nyid ston te| des tshig gi mam pa bstan pa na bya ba nus par 'gyur ro| 'jam dpal brten pa'i chos nyid bya

ba nus par 'gyur ba la ltos |

62 D has a single shad for all three lines, which are apparently taken for prose.

63 yongs conj., yod A, yang B, yong D

64 | D

65 D inserts the gloss between the syllables phyag and rgya.

66 D inserts the gloss between the syllables yul and du.

67 | D

68 B erroneously repeats the syllable kyis.

69 mtshogs B

70 gyi B

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dper na gtsub stan brten\textsuperscript{71} nas su||
gtsub shing gtsubs pa byas pa yis||
mi yis rtsol ba byas rgyu las||
stobs dang ldan pa’i me ‘byung ngo||
de bzhin sngags dang phyag rgya lha||
gsum ni ‘dus par gyur pa las||
(don dam pa’i ‘bras bu) chen po dag ni ‘byung ‘gyur te||
byung nas yid la gang ‘dod pa’i||
dgos pa thams cad byed par ‘gyur\textsuperscript{72}

zhes gsungs pa lta bu’i don yin no|| de ltar don byed nus pa’i phyag rgya de yang rdul tshon gyi dkyil ‘khor du bkod pa’i dus na| yi ge bkod pa ni gsung chos kyi phyag rgyar bsdu bar ‘gyur ro|| glegs balm du bkod na ni dam tshig gi phyag rgyar bsdu bar ‘gyur ro|| mchod rten yang dam tshig gi\textsuperscript{73} phyag rgya’i khongs su bsdu’o|| sku yongs su rdzogs pa ni phyag rgya chen po’o|| de bzhin du| sku gzugs dang ri mo’i rgyud kyang phyag rgya chen po’o|| rdul tshon la ma brten pa’i mchod rten gud du bzhengs pa’ang| chos kyi sku’i gzugs bryn te| chos kyi dbyings sam| gnyis su med pa’i ye shes sam| mam par grol ba’i ‘bras bu’am sku zhes grags pa’i phyag rgyar bstan pas| skabs kha cig tu sangs rgyas kyi pho brang du’ang bstan te|

gnyis med ye shes de nyid nii| de bzhin gshegs pa kun gyi\textsuperscript{74} gnas|

zhes gsungs\textsuperscript{75} pa dang don ’dra ste| e {chos ’byunggl| gru gsum dang| gtsug tor gyi phyag rgya dang| mchod rten nams thugs dam tshig gi phyag rgya’i khongs su bsdu’o\textsuperscript{76}|| de las khyad par du mchod rten dang| gtsug tor gyi phyag rgya dang| ‘khor lo nams ni de bzhin gshegs pa’i rigs kyi dam tshig gi phyag rgyar gsungs so| sarba buddha\textsuperscript{77} sa ma yo ga {sangs rgyas thams cad dang mayam par sbyor ba| las| {rigs drug gi} de bzhin gshegs pa’i rigs kyi dam tshig gi phyag rgya dkyil ‘khor du ’god pa’i skabs su gsungs pa|

chos gos dang ni lhung bzed dang||
de bzhin du ni ‘khar gsil dang||
dam pa’i chos kyi glegs bam dag||
mtshan ma’i phyag rgya\textsuperscript{78} tshogs gzhan no||

zhes gsungs pas glegs bam yang dam tshig gi phyag rgyar gsungs la| ‘khar gsil gyi don yang lam dang ‘bras bu beas pa’i mchod rten gyi don du gsungs te| ‘di ltar bcom ldan ’das

\textsuperscript{71}brten conj., rten BD
\textsuperscript{72} D
\textsuperscript{73} gyi B
\textsuperscript{74} kyi B
\textsuperscript{75} gsung D
\textsuperscript{76} sdu’o D
\textsuperscript{77} D inserts the two following glosses here and thus erroneously reads sarba buddha \{sangs rgyas thams cad dang mayam par sbyor ba rigs drug gi\} sa ma yo ga las|.
\textsuperscript{78} B has space for approximately one letter after rgya, possibly due to the reading rgya’i (which is found in the canonical version) having been corrected to rgya.
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kyis 'khar gsil bsnams te grong khyer du bsod snyoms la gshegs pa'i tshe| 'khar gsil gyi don dang che ba bsgrags pa na| 'di skad du|

gling bzhi legs par brgyan pa'i spyi bs dus la|| nram grol 'bras bu smin pa'i mchod rten bzhugs|| stong pa mtshan ma med pa'i sbu gu ru|| mi rtog dka' thub 'chang ba'i drang srong stsal||

zhes bya ba la stsgos pa gsungs pa'i don gyis| mchod rten ni nram par grol ba'i sku'i phyag rgya yin la| sbu gu dang drang srong ni lam dang gang zag gi phyag rgya'o|| mdor na glegs bam dang mchod rten ni de bzhin gshegs pa'i phyag rgya dang mtshan no||

H. Sāsttsha gdab pa (B, fols. 316b1–317a5; D, pp. 373.16–374.14):

bye brag de dag gi yon tan gyi sgo nas don mtha' dag 'grub par bstan pa yin te| dngos su ni bsod nams kyi tshogs bsags pa'i rgyu yin par shes par bya'o|| ji ltar zhe na mchod rten ni chos kyi sku'i gzugs brnyan yin te| de byas pa ni sems can mang po'i bsod nams bsags pa'i don gyi phyir dang| dkon mchog mchod pa'i phyir yin te| dkon mchog gsum yang chos kyi skur 'dus te|| 'di skad du|

sangs rgyaschos shes bya ba ste|| de ltar chos nyid phyag rgyar brjod||

zhes gsungs pa'i skabs su bshad pa| slob pa dang mi slob pa nams kyi 'bras bu'i ngo bo nyid ni sangs rgyas te| chos kyang de'i ngo bo nyid do|| de bas na sangs rgyas gang yin pa de chos so|| zhes gsungs pa lta bu dang| sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' ni shes par byed pa yin la| chos nyid ma nor ba ni shes par bya ba yin te|| de bas na shes pa dang shes bya khyad med ces 'byung bas| dkon mchog gsum mnyam par ston pa lta bu'i phyir| chos kyi sku'i gzugs brnyan yin pa'i sgo nas| chos dang dge 'dun gyi gzugs brnyan du gyur pa yang yin no||

chos kyi sku zhes bya ba de nyid kyang chos bdag med pa la gsungs pa'i skabs kyang yod de| 'di skad du| gdung mchogchos kyi sku la phyag 'tshal lo|| zhes gsungs te| yang sangs rgyas kyi gdung ni de bzhin nyid do zhes kyang gsungs te| tshul 'di dag dang yang gzhan las dge don legs kyi gzhi| chos tshul rab kyi dbyings| zhes gsungs te| legs pa thams cad kyi gzhi| chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa de ni mchod rten gyi don du bstan to||

yang gzhan las chos kyi sku ni| byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos nams yongs su bsags pa'i lus ni gnyis su med pa'i ye shes te| de ni chos kyi sku yin la| de'i gzugs brnyan dang phyag rgyar gyur pa ni mchod rten no zhes so|| don de dag gis dkon mchog mchod cing bkur ba'i sgo nas bsod nams kyi tshogs kyi gzhir bstan to|| gzugs brnyan de yang 'gro ba'i don du nye bar gnas pa'i phyir yin gyi| gzhan gyi phyir ma yin pa'i sgo nas kyang bsod nams kyi tshogs su gyur pa yang yin no||

I. dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 43a3–b4; D, p. 72.7–23):

sngags dang phyag rgya zhes bya ba nram pa 'di gnyis kyang gcig gis khyab par bstan pa yin mod kyi| khyad par cung zad tsam du na phyag rgya ni gzugs kyi mtshan ma gtsor

[79 ste D]
[80 || D]
byed pa yin la| gsang sngags ni ngag gi bden tshig gtsor byas te bstan pa yin no|| 'di gnyis ka la yang gzhung dang gang zag so| i rtog pa| i dbang gis brtag pa rnam pa du ma la 'jug par bstan te| de la dang po ni rnam par smin pa| i lus dang ngag gi phye ba| i bye brag zhig go zhes brtag pa 'jug tu rung ngo| de bzhin du gnyis pa ni rgyal ba rnam s kyi sku gsung thugs kyi mtshan ma dang brdar gyur pa| o zhes brtag pa 'jug tu rung ngo| gsum pa ni mtshan ma| ‘di nyid las dang dngos grub thob pa byed pa| i nus pa can no zhes bya’o| bzhig pa ni ‘di nyid la de bzhin gshegs pa| i byin gnyis brlabs kyi| ‘phrul pa dang| las kyi dbang gis snang ba gnyis ‘dres nas snang ba| o zhes bya’o| Inga pa ni mtshan ma byin rlabs dang Idan pa ‘di nyid la dam tshig can gyi skye bo rnam s kyi lha nyid du kun tu brtag pa zhes bya’o| drug pa ni rgyal ba rnam s kyi ye shes chen po de nyid thugs rje dang smon lam gyi dbang gis mtshan mar byin gnyis brlabs shing gyur pa87| ste| dper na bag chags kyi dbang gis s mni nyid yul dang lus su snang ba lta bu zhes bya| i brtag pa ‘jug tu rung ngo| tshul ‘di lta bu rnam s lha mchog tu gyur pa ni drug pa ‘di nyid yin par shes par bya’o|


de la sku lnga po ‘di dag gang zhe na| (1) ngo bo nyid kyi sku dang| (2) chos kyi sku dang| (3) longs spyo| kyi sku dang| (4) sprul pa| i sku dang| (5) rang bzhin gnyis ‘od gsal ba| i sku’o| (1=2) de la dpal kun tu bzang po ni chos kyi sku yin pasl| (2=1) de| i khyad par ram ngo bo nyid ni ji lta bu zhe na| de bzhin gshegs pa yang dag par rdzogs pa| i sangs rgyas bcom ldan ‘das longs spyo| chen po zhes bya ba la sogs pa| i gtan tshigs kyi don ni| ngo bo nyid kyi sku’o| (3) longs spyo| rdzogs pa| i sku ni gang dang ldan zhe na| sku mdun dang rgyab med pa thams cad du zhal thal82 le bar gsal zhi mtshan dang dpe byad du83 ldan pa| zhes bya ba la sogs pas bstan| (4) sprul pa| i sku ni longs spyo| rdzogs pa| i sku de las byung ba ste| bsam gnyis mi khyab pa thams cad du sku gsung thugs sna tshogs pa kun tu snang ba zhes bya ba la sogs pa| o| (5) rang bzhin gnyis ‘od gsal ba| i sku ni rnam par shes pa| i rgyal po la sogs pa ste| ‘dir ni sku lnga rigs lnga la sogs pa| i dkyl ’khor ro| ‘di la ci| i phyir rang bzhin gnyis ‘od gsal ba| i sku zhe na| s mni can thams cad la ye nas sangs rgyas pa| i rang bzhin yod par bstan pa ste| de yang don dam pa| i dbang du ni s mni can thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa| i rgyu rdo rje lta bu cies kyang mi shigs pa shin tu rnam par dag pa| i rgyu ye nas sangs rgyas par bstan pa yin la| kun rdzob phyin ci log gi phung po dang khang dang skye mched thams cad ye nas lha| i dkyl ’khor du sangs rgyas par bstan pa ste| de ltar le| u dang po dang gnyis pa las kyang de ltar bstan la| rgyud ‘di| i don yang ‘di ltar ro| de ltar mya nagan la| ‘das pa| i mdo las kyang| s mni can thams cad la ye nas sangs rgyas pa| i rang bzhin rdo rje ltar mi shigs pa| i mthu bo che yod do| zhes rgyas par gsungs so||

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81 ba D

82 thal *conj.;* thA PTb. *The reading thal is supported by the canonical version of the* *Guhyagarbhatantra.*

83 dang Tb
K. dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 160b6–161a5; D, p. 197.2–13):

ye shes la gcig dang du ma dang mtha' dang dbus la sogs pa'i phyogs cha dbyer med mod kyi| 'on kyang kun tu bzang po'i rol pa dang cho 'phrul tsam du ye shes ram pa lngar grags te| (1) 'di ltar sgrib pa nyid ggod ma nas dag pa rang bzhin gyis 'od gsal ba'i phyir chos kyi dbyings kyi ye shes so| (2) sgrib pa dag pa'i byang chub sems na| 84 nam par rtog pa med bzhin du che ba'i yon tan thams cad gzung brnyan gyi tshul du rang shang bas| me long lta'u ye shes so| (3) 'di ltar gsal yang ye shes la bdag nyid med cing yon tan gzhau ban bsten| 85 pa med de| thams cad nam mkha'i dkyil ltar rtogs pas nnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes so| (4) 'di ltar gnyis su med kyang ye shes rol pa'i sku dang ye shes kyi dkyil 'khor du ma gyur pa'am ma gzigs pa med de| don ji lta ba dang ji snyed pa thugs su chud pas so sor rtogs pa'i ye shes so| (5) 'di'i ngang las thugs rje mdzeg pa dang bcas pa lhun gyis grub bzhin du 'byung bas bya ba grub pa'i ye shes te|

L. dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 79b4–80a2; D, p. 117.7–14):

de ltar sku gsung thugs yon tan phrin las lnga'i dbang gis rigs lnga'i sangs rgyas yin par 'gyur rol| de bas na sags rgyas grangs med pa thams cad kyang chos 'di lnga tsam du 'dus pas| longs spyod rdzogs pa dang sprul pa'i sku mtha' dag kyang rigs ram pa lngar bsdus pa yin no| 'di ltar yang rdo rje bkod pa las kyang|

          | sku ni ma bcos de bzhin nyid|
          | thugs ni mi 'gyur rdo rje'i rigs|
          | yon tan kun 'byung rin chen rigs|
          | gsung ni chags med padma'i| 86 rigs|
          | don grub spyod pa las kyi rigs|

zhes gsungs pas na| rigs ram pa lnga kho nar bsdus pa'i don yang gong du mdor bstan pa bzhin du| rgyud de nyid las rgyas par gsungs so|

M. mtshan brjod 'grel pa (B, fol. 280a5–b3; D, pp. 269.20–270.6):

de la de bzhin gshegs pa'i rtsis las 'das pa'i yon tan gang zhe na|

          | 'di ltar de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku'i yon tan dang| de bzhin du gsung dang| thugs dang| yon tan dang| phrin las kyi dbang gi sgo nas yon tan du gyur pa dang| rtsa ba re re la yang yon tan gyi cha lnga lngar phy e bas sku lnga dang| de bzhin du gzhau la yang lnga lnga dang| lnga phrag gcig la yang| de bzhin du rigs nyi shu rtsa lnga dang| de rnam las la yang snying po dang| phyag rgya dang| gsang snga dang| rig snga sams kyi rigs kyi phy e bas rigs brgya brgya ste| de dag la yang de bzhin du phy e bas| rigs 'bum phrag brjod kyis mi langs pa dang| grangs med pas rigs rgya mtsho

zhes gsungs te| 'di ltar gzhau las|

          | rigs ni mtha' yas gsungs pa yang|
          | rigs chen dag tu zad par 'dus|

84 na conj., ni BD
85 bstan D. The reading bstan is found also in the NyK (F, p. 334.4) and in the Zhol-par-khang (G, fol. 109b2) versions. The reading bsten, however, seems to make more sense than bstan, which would mean something like "there are no qualities to be shown to others."
86 pad ma'i B
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zhers gsungs pa lta bu ste| 'dir gsungs pa|
  sangs rgyas thog ma tha ma med|
  - dang po'i sangs rgyas rgyu med pa|

zhers so||

N. dKon cog 'grel (B, fol. 68a4–b3; D, p. 99.6–15):
de la skabs 'dir rigs thams cad kyi spyi'i rigs drug par grags pa| kun tu bzang po byang chub kyi sems kyi rigs de nyid 'gro ba 'dul ba'i thabs kyis rigs nram pa Inga lta bur snang bar 'dod de| ji Itar dpal sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor las|
sems dpa' sangs rgyas kun gyi dngos||
  rdo rje sems dpa' bde ba'i mchog||
gsang ba mchog gi dgyes pa na||
thams cad bdag nyid rtag tu bzugs||

zhers byang chub sems kyi rigs dang por gsungs nas| de nas 'gro ba 'dul ba'i thabs kyis de nyid rigs lngar snang ba yang|
yang dag grub pa gcig pu nyid||
  ji Itar 'dod pa bzhin du sbyar||

zhers bya ba la so gs pa gsungs pa lta bu ste| de bas na gzugs kyi sku'i mtshan ma bstan pa'i skabs 'dir kun tu bzang po'i sku'i mtshan ma zhig ma smos pas| ston pa'i bdag nyid kyang rigs nram pa Inga yin nam snyam du the tshom za bar mi bya'o||

O. dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 169.5–170b1; D, pp. 205.17–206.22):
khro bo zhes bya ba ni (1) rang gi ngo bo ci zhig (2) sku gsum mam bzhin la so gs par grags pa las gang du bsdu| (3) sangs rgyas kyis mzdad pa ni ji lta bu zhig sgurb ce na| de la (1) rang gi ngo bo ni yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas nyid do| (2) gang du bsdu ba ni sku gsum dang bzhin la so gs pa thams cad du gtogs pa ste| 'di Itar thabs kyi zhags pa las|

mnyam nyid ngang gi khro la phyag 'tshal lo||
khro bos longs spyod mzdad la phyag 'tshal lo||
rdo rje 'du 'phro mzdad la phyag 'tshal lo||

zhers bya ba la so gs pa gsungs pa lta bu ste| rgyud kha cig las grags pa| khro bo nrams ni sprul pa'i sku dang pho nyar bstan pa'o| zhes grags pa lta bu ni ma yin no| de dag la ci'i phyir khro bo zhes bya zhe na| 'di Itar sangs rgyas mam kyang chos bzhin'i bdag nyid de| bzhin gang zhe na| (a) chos nyid dang| (b) ye shes dang| (c) thugs rje dang| (d) mzdad pa'o||

de la (a) chos nyid ni rang bzhin gyis khro bar bcas pa ste| mtshan ma'i gnas med pa'i phyir ro| (b) ye shes ni rtogs pa ngang gis khro ste| bskal pa'i me 'bar ba la mgon par 'du byed pa'i gnas med pa bzhin no| (c) thugs rje ni shugs kyis khro bo ste| de'i dbang gis 'gro ba skyob pa la ched du rtsol mi dgos so| (d) mzdad pa ni 'dul ba'i dbang gis khro bar bcas||

pa ste| ji Itar 'tshams par 'byung ba'o|| (3) mzdad pa ji Itar sgurb ce na| dgos pa ni 'di skad du|

87 D
88 bcas conj., bcos BD. Compare the reading de la chos nyid ni rang bzhin gyis khro bar bcas pa above. Also note the unusual employment in these phrases of the terminative 8r instead of the usual.
Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction

P. rGyud spyi’i dngos po (A, pp. 498.6–500.2; B, fols. 226b3–227a4; D, p. 91.5–18):

dkyil ’khor ni| rgyal ba rgya mtsho ’khor dang bcas pa| pho brang dang bcas pa la ni| dkyil ’khor gyi sgrag brjod de| de yang rang bzhin dang| ting nge ’dzin dang gzugs brnyan la sogs pa’i dbye ba dang| sku gsung thugs la stogs pa’i dbye bas brjod par bya ba ni mang mod kyi| nye bar ni gang du gzhal yas khang dang bcas par ston pa ste| nye ba’i sgrag brjod do|

nges pa’i tshig gi tshul gyis na| ’mandala| 92 zhes bya ba snying po ’dzin pa’i don te| ’dis snying po’i don gyis| 93 dkyil ’khor zhes brjod| {’manda ni snying po’am bcud la ’dzin pa ste} snying po nyid yon tan ’dzin pas na| snying po nyid kyi don du sbyar} gang du chos nyid byang chub kyi sens dang| gtso bo rnam la dkyil ’khor gyi sgras brjod do| 94 rnam pa gcig tu ’manda la| 95 zhes bya ba

particle dang with the verb bcas pa. This occurs, too, in the phrase lus dang ’khor du bcas pa found below.

89 ’tsham B
90 yis B
91 bstan B
92 ’manda D
93 gyis conj., gyi ABD
94 D erroneously takes the second phrase in the gloss as part of the main text and the third phrase as a separate gloss, and thus reads: ’manda (’manda ni snying po’am bcud la ’dzin pa ste) zhes bya ba snying po ’dzin pa’i don te| ’dis snying po’i don gyi dkyil ’khor zhes brjod| gang du chos nyid byang chub kyi sens dang| gtso bo rnam la dkyil ’khor snying po nyid yon tan ’dzin pas na| snying po nyid kyi sgras brjod do| This erroneous reading obviously occurred due to the fact that only the first part of the gloss, as it appears in A, is written in smaller script. In order to salvage the reading of what is now syntactically an impossible sentence—it reads (disregarding the gloss) ... ’dzin pas na| gyi sgras brjod do|—the editors inserted after the gloss the phrase snying po nyid and emended kyi to gyi.
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khor yug tu bskor ba'i don te 'dis bskor cing bkod pa'i don gyis dkyil 'khor zhes brjod del gang du 'khor dang zlum la stsogs pa de'i sggr brjod pa rnam so|| rnam pa gcig tu mañda ni mnan pa la ni 'dzin pa ste| 'dis 'dug pa'i don gyis dkyil 'khor zhes bya ste| gang du gzhal yas khang dang| nyi zla'i gdan la stsogs pa la brjod pa rnam so||

go bo dbye ba nges tshig gis||
rgyal ba'i dkyil 'khor shes par bya||

Q. Kṛṣṇayamāritantrapāñjikā (P, fol. 396a5–b4; D, fol. 333a2–7; S vol. 23, pp. 1604.11–1605.9):

ji ltar 'dir bdag tu 'dzin pa dang bral ba de bzhin du sdog bsngal la sogs pa srid par mi 'gyur ro|| bdag tu 'dzin par gyur na ni| rang bzhin gyis phan pa'i don 'dod pa la sogs par gyur pa? sdog bsngal mgon par sgrub bo?| cig shos las ni 'di ltar sdog bsngal du ga la 'gyur| de nas sdog bsngal dang sbyor ba dang bral ba las bde ba chen po'i mtshan nyid dang Idan pa'i yid byang chub thob par byed do|| 'o na de lta na yang skyon nyid du 'gyur te| yid? bde ba chen po'i rnam pa can yin na yang nges pa nyid du sdog bsngal gyis gnong par byed de| bde ba dang sdog bsngal ba dag ni phan tshun bltos?| pa nyid yin pas| gcig yod? par gyur na rang bzhin nyid kyis rim gyis gnong la len par byed de| de bas na gzhana yang sdog bsngal mgon par grub pas byang chub thob par mi 'gyur ro zhe na| 'di brjod par bya ste| bde ba chen po'i rnam pa zhes bya ba 'di ci bde ba'i bdag nyid rang gis nyams su myong ba'i rang rig pa 'dzin pa la sogs pa'i bdag nyid can du 'gyur ba zhig gam ji ltar na gang dag gzung ba la sogs pa'i rnam par rtog pa yang dag pa ma yin pa'i nyon mongs pa 'byung ba yin te| 'rgyu'i dngos po las 'bras bu 'byung ba thams cad la snang ba nyid do|| de ni 'di ltar nyon mongs pa'i bag chags mtha' dag rnam par bsal?| ba'i yid du gyur pa na| de la 'khor ba'i sdog bsngal mi 'gyur? ba'i phyir bde ba chen po zhes bya ba'i sgras brjod do?| gzhana du na de la bde ba la sogs pa gzung ba'i dngos po myong ba ni med do||

95 maññala D
96 A has a single shad for both lines of verse.
97 pas D
98 po P
99 add. de D
100 non D
101 ltos D
102 yin D
103 gsal P
104 'byung D
105 de D

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2. Passages Cited in Chapter Four

A. Rong zom gsung 'bum dkar cag (A, pp. 24.6–33.5; B, fol. 12b3–17a1; D, pp. 15.3–19.24):

snga 'gyur pa'i ring lugs 'dzin pa la mkhas grub du ma byon mod kyi| kun gyi nang na khyad par 'phags pa kun mkhyen rong klong rnam <A 25> gnyis zhes nyi zla ltar grags pa yin zhing| bod snga rabs pa phal mo ches| sangs rgyas la ye shes mi 'dod pa ni rgya gar na slob dpon zla grags dang| bod na rong zom chos kyi bzang po'o zhes rong zom pa'i 'gsung 'ol spiyi tsam la brten nas slob dpon 'dis sangs rgyas la ye shes gtan mi bzhd par bshad pa ni bdag nyid chen po 'di'i dgongs pa'i gting ma nryed pa ste| gang gi phyir na spyir 'phags yul na sangs rgyas kyi sa la ye shes yod par bzhd pa ni phal mo che zhig dang| mi bzhd pa slob dpon dbu ma'i seng ge sog kyis rigs pa dang| jo bo chen pos lung gi sgo nas bsgrab pa <B 13a> lta bu yod mod kyi de dag so sorgs pa'i gnad re yod la|

rong zom pas rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes kyi mthar thug par rigs pas dgag pa brjod pa 'di dag ni gzhan byung gi ye shes dgag pa kho na yin te| gzhan byung gi ye shes ni rgyu las skyes pa'i 'dus byas kyi dngos po gang zhig slob| pa nas mi slob pa'i bar du rgyun ma chad pa'i gang zag gi rgyud nyi tse bas bs dus pa theg pa thun mongs pa'i 'dod pa de la sun 'byin gyi rigs pa yang dag lan gyis bzlog par mi nus pa bstan pa 'dis| sangs rgyas kyi ye shes ni rang byung 'dus ma byas pa gzhir gnas kyi ye shes <A 26> de nyid dag pa mthar thug du gyur pa'i dbyings sgrab bral de la bzhd par| de ltar na gang zag gi rgyud kyis bs dus pa'i ye shes 'dus byas can ci yang mi mga| bar bzhd mod kyi slob dpon 'dis| rang byung gi ye shes dang| gdod nas 'od gsal ba'i chos kyi dbyings dang| byang chub kyi sems kun tu bzang po rnam ming tha dad kyang ngo bo tha mi dad pa chos nyid:kyi ngo bos gzhil la ye nas yod pa rdzogs pa chen po'i gzhung 'dzugs pa yin pas na| ye shes 'dus ma byas pa de la gzhil lam 'bras bu'i skabs thams cad du 'pho 'gyur med pa'i phyir| slob lam du <B 13b> yod la mi slob pa'i tshe med pa'i tha snyad ji ltar bya <D 16> ste des na ye shes gtan med du bzhd pa ma yin no|| rje rong zom nyid kyi gsungs sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo las|

ghzan yang bag chags kyi mthsams sbyor ba ma lus pa yongs su zad pas| chos kyi dbyings ma lus pa yongs su dag par gyur pa'i dbang las kyang 'byung ste| rdzas dang zhing dag pa'i dbang las gzugs bmyan 'byung ba lta bu'o||

zhes dang|

tshogs bsags shing smon lam bt ab pa dang| chos dbyings glo bur gyi dri ma mtha' dag gis dag pa 'di gnyis ni bdag po'i rkyen yin no||

zhes dang|

sangs rgyas kyi sa ni shin tu rnam par dag pa'i <A 27> dbyings 'ba' zhig go

zhes dang|

chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa'i dbang las kyang gzhan la snang ba'i rkyen du 'gyur ba| phyogs gcig la mongs pa'ang ma yin te|| spros pa dang bral ba'i rnam par dag par gyur pa nyid ma lus par mkhyen pa nyid yin no

106 spob A
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zhes dang| thams cad kyangchos dbyings rnam par dag pa dang| smon lam gyi dbang ngo| yang na de dag gi steng du ye shes chen po’i dbang las kyang gzugs kyi sku me long gi gzugs bnyan bzhin du snang bar gsungs pa dang|

'on kyang bsam gyis mi khyab pa’i chos yin pas| ye shes rnam pa gnyis po sags rgyas kyi thugs rgyud la mngon par ’dod pa’i gzhung<sup>35</sup> ’di la nges par skur ba yang mi bya ste sngon gyi slob dpon gsang ba dang| nying ma’i ’od ’phro la sogs pas ’di litar bzhed|

ces dang| shin tu ’gal ba che ba ye shes kyi rgyud tshor ba can dang| skyes pa’i gzugs can dang| gzhan yang bud med la longs mi spyod do zhes dang| bud med la longs spyod pa’i bde ba yod pa sogs gdul bya la snang ba tsam min par sags rgyas la rang rgyud par mnga’ na nges par sun phyung dgos par gsungs pa dang|

sangs rgyas kyi ye shes bsam gyis mi khyab pa yin pa’i phyir| ’di dag spong<sup>36</sup> ba’i gzu bo mi byed kyi

zhes dang| rang rgyud pa’i ye shes dngos dang mtshan ma can du ’dod pa rnam la brgal ba rnam bstan nas|

rigs pas gzhal na ches che ba nyid du gyur pa ’di la nga rgyal gyis brtsad pa’i don ma mthong ngo|

zhes gsungs pa ’di rnam kyis shes te| gang gi phyir na rong zom pa chen pos chos kyi dbyings spros pa las ’das par dngos su bzhed par gsal gyi| med dgag stong rkyang phyang chad du nam yang ma gsungs<sup>37</sup> pas gnad ’di la thug ste mkhas pa’i dbang phyug ’di’i gsung thams cad bden gnyis dbyer med pa’i gnas lugs ’ba’ zhig sgrub pa’i don du rigs pa’i rnam grangs sna tshogs gsal bar bkod pa bsnyon du med pa ’dis grub bo|

dbyings zung ’jug ma yin par med pa phyogs gcig du<sup>107</sup> bzhed na| gzhis dus na yang snang ba sna tshogs ’byung ba mi ’thad la| lam gan la ’beb dus su| spros pa dang bral ba yang mi srid de| med pa’i spros pa dang ma bral bar ’gyur la| ’bras dus su med dgag ’ba’ zhig gi ngang du blo rgyun chad na| (i) chos kyi dbyings dag pa gnyis Idan ma lus par mkhyen pa dang (ii) thugs rje ’byung ba’i rgyu yang ci zhig yod de ri bong rwa<sup>108</sup> med bzhin no|| des na chos dbyings spros bral gyi don ma shes par med dgag tsam<sup>384</sup> la chos dbyings su bzung ba dag gis rong zom pa’i lugs ’disangs rgyas kyi sa na ye shes gtan nas bkag go snyam du rang blo’i dri ma bdag nyid chen po’i lugs dri ma med pa la bgo bar zad do||

mdor na gzhis rig stong zung du ’jug pa’i byang chub kyi sems chos kyi dbyings ’di ni ’pho ’gyur dang bral ba yin la| dag pa gnyis Idan gyi chos dbyings ’gog bden mthar thug mngon du mdzad pa’i skabs na ji lta ba ’ba’ zhig mkhyen pa’i ye shes chos kyi dbyings las tha dad par yul can gyi tshul du yod pa dang| spros pa sna tshogs pa gzigs pa’i yul can gyi ye shes rang rgyud pa mnga’ ba mthar thug dpyod pa’i rigs pas mi ’grub ste| klu sgrub kyis|

brjod par bya ba ldog pa ste||
sems kyi spyod yul ldog pas so||
ma skyes pa dang mi ’gag<sup>39</sup> pa||
chos nyid mya ngan ’das dang mtshungs||
Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction

zhes gsungs pa ltar| da lta gzhi sms can gyi dus na yang| yul dang yul can la sogs pa gnyis su snang yang de ltar grub pa med par chos kyi dbyings 'ba' zhig gi rang bzhin du gnas par gtan la pheb dgos na| glo bur gyi bag chags kyi bslad pa mtha' dag zad pa'i sangs rgyas kyi sa na lta ci smos| des na chos kyi dbyings nyid gzhi ji bzhin pa mgdon du gyur pa las|<A 30> gzan pa'i rten can rang rgyud pa'i ye shes gang yang med ces bsgrub pa yin te| des na chos kyi dbyings nmam par dag pa de nyid ye shes thams cad kyi dngos gzhi yin te| sangs rgyas nmams de las ma g.yos pa'i cha nas ji lta ba mkhyen pa< D 18| dag| ma g.yos bzhin du chos kyi dbyings kyis bsdu pa'i shes bya thams cad nmam rtog med bzhin 'bad med lhun grub tu mkhyen pa ni ji snyed pa mkhyen pa yin te de'i phyir stobs bcu dang ldan pa'i mkhyen pa'i ye shes zhes sam|<109> nmam pa thams cad mkhyen pa'i ye shes zhes mdo rgyud thams cad las gsungs pa yin gyi| chos dbyings nmam dag mngon du gyur pa las lhag pa'i ye shes rang rgyud pa gang yang mi dgos so| de'i phyir nang dbyings ka dag chen po'i sbubs su gzung 'dzin gyi dri ma bag chags dang bcas pa'i< B 156| sgrub pa gtan med| du song ba'i mnyam bzhal snang med kyi dbang du byas te| rdzogs chen gyi gzhung nmams su yang sku dang ye shes sogs gnyis chos thams cad med par bshad pa de'i dbang du byas te bla ma rong bas kyang mthar thug gi sa la spros pa med tshul rigs pas bsgrub pa rtsal du bton pa yin zhes rgyal dbang klong chen rab 'byams kyis gsungs|

bod ston phal mo ches sogs rgyas la gnyis su med pa'i ye shes nmam dag 'ba' zhig mnga' ba'i| ma dag pa'i sms can gzigs pa sogs ji< A 31| snyed pa'i ye shes sogs rgyas rang snang la mi mnga' bar bzhed mod kyi| rong zom pa chen pos ni chos dbyings nmam dag 'ba' zhig ma gtoqs pa'i ji lta ba'am mi rtog pa'i ye shes kyang ji ltar khed yig das dag 'jig rten pa'i ye shes mi mnga' bar bzhed pa de dang 'dra bar mgo mnyam par bsgrub pa 'dis' sangs rgyas kyi sa ji lta ji snyed kyi ye shes gnyis po yod na yod mnyam med na med mnyam du grub pa'i phyir| sangs rgyas kyi sa ni chos dbyings nmam par dag pa tsam du grub kyang chos dbyings de nyid la Idog pas phyed na ji lta ji snyed mkhyen pa gnyis ka yang bsgrub rung ste| chos thams cad chos kyi dbyings las gzhon du gyur pa rdul tsam med pa'i phyir ro| de'i phyir rgyal dbang padma< B 165| sam bha ba'i gsang sngags lam rim du|

rten bcas rten med ngo bo nyid don byed||

ces mthar thug sangs rgyas kyi sa na| gzhon don 'byung ba la rten ye shes rang rgyud pa 'dod pa sms tsam pa sogs dang| de 'dra'i rten med kyang smon lam gyi<112| dbang gis gzhon don 'byung ba dbu ma pa mams dang| de gnyis ka'i mthar ma lhun ba bsam gyzis mi khyab pa'i chos nyid nmam par dag pa'i byin rlabs rtsol ba med pa ngo bo nyid< D 19> kyis gzhon don byed pa rdzogs pa chen po sogs sngags rgyud nmams kyi dgongs pa ste| gsang< A 32| snying las|

thugs rje chen pos 'brel bas na<113| 'gro drug kun gnas ma lus snang||

109 | A
110 | AD
111 | mod A
112 | gi AB
113 | A

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zhes dang| rdzogs chen gyi rgyud rnams su thugs rje kun khyab kyi ye shes zhes gsungs pa ltar| rong zom pa chen pos rten med kyang smon lam gyi dbang gis ji ltar ’phangs pa ltar| zhing dag pa dang ma dag pa| sku tshad sku mdog la sogs pa sna tshogs su snang yang| rang rgyud kyi bs dus pa’i rten rang mtshan pa med par bsgrub kyang chos db yogs rnang dag ngo bo nyid skus byin rlabs114 kyis don byed par bsgrub pas mthar ngo bo nyid kyis don byed pa sngags rgyud rnams kyi dgongs par la bzla ba yin no||

ha cang spros pas chog kyang mdo tsam bstan pa yin la| ’di tsam zhig mi brjod ka med <B 16b> yin te| chos db yogs zhes pa stong115 rkyang tsam la ’dzin pa mthar thug gi don la phyogs su ma phyin pa dag gis bdag nyid chen po ’di’i gsung zab cing br ling ba thos na shin tu skrag cing mi mos pa’i dogs pa sel ba’i phyir yin te gal te nges par sangs rgyas la mkhyen pa gnyis po de nges su go na| mam pa thams cad mkhyen pa ni ri bong gi rwa’i rjes su song nas ’bras bu’i mchog la skur116 pa117 ‘debs pa dang| nam mkhyen med na gdul bya rnams la lam ma nor ba ston pa’i sangs rgyas med cing! de med na chos dang dge ’dun yang yod par dka’ <A 33> ba’i phyir thig pa chen po’i lam dang ’bras bu las phyir phyogs par ’gyur ro|| des na bsam g yis mi khyab pa’i chos kyi db yogs spros pa bral ba’i don gtan la ’bebs118 na de dag gis de bzhin gshegs pa’i chos nyid ye shes kyi sku shes rab kyi dbang pos mngon du byas pa yin te| mgon po klus|

de bzhin gshegs pa spros ’das shing||
zad pa med la spros byed pa||
spros pas nyams pa de kun g yis||
de bzhin gshegs pa mi mthong ngo||

zhes dang| mdo las|
gang dag nga la gzugs su mthong sogs

kyi lung don ltar de bzhin gshegs pa’i rang bzhin gtan la ’beb pa la rong zom pa chen po’i gsung dang mtshungs pa gzh an med pa yin no|| des na kun mkhyen rong <B 17a> klong rnarn gny is ni theg pa’i rgyal po rdzogs pa chen po’i rgyud kyi dgongs pa bzhin du mthar thug dgongs pa dbyer med yin pa shes par bya’o||

B. Prasphuṭapadā (P, fols. 76a3–77a6; D, fols. 65b3–66b3; S, vol. 52, pp. 857.21–860.9):

de ltar sungs rgyas thams cad kyis bshad pa’i de bzhin nyid de ni mya ngan las ’das pa yin te| mya ngan las ’das pa de gang zhe na| de bzhin nyid mam par dag pa’o119 zhes bstan pa ste| de’i phyir sungs rgyas kyi chos su bstan to|| chos thams cad ni ’dus byas dang| ’dus ma byas rnams so|| de dag la mnga’ sgyur ba ni spang ba dang| mngon du bya

114 rlab AB
115 stod A
116 skur conj., bskur ABD
117 ba D
118 ’bebs conj., pheb AD, beb B
119 P has here space for approximately one letter (or perhaps a double shad that has been removed).
Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction

- ba dang\[120\] skyed pa dang| dgag pa dang| b skal pa skad ciu tu bya ba dang| skad ciu b skal pa tsam du byin gyis br labs pa la sog pa’o\[1\] de ltar chos thams cad la m nga’ sgyur ba de ni rang byung gi m thu’o\[1\] de la rang byung gang zhe na| rang byung gi ye shes so\[1\] de yang gnyis te (1) chos kyi db yings dang| (2) s rid pa th a ma pas thob pa’i r nam pa thams cad mk hyen pa’i ye shes so\[1\] de la (1) chos kyi db yings kyi dbang du byas te| ji skad du ’phags pa sdong po bkod pa las|

 ‘jig rten khams rnams la la dag|| bsam gyis mi khyab thig gyur kyang|| nam mkha’ ‘jig par ’gyur ba med|| rang byung ye shes de bzhin no\[1\]

 zhes gsungs so\[1\]| de ji ltar rang byung gi ye shes yin zhe na| rgyu dang rkyen\[121\] gyi nam pas ma byas pa’i phyir dang| nam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes kyi rgyur gyur pa’i phyir ro\[1\]| gzhan dag ni rgyal ba’i yum las|

 ye shes kyi yul\[122\] ni gang yang ma yin no|| ye shes kyang gang gi yul yang ma yin no\[1\]| ye shes ni yul med pa’o\[1\] gal te ye shes la yul yod na mi shes par ’gyur ro\[1\]

 zhes gsungs pas| chos kyi db yings rnams par dag pa de nyid ye shes su ’dod de| de ltar byas na shin tu ’duschos lngas sangs rgyas kyi sa bsdus te zhes gsungs pa la sog pa dang ’gal bar ’gyur ro\[1\] (2) s rid pa th a ma pas thams cad mk hyen pa’i ye shes thob pa’i dbang du byas te ni byang chub sens dpa’ dus ring du dge ba’i bshes gnyen rab tu mnyes par byas pa’i gdams\[123\] ngag rab tu bstan pa thos pas tshe de la slob dpon med pa’i ye shes brnyes pas\[124\] na gzhan la rag ma lus pa’i phyir rang byung ste| ji skad du|

 nyer ’gro nga ni sangs rgyas te|| nga la slob dpon su yang med||

ces\[125\] bya ba la sog pa gsungs pa lta bu’o\[1\] de la rang byung dang po ni sngar bstan pa’i de bzhin nyid sangs rgyas thams cad kyis gsungs pa’o\[1\]| ’di ni rang byung gnyis pa bzung ste|

 b skal pa mang por goms pa’i m thu las\[126\] chos thams cad la dbang sgyur ba ni|

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120 add. bcab pa dang| P, add. bstan pa dang bcas pa dang| D. The reading of this passage is somewhat problematic. The phrase bcab pa dang| in P seems to be an interpolation, one I cannot provide an adequate explanation for. I have suggested in the corresponding note to the translation of this passage that it is the Four Truths that are being referred to here. This interpretation, if correct, would support the assumption that bcab pa dang| is an interpolation. The reading bstan pa dang bcas pa dang| in D might then be an unsuccessful attempt to clarify the reading. I therefore disregard this phrase in my translation altogether.

121 rgyen P

122 yum P

123 ged P

124 pa P

125 zhes P
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goms te sla bar ma gyur pa’i||
dngos de gang yang yod ma yin||
zhes ji skad bshad pa lta bu’o|| yun de srid du bsod nams bsags pa’i mthu las kyang dbang sgyur bar ’gyur ba ni|

bsod nams ldan pa’i mi yi bsam pa rnams kyang ’grub||
ces127 gsungs la rgyas par ni gzhon nu bsod nams stobs kyi rtogs par128 brjod pa’i mdo las shes par bya’o|| gzhon yangchos thams cad la mnga’ sgyur ba’i gtso bo ni|

chos kyi dbyings las ma gtogs129 pa’i||
’di ltar choysod ma yin tel||

zhes bya ba dang||
dngos gcig dngos po kun gyi ngo bo nyid||
dngos kun dngos po gcig gi ngo bo nyid||
gang gis130 dngos gcig de bzhin nyid du rtogs||
d yeis dngos kun de bzhin nyid du rtogs||

zhes bya ba’i rigs pas gang gis chos kyi dbyings shes na de’i mthus ji ltar ’dod pa tsam la rag las pa ’di nyid yin par khong du chud par bya’o|| de ltar de bzhin nyid la dmigs ter nnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa’i ye shes thob pas na dngos po rnams la dbang sgyur ba’i mthu’i sgo nas131 rang byung du bzhag la de nyid132 sna tshogs ma ’dres par mkhyen pa’i sgo nas ni rnams pa thams cad mgon par rdzogs par byang chub pa’i sangs rgyas nyid kyi rnams pa zhes bya ste khyad par133 ’di tsam du zad do||

kha cig ni rang byung ni134 rgyu dang chos can yin la rnams pa thams cad mgon par rdzogs par byang chub pa ni ’bras bu dang chos can de’i chos nyid do zhes zer zhing de’i lung ni

rigs kyi bu sangs rgyas bcom ldan ’das rnams mgon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas nas ting nge ’dzin sangs rgyas shin tu rnams par sangs rgyas pa zhes bya ba la snyoms par zhugs tel ting nge ’dzin de la snyoms par zhugs ma thag tu sems can rnams ji snyed pa de snyed135

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126 add. rang ’byung yang ’thob la de bzhin du goms pa’i mthu las D. This seems to be an interpolation. The phrase was apparently inserted due to scribal error, probably resulting from the last four syllables (i.e. goms pa’i mthu las) of this phrase being identical with four syllables occurring in the text just prior to the insertion. I did not, however, find a similar phrase in the immediate vicinity that could have caused the scribe to make this error.
127 zhes P
128 pa D
129 rtogs P
130 gi P
131 add. ni D
132 add. du P
133 add. ni D
134 ni conj., gi PD
135 nyid P
Tibetan Texts Cited in the Introduction

kyi sku kun tu gnas pa’o136| sku ji snyed pa de snyed137 thugs kun tu gnas so zhes gsungs pa’o

zhes 'dod do

C. dKon cog 'grel (B, fols. 139b1–140a6; D, pp. 174.11–175.11):
'o na sangs rgyas mams kyis sangs rgyas nams mthong ba ye shes mthun par snang bas so zhes bshad pa de ji ltar snang zhing mthong bar 'gyur zhe na|
rang byung ye shes gnas med snang

zhes gsungs te| de la rang byung gi ye shes gong du bstan pa bzhin| sems dang ye shes kyang gdod ma nas gzung ba dang 'dzin pas stongs pas mtshan ma de yang gzhlan la138 btlos pa med la| rang rig pa tsam de nyid kyang shes rig gi chos kyis stong pas gdod ma nas 'od gsal ba’i phyir139 rang byung gi ye shes zhes bya ste| 'di la yang rten gang yang yod pa ma yin no| 'di ltar rten med cing bdag nyid thob pa med bzhin du| byin gyis brlabs yongs su dag pa’i zhing khams na sku dang ye shes kyi bkod pa sna tshogs snang bas|
rang byung ye shes gnas me sna ng

zhes bya'o
'o na rgyal ba nams kyis sems can mi mthong bar 'gyur ro zhe na|
rgyu gsum gyis gziggs par bshad du rung bar bstan pa’i phyir|

'log par rtog brtags140 rnam dag cing||
ye shes dbyings las mi gzhlan phyir||
thugs rje chen pos 'breI bas||
'gro drug dus gnas ma lus snang||

zhes gsungs te| de la
(1) rgyu dang po ni ’gro ba nams kyi log par rtog pa ji skad du dngos po gang dang gang nram par brtags pa’i sgrib pa de dag thams cad sangs rgyas nams kyi nram par dag par gyur pa141 yin pas| chos dang chos nyid rang bzhin gyis 'brel ba yod pa’i phyir dang|
(2) gnyis pa ni sangs rgyas nams kyi ye shes chos thams cad kyi chos kyi dbyings las gud na med pa’i phyir| yul dang yul can rang bzhin tha mi dad pa’i ’brel ba yod pa’i phyir dang|


136 nyid PD
137 add. dang D
138 las D
139 phyis B
140 ma rtogs log brtags D. This seems to have been the reading in the Shri-seng edition, which served as the basis for both B and D, and is also found in G (fol. 94b1). The reading log par rtog brtags, found in B, is clearly an emendation on the part of the editor. This reading is, however, preferable not only because it conforms to the canonical reading, but more importantly because it is supported by Rong-zom-pa's comment on this line following his citation, which reads ... log par rtog pa ... brtags pa’i ....
141 pa conj., ba BD
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddho\ogy

(3) 142sangs rgyas nams kyis sngon byang chub kyi spyad pa spyod pa na\ thugs rje chen pos kham gsum gyi sems can thams cad yongs su bzung ‘ba las143 thugs rje yongs su bzung ba’i ‘brel ba yod pa’i phyir\ ’gro ba drug gi dus dang gnas thams cad du de bzhin gshegs pa’i byin rlabs ‘byung zhing snang bar ‘gyur ro zhes pa’am\ nams pa gcig tu rgyal ba nams la dag pa ‘jig rten pa’i ye shes mnga’ bar ‘dod pa nams kyi gzhung litar na ‘brel ba ‘di gsum gyi sgo nas\ rgyal ba nams kyis ni sems can la ‘brel ba’i yul du byas la| sems can nams kyi sgo nas ni ‘brel ba’i yul du ma byas pa| sangs rgyas nams kyis ni gzigs so|| sems can nams kyis ni mi mthong ngo zhes sbyar ro||

D. dKon cog ’grel (B, fol. 45a4–b6; D, pp. 74.14–75.6):

drodzogs pa’i mal ‘byor ni dbu ma dang sgo mthun pa ste| bdag gi de kho na nyid kyang brtags pa tsam ste| de la bdag ni phung po lnga la blo ma phye ba tsam mo| de’i de kho na nyid ni spros pa thams cad yongs su zhi ba tsam ste| ‘di litar rten gang yang dmigs pa med do| de las sku dang ye shes kyi dkyil ‘khor sna tshogs su ‘phrul yang rten med cing ngo bo nyid med pa ste| ‘on kyang gdul bya nams kyi dbang la snang ba ni chu zla dang ‘dra ste| chu zla ni chu la zla ba’i rang bzhin yod pa ma yin yang| zla ba nyid las ‘ongs\ pa ma yin te| ‘on kyang ‘jig rten pa’i mig gi blo la chu ‘dwangs par145 snang ba dang nam mkha’ la zla ba gsal ba gnyis yod na| de’i dbang gis chu’i nang na zla ba yod pa dang ‘dra bar snang ngo| de bzhin du gdul bya nams kyi blo la ‘khrul pa’i146 bag chags ma zad kyi bar du snang ba mi ldog ste| de’i dbang gis dkar po’i bag chags sgrib pa rim gys dag pa’i mtshan nyid rgyud ‘dwangs pa147 dang| dad pas dkon cog bsten par snang ba’i dbang dang| rgyal ba nams kyis kyang smon lam dang thugs rje lhun gys grub par mdzad par snang ba mnga’ ba’i dbang gis gdul bya nams kyi rgyud la ji litar ‘tshams148 pa bzhin du snang ba ‘byung ngo| ‘di litar lhun gys grub na ni sans gryas nyid dang khyad par med par gyur pa yin mod kyij ‘on kyang las dang po pa’i149 nal ‘byor pas kyang don ‘di lta bu rtogs shing bsogs pa’i ngang las sprul pa sna tshogs ‘gro ba’i don du ji litar ‘tsham pa bzhin du sprul bar150\ bya ste| de la rten dang ngo bo nyid gang yang gzung bar mi bya’o||

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142 add. gsum pa ni B. This phrase is not found in G (fol. 94b3) either, which was no doubt consulted by B (either directly or by way of a descendent copy), and seems to be a deliberate addition on the part of the editor of B for the sake of a smoother reading.

143 ba las conj., bas las dang BD (also found in G, fol. 94b4)

144 ‘das B. This seems to be a deliberate emendation on the part of the editor of B. Note that G (fol. 29a1), which, as has been already stated, was consulted by B, also has ‘ongs.

145 dwang bar B

146 ba’i D

147 dang ba B

148 ‘tshams D

149 ba’i B

150 par B
The *Sangs sa chen mo*

1. A Note on the Edition
The critical edition of the *Sangs sa chen mo* takes into account the following versions:

A: *RZKB*, pp. 453–489  
B: *RZSB*, vol. 2 (ā), fols. 203–221  
C: *RZSB-YDPE*, vol. 2, pp. 113–158 (under the general title *gSung thor bu*)  
D: *RZChZSB*, vol. 2, pp. 69.15–87.8 (under the general title *gSung thor bu*)

The entire text, excluding the colophon, is also cited in Ra-mgo-mchog-sprul’s *Phar phyin dka’ ’grel legs bshad lung gi rgya mtsho*, Peking: Mi-rigs-dpe-skrun-khang, 1997, pp. 376–387. This version, however, is of no philological value, and thus has not been considered here. All four versions of the *Sangs sa chen mo* consulted are clearly based on the Shri-seng edition, and thus commonly display no major variants. The features of these four versions correspond on the whole to the general features of the four editions of Rong-zom-pa’s collected works described above in the introductory remarks to the critical editions.

sangs rgyas kyi sa chen po zhes grags pa bzhugs so

I. sangs rgyas kyi sa’i mtshan nyid la yon tan gyi chos ji ltar gnas pa dang| mtshan nyid dang yon tan de dag kyang nges pa’i don du de bzhiṅ’ gshegs pa nyid kyi dgongs pa la ji ltar gsungs pa de ltar snang zhing ldan pa zhig gam| ‘on te gdul bya rnams kyi snang ba’i dbang du byas te gsungs pa zhig gam| nges pa’i don du ji ltar bta zhes rtog pa rnams la| gang zag so so’i ‘dod gzhung| gzhung gang la brten pa dang bcas pa mdo tsam bkod pa’i de la mdo sde dang bstan bcos dang| gsang sngags kyi tshul rnams las <A 454> sangs rgyas pa’i3 chos su gyur pa mdor bsdu dang rgyas pa’i sgo nas gsungs pa ni|

II. 1. ‘di ltar sku gsung thugs ye shes bzhis dang| <B 204a> chos kyi dbyings mam par dag pa dang| gzhang yang sbtos bcu dang| ma ‘dres pa bco <C 114> brgyad dang| thugs rje chen po sum cu rtsa gnyis dang| mtshan dang dpe <D 70> byad bzang po dang| sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi rgyan bkod pa phun sum tshogs pa dang| gzungs dang ting nge ’dzin gyi sgo mtha’ yas pa dang| ma ‘dres pa’i dran pa nye’ bar gzhag pa dang| bsnyle ba mi mnga’ ba’i chos nyid dang| bag chags kyi mtshams sbyor ba thams cad yongs su dag pa dang| rnam pa thams cad mchog gi ye shes zhes bya la btsogs pa sangs rgyas kyi yon tan rgya mtsho gsungs pa dang| 2. gzhan yang sangs rgyas kyi sku dang zhing dang| sku’i bkod <B 204b> pa phun sum tshogs pa tshul sna tshogs su bstan pa ni|

A. ‘di ltar thun mong gi mdo kia cig las| bcom ldan ’das dpal shākyā thub pa ‘dzam bu’i gling ‘dir srid pa tha ma’i byang chub sems dpa’ don thams cad grub pa las| rab tu byung ba’i sgo nas mngon par rdzogs par sangs <C 115> rgyas te| gtson dge slong gi dge ‘dun stong nyis <A 455> brgya Inga bcu la btsogs pa’i ’khor gyi dkyil ’khor na bzhugs shing chos kyi ’khor lo bskor’ te mthar mya ngan las ’das pa’i tshul bstan to zhes grags pa dang|

B. gzhan yang mdo sde dang gsang sngags kha cig las| sangs rgyas rnams kyi byang chub kyi snying po brnyes pa’i gnas ni ’og min yin te |’di skad du|

‘dod pa’i khams dang gzugs med du6
sangs rgyas mngon par ’tshang mi rgyal
gzugs kyi khams kyi ’og min du
’dod chags bral ba khyod ’tshang rgya’o

1 add. pa A
2 || C
3 sa’i B
4 nya B
5 skor D
6 AC have a single shad at the end of the first three lines of this verse; the double shad at the end of the fourth and last line is obviously due to the final particle.
The Sangs sa chen mo

zhes gsungs pa lta bur 'og min gyi gnas su bcom ldan 'das dpal mam par snang mdzad| longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku 'khor lo'i 7 bsgyur ba'i rgyal po lta bu'i tshul du| gnas dang dus nges pa dag tu tshul nges pas yongs su dag pa'i 'khor rams la| theg pa chen po'i chos la| longs spyod par ston par| mdzad| pa ni| sngon gyi bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs tshad med pa bsags pa'i rnam par smin pa'i sku yin te| bcom ldan 'das shākyā thub pa ni de'i dbang las 'phrul pas| sprul pa'i sku 'dzam bu gling 'dir sangs rgyas par bstan pa'o| zhes grags pa dang]

C. gzhane yang 456| gsang sngags kyi tshul kha cig las| sangs rgyas ni 'og min gyi gnas chos kyi dbyings kyi pho brang na| bcom ldan 'das rdo rje 'chang chen po rdo rje sems dpa' de nyid rtag tu da ltar byung ba lta bu'i skur bzhus pa| 'dus ma byas zag pa med pa'i bde ba| dang ldan pa| longs spyod chen po'o| bde ba dang ldan pa| lha mo'i tshogs dpag tu med pa'i dkyil 'khor na bzhus shing| gzungs ma| dang gnyis su med par sbyor ba'i bde ba chen po las mi g.yo ba| thugs rje chen pos mnyes gshin pa| sems can thams cad bsgral| ba| la brtson par mdzad pa| chos thams cad kyi rang bzhin du gnas pa| chos thams cad du rnam par sprul pa'i mnga' bdag|12 sangs rgyas thams cad kyi bdag por grags shes13 bstan pa dang]

ghane yang gsang sngags kyi tshul rnam las| bde bar gshegs pa'i dkyil 'khor ni| longs spyod rdzogs pa dang| sprul pa|1| sku'i tshul dang| zhi ba dang khro bo'i tshul dang| rig|14 sngags dang gsang sngags kyi tshul can| dkyil 'khor chen po dang chung ngi'i tshul du bzhus pa

III. ji snyed par grags pa'i gzhung 'di dag la 457| brten nas| nges pa'i don du gzhung so sor smra ba ni 'di lta ste|

1. gang zag kha cig na re sangs rgyas pa'i chos ni| chos kyi dbyings rnam15 par dag pa tsam ste| de bzhin gshegs pa nyid kyi dbang du ni| rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dang| dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes kyis bsdu|16 don dam pa dang kun rdzob kyi bden pa'i yul can gyi ye shes dag dang longs spyod rdzogs pa dang| sprul pa'i skus bsdu| pa'i gzugs kyi sku dag kyang mnga' ba ma yin no| sangs rgyas kyi ye shes ji lta ba bzhin du| sems can gyi sems kyang de dang 'dra ste| 'on kyang shes shing rig pa'i mtshan nyid du skye ba ni| gzung 'dzin du snang yang rung| mi snang yang rung ste| bag chags kyi dbang gis

7 los B. The reading los is the usual one and is obviously a deliberate emendation.
8 pa AC
9 add. | ABCD
10 om. AB
11 pa A
12 || AC
13 zhes CD
14 A has three tshegs after rig, possibly due to a correction of the block from rigs to rig.
15 rnam AC
snang ba tsam grub pa yin la| snang ba ni ji ltar snang yang 'khrul pa\(^{16}\) yin te| de bzhin du yod pa ma yin pas sms can gyi dus na yang rnam par dag pa yin te| des na rang byung gi ye shes zhes kyang bya ste| 'di ltar sdong po bkod pa'i mdo las| <B 206a>

\[
\text{\textquoteleft jig rten khams mang la la dag\textquoteright}^{17} \\
\text{bsam gyis mi khyab tshig gyur kyang} \\
\text{nam mkha' 'jig par mi}^{<A 438>} \text{gyur bzhin} \\
\text{rang byung ye shes de bzhin no}\]

zhes gsungs pa lta bur sms kyang <C 119> shes rig gi mtshan nyid 'gyur ba med pas| de bzhin gshegs pa nyid dang 'dra ste| 'on kyang bye brag ni| sms can gyi dus na 'khrul pa'i\(^{18}\) bag chags kyi dbang gis rnam rtog gi shes pa gzung ba dang 'dzin par snang ba skye'ol| <B 72> 'on kyang de bden pa ma yin no| 'phags pa\(^{19}\) bden pa mthong ba rnam la| rnam par mi rtog pa'i mtshan nyid du mnyam par bzhag pa'i skabs su skye ste| de yang rang rig pa nyid bag chags kyi stobs las byung ba rang rig pa'i mtshan nyid du ma grub bzhin| shes rig gi mtshan nyid du skye bas| 'di yang 'khrul pa'i\(^{20}\) shes pa'ol| de bzhin gshegs pa rnam ni| bag chags kyi mtshams sbyor ba yongs su zad pas| shes rig gi mtshan\(^{21}\) nyid du skye ba tsam dang yang bral te|chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa nyid du gur pas| sms can gyi sms kyi rang bzhin las khyad <C 120> par du byung ba thob pa ni 'ga' yang med kyi| sms kyi rang bzhin ji lta ba <B 206b> yin pa de lta ba nyid du gur par\(^{22}\) zad do| zhes 'dod do\|

2. kha cig na re sangs rgyas 'kyi sa\(^{23}\) ni (i) chos kyi dbhyings rnam par dag pa dang| (ii) rnam <A 459> par mi rtog pa'i ye shes gnyis so| dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes dang| gzugs kyi sku'i bkod pa'i khyad par dag ni mi mnga\(^{14}\) stel 'di dag ni gzung 'dzin gyi mtshan ma can yin pas| gal te 'di dag mnga' bar khas len na| sangs rgyas kyang 'khrul pa\(^{25}\) can nyid du khas len par 'dod du zad do zhes zer ro\|

3. kha cig na re sangs rgyas kyi sa ni chos gsum yin te\(^{26}\) 'di ltar (i) chos kyi dbhyings rnam par dag pa dang| (ii) rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dang| (iii) dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes

\(^{16}\) ba D

\(^{17}\) AC \emph{have a single shad at the end of the first three lines of this verse; the double shad at the end of the fourth and last line is obviously due to the final particle.}

\(^{18}\) ba'i D

\(^{19}\) pa'i CD

\(^{20}\) ba'i D

\(^{21}\) mchan B

\(^{22}\) bar D

\(^{23}\) kyis D

\(^{24}\) mda' A

\(^{25}\) ba D

\(^{26}\) ste D

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4. kha cig na re| sangs rgyas nams la gzugs kyi sku'i bkod pa ni mi mnga' ste| 'on kyang nyid rdzogs par longs spyod pa zhes bya ba| ye shes kyi bde ba chen po zag pa med pa nyams su bstar <D 73> ba ni yod de de ltar na sangs rgyas nams ni| (i) chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa dang <C 125> (ii) rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dang| (iii) dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes dang| (iv) 'dus ma byas zhi ba thugs su chud pa'i bde ba dang ldan te| de ltar chos bzhin ldan no zhes zer ro||

5. kha cig na re| sangs rgyas nams ni rigs dang dge ba'yi bshes gnyen gyi stobs kyis byang chub mchog tu thugs bskyed pa nas bzung ste bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs tshad med pa bsags shing sgrib' pa'i tshogs ma lus pa zad par mdzad pas| de'i dbang gis yongs su dag pa'yi zhing khams su dge ba'yi rtsa ba tshad med pas bsgrubs pa'i rnam par smin pa'i sku bzang po dpe med pa mngon par grub ste| rtag tu sems can la phan btags pa'i sbyor ba las byung zhing| gdul <B 207b> bya thams <A 461> cad la ji ltar 'tshams pa bzhin du phan 'dogs pa'yi bdag nyid kyi sku grub pas| bsod nams kyi sku zhes bya ste| gzugs kyi sku 'di lta bu yang sangs rgyas <C 123> nams la mnga' ba yin la| sku des kyang ting nge 'dzin gyi ye shes bdag nyid la| dmigs pa'i bde ba chen po nyams su bstar ba yin te| sku de'i nyams su bstar ba'yi bde ba de la skad cig skad cig ma gzhan gyi bar skabs med do|| des na sangs rgyas nams ni (i) chos kyi dbyings mam par dag pa dang (ii) rnam par mi rtog pa'yi ye shes dang| (iii) dag pa 'jig rten pa'yi ye shes dang| (iv) bsod nams kyi tshogs tshad med pa las bsgrubs pa'i gzugs kyi sku dang| (v) 'dus ma byas gzigs pa'i thugs kyi bde ba dang| (vi) bsod nams dang ye shes kyi dbang las gyur pa'i sku yi bde ba rams dang ldan te| bde ba'yi chos drug dang ldan no| lha mo'i 'khor la longs spyod pa'yi bde ba ni| smad pa'yi gnas yin pas de mi mnga' o zhes zer ro||

6. kha cig na re| sangs rgyas nams ni| nyes pa'yi skyon thams cad ni sa bon <C 124> dang bcas nas yongs su dag pa yin la| <A 462> legs pa'yi yon| thun mong dang thun mong

om. AC. The omission of the syllable du seems to be due to aberratio oculi, given that the following syllable is dus.

27 27 | C
28 29 bsgrub ABD
30 mnga' 'o B
31 bsgribs BD
32 rgyas rgyas AC. The syllable rgyas is repeated at the start of a new line in A—obviously a scribal error. This was overlooked by the typesetter of C, probably because C starts a new page at this point.
33 om. A
ma yin pa'i yon tan du gtogs pa thams cad <B 208a> ji ltar tshogs bsags pa de lta de ltar don med par 'ga' yang ma gyur cing rdzogs shing mthar ma phyin par yang 'ga' yang ma gyur te| yon tan thams cad kyi 'bras bu'i ngo bor bzhugs la| de la bar zad dang gzhan du 'gyur ba yang dus thams <D 74> cad du mi mnga' ste| de ltar na sams rgyas kyi chos ni (i) chos kyi dbyings nmam par dag pa dang| (ii) nmam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dang| (iii) dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes dang| (iv) bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs mtha' yas pa bsags pa'i rnam par smin pa'i sku longs spyd rdzogs pa'i sku chen po bcom ldan 'das rdo rje 'changchen po dang| (v) zhing bkod pa phun sum tshogs pa yongs su dag pa'i zhing kham khyad par can dag na| longs spyd phun <C 125> sum tshogs pa mdo sde dag las grags pa'i sams rgyas kyi zhing bkod pa phun sum tshogs pa thun mong du grags pa rnams dang| (vi) thun mong ma yin pa 'dod pa'i yon tan la shin du longs spyd pa'i bde ba khyad par can dang ldan te| 'di ltar ye shes kyi lha mo'i tshogs dpag tu med <A 463> pa'i dkyil 'khor na gnyis su med par sbyar ba'i rol pa'i bde ba chen po mthar thug par mi 'gyur <B 208b> ba'4 dang yang ldan zhing| (vii) gzugs dang sgra la stso ga'i bde ba thams cad kyang nyams su bstar bas| phyi rol gyi 'dod pa spyad pa las byung ba'i bde ba dang| (viii) dge ba'i rtsa ba'i rnam par smin pa'i sku grub pas rang bzhin 35 gyi sku'i bde ba dang| (ix) 'dus ma byas pa'i chos nyid zhi ba gzigs pas| thugs kyi 36 bde ba dang yang ldan te| des na bde ba gsum dang bzhis kyang khyad par du gyur pa'i bdag nyid can yin no| zhes kyang zer ro||

<C 126> de dag ni gzhung so sor bkod pa tsam smos pa yin no|37

IV. da ni de dag gi brgal ba dang lan nams brjod par bya ste|

1. A. de la dang por sangs rgyas kyi sa la rnam par mi rtag pa'i ye shes tsam yang mi 'dod pa'i gzhung la| rnam par mi rtag pa'i ye shes tsam 'dod pa la sogs pa gzhung lhag ma 'dzin pa rnam kyi thun mong du brgal bai gal te khyod 'dod pa ltar sungs rgyas rnam la rnam par mi rtag pa'i ye shes tsam yang mi mnga' ste|chos <A 464> kyi dbyings

(nam par dag pa tsam la gdags so zhes zer na| nyes pa'i skyon mang du 'byung ste| mdor bsdu na

(i) rgyal ba'i bka' mtha' dag dang| sngon gyi mkhan po rnam kyi bshad pa'i gzhung gi tshogs kun las| sku dang <B 209a> ye shes kyi khyad par dang| thugs rje chen po 'byung ba'i tshul mtha' yas pa gsungs pas| de lta na khyed kyi rgyal ba'i bka' dang| gzhung thams cad la mgon du <C 127> skur pa btab pa'i <D 75> phyir| khyed dkong mchog gnyis pa zhig yin par khas longs shig|

(ii) gzhann yang rigs dang dge ba'i bshes38 gnyen gyi stobs la brten te bying chub tu sems bskyed nas| bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs tshad med pa bsags pa'i 'bad pa thams cad chud gsan te| 'gro ba'i don du che ba'i yon tan 'byung ba'i 'bras bu'i ngo bo yang

34 pa B
35 bzhan D
36 gyi A
37 | C
38 gshes B

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med| de`i\(\text{rgyu yang med}\)\(\text{rkyen yang med}\)\(\text{rten yang med}\) pas mtha'\(\text{chad par smra ba}\) nyid du`\(\text{ang }\)gyur ro\(\text{]}\)

(iii)\(\text{g}z\)han yang mya\(\text{nga} \)ng\(\text{a las }\)\(\text{d}a\)s pa me\(39\)\(\text{sha} \)la bur smras te|\(\text{n}y\)an\(\text{thos zi} \)ba phyogs gcig pa dang mthun par gyur nas|\(\text{the}g\) pa chen po don med par 'gyur ro\]

detar nyes pa chen po 'di <\(\text{A}465\)> rnam\(\text{snang ba' }\)i phyir| khyod kyis gzhung 'di thong\(40\) zhig|\(\text{B. de la slar smras pa| khyed kyis brgal ba' i nyes skyon gsum po de dag nga'i41 grub mtha' }\) 'di la med de|\(\text{B. de la slar smras pa| khyed kyis brgal ba' i nyes skyon gsum po de dag nga' i41 grub mtha' }\)

\(\text{(i)}\)\(\text{<\(\text{C}128\)}> \) de la dang po nyid du bka' i gzhung dang 'gal\(42\) lo zhes zer <\(\text{B}209b\)> yang| de \(\text{ltar ma yin te nges pa' i gzhung zab mo mtha' }\) dag las gzhung 'di nyid gtsor bsgrubs te| 'di \(\text{ltar rdo rje gcod pa las|}\)

\begin{itemize}
  \item gang gis nga la gzhugs su mthong|\(\text{43}\)
  \item gang gis\(44\) nga la sgrar shes pa|\(\text{}\)
  \item log par spong bar zhugs pa ste|\(\text{}\)
  \item skye bo de yis nga mi mthong|\(\text{}\)
  \item 'dren pa rnam\(\text{ni}\)\(\text{chos kyi skul|}\(\text{}\)
  \item chos nyid du ni sangs rgyas bta|\(\text{}\)
\end{itemize}

zhes gsungs te| sangs rgyas ni chos nyid la bya bar gsungs kyi gzhugs dang sgra' i tshul gyis sangs rgyas su 'dzin pa ni sangs rgyas nyid spong bar bshad do|\(\text{dkon mchog brtsegs pa las kyang|}\)

\begin{itemize}
  \item sangs rgyas gzhugs su mi bta mtshan dang ni|\(\text{45}\)
  \item rigs dang 'rgyud du|\(46\) mi brtag sgra dang ni|\(\text{}\)
  \item 'chad par 'gyur ba ma yin sens dang ni|\(\text{}\)
  \item rnam shes yid kyi\(\text{pa tu phye ma yin|}\(\text{}\)
  \item chos nyid gang yin de ni bcom\(\text{ldan 'das|}\(\text{}\)
\end{itemize}

shes\(47\) gsungs te| <\(\text{<C}129\)> tshul 'dis kyang lus dang ngag dang yid kyis\(48\) phye ste|\(\text{}\) sangs <\(\text{<A}466\)> rgyas su ma gzhag gi| chos nyid gang yin pa sangs rgyas su gzhag go|\(\text{ye} \) shes ni yid

\(\text{39 mi B}\)

\(\text{40 thongs B}\)

\(\text{41 pa' i B}\)

\(\text{42 gal A}\)

\(\text{43 C has a single shad at the end of all six lines of this verse.}\)

\(\text{44 gi D}\)

\(\text{45 AC have a single shad at the end of all five lines of verse.}\)

\(\text{46 rgyudu A}\)

\(\text{47 zhes D}\)

\(\text{48 kyi ACD}\)

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kyis phye ba yin te| ma na zhes bya ba skad kyi byings las| mngon par rtog B pa dang shes pa'o zhes bshad do|| de bzhin gshegs pa'i yul la 'jug pa ye shes snang <B 210b> 'ba rgyan B gyi mdo las|

rtag tu skye med chos ni de bzhin gshegs D
chos nrams thams cad bde bar gshegs dang 'dra|
byis pa'i blo can mtshan mar 'dzin pa dag|
'jig rten dag na med pa'i chos la spyod||
ces <D 76> gsungs te| rtag tu skye ba med pa'i chos nyid de bzhin gshegs pa yin pas| chos thams cad kyang skye ba med pa yin pas| des na de dang 'dra'o|| 'o na 'jig rten pa la skye 'gag tu snang ba ci zhe na| de ni med pa'i chos la spyod pa st| smig rgyu'i chu bo dang 'dra'o|| de la sogs <C 130> pa lung zab mo rnam las kyang sangs rgyas kyi dngos po ni| chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa yin par gsungs so||
sngon gyi mkhan po nrams kyi man ngag las de bzhin du 'byung ste| mam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dang dag pa 'jig rten pa dang| sangs rgyas kyi rdzu 'phrul A 467| thams cad 'khrul pa'i52 ngo ga53 la snang ba tsam yin te| de ltar ma grub par 'byung la| slob dpon 'jam dpal bshes gnyen dang| dbu ma'i seng ge la stsogs pa gzhung 'di lta bu 'dzin pa'ang rim gyis54 byung steg| de bas na gzhung 'di ni lam po che'i55 srol btod pa nyid du 'jug pa yin pas| 'di skad du rgyal ba'i <B 210b> bka' dang| sngon gyi mkhan po'i gzhung la skur ba yin pa'i phyir khyod dkon mchog gnyis pa yin par khas len pa yin zhes ma zer zhig| kho bo cag ni bstan pa'i snying po nyid kyi gzhung sgrub pa yin no||

(ii) gzhan yang 'di skad du B C 131> 'gro ba'i don du 'gyur ba'i sku dang ye shes kyi che ba dang| thugs rge'i 'phrul pa dag de'i bdag nyid kyang med| rgyu dang rkyen yang med| rten yang med pas| tshogs bsags pa chud zos te| mthar Chad par smra bar 'gyur ro zhes ma zer cig| de la nyes pa 'di med de| Chad par lta ba zhes bya ba ni theng geig yod la| de nas de'i rgyun med par 'dod pa la bya ste| 'di lta bu ni kho bo cag mi 'dod de| de yang bden

49 rtogs B
50 brgyan B
51 AC have a single shad at the end of all four lines of this verse.
52 ba'i CD
53 ga conj. gang ABCD. See below, n. 69. The reading ngo gang occurs in two more instances in the passage from the dKon cog 'grel cited in the present study (see the critical edition, nn. 7 & 19), and seems to have been 'corrected' by the editors of Rong-zom-pa's collected writings. Since the form ngo gang is not attested in the dictionaries consulted by me, I have decided to emend the text to ngo ga in all cases, particularly as it appears to be the original reading in at least one instance (see below, n. 69). Nonetheless, it cannot be ruled out that the form ngo gang was used in some circles, it being found, for example, in Atiša's *RatnakaraJ.90146| (p, fol. 124b4,5&7; D, fol. 111b1,2&3; S, vol. 64, pp. 324.19 & 325.2&5-6; see also the passage in the Jo bo rje'i gsung 'bum, p. 800.16,19&21) in a similar context, where the phrase gdul bya'i ngo gang (la snang ba) is found.
54 kyis AB
55 che 'i A
56 || D
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pa gnyis kyi tshul las don dam pa'i tshul la ni tshogs <A 468> bsags pa'am| sgrib pa spangs pa'am| sngs rgyas nyid thob par gyur pa'am| sems can sgrib pa dang ldan pa zhes bya ba gang yang dmigs su med de| bdag nyid thob pa med cing gnas pa dang gzhan du 'gyur ba med pa la| chad pa dang rtag pa'i tha snayd ji ltar gzhag| kun rdzob 'khrul pa <C 132> gyi don mdzad pa'i sku dang ye shes kyi bye brag yon tan gyi cho sngs rgya mtsng <B 211a> snyed kyi| bdag nyid kyang yod| de'i rgyu yang yod| rkyen yang yod kyi| rten ni dogs so||

de la yon tan rgya mtsng 'byung ba'i rkyen ni nmam pa gnyis te| <D 77> (a) (1) dang po rigs dang bshes gnyen gyi stobs kyi sems bskyed pa nas bzung ste| mngon par rdzogs par sngs rgyas kyi bar du| dge ba'i rtsa ba tshad med pa bsags shing yongs su ma chad pa'i snying rje chen po bskyed pa dang| yongs su ma chad pa'i smon lam chen po lhun gyis grub pa'i shugs las| gdul bya'i rgyud la rang dang 'tsham <A 469> gyur pa'i dbang las kyang 'byung ste| rdzas dang zhih dag pa'i dbang las gzugs brnyan 'byung ba <C 133> lta bu'o| 'di gnyis ni bdag po'i rkyen yin ni (b) (1) gdul bya'i rgyud la 'khrul pa <A 469> ma zad pa dang (2) dkar po'i bag chags dang ldan pa ni rgyu'i rkyen yin te| 'di ltar yon tan 'byung ba'i rgyu ni 'khrul pa'i <A 469> bag chags yod pa yin la| yon tan du snang ba'i rgyu ni dkar po'i bag chags yin no| rten ni 'di la dgos <B 211b> pa med de| dper na drang srong dag gis smon lam grub <A 469> par gyur pa na jis physis dge ba 'am <A 469> mi dge ba gang zhih kyang rung ste| 'di lta bu zhih sa phyogs 'dir 'byung bar gyur cig ces smon lam gdab ste| drang srong shi nas dus physis dge shis la sogsa 'byung bar gyur pa na| rten nus pa can gyi drang srong yang mi dgos la| nus pa bsso bar bya ba'i rten gzhana yang med par sa phyogs der nus mthu 'byung bar 'gyur ro||

kha cig tu yon tan can gyi rten med kyang| yon tan <C 134> gzhan la bsogs pa'i rten gyi rgyun la brten nas| dus gzhan na 'bras bu 'byung bar 'gyur ba <A 470> yod| dper na nam mkha' ldng gi sngags grub pas| chag <A 470> shing la sngags kyi bta bste bzhag na| sngags mkhan shi nas lo brgya stong lon pa na| dug gis zin pa rnam la chag <A 470> shing des byabs na| dug nad sos par 'gyur ba yod do||

57 chogs B
58 ba'am CD
59 ba D
60 tshams BCD
61 ba D
62 ba'i BD
63 grub conj., 'grub ABCD
64 ba'am D
65 pa C
66 phyag B. B obviously emended in the mistaken belief that the word shing was being cited in its honorific form.
67 phyag B

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de bzhin du sangs rgyas nams kyi byang chub kyi spyod pa sgrub pa'i dus na| thugs rje dang smon lam yongs su btab pas| yongs su sgrub par 'gyur te| mgon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas nas kun rdzob kyi chos ma lus pa zad par gyur kyang| gdul bya dus 68| la bab pa'i tshe yon tan gyi chos snang bar 'gyur ba na| yon tan can gyi rten rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes la stogs pa ma kyang< D 78> gdul bya nams kyi 'ngo ga69 la| rgyal ba nams kyi sku longs spyod rdzogs pa dang| sprul pa'i tshul can| <C 135> rnam par mi rtog pa dang| dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes kyi mtshan nyid kyi thugs rje dang ldan pa| dag pa dang ma dag pa'i zhing rnam su snang bar 'gyur te 'di lta bu ni yon tan can gyi rten med par snang ba zhes bya'69||

gzhan yang gzhan gyi rten la <A 471> bgos nas snang ba ni| sangs rgyas 'jig rten du 'byung ba'i snang ba de la brten na| de'i dam tshig dang chos la sogs pa'i phyag rgya rnam byin gyis brlabs-te| 'jig rten du bzhag nas sangs rgyas mya ngan las 'das pa'i tshul bstan kyang| dus phyis phyag rgya des sms can gyi don byed pa sangs rgyas nyid dang 'dra bar 'gyur te| 'di skad du|

68 'grub CD
69 ngog BD, dog C. The misreadings ngog and dog probably came about as a result of the scribes’ or typesetters’ unfamiliarity with the archaic form ngo ga. See the corresponding note in the translation.

(iii) gzhan yang tshul 'di nyid kyis nyan thos zhi ba phyogs gcig pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa dang khyad par med pa yang ma yin te| bdag gi don du bag la nyal thams cad yongs su zad <A 472> par gyur pas| chos kyi dbyings nram par dag pa nyid du gyur pa dang| gzhan gyi don du dge ba'i rtsa ba thams cad kyang sms can gyi don byed pa'i rkyen nyid du 'gyur ba dang| chos kyi dbyings nram par dag pa'i dbang las kyang| gzhan la snang ba'i rkyen du 'gyur bas72| gzhan gyi don phun sum tshogs pa dang ldan pas73 spyir khyad par med pa ni ma yin no nyan thos nams <C 137> kyis 'dus ma byas cung zad thob pa dangi de bzhin gshegs pas yongs su dag pa74 thob pa'i khyad par yod mod kyil 'on kyang mya ngan las 'das pa zhe bya ba| 'dus ma byas pa nyid la bya bar ni khyad par med de|

70 AC have a single shad at the end of all seven lines of verse.
71 D has erroneously only one shad at the end of this line of verse.
72 pas AD
73 par B
74 pa conj., par ABCD
The *Sangs sa chen mo*

'di ltar 'dus ma byas kyis phye ba ni 'phags pa'i gang zag go' <B 213a>

zhes gsungs pa lta bu'o

di ltar na khyed kyis skyon brjod pa de dag thams cad ni| kho bo cag gi gzung <D 79> la med kyis<sup>75</sup> de skad ma zer cig

2. da ni kho cag gis khyed cag gi gzung la brgal bar bya yis rigs par lan thob cig

A. de la dang po nyid du rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes tsam 'dod pa la dri bar bya ste| 'di ltar rnam<sup>76</sup> par mi rtog pa'i ye shes bya ba 'di| gdul bya rnam s kyi <A 473> rgyud la sangs rgyas rnam s ye shes chen po dang ldan par snang ba tsam ma gtog par| sangs rgyas nyid kyi rgyud kyi dbang la shes pa rang rig pa gzung 'dzin du snang ba dang bral ba| skad cig ma rgyun chags kyis skye ba'i mtshan nyid can yod par 'dod na

(i) ye shes rigs pas gzhig tu mi<sup>77</sup> rung ste yod par 'dod dam|
(ii) 'on te gnyen pos gzhig tu mi rung ste yod par 'dod|
(iii) 'on te de dag gang yang rung bas gzhig tu rung ba yin yang| sangs rgyas rnam s chos la mnga' brnyes pa yin pas dgos pa zhig yod pa'i phyir 'di tsam 'ma spang bar<sup>78</sup> bzhag|
(iv) 'on te de dag ma yin par 'di tsam mnga' bar rigs pas grub ces brtag<sup>79</sup> grang<sup>80</sup> na|

(i) de la re zhig dang por blos gzhig<sup>81</sup> tu mi rung ba<sup>82</sup> ni med de<sup>83</sup> rnal <B 213b> 'byor spyod pa'i 'dod pa ni dbu ma pas sun phyung zin pa yin la| rang gi gzung la ni kun rdzob tsam la blos gzhig tu mi rung ba mi srid do||

(ii) gnyen pos<sup>84</sup> gzhig tu mi rung ba'ang med de<sup>85</sup> 'di skad du rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes nyid sgrip pa spong ba'i gnyen po yin pas <D 139> de nyid spang ba la gnyen po med do bya yang mi rung ste| mi rtog pa zhes<sup>86</sup> bya ba ni gzung ba <A 474> dang 'dzin pa'i

<sup>75</sup> kyis conj., kyi ABCD

<sup>76</sup> nam B

<sup>77</sup> om. B

<sup>78</sup> *The negation particle ma in combination with the future form spang ba is grammatically odd. One would expect here either ma spangs par, mi spang bar, or mi spong bar.*

<sup>79</sup> A *has three tshegs after brtag, possibly due to brtags having been corrected to brtag.*

<sup>80</sup> grang ACD

<sup>81</sup> gzheg B

<sup>82</sup> bar AC

<sup>83</sup> || ACD

<sup>84</sup> po ACD

<sup>85</sup> || ACD

<sup>86</sup> zhe D

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snang ba log pa\(^{87}\) bya bar 'dod la\| de yang gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i rtog pa mongan du rgyu ba log pa la ni bden pa mthong zhes 'dod la\| bag la nyal ma lus par zad pa la ni de bzhin gshegs nyid ces 'dod de| de bas na snang ba mongan du rgyu dang bag la nyal rim gyis ldog pa'i shes pa nyid mi mthun pa dang gnyen por sbyar bar zad kyi| rtag tu gnyen po\(^{88}\) chos 'di 'dzin pa'i shes pa gang yang med do| de bas na bag la nyal ma lus pa zad na| rang rig par shes pa skye ba'i rgyu med pas| des na rgyu med na 'bras bu mi skye ba'i tshul de nyid la gnyen pos bsal zhes 'dogs par zad do||
gzhan yang 'di skad du| mam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes skye ba'i rgyu ni dge ba'i rtsa ba tshad med pa \<D 80^a\> bsgags pa\| \<C 140^a\> bdag po ni dran pa| yul ni \<B 214^a\> chos kyi dbyings ma nor ba\(^{89}\) la dmigs pa las skye'o zhes bshad pa gang yin pa de ni| 'khrul pa'\(^{90}\) bag la nyal ma zad kyi bar du dran pa yang dag byang chub\(^{91}\) kyi yan lag gi rgyu las mnyam par gzhang pa'i gnas skabs na gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i mongan du rgyu nub pa'i gnas skabs tsam la bshad pa stel\(^{92}\) \<A 475^a\> sngags rgyas kyi sa la 'di ltar bshad na| don med pa nyid 'gyur rol||
de'i phyir 'di la rigs pa'am gnyen pos gzhig tu mi rung ba med do||

(iii) gal te dgos pa zhig yod pa'i phyir chos la dbang sgyur ba'i rgyal ba rnams kyis gzhig tu rung yang| 'di sgyu ma tsam du zad par ma mzdad do zhe na| 'di zad par ma mzdad pa la dgos\(^{93}\) pa ci zhig yod| bdag gi\(^{94}\) don la ni zag pa med pa'i chos spros pa dang bral ba'i chos nyid bde ba chen po yin te\| sdbug bsngal gyi snang ba las 'das sol| zhi ba yin te \<C 141^a\> mtshan ma med pas so| rtag pa yin te 'dus byas kyi chos rab tu nub pas so| de bas na 'di tsam la bdag gi don zhes bya ste| bde ba'i tshor ba'am| zhi ba'i rnams pa 'am\(^{95}\) | rtag pa'i bdag nyid yod pa ni ma yin no| gzhang gyi don du ni rgyu 'di la ma brten\(^{96}\) yang\<B 214^b\> sems can thams cad kyi skal pa dang mos pa ji ltar 'tshams pa bzhin du yon tan gyi chos bkag pa med par 'byung bas 'di la don yod pa ma yin no||

(iv) gzhan yang 'di skad du 'di ni rigs\(^{97}\) pa'am gnyen\(^{98}\) pos gzhig tu mi rung ba'ang med \<A 476^a\> de| rgyal ba rnams kyis 'di tsam dgos pa'i phyir chos la dbang bsgyur te bzhag 'pa

\(^{87}\) ba B
\(^{88}\) pa'i A
\(^{89}\) pa ACD
\(^{90}\) ba'i ACD
\(^{91}\) chu A
\(^{92}\) CD
\(^{93}\) dgas B
\(^{94}\) nyid A
\(^{95}\) pa'am BCD
\(^{96}\) The word brten in B has three 'greng bu signs: besides the one above the main ligature (reading ste), there is one above the suffix na (thus reading ne) and one above the following tsheg.
\(^{97}\) rigs conj., rig ACD

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There is considerable space between the letter ga and nyen; the tsheg, however, is missing.

pa'ang BD
rig AC

gis conj., gi ABCD
dpag conj., dpags ABCD

It is unclear whether this is a print error or whether the oblique stroke that marks the difference between pa andpha has become invisible.

ba A

dgos pa med pa dang| re zhig sguy ma tsam du sgrub pa'i rigs pa'ang med pa dang| dagag pa'i rigs pa'ang yod pas| 'di skad du< A.478> sangs rgyas nams kyi rgyud la mam par mi

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rtog pa'i ye shes mnga'o zhes ma zer cig 'di ni mdo las kyang gsungs pa yin te 'di skad du

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deh bzhin gshegs pa'i dge chos zag med ni| chos kyi sku mchog yin te de la nii| de bzhin nyid med de bzhin gshegs med de| 'jig rten dag na gzugs brnyan kun tu snang

zhes gsungs te| de bzhin gshegs pa ni chos kyi sku ste| de bzhin nyid dang de bzhin gshegs pa'i mtshan nyid yod pa ma yin mod kyi| sangs rgyas 'jig rten du 'byung ba dag ni| gzugs brnyan kun tu snang ba'o zhes gsungs la gzugs brnyan ni dbang las snang ba'ol| spros pa dang bral ba'i don de nyid gsang sngags kyi ngo bor yang gsungs la gnyis su med pa'ai ye shes kyang bstan| cho ga sna tshogs su byin gyis brlabs shes kyang bstan te| de nyid 'dus pa'ai rgyud chen po las gsang sngags kyi thabs kyi cho ga'i skabs su bshad pa|<B 216a>

  bden las 'jig rten 'di nyams pas| sngags kyi dngos grub thob mi 'gyur| spros pa med pa'ai thabs kyiis ni| dngos grub kun gyi <A 479> mchog tu 'gyur

zhes gsungs te| gsang sngags kyi dngos po ni spros pa med pa yin la| de'i thabs kyi cho ga ni bskyed pa'ai chos rnam yin no| gsang sngags shes bya ba spros pa med pa'ai don de nyid de bskyed pa'ai thabs kyi cho ga thams cad du byin gyis brlabs par yang bstan te| rnam par snang mdzad mngon par byang chub pa'ai rgyud las| gsang ba'ai bdag po sngags kyi mtshan nyid ni| de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyiis ma mdzad byed du ma bcug| rjes su yi rags pa ma yin no| de ci'i phyir zhe na| 'di ni chos thams cad kyi cho nyid de| 'di lta ste| de bzhin gshegs pa rams byung yang rung ma byung yang rung| chos rams kyi chos nyid de ni ye nas gnas pa ste| de yang 'di ltar gsang sngags rams kyi chos nyid do

zhes bya ba nas|

gang gi tshe sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das 'jig rten du byung ba de'i tshe chos nyid de tshul sna tshogs dang dgos pa sna tshogs kyiis sems can| bsam pa sna tshogs pa rams la| tshig sna tshogs dang| yig 'bru sna tshogs dang| yul nges pa'i tshig tu <A 480> brjod pa sna tshogs dang| dbyangs sna tshogs su go ba rams su byin gyis brlabs te gsang sngags kyi tshul 'chad do

107 mnga' 'o B
108 AC have a single shad at the end of the second, third, and fourth lines of this verse.
109 zhes CD
110 AC have a single shad at the end of all four lines of this verse.
111 skyed ACD
112 zhes CD
113 pa conj., ba ABCD
114 ba'i B

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zhes ji skad gsungs pa'o de bas na de bzhin gshegs pa rnamz la mi rtog pa'i ye shes zhes bya ba rig pa dang rtogs pa'i mtshan nyid can yod par sgrub pa 'di la rigs pa 'ga' yang ma mthong

(v) de la slar dris pa yon tan gyi rten ye shes mi mnga' na 'gro ba'i don du yon tan snang ba'i rgyu byang chub sems dpa'i gnas skabs na bskyed pa'i smon lam dang snying rje yin pa de lta na de bzhin gshegs pa'i yon tan du mi 'gyur gyi 'di ni byang chub sems dpa'i yon tan du 'gyur ro zhe na

skyon 'di ni khyed nyid la yang mtshungs pa ste 'di skad dus gnos gyi smon lam dang thugs rje chen po'i shugs kyis yid bzhin gyi nor bu chen po bzhin du rtsol ba med par lhun gyis grub par 'byung ngo zhes 'dod de| sngas rgyas nas kyang 'gro ba pa'i don brtsal dgos so zhes ni mi 'dod do 'di skad du slob pa dang mi slob pa'i 'bras <B 83> bu'i <B 217a> ngo bo nyid ni sngas rgyas te zhes gsungs pas 'di la ye shes <A 481> tsam yod pas sngon gyi thugs rje dang smon lam gzhon gyi don gyi rgyur mi 'gyur ba la phan pa med <C 145> do

(vi) yang dris pa byang chub sems dpa'i sa la sgrib pa rim gyis spong ba'i tshe ye shes rim gyis 'phel nas| rdo rje lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin gyi tshe dus gcig tu rgyun chad par ji ltar rung

smras pa| sa dang po thob nas snang ba rim gyis log ste sa lnga pa la bdag dang gzhon gyi rgyud du snang ba log nas| drug pa la mtshan ma med pa la ngang gis 'jug pas rim gyis snang ba log par bshad pa ma yin nam| snang ba ji ltar log pa ltar snang ba'i gzhis shes pa'ang log pa ma yin nam| de ltar na snang ba ma lus par log pa la| de'i gzhis po'i shes pa ci zhig lus| des na ye shes skyes zhes zer ba ni| mtshan ma ches zhi bar gyur pa la bya bar zad de| de bas na 'di la skyon yod pa ma smra zhig

115 rtogs conj., rtog ABCD
116 rig B
117 bris B
118 stsol AB
119 ba'i C
120 smon D
121 sgyur A
122 | CD
123 gyi D
124 kyis AB
125 kyi A
126 bo'i AB
B. de nas yang dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes 'dod pas mi 'dod pa de gnyis la brgal\textsuperscript{127} ba |

(i) bdag dang gzhan gyi don du che ba'i yon tan \textsuperscript{149} gyi tshogs grub \textsuperscript{<A 482>} pa la| dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes 'di dgos pa med pa khyed smra ba \textsuperscript{<B 217b>} bden du chug kyang\| rnam par mi rtog pa ji ltar thob pa ltar mngon par shes pa dang stobs rhaps 'phel bar bshad pa de khyed nyid kyang 'dod pa ma yin nam| de ltar na byang chub sems dpa'i sa la ye shes 'phel bar gyur pa de| sangs rgyas kyi sa la rgyun chad pa 'di yang rigs\textsuperscript{128} pa ma yin no| gzhan yang| sangs rgyas rhaps kyis 'gro ba'i rgyud mkhyen pa'ai ye shes med na| phyogs gcig la rmons par yang 'gyur ro zhe na|

slar smras pa| 'di la rigs pa yod de\textsuperscript{129} dper na gang zag gang zhig bsam gtan dang po'i ting nge 'dzin thob nas| bsam gtan bzhis pa'i ting nge 'dzin thob kyi bar du| ting nge 'dzin de la brten nas mngon par shes pa 'phel bar 'gyur gyi| de bas ches zhi ba nam mkha' mtha' \textsuperscript{<C 150>} yas skye mché thob nas sna tshogs kyi 'du shes mi 'byung ba dang 'dra bar| sa dang po nas bcu pa'i bar du ting nge 'dzin zhi bar gyur cing mngon par shes pa dang stobs 'phel ba rigs kyi| rdo rje lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin \textsuperscript{<A 483>} gyis rnam par smin pa'i rnam par shes pa gnas 'gyur nas| mtshan ma la dmsigs pa'i shes pa skye bar mi rigs so| phyogs gcig la rmons 'pa 'ang\textsuperscript{130} ma yin te| spyos pa \textsuperscript{<A 218a>} dang bral ba'i rnam par dag par gyur pa nyid| ma lus par mkhyen pa nyid yin no|

(ii) yang brgal ba| sangs rgyas kyi sa ni bsam gyis mi khyab pa'ai\textsuperscript{131} chos yin te so so'i skye bo'i rigs pas gnod pa 'dra ba snang yang| nges par tshad mas gzhal bar bya ba ma yin pas ye shes 'di khyed kyis spang du mi rung ngo zhe na|

de ni kho bo cag kyang 'dod pa yin te| sangs rgyas rhaps kyis chos bsam gyis mi khyab pa yin pa'i phyir 'di dag spong ba'i gzu bo \textsuperscript{<C 131>} mi byed kyis| khyed cag rhaps kyang gong du bshad pa rhaps la skur bar ma byed cig| rips pas rnam par bzhag\textsuperscript{132} na| ches che ba nyid du gyur pa 'di la| nga rgyal gyis\textsuperscript{133} brtsad pas don myed par ma mthong ngo|\textsuperscript{134} de bas na 'di ltar rtoqs par bya ste| sangs rgyas kyi chos bsam gyis mi khyab pa 'di dag la| rips pa che \textsuperscript{<A 484>} chung yod kyang chos thams cad kyi gzhung las spyir grags pa 'di rhaps skye bo'i tshogs\textsuperscript{135} kyis nang du ji skad

\textsuperscript{127} bs
g\textsuperscript{128} rig B

\textsuperscript{129} do AC, da B. \textit{Although the semifinal particle de is preferable here, the reading do is of course also possible. Nevertheless, it cannot be ruled out that it was a scribal error in A (and copied by C), particularly given that A has here a single shad after do and not a double one, as it usually does after a final particle.}

\textsuperscript{130} pa'ang BD

\textsuperscript{131} ba'i B

\textsuperscript{132} gzhag B

\textsuperscript{133} kyis A

\textsuperscript{134} | B

\textsuperscript{135} chogs B

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bshad pa’i spyi skad du bshad par bya’o|| rang gi grub pa’i mtha’ la rigs pa gang che ba lta’r gzang bar rigs so’|| on kyang bsam gysis mi khyab pa’i chos yin pas| ye shes rnam pa gnyis po sangs rgyas\[136 kyi rgyud \(<\text{B} 218\>\) la mnga’ bar ’dod pa’i gzhung ’di la nges par skur ba yang mi bya ste| sngon gyi slob dpon sangs rgyas gsang ba dang| nyi ma’i ’od ’phro ba\[137 la stogs pas kyang| ’di lta bu dag\[<\text{C} 152>\] la rnam par dbye ba yang mdzad nas yang\[138 ’di lta bu ni bdag cag lta’u’i spyod yul ma yin pas| ’di dag ni gzhag par bya’o zhes gsungs pa bzhin du gang zag gzhahn gyis kyang rang gi blo la ji lta’r\[139 rigs\[140 pa tsam gzhag par ’bya’i|’141 nges par khas blang bar mi bya’o||

C. shin tu ’gal ba che ba rnam\[142 ye shes kyi rgyud kyis bzung zhung| gnas su byin gysis brlabs\[143 gzugs kyi sku mnga’o\[144 zhes ’dod pa dang|\[145

(i) ’di lta’r

(a) de bzhin gshegs pa rnam\[142 ye shes kyi rgyud kyis bzung zhung| gnas su byin gysis brlabs\[143 gzugs kyi sku mnga’o\[144 zhes ’dod pa dang|\[145

(b) sku de la yang\[\langle\text{A 485}\rangle tshor ba bde ba mnga’ ’o\[146 zhes ’dod pa dang|\[145

(c) sku de’ang\[147 skyes pa’i gzugs can no zhes ’dod pa dang|\[145

(d) gzhahn yang bud med la longs mi spyod do| zhes ’dod pa dang|\[145

(e) bud med la longs spyod de ’di lta rtag tu bde ba mi ’gyur ba dang ldan te| de’i khungs kyang rgyud dang man ngag rnam la brten nas| (1) chos nyid kyi ro myong la brten\[\langle\text{D 85}\rangle nas (i) thugs\[\langle\text{C 153}\rangle kyi bde ba dang| (ii) sku’i bde ba gnyis dang ldan pa dang| (2) lha mo la stogs pa yul gyi bde ba la brten\[\langle\text{B 219a}\rangle nas (iii) rol pa’i bde ba dang| (iv) phyi rol gyi bde ba gnyis dang ldan te| ’di lta bu la stogs pa bde ba’i rgya mtsho (i) mi ’gyur ba mnga’ ba dang| (ii) de la yang ’dod chags la stogs pa’i zag pa mi mnga’ ba dang| (iii) thugs rje chen po la stogs pa yan lag drug la stogs pa’i chos ’di dag ’dod pa ni gdul bya la snang ba ma gtogs par sangs rgyas nyid kyi rgyud la nges par\[148 mnga’ bar ’dod na| gdon mi za bar sun dbyung bar bya ste|
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de la gtan tshigs 'di dag brjod par bya ste| so so'i skye bo rnams kyi rnam par shes pa'i kham s kyis lus len pa ni bdag tu lta ba dang bcas pa'i sred pas<sup>149</sup> bsgrubs<sup>149</sup> pa yin te| 'di ni khed cag kyang 'dod pa ma yin nam| gzhans yang byang chub sems dpa' rnams smon lam gyi lus<sup>154</sup> grub pa'i rgyu ni| bdag tu lta ba'i bag la nyal la brten nas gnas kyi sa'i ma rig pa'i rgyu las byung ba yin par khed ynid kyang 'dod pa ma yin nam| de bzhin gshegs pa mams ni bdag tu lta ba'i bag chags thams<sup>150</sup> cad ma lus pa zad pas| gnas kyi sa'i ma rig pa'ang mi mnga' na gnas su 'dzin pa mi mnga' ba bzhin du shes pa gang gis lus len par 'gyur| 'di skad du| bdag tu lta<sup>159</sup> ba spangs pa'i phyir<sup>151</sup> gnas la tha dad<sup>152</sup> yod ma yin<sup>153</sup> zhes gsungs pa 'di lta bu yang khyed cag skur bar byed dam| gzhans du 'dren par byed| bsod nams kyi rgyu las byung ngo zhe na yang| 'khor ba'i chu bo las ma brgal<sup>154</sup> ba'i dus na bsod nams kyi lam gyi gru i<sup>155</sup> tshogs kyang| bsten<sup>156</sup> cing ldan par bshad kyi<sup>157</sup> byang chub bnyes bzhin du da dung lus dang longs spyod dang bcas pa 'dzin pa ni skye bo rnams kyi blo| s m| shes kyis| khyed<sup>155</sup> nyid sangs rgyas su khas longs la smros shig| gzhans yang 'di skad du<sup>159</sup> sangs rgyas skyes lus su sgrub tu rung 'ba 'ang<sup>158</sup> med kyi| lha chen po'i bshad pa yang 'dra bar| bdag yongs su dag ces bya ba 'dod pa'i yon tan thams cad la longs spyod de| bde ba'i tshor ba thams cad dang ldan pa' i dbang phyug mi 'gyur ba zhig yod par 'dod pa dang| khyad par cung zad kyang med kyi khyed cang mams lta ba 'di gtong bar mi spro na| sangs rgyas kyis bstan pa'i cho| s la<sup>159</sup> brtsal mi dgos kyis| dbang phyug gis bstan pa'i cho| s la spro bar gyis shig| (ii) de dag gis slar dris pa| bdag cag gzhung 'di yang 'rang bzo<sup>159</sup> ma yin<sup>160</sup> te| de bzhin gshegs pa'i bka' nyid las snang ba nyid yin pas<sup>161</sup> <sup><A485</A> </sup>ynes par mi 'gyur ro zhe na<sup>162</sup> 149 grub CD  
150 tham D  
151 om. ACD. A has space for approximately three letters or ligatures between the syllable phyir and the following syllable gnas; C has space for approximately one letter or ligature.  
152 dang B  
153 | ACD  
154 rgal ACD. The perfect form brgal is grammatically preferable here, since it is in agreement with the negation particle ma.  
155 mthu'i B  
156 sten ACD. The form bsten is in agreement with the following particle cing, whose employment hints at the existence of a da drag suffix.  
157 || ACD  
158 ba'ang BD  
159 The final "ng in rang is wholly defaced, and the prefix b<sup>5</sup> in bzo partially so, in C.  
160 The syllable yi in yin is partially defaced in C.  
161 || AC  
162 || AC
The Songs sa chen mo

de la smras pa\textsuperscript{163} sangs rgyas kyi bka’ las de ltar ‘byung ba dang| las dag pa rnams\textsuperscript{<C 156>} kyi g dul bya la de bzhin du byung ba ni brdzun pa ma yin te| yod pa yin pas\textsuperscript{164} da ltar boom idan ‘das shäkya thub pa’i zhing kham |di na| boom idan ‘das shäkya thub pa skyes pa’i lus la rgyal rigs las| khyim nas khyim med par rab tu byung nas\textsuperscript{<A 488>} mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas te nye bar bsten pa’i ‘khor nram\textsuperscript{165} bzhì dang| lha ma srin sde bryad la stogs pa spyi’i ‘khor gyi dkyil ‘khor du theg pa sna tshogs kyi| chos kyi ‘khor lo bskor bar snang ba brdzun pa ma yin pa de bzhin du| dpal nmā par snang mdzad byang chub sems dpa’i dkyil ‘khor na| g dul bya smin par mdzad pa dang| dpal rdo rje sems dpa’ lha mo’i tshogs kyi dkyil ‘khor na| ‘dod pa’i yon tan la rol pas gdul bya smin par mdzad par snang ‘ba ‘ang\textsuperscript{166} brdzun pa ma yin pa mtshungs mod kyi| de dag thams cad ‘la ‘ang\textsuperscript{167} thun mong du ye shes\textsuperscript{<C 157>} kyi rgyud kyis gzugs kyi sku gzung ba mi mngā’ ste| thams cad kyang chos kyi dyings nmā par dag pa dang| smon lam gyi dbang ngam| yang na de dag gi steng du ye shes chen po’i dbang las kyang\textsuperscript{<B 220b>} de ltā bu dag snang ste|

des na dper na me long gi gzugs brnyan me long dag pa’i dbang dang| bzhin gyi rgyu las snang yang| me long las ma ‘das pas| me long gi chos su brtsi zhing gzhi me| long gis bzun ba ‘dra na’ang| gzugs brnyan la rten gyi ‘byung ba chen po med pas| me long gis bzun\textsuperscript{169} ba ma yin no| de bzhin du sangs rgyas kyi gzugs\textsuperscript{<A 489>} kyi sku’ang| chos kyi sku’i dbang las snang zhing de las ‘das pa med pas| chos kyi sku de bzhin du\textsuperscript{170} bshad cing sangs rgyas skur bgrangs kyang| chos kyi sku la bdag tu ltā ba’i gnas med pas gzugs kyi sku la rten pa’i phyir| ye shes kyi rgyud kyis\textsuperscript{<C 158>} gzugs kyi sku bzung bar smrar mi rung ngo| de nyid kyis na| gzugs kyi sku’i chos thams cad kyang bloz gzung kyang\textsuperscript{171} rten mi myed de| ji ltā byis pa chus khyer bas rtsa drung phyir la ‘dzin pa\textsuperscript{<D 87>} dang ‘dra’o|\

\textsuperscript{163} || AC
\textsuperscript{164} || AC
\textsuperscript{165} rnams D
\textsuperscript{166} ba’ang BD
\textsuperscript{167} la’ang BD
\textsuperscript{168} ma B
\textsuperscript{169} gzung B
\textsuperscript{170} om. B
\textsuperscript{171} One would expect here yang instead of kyang.
\textsuperscript{172} da man A
\textsuperscript{173} pa’ang BCD

V. sangs rgyas kyi sa’i ltā ba’i bye brag ‘di dag gi dbye ba nmā par gzhag pa ‘di ltā bu ni| bdag cag ltā bu’i spyod yul ma yin yang| dus kyis mnr ba’i gang zag nmās rgyal ba’i bka’i tshig tsam la brten nas ‘jug pa dang| gang zag gi phyir ‘brangs te| ltā ba dman\textsuperscript{172} pa’i phyogs la ltā ba dam par bzung nas|\textsuperscript{<B 221b>} rigs pa med par sgron skur du spyod ‘pa ‘ang\textsuperscript{173} mang du snang bas| de dag gi don du ‘gyur yang srid pa dang| rang gi rjes su ‘brang ba’i

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slob ma rnams kyis tshul 'di dag gi rigs pa gzung ba'i don du brjed byang du bris pa yin no||
bod kyi lo tsā ba rong zom chos kyi bzang pos mdzad pa rdzogs so|| ||
The Discussion in the *dKon cog 'grel*

1. A Note on the Edition

The critical edition of the passage from the *dKon cog 'grel* takes into account the following versions:

- **B**: *RZSB*, vol. 1 (*a*), fols. 7a3–16b3 (published under the title *rGyud rgyal gsang ba snying po dkon cog 'grel*)
- **C**: *RZSB-YDPE*, vol. 1, pp. 4.2–31.5 (published under the same title as B)
- **D**: *RZChZSB*, vol. 1, pp. 33.9–43.13 (published under the same title as B)
- **F**: *NyK*, vol. 25 (*ra*), pp. 7.3–28.4 (published under the title *rGyud rgyal gsang ba snying po'i 'grel pa rong zom chos bzang gis mdzad pa*)
- **G**: An Indian offset print of the dGa'-ldan-phun-tshogs-gling edition, that is, the edition from the Zhol-par-khang (published under the same title as F)

In addition to the versions included in the three complete editions of the collected works of Rong-zom-pa (BCD), therefore, two further versions have been drawn upon, namely, the version included in the *NyK* (F) and a reproduction of the xylographic edition published in Zhol (G). Few further peculiarities could be observed in the text of the *dKon cog 'grel* beyond the general features of the three complete editions of Rong-zom-pa's collected works (BCD) discussed above.

Version B, as we have already seen, has undergone the lengthiest editorial process, including deliberate altering of the reading in several cases. Although B generally is based on the Shri-seng edition, in the case of the *dKon cog 'grel* it is obvious that version G (or a copy of it) was consulted, since in a remarkable number of cases the readings in B are the same as those of G, and in deviation from CDF. In some cases, B introduces emendations of its own, thus providing readings not found elsewhere. Most of these emendations are orthographical in nature. A few of them, however, contrast significantly with the original reading. B also contains misreadings due to scribal errors. It seems that the woodblocks are partly damaged, as a result of which parts of some letters or vowels have broken off (block 8, particularly the verso, but possibly also the recto, and the recto of block 10). Further, as is generally the case with B, we have a great number of additional punctuation signs.

Version D, too, is largely based on the Shri-seng edition (including in matters of punctuation). It obviously also has links with the heavily edited version B, but it commonly reads the same as CF against B. This is clear evidence that C and F, too, were
based on the Shrī-seng edition, or that the three at least have a common ancestor. In some cases, however, D adopts the emendations of B, thus reading (at times together with G) against CF. In a few cases D introduces its own emendations to the text, and in some others it contains some minor typographical errors.

As stated earlier, C and F seem to have a common origin, since in most cases they together with D read identically against G and B (with B often following G). There is, however, some evidence that C has been influenced by the reading in G. This suggests that either G was consulted during the preparation of C or that this was the case with the copy used for preparing C.

As has become obvious by now, G, an Indian reproduction of the xylograph edition from dGa’-ldan-phun-tshogs-gling, presents the most idiosyncratic version. While C and F clearly form one group deriving from a common version (i.e. an ancestor of the Shrī-seng edition or a revised copy of the latter), G stands alone, and seems to derive from an earlier version, which could be a common distant ancestor of CF and the Shrī-seng edition. While G seems to have, orthographically speaking, some archaic readings, it also has more typographical errors than the other versions, and therefore is of a rather inferior quality.

I. rdo rje sms pa' sgyu 'phrul drwa'1 ba le'u stong phrag <G 2a> brgya pa las[ mtshan nyid dang rgyud dang lung thams cad kyi spyi| de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi gsang ba'2 gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa <F 8> las[ thams cad ma lus par 'phros< B 7b> te| 'khor lo bskor ba de dag gi tshul ni]

ston pa sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das longs spyod chen po| phyogs bcu5 dus bzhi'i de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi sku dang gsung dang thugs rdo rje'i bdag nyid| ma lus mi lus lus pa med pa'i choz thams cad kyi rang bzhin gcig dang du ma <C 5> med pa'i bdag nyid chen po'i ngang las| g.yo ba'i rtsol ba dang nam par rtog pa mi mnga' bzhin du| sngon gyi smon lam dang thugs6 rje chen po lhun gys grub pa'i shugs dang shes rab chen po'i stobs kyi| chos kyi dbyings mam par dag par gyur pa'i dbang dang| gdul bya bya lus kyi dkar po'i las kyi bag chags kyi rgyu las| sku gsung <G 2b> thugs kyi sprul pa sna tshogs pa gdul bya so so'i ngo ga7 la snang ba ni|

dper na lha'i rgyal po dbang sgyur gyi gnas man chad nas| 'dzam bu'i gling yan chad| mtho ris kyi8 gnas mams su| 'dod pa'i yon tan gyi rkyen char so sor 'bab pa yang| rgya mtsho'i lha'i dbang dang| gnas so so'i nam mkha'i dbang dang| 'gro ba so so'i las kyi rgyu las| char so sor 'bab pa 'grub pa yin yang| rgya mtsho'i lha yang 'di snyam du bdag gis ni gnas 'di <C 6> mams su so <F 9> so'i las kyi skal ba dang 'tsham' par sprin 'di lta bu bsdu bar bya'o|| glog <D 34> 'di lta bu dbyung bar bya'o|| 'brug 'di <B 8a> lta bu bsgrag par10 bya'o|| char 'di lta bu11 dbab par bya'o snyam du mi rtog nam par mi rtog| mngon par mi rtsol| nam mkha' yang 'di snyam du bdag gis 'gro ba 'di dag gi 'dod pa'i yon tan 'byung ba'i char 'bab pa'i go skabs dbye'o snyam du mi rtog| nam par mi rtog| mngon par mi rtsol| 'gro ba so so'i las kyi bag chags kyang 'di snyam du bdag gis12 las kyi skal

1 dra G
2 || C
3 || C
4 'gros G
5 bcu'i CDFG
6 zugs B. This mistake by the scribe or carver is obviously due to the graphical similarity between the letters tha and za.
7 ga conj., gang BCDFG. See nn. 53 & 69 in the edition of the Sangs sa chen mo.
8 gys G
9 'tshams CDF
10 pa B
11 bur CDF
12 ges B. This may be an error attributable to either the scribe or carver. It is possible, however, that the reading of e instead of i here was caused by damage to the woodblock, as a result of which the upper tip of the vowel i has broken off. This is supported by the fact that we have a second similar case on this side of the leaf and another two cases on the other side of it which obviously resulted from damage to the block. See below, nn. 15, 20 & 23.

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ba dang 'tsham\textsuperscript{13} pa'i char dbab par bya'o snyam du mi rtor| nram par mi rtor| mngon par mi rtsol bzhin du| rgyu rkyen 'tshogs pa'i dbang gis gnas de nrams su so so'i las kyi skal ba dang 'tsham\textsuperscript{14} pa'i sprin 'du ba nas char 'bab pa'i\textsuperscript{15} bar du so sor 'byung ba ni| lha'i dbang po dbang sgyur gyi gnas su gser\textsuperscript{<C 7>} gyi snying po lta bu'i sprin 'du ba dang| de bzhin du glog dang 'brug nrams kyang tha dad du 'byung zhing char yang rang bzhin tha dad du 'bab pa nas| 'dzam bu gling gi bar du yang de bzhin te| sprin mams kyang mu tig dmar po lta bu nas| ri nag po brtsegs pa lta\textsuperscript{<F 10>} bu'i bar dang| glog kyang gser kha sbyangs pa nas| rin po che anda\textsuperscript{16} myi| 'od 'phro ba lta bu'i bar dang| 'brug kyang ka la ping\textsuperscript{7} ka'i dbyangs lta bu dang| rol mo'i sgra\textsuperscript{<G 5a>} dbyangs lta bu nas| rgya mtsho 'khrug pa lta bu'i sgra'i bar dang| char yang rin\textsuperscript{<B 8b>} po che sna tshogs kyi char nas| mtshan cha'i char dang| chu dang ba'i char gyi bar du so so'i las kyi skal ba dang 'tsham\textsuperscript{18} par so so thad du 'byung ba bzhin du| II. gdul bya so so'i ngo ga\textsuperscript{19} la byin rlabs tha dad par snang zhung| dkon cog gsum gyi rang bzhin tha dad du mthong ba ni 'di lta ste|\textsuperscript{<C 8>} r

1. theg pa thun mong du grags pa'i sangs rgyas dkon cog| (1) de bzhin gshegs pa (2) dgra bcom pa (3) yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas (4) rig pa dang zhabs su ldan pa (5) bde bar gshegs pa (6) 'jig rten mkhyen pa (7) skyes bu 'dul ba kha lo sgyur ba (8) bla na med pa (9) lha dang mi nrams kyi ston pa zhes bya ba'i yon tan gyi\textsuperscript{20} nram grangs kyi mtshan gyis brjod pa| nram par grol ba'i ye shes kyi sku dang bdag nyid rtsa ba'i sku dang 'phrul pas\textsuperscript{21} sprul pa'ai sku dang bcas pa| yang dag par rdzogs pa'ai sangs rgyas kyi rigs kyis bsdu| pa| rab tu byung ba'i\ textsuperscript{<F 11>} cha byad 'chang ba| skyes pa'i gzugs su bzhugs pa\textsuperscript{22} gtso bo gcig pu pa| 'mdzad pa yongs su rdzogs\textsuperscript{<D 35>} pa\textsuperscript{23} rgyud kyis bsdu| pa ni| sangs rgyas dkon cog go zhes 'dod do||

chos dkon cog kyang| dam pa'i chos thog mar dge ba| bar du dge ba|\textsuperscript{<C 9>} mtha' mar dge ba| don bzang po| tshig 'bru bzang po| ma 'dres pa| yongs\textsuperscript{<B 9a>} su dag pa| yongs su byang

\textsuperscript{13} 'tshams F
\textsuperscript{14} 'tshams CDF
\textsuperscript{15} pa'e B. See above, n. 12.
\textsuperscript{16} andal B
\textsuperscript{17} bing B
\textsuperscript{18} 'tshams CF
\textsuperscript{19} ga cong., gang BCDFG. See nn. 53 & 69 in the edition of the Sangs sa chen mo.
\textsuperscript{20} The second vertical stroke of the letter ga is missing in B, apparently due to damage to the woodblock.
\textsuperscript{21} pas cong., pa BCDFG
\textsuperscript{22} ba B
\textsuperscript{23} mdzad pa yongs su rdzogs pa cong., mdzad pa yongs su rdzogs\textsuperscript{a} pa dang| yongs su rdzogs pa'i BCDFG. \textsuperscript{a} The middle horizontal stroke of the letter dza is missing in B, apparently due to damage to the woodblock. See also the translation, n. 15.
The Discussion in the dKon cog 'grel

ba| bcom ldan 'das kyis chos 'dul ba la legs par gsungs pa| lam dang bcas pa| mya ngan las 'das pa dang bcas pa ni| chos dkon cog ces 'dod do||

dge 'dun la yang 'phags pa'i dge 'dun legs par zhugs pa| rigs24 par zhugs pa| drang por zhugs pa| lta ba dang dad pa mi phyed pa| mchod gnas kyi dpal gyi25 zhing| bkur ba'i 'os| phyag<3b> gi gnas| skyes bu zung bzhi dang gang zag ya brgyad kyis bs dus pa zhes 'dod do||

2. theg pa chen po thun mong ma yin pa'i gzhung las grags pa ni| sangs rgyas dkon cog yon tan gyi mtshan gong du smos pa lta bus <F 12> brjod pa| ye shes bzhi dang chos kyi dbyings mam par dag pa'i dbang gis chos <C 10> Inga'i bdag nyid longs spyod rdzogs pa dang| 'phrul pas26 sprul pa'i sku dang bcas pa de bzhin gshegs pa zhes bya ba dang| sangs rgyas zhes bya ba dang| bde bar gshegs pa zhes bya bas bs dus pa 'khor los27 sgyur ba'i rgyal po'i cha byad dang| rab tu byung ba'i cha byad 'chang ba| skyes pa'i gzugs su bzhugs pa| gtso bo gcig pu pa dang| gtso bo 'du ma28 pa sangs rgyas kyi zhing chen po dang| chung ngu29 rgyud kyis bs dus pa ni| sangs rgyas dkon cog ces <B 90> 'dod do||

chos dkon cog kyang ji skad smos pa dang| theg pa chen po'i gzhung dang lam dang mya ngan las 'das pa dang bcas pa'o zhes 'dod do||

'phags pa'i dge 'dun yang| nyan thos kyi dge 'dun dang| byang chub sems dpa'i dge 'dun dang bcas pa'o zhes 'dod do||

3. gzhan yang gsang ba bla na med pa'i theg pa thun mong du grags <C 11> pa'i sangs rgyas dkon cog| ji skad smos pa'i yon tan gyi mtshan gyis brjod pa| ye shes Inga dang sku gsum mam bzhi'i bdag nyid chos nyid dag pa dang| nam par 'phrul pa dang| <F 13> byin gyis brlabs pa'i lha dang bcas pa| de bzhin gshegs pa dang| padma20 dang| rdo rje'i rigs gsum gyis bs dus pa longs spyod rdzogs pa dang sprul pa dang zhi ba dang khro bo'i cha byad 'chang ba rig31 snags dang gsang snags kyi gzugs su bzhugs pa| gtso bo dang 'khor dang gcig dang du ma dang| rtsa <D 36> ba'i dkyil 'khor dang snying po'i dkyil 'khor la sogs pa'i bye brag gis dkyil 'khor <G 4a> che chung mams su yongs su dag pa chen po'i lha32 rgyud du gtogs pa ni sangs rgyas dkon cog ces 'dod do||

24 rig CF
25 om. BDG
26 pa BD
27 lo G. Although los is the common form, it cannot be ruled out that lo was the original reading. Cf. the Sangs sa chen mo, §II.2.B, which has 'khor lo'i bsgyur ba, which in turn seems to have been deliberately emended in B to 'khor lo bs gyur ba.
28 dum C
29 ngu conj., ngu'i BCDFG.
30 pad ma G
31 rigs G
32 lta CG

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chos dkon cog kyang ji skad smos pa'ang| gsang ba bla na med pa'i gzhung dang lam dang <C 12> bcas pa'ø zhes 'dod do||

'phags <B 10a> pa'i dge 'dun yang nyan thos kyi dge 'dun dang| byang chub sems dpa'i dge 'dun dang| rig pa 'dzin pa'i dge 'dun dang bcas pa'o zhes 'dod do||

4. gzhan yang rnal 'byor gyi rgyud kyi gzhung las grags pa'i sangs rgyas dkon cog gong33 du smos pa'ì yon tan gyi mtshan gyis brjod pa| ye shes lnga dang sku34 gsum dang bzh'i| mtshan nyid chos nyid dag pa dang| rnam par 'phrul pa35 dang| byin gyis brlabs pa'i dbang gis <C 14> rang bzhin khyad par can dang| khyad par can ma yin pa'i lha dang bcas pa| de bzhin gshegs pa rnam dang| de dag gi rigs dang| rdo rje dang padma36 dang nor bu'i rigs kyi dbang gis rigs 'bzh'i 'am37 lngas bs dus pa longs spyod rdzogs pa dang| sprul pa dang zhi ba dang khro bo'i cha byad 'chang ba| snying po dang phyag rgya dang gsang sngags dang rig38 sngags kyi <C 13> gzugs su bzhugs pa| gtso bo dang 'khor dang gcig dang du ma la39| rtsa ba'i dkyil 'khor chen po dang| dam tshig dang| chos dang las kyi dkyil 'khor dang| phyag rgya bzh'i pa dang gcig pa la sog pa'i bye brag gis dkyil 'khor chen po dang chung ngu rnam su yongs su dag pa chen po'ì40 lha rgyud gu gtogs pa ni sangs rgyas dkon cog ces 'dod do||

chos dang dge <B 10b> 'dun gyi tshul yang gsang ba spyi'i tshul bzhin no||

5. gzhan yang rnal 'byor chen po'i tshul la41 grags pa'i sangs rgyas dkon cog| de bzhin gshegs pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das longs spyod chen po42 phyogs bcu dus bzh'i| de bzhin gshegs pa thams <G 4b> cad kyi sku dang gsung dang thugs rdo43 rje'i bdag nyid ma lus <F 18> mi lus lus pa med pa thams cad dang so so ma yin tha mi dad dbyer med <C 14> pa'i rang bzhin gcig dang du ma med pa'i bdag nyid chen po zhes bya ba la sog pa yon tan gyi mtshan gyis brjod pa ye shes chen po drug dang sku lnga'i bdag nyid| zag pa dang bcas pa zag pa med pa'i chos thams cad dbyer med par sku gsung

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33 gang D. This is obviously a typographical error.
34 om. CDFG
35 ba G
36 pad ma G
37 bzh'i'am BCF
38 rigs G
39 pa BG
40 B has space (marked with tshegs) for approximately three letters or ligatures between the syllables po'i and lha resulting from an apparent correction of the woodblock.
41 om. G. This is probably a scribal error due to the final consonant la in the preceding word tshul.
42 || G
43 om. G. This error is obviously due to the graphical similarity between the syllable rdo and the following syllable rje, and the fact that the resulting reading thugs rje itself makes sense.
The Discussion in the dKon cog 'grel

thugs rdo rje lta bu'i dkyil 'khor du ye <D 37> nas lhun gyis grub pa'i lha dang bcas pa| sku gsung thugs yon tan 'phrin44 las lnga dang| byang chub sems kyi dbang gis rigs45 drug gis bsdus pa longs spyod rdzogs pa dang sprul pa dang zhi ba dang khro bo'i cha byad 'chang ba| thabs dang shes rab gnyis su med pa'i rgyan chen po46 la rol pa chen po'i gzugs su bzhugs pa| gts'o bo dang 'khor dang gcig dang du ma dang sku dang gnas dang spyod yul lta bu la| chos thams cad ye na mgon par rdzogs pa sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin dbyer med cing <S 11a> gcig dang du ma med pa'i bdag nyid kyi47 dus bzhugs mnyam pa nyid kyi dbyings na sku gsung thugs lhun stug po bkod pa'i rgyan nyid du bzhugs pa ni sangs rgyas dkon cog go zhes 'dod do|

chos dang <F 16> dge 'dun gyi tshul yang thun mong du bstan pa ni| ji ltar gsang ba spyi'i skabs su bshad pa bzhin no| thun mong ma yin par bstan pa ni| ji ltar sangs rgyas kyi rang bzhin gang yin pa de nyid chos te| dge 'dun gyi rang bzhin yang de nyid do| des na rgyu dang 'bras bu dang lam dang sgrub pa rnam dbyer med pa ni kun tu bzang po byang chub sems zhes bya ste| de nyid bcom Idan 'das rdo rje 'chang chen po rdo rje sems dpa| gdod ma na sangs rgyas pa| chos kyi snying po| mal 'byor thams cad kyi| gts'o bo zhes grags pa gang yin pa'o| rnam par 'phrul pa'i dbang du bshad na| sangs <G 5b> rgyas chos dang dge 'dun du sprul pa'ang yod de| <C 16> 'di ltar phyag rgyar sprul pa dang| gang zag tu sprul pa rnam s| chos dge 'dun dang sangs rgyas su 'phrul pa'ang yod de| sa dang pha rol tu phyin pa dang gzungs rnam sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa47 legs par sprul pa lta bu'o| dge 'dun chos dang sangs rgyas su 'phrul pa yang48 yod de| slob pa'i sa la gnas <B 11b> dag gis sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa bsgrub pa lta bu'o|

'di lta bu la sog pa dag bstan pa ni| theg pa rchen po <F 17> thun mong ma yin pa'i gzhung bzung nas sangs rgyas rnam kyi 'phrul pa gdul bya la ji ltar snang ba'i tshul theg pa so so'i gzhung las grags pa mdo tsam bstan pa'o|

III. de ltar sku gsung thugs kyi byin rlabs spyir snang ba de dag gi gzhi yang rnam pa bzhi ste| de yang gzhung kha ci ni rtsod gzi med pa'o| kha ci ci ni rtsod gzi dang bcas pa'o| de la gzi rnam pa bzhi ni| <C 17>

1. dang po de bzhin <D 38> gshegs pa nyid la gong du bstan pa'i tshul lnga po de dag ji ltar smos pa bzhin du Idan pa yin te| gdul bya'i dbang la snang ba tsam yang ma yin no zhes 'dod do|

2. gnyis pa ni de bzhin gshegs pa nyid la ni lus dang gnas dang spyod yul du snang ba ni mi 'mnga' 'o49| de dag ji lta ba dang ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes don dam pa dang kun rdzob kyi bden pa'i yul can rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dang dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes mnga'o zhes 'dod do|

44 phrin CF
45 ris G
46 pe B. Probably damage to the woodblock resulted in the right wing of the vowel o breaking off.
47 dpar D
48 pa'ang B
49 mnga'o D
3. gsum pa ni de bzhin gshegs pa la dag pa ’jig rten pa’i ye shes kyang mi mnga’o zhes ’dod do||

4.A. de la rtsod gzhi med pa ni

(a) theg pa chung ngu’i gzhung ’dzin pa rnams ni byang chub sems dpa’ srid pa tha ma pa’i50 <F 18> lus <B 12a> ni bdag tu lta ba dang sred51 pas bskyed pa’i so so’i skye bo’i lus yin la| des srid pa de la mngon par rdzogs par <C 18> sangs rgyas nas| <D 5b> sangs rgyas kyi mzdad pa bsgrubs te mya ngan las ’da’ bar ’dod pas| ’di yang ji ltar bstan pa bzhin ’dod pa la rtsod gzhi med do||

(b) theg pa chen po52 nyan thos dang thun mong gi tshul ltar na yang| byang chub sems dpa’53 srid pa tha ma pa’i lus ni smon lam gis bsgrubs pa’i lus yin te| lus ’di lta bu len pa’i rgyu yang bdag tu lta ba’i bag chags dang| gnas kyi sa’i ma rig pas bskyed par ’dod pa yin pas| ji skad bstan pa de bzhin sangs rgyas nyid la Idan par ’dod pa’i phyir rtsod gzhi med do||

(c) rnal ’byor spyod54 pa rnam pa dang bcas par smra ba’i gzhung ltar na yang| phyi rol gyi don sems las gud na med na yang sems nyid lus dang gnas dang spyod yul lta bu’i rnam par snang bar skye ba yin la| mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas nas kyang nyon mongs pa dang| mi shes pa <C 19> dang| mngon par zhen pa dang bral ba’i ye shes gzugs kyi sku dang| sangs rgyas kyi zhi dang| de’i rgyan la sogs <D 19> par yod par snang bar ’dod pas ’di la rtsod pa’i gzhi med do||

(d) rnal ’byor spyod55 pa rnam pa med par smra ba’i gzhung ltar na yang kham56 <B 12b> gsum pa’i sems kyang don ltar snang ba’i rnam pa dang bral ba yin la| snang ba ni sems de nyid dang gzan du brjod du med pa’i bag chags te| mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa’i dus na bag chags yongs su dag nas ye shes rnam pa dang bral ba skad56 cig ma’i mthshan nyid rgyun ’brel bar57 skye bar <D 39> ’dod cing| gzugs kyi sku la sogs pa’i yon tan gyi khyad par yang sngon gyi smon lam dang thugs rje chen po’i shugs dang| ye shes chen po’i dbang gis dpag bsam gyi shing dang yid bzhin gyi nor bu rin po che ltar ’gro ba’i don du yon tan <C 20> ’byung bar ’dod pas ’di la’ang rtsod pa’i gzhi med do||
The Discussion in the dKon cog 'grel

B. rtsod⁵⁸ gzhi dang bcas pa ni

gang dag <G 6a> dbu ma⁵⁹ dang gsang sngags kyi gzhung 'dzin pa rnam s don dam par chos thams cad spros pa zhi bar yang 'dod cing kun rdzob tsam du sgyu ma'i mtsshan nyid mi 'gog par yang smra bas tshul 'di dag la brten nas| sangs rgyas⁶⁰ sa'i gnas <F 20> lugs kyang tha dad par smra ste| de'i gzhi la'ang tha dad par smra'ol de la mdo sde dbu ma pa'i tshul ni kun rdzob nyan thos mdo sde pa dang tshul mthun par smra bas 'di'i rtsod pa ni mi dpyad do||

(a) mal 'byor spyod⁶¹ pa'i dbu ma dang| gsang sngags kyi⁶² tshul 'dzin pa dag gi rtsod gzhi dang po ni| de bzhin gshegs pa rnam s la ni <B ¹³a> tshul lnga'i skabs su ji skad bstan pa bzhin du nyid kyi rgyud la ldan pa yin te| de la kha cig ni gsang sngags la grags pa'i gzhung bzung nas| sangs rgyas la <C ¹³> chos 'di ltar ldan par smra ste| ji skad du|

-bde ba kun gyi mchog rig⁶³ mnyam med ye shes gzugs||
-ddag chags zhe sdang gti mug nga rgyal phrag dog min||
-ddag nyid kun tu rtag gnas srid gsum mchog gsum gzugs||
-dpal ldan tshad med bde ba'i rgya mtshe mi 'gyur bas||
-bde chen bde skyed rdo rje sms dpa' mgon po la||
-’gro ba gsum gyi gnyen gyur⁶⁴ phyogs pas phyag btsal⁶⁵ te||

zhes gsungs pa lta bur| sangs rgyas rnam s ni kun tu bzang po byang chub kyi sms rdo rje rdo rje 'chang chen po rdo rje sms dpa' zhes bya ba ye shes <F ²¹> lnga dang drug gi bdag nyid can| rtag tu da ltar byung ba lta bu'i sku mnga ba longs spyod rdzogs pa chen po 'phrul pa thams cad kyi 'byung gnas| rtag tu yongs su dag pa'i zhih khams na mi 'gyur bar bzhugs pa⁶⁶| btsun mo'i 'khor dpag <C ²²> tu med pa'i dkyil 'khor na bde ba thams cad dang mi 'bral bar bzhugs te| bde ba de yang 'di ltar (i) chos kyi dbyings rtoqs pa de kho na <G ⁶b> nyid kyi don la dmigs pa'i ting nge 'dzin gyi dbang gis mnyes pa'i bde <B ¹³b> ba dang| (ii) yid bde ba dang ldan pa| (iii) gzugs la sog s pa'i phyi rol gyh 'dod pa'i bde ba dang| (iv) gzugs⁶⁷ <D ⁴₀> dang mnyam par sbyor ba'i bde ba la sog s te 'di ltar (i) bde ba mchog dang ldan pa| (ii) bde ba rag pa med pa dang ldan pa| (iii) bde ba tshad med pa dang ldan pa| (iv) bde ba mi 'gyur ba dang ldan pa| (v) bde ba chen po dang ldan pa| (vi)

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⁵⁸ add. pa'i B
⁵⁹ add. pa B
⁶⁰ add. kyi CF
⁶¹ dpyod BG
⁶² pa'i B
⁶³ rig conj., rigs BCDFG
⁶⁴ gyur conj., 'gyur BCDFG
⁶⁵ 'tsal CF
⁶⁶ om. D
⁶⁷ gzungs B. Apparently this is a deliberate emendation of gzugs to gzungs in the sense of gzungs ma (dhārāṇī), which is indeed the actual meaning of the term gzugs in this context.
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gdul bya thams cad la bde ba skyed pa dang ldan pa ste| de bas na bde ba chen po pa pa zhes bya’o zhes nges par ’dzin no|]

(a.1) kha cig ni pha rol tu phyin pa’i gzhung bzung nas btsun mo’i ’khor la longs spyod pa ni smad pa’i gnas yin pas| sangs rgyas nams la mi <F 22> mnga’ yi <C 23> bsod nams kyi tshogs tshad med pa las bsgrubs pa’i rnam pa smin pa’i sku ye shes chen po’i rten gyi bdag nyid yongs su dag pa’i zhing dang bcas pa nyid rdzogs par longs spyod pa’i bde ba dang bcas pa| ji Itar ’dul69 ba’i ’khor gyi dkyil ’khor na bzhugs pa ’di lta bu nges par ’dzin to]

’di gnyis ka yang kun rdzob tu rnal ’byor spyod70 pa ba71 rnam pa bden par smra ba’i gzhung la brten pa yin te’ di Itar sems can gyi dus na yang phyi rol gyi yul la skye ba’i don gyi gzung ’dzin med kyang sms sems nyid gzung ba dang ’dzin pa lta bu’i rnam par skye ba yod pas| de bzhin du gnas ’gyur ba’i72 gnas skabs na yang <B 14a> ye shes rang snang ba’i sku dang zhing gi bkod pa dag yod do snyam du rtor go||

(b) rtsod gzhi gnyis pa ni| de bzhin gshegs pa rnam la gzugs kyi sku dag ni mi mnga’ ste| ’on kyang don <C 24> dam pa dang kun rdzob kyi bden pa’i yul can gyi ye shes rnam pa gnyis mnga’ zhes rtor go|| kha cig ni ye shes des kyang ting nge ’dzin gyi bde ba’i bdag nyid nyams su myong ngo zhes kyang ’dod do|| tshul <D 7a> <di rnal ’byor spyod73 pa ba74 rnam pa brdzun par smra ba’i <F 25> gzhung la brten pa yin te’ di Itar sems can gyi dus na yang sms gzung ’dzin gyi rnam par skye’i75 de Itar bden pa ni ma yin no| sangs rgyas kyi gnas skabs na yang dag pa ’jig rten pa’i ye shes mnga’ ye shes rnam pa brdzun par smra ba’i yul can gyi ye shes rnam pa’i yul can gyi ye shes nges par ’dzin te| tshul ’di yang rnal ’byor spyod76 pa ba77 rnam pa med pa la brten pa yin no||

de Itar rtsod gzh'i gsum po ’di dag ni| chos thams cad la bden pa gnyis kyi msthan nyid du ’dzin pa las ’byung ba yin te’ di Itar sems <D 41> can gyi dus na snang ba’i dngos po rnam

68 to B 69 gdul B 70 dpyod BG 71 pa BG 72 pa’i CDF 73 dpyod BG 74 pa CBG 75 skye’i conj., skye ba’i BCDFG. It is quite certain that the genitive here should be understood as an adversative particle; the more common formulation would be perhaps skye ba yin gyi. This is evident, in particular, from the following sentence, which has a similar structure—this time, however, with yang as the adversative particle. It seems that the particle ba was added by a scribe who was not familiar with this form. 76 dpyod BG 77 pa BCG
kyang bden pa gnyis kyi mtshan nyid tsam yin <B 14b> la| sangs rgyas kyi sa na yang bden pa gnyis kyi tshul dang ldan no zhes rtog go

5. bzhi pa ni| sangs rgyas kyi sa ni chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa tsam ste| sku dang ye shes kyi bkod pa thams cad ni sgon gyi smon lam dang| thugs rje chen po'ii shugs dang| chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag <F 24> par gyur pa'i dbang dang| gdul bya rnam kyi dkar po'i bag chags kyi sa bon gyi dbang las byung ba rten med par 'byung ste| dper na drang srong smon lam grub pas ma 'ongs pa'i dus na smon lam btab pa rnam| drang srong shi nas dus yun ring mo 'das kyang smon lam grub par gyur pa la rten 78 mi dgos pa bzhin no zhes 'dod do||

   tshul 'di yang bden <C 26> pa rnam pa gnyis dbyer med par 'dod pa'i gzhung thun mong ma yin pa la brten pa ste| 'di ltar sangs rgyas kyi sa la rten med par ma zad sms can gyi dus na yang dngos po sna tshogs su snang ba la rten med de| 'di ltar dri ma med par 79 grags pas 80 bstan pa'i <G 7b> mdo las| sngug bsngal gyi rgyu yang dag 'pa ma yin 81 pa'i kun tu rtog pa yin par bstan pa'i skabs su dris pa|

   yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa'i rgyu gang yin| smras pa 'jig tshogs la lta ba'o||
   smras pa de'i rgyu gang yin| smras pa 'dod chags so||
   smras pa 'dod chags kyi rgyu gang yin| smras pa phyin <38 15> ci log gi 'du shes so||
   smras pa de'i rgyu gang yin| rten med pa'oi| smras pa rten med pa'i rgyu gang yin| smras pa btsun pa rten med pa la <F 25> ni rgyu'i gnas med do

   zhes gsungs pa lta bu ste| 'khor ba'i chos kyang rten med par 'byung ngo|| sngud <C 27> pa tshigs su bcad pa las kyang|

   mkha' la rlungr brten de la 'chu yi 82 phung po brten||
   de la sa chen 'di brten de la 'gro ba brten||
   sms can las la spyod pa'i rgyu ni de 'dra zhes||
   nam mkha' gang la gnas zhes don 'di brtag 84 par gyis 85||

   zhes gsungs pa lta bu'o|| de la rten med pa de las 'byung ba ni dngos po yod pa'ang ma yin te| ji ltar smig sgyu' 86 chu sngo ba dang g.yo ba dag la rten gyi 'byung ba chen po med par ma zad kyi| ji ltar snang ba de lta bu'i rang gi ngo bo 'byung ba'ang yod pa ma yin te long ba rnam kyi mun pa'ang de dang 'dra ste| de bas na 'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa'i chos sna tshogs su snang ba'ang rten dang <D 42> rang gi ngo bo gnyis ka ma

* * *

78 brten CDFG
79 pas G
80 pa G
81 om. G
82 chu'i G
83 G has only one shad in the first three lines of the verse.
84 brtags BCDF
85 gyis conj., bgyi CDFG. The reading gyis is grammatically preferable and is supported by the canonical version.
86 rgyu'i CDF
Rong-zom-pa's Discourses on Buddhology

grub pa'i phyir| sems can dang sangs rgyas gnyis ka'ang rang bzhin mnyam par smra'o| 'di ni theg pa chen po thun mong ma yin pa'i tshul yin <C28> te|

de yang mtshan nyid thun mong ma yin pa ni

(a) chos thams cad rnam par bsgrub pa nye bar gzhag87 pa'i mtshan nyid tsam du <B 15b>| 'dod do|| (i) gang bden pa gnyis kyi mtshan nyid rnam par <F 26> gzhag88 pa dang| (ii) ngo bo nyid gsum gyi mtshan nyid rnam par gzhag pa dang| (iii) phyi dang nang gi skye mched rnam pa gnyis kyi mtshan nyid rnam par gzhag pa dang| (iv) brdzus te 'byung ba'i sems <G 8a> can gang zag gi mtshan nyid rnam par gzhag pa 'di rnam89 snang 'ba tsam90 la91 brten nas92 rnam par bsgrub pa nye bar gzhag93 pa'i mtshan nyid tsam yin par bye brag med do zhes 'dod do||

(b) de bzhin du rnam par grol ba yang thun mong ma yin te| nyon mongs pa'i rang bzhin nyid rnam par grol ba'o||

(c) rnam par grol ba'i ye shes mthong ba yang thun mong ma yin te| khams gsum pa'i sems dang sems las byung ba nyid rang byung gi ye shes so||

(d) zhing94 <C 29> dang spyod yul yang thun mong ma yin te| bcom ldan 'das shäkya thub pa'i zhing kham gongs su ma dag pa 'di nyid kyang gongs su dag pa'i zhing kham so| de yang ji ltar zhe na dper na yi dwags95 kyi sbya klung la rnan khrag96 tu mthong ba de'i tshel| chos can sa phyogs nam mkha' dang bka' pa'i phyogs shig97 na bbran zhing gsher ba'i bya ba byed pa dang ni gong ba'i thun mong gi snang ba ma log par mtsbungs mod kyi |'on kyang snang ba de dag pa dang ma dag pa'i tshul so sor snang ba ste| 'di ltar (i) yi dwags98 rnam la99 ni shin tu ma dag par snang ste <B 16a> bbran pa'i <F 27> bya ba yang byed la| dbang po'i rgyun nyams par byed pa'i dri dang ro yang snang ngo| (ii) mi la sogz pa la ni cung zad ma dag par snang ste bbran pa'i bya ba yang byed la dbang po'i rgyun

87 bzhag B
88 bzhag B
89 add. la CG
90 These syllables are covered by a black blot in G; only the suffix m of the word tsam is visible.
91 nas D
92 la DG
93 bzhag B
94 zheng B. The reading e instead of i is probably a typographical error or a result of damage to the woodblock. Cf. above nn. 12 & 15.
95 dags G
96 om. D
97 zhig BG
98 dags G
99 om. G

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The Discussion in the *dKon cog 'grel*

‘la yang\(^{100}\) mi gnod do\(^{101}\) (iii) zhing dag pa na gnas pa’i gang zag rnams la ni dag \(^{<C\,30}>\) par snang ste brlan pa’i bya ba yang\(^{102}\) byed la dbang po’i rgyun rgyas par byed pa’i dri dang ro dang yon tan phun sum tshogs pa dang ldan pa’i bdud rtsi\(^{103}\) btung bar yang snang la| kha zas kyi bya ba yang\(^{104}\) byed cing dam pa’i chos rgyud la skyed par yang byed de sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa yang byed do\(^{11}\) (iv) chos la dbang thob pa’i rig\(^{105}\) ’dzin dag la ni shin tu dag par snang ste chu de nyid yum mà ma ki’i skur \(^{<D\,43}>\) snang ste| \(^{106}\) de la reg pas brlan pas \(^{<O\,8b}>\) tshim pa’i bya ba yang byed la rol pa’i bde ba yang nyams su myong bar\(^{107}\) byed cing| rnam par mi rtog pa’i ting nge ’dzin rgyud la skyed par yang byed do\(|\) (v) bag la nyal yongs su zad pa rnams la ni snang ba thams cad dang bral te spros pa thams cad yongs su zhi bar yang ’gyur rol| de bas na ’di dag kyang rnam par sgrub pa nye bar gzhag\(^{108}\) pa’i mtshan nyid tsam yin te| rang rang gi bya ba byed par snang \(^{<C\,31}>\) ba tsam yang mi bslu \(^{<F\,28}>\) la| gzu\(^{109}\) bo’i blos gzhal\(^{109}\) na snang ba de dag kyang ji ltar ji ltar dag pa de lta de ltar bden par shes par bya’o| (e) don ’di dag la ’jug pa’i gang zag \(^{<B\,16b}>\) gi blo yang thun mong ma yin te| kha cig ni nyan thos chen po rnams kyi bslab lugs bzhin rjes su slob bo| kha cig ni sa chen po la gnas pa’i byang chub sens dpa’ rnams kyi rjes su slob bo| kha cig ni sangs rgyas rnams kyi rjes su slob ste| ’di ltar gnyis su med pa’i tshul la ’jug par byed do| de dag la sogs pa\(^{110}\) thun mong ma yin pa’i chos rnams la slob cing sbyong ba tshul bzhi pa yin par shes par bya’o| de dag ni dkon cog gi tshul lnga bstan pa’i gzhì’i rnam pa bzhi brjod pa yin no|
Works by Indian Authors

1. Proponents of the Purified Dharmadhātu as the Sole Consituent of Buddhahood

A. *Madhyamaka-Siṃha’s Dṛṣṭivibhāga

Dṛṣṭivibhāga (P, fol. 62a4–8; D, fol. 5b3–6; S, vol. 63, pp. 876.15–877.5):

yang ye shes rgyun du byung ba yod pa nyid dpyad de ci ’das pa dang da ltar med pa’i ma ’ongs pa yod par thos sam| gang yang gnas gyur pa’i sems nyid med na de gnas gyur pa’i ye shes ji ltar yod par ’gyur| shes pa rnam pa dang bcas pa dag ’dod pa ltar dmigs pa rnam par dag pa dang ldan pa’i ye shes yod na

nor pa thams cad spangs nas kyang||
gal te mtshan ma² skyer zin na|³
de ni⁴ nor ba yang dag ste|⁵
rab rib yongs su ma dag bzhin|⁶

zhes gsungs pa ’di yang legs par bzlog⁶ shig| shes pa rnam pa med par smra ba dag gi ltar na ye shes bag chags ma lus pa dang bral ba rang rig pa tsam yod par ’dod na yang skyon gong du bstan pa las ma ’das pa de lta bu’i ye shes des dgos pa ni ci zhig yod|⁷ de med pas na ci zhig nyams⁸| de bas na dgos pa med pa rtog pa tsam ’di dag rab tu spongs shig| ’di ni rnam par rig pa tsam du ’dod pa dag gi mngon par zhen pa spang ba’i rim pa mdor bstan pa’o||

1 om. PD

2 ma conj., mar PD. Compare the reading ma in three of the four canonical versions provided in a note to the translation.

3 | PD. The first two lines have been apparently taken to be prose by the editors.

4 ni conj., na PD. The original reading de na (i.e. ‘there’) does not seem to make much sense here. Compare the reading de nyid of the canonical versions provided in a note to the translation.

5 P has a single shad for both the third and fourth lines of verse.

6 zlog D

7 || P

8 nyams conj., mnyam PD
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**Dṛṣṭivibhāga** (P, fols. 62a8–63a5; D, fols. 5b6–6b2; S, vol. 63, pp. 877.6–879.1):

‘dir theg pa chen po dbu ma pa dag la rnam par brtsad pa

(1) gang ye shes nyid med par smra na gang khyed kyi mya ngan las\(^9\) ’das pa nyid ni gang zhig

(2) sems can gyi don dag ji ltar byed ce na

‘di la bshad pa

(1) dper na til mar dang sdog bu dag yod kyi bar du mar me’i rgyun ’bar bar ’gyur la| sdog bu dang til mar de dag zad pa’i dus na mar me de’i rgyun kun tu chad par\(^10\) ’gyur la| de bzhin du sdog bu dang til mar lta bu’i ma rig pa zad pa na| rnam par shes pa mar me lta bu ‘di rang gi ngang gis rgyun chad pa’i skra’i cha brgyar bshags\(^11\) pa’i tshad tsam med par rnam pa thams cad du kun nas rgyun chad par ’gyur ro| de bas na gnas gyur pa’i ye shes gang nas kyang byung ba med pa’o| de nas kun nas stong pa nyid gang yin pa de nyid mya ngan las’ ’das par gzung ngo|| de ltar na chad par cis mi ’gyur bshad pa| dpe bshad kyis nyon cig

skyes\(^12\) bu zhir gis nam mkha’ med do zhes brjod na| de chad par smos\(^13\) pa yin nam| de bzhin du kho bo yang nam mkha’\(^14\) dang ’dra ba’i sems ye nas med pa nyid med par ma shes pa dag la med do zhes’ ’gog gi| gang yod pa rnam par bcad nas med par byed pa ni| kho bo cag dbu ma pa ma yin pas chad par ji ltar ’gyur| (2) gang sems can gyi don byed pa\(^15\) ji ltar ’gyur zhes dris pa\(^16\) de yang bshad de sa bcu pa’i dbang phyug tu gyur pa rgyal ba’i thugs kyi sras smon lam thams cad la dbang thob pa des sems can gyi khams la bglas nas gang dag gis gis sems can thams cad kyi don nye bar bsgrub\(^17\) pa ni chos kyi sku ma thob par mi nus so zhes bsams nas skad cig ma gcig gis chos kyi sku mngon sum du byed nas ’di lta bu’i smon lam byin gyis rlob stel skad cig ma gang la bdag mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa nas bzung\(^18\) stel ’khor ba yongs su ’drongs\(^19\) kyi bar du sems can rnam la skal ba ji lta ba bzhin du sku sna tshogs dang gsung sna tshogs dag rgyun mi ’chad par nam mkha’i khams kyi mthas klas par ’byung bar gyur cig| byang chub sems dpa| rnam la longs spyod rdzogs pa’i\(^20\) sku yid du ’ong ba ’byung bar gyur cig ces de lta bu’i smon lam byin gyis brlabs nas stong pa nyid ston ka’i nyi ma phyed kyi nam mkha’i dkyil lta bu mthshan rdul thams cad rab tu zhi ba’i bdag nyid du ’gyur te| de nyid la mya ngan las’ ’das par smra’o||

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9 lam P  
10 bar P  
11 gshags D  
12 skyed P  
13 smos conj., mos PD  
14 mkhar P  
15 par D  
16 ma P  
17 sgrub D  
18 gzung P  
19 drongs D  
20 ba’i P
Works by Indian Authors

gang yang ye shes dang stobs dang| dbang la sogs pa dang| rang rig pa la sogs pa
bshad pa ni skrag par21 'gyur ba spang ba' phyir bstan pa kho na yin no|| de bas na smon
lam la dbang ba'i smon lam lam gyi stobs dang| skal pa dang Idan pa'i 'gro ba'i dbang gis sku
dang| gsung dang| cho 'phrul sna tshogs 'byung gi| dngos po nyid du cung zad tsam yang
med pa kha na yin te22| gal te dngos por yod na de'i tshe 'dus byas kyi bdag nyid thams
cad pa dag dang| khyad par ci 'dra bar 'gyur| de bas na kha cig yid bzhin gyi nor bu dang| mkha' lding grub pa'i mchod23 sdong lta bu'o zhes dper 'dzin pa dag ni tshul thams cad
pa'i24 dper mi rung ste| de dag ltar 'di dngos por 'gyur pa25 ni ma yin pa'i phyir ro||

Drṣṭivibhāga (P, fol. 63a5–b2; D, fol. 6b3–7; S, vol. 63, p. 879.2–17):
'dir yang smras pa| de ltar thams cad med pa 'yin na26| skye ba dang| gnas pa dang| 'jig pa
dag ji ltar blta bar bya|
dris pa dang po nyid gang 'byung|
smars pa skye ba'o||
bshad pa' gang gnas pa dang 'jig pa dang bral ba'i skye ba ji ltar 'byung| gal te
gnas pa dang| 'jig pa dang bral ba'i skye ba 'dod na de'i tshe ri bong gi rwa'i skye ba su
yis27 bzlog par 'gyur|
yang smras pa| dang po nyid du gnas pa 'byung ngo||
bshad pa| 'skye ba dang| 'jig pa dang bral ba'i gna' pa ji ltar 'byung| gal te skye
ba dang 'jig pa dang bral ba'i gnas pa 'dod na| de'i tshe28 dang po ma skyes pa yin la|
gnyis pa ni29 skye ba stel| gsum pa ni 'jig pa yin pas gnas pa med pa kha na'o||
yang smras pa| 'jig pa'o||
bshad pa| gal te skye ba dang gnas pa dang|30 bral ba'i 'jig pa 'dod na de'i tshe
mo gsham31 gyi bu 'jig par 'gyur ba su yis32 bzlog par 'gyur|
gal te skye ba dang gnas pa dang 'jig pa dag dus gcig kho nar yod do zhe na|
bshad pa ci mun pa dang snang ba dag33 go gcig34 car kho nar yod dam| skye ba
dang35 gnas pa dang| 'jig pa dag phan tshun 'gal ba yin pas cig car ga la 'byung| de bas na
skye ba dang gnas pa dang 'jig pa dag med pa kha na'o||

21 bar P
22 de P
23 chos D
24 ba P
25 ba P
26 yin na conj., yin PD. P seems to have a swastika beneath the word yin, which may denote an
insertion, presumably of the particle na. I was not able, however, to locate a corresponding
marginal notation in the copy used by me.
27 sus D
28 om. P
29 na P
30 om. D
31 gsham conj., sham P, gshams D
32 sus D

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Drṣṭividhāga (P, fols. 63b2–64a7; D, fols. 6b7–7b3; S, vol. 63, pp. 879.17–881.11):

‘dir smas pa| de ltar thams cad med pa kho na bas sbyin pa la sogs pa spyod pa don med par ’gyur zhing| thob par bya ba byang chub ces bya ba yang med pa nyid yin par ’gyur la| des na rnam pa thams cad du rnam par bzhag36 pa ’khrugs37 par ’gyur ro||

’dir bshad pa| skyes bu ’ga| zhig gi mig mig ser gyi nad kyiis btab nas des nam mkha’ la skra shad ’dzings pa dang| bal gyi ’khor lo dang| rab rib dag mthong la| skyes bu de yang mkhas pa’i rang bzhin can yin pas ’di snyam du bdag gis dmigs pa ’di dag yod pa ma yin te| mig nad kyiis mig38 nyams pas ’di ltar snang ba’o snyam na ci skyes bu des log par rtog pa yin nam| skyes bu de log par snang ba’i mig nad de bsal ba la ’bad par mi byed dam| de bzhin du med par snang ba’i rtog pa ’byung ba mig ser gyi nad lta bu’i log par rtog pa bsal nas| nad dang bral ba’i mig lta bu mtshan ma’i nad thams cad dang bral ba| nam mkha’ ltar dngos po med pa’i dngos po’i bdag nyid du ’gyur ba ’di la nyes pa yod dam| sgyu ma’i skyes bu la sbyin pa byin pa la sogs pa dang| des kyang byang chub ces bya ba thob pa ltar bdag cag rnam sgyin pa la sogs pa dang| de nams kyi ’bras bu de ltar ’dod de| de bas na mam par bzhag39 pa ’khrugs pa ’jig rten rgyang ’phen40 pa ltar bdag cag ni ’di mi smra’o| de bas na thog ma nyid du sngon nyid du mkhas41 pa’i rigs pa dag gis brtags pa’i bdag med pa nyid du nges par bya zhing| chos tsam la gnas par bya’o| de nas phung po la sogs pa’ichos tsam gang yin pa de yang ja skad bshad pa’i rigs pa mi sngan bar byas la| sams tsam nyid la gnas par bya’o| de bzhin du yang rigs pa’i tshogs rgya chen pos sems snang ba med par byas la| mtha’ thams cad las rgal ba| mtshan ma’i rdul nye bar zhi ba| bdag dang sems can dang srog la sogs pa ma yin pa| rang rig pa’i rlabs med pa ’di lta bu la blta bar ste| dper na skyes bu ji srid du mig sman lan mang du btse42 pa de srid du mig gi nad nyams par ’gyur ro| de bzhin du ji srid du med par rtog pa de srid du rtog pa’i nad nyams par yang ’gyur la| ring43 zhig na med do|44 zhes rtog pa nyid kyang spong bar ’gyur ro| de dang mthun pa nyid du|

gang tshe gang zhig med do zhes||45
brtags pa’i dngos po mi dmigs pa||

33 ngag P
34 cig D
35 om. P
36 gzhag D
37 ’khrugs P
38 mi P
39 gzhag D
40 phan P
41 mkhas conj., ’das DP. On this emendation, see the translation, n. 16.
42 bstan D
43 re P
44 om. D
45 PD omit the double shad in all four lines of verse and seem to treat this citation as prose rather than verse.

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due’i tsho cung zad md do zhes
rtog pa nyid kyang spong bar ’gyur

due bshad do

de bas na bag yod par ji skad du bshad pa’i chos rnams rab tu rtogs par ’gyur bar
bya ba’i phyir nan tan gyis rtog tu brtson par gyis shig| ’di ltar nye bar bstan pa gnang nas| bsdu ba’i tshigs su bcad pa ’di dag gsungs te|

bdag tu ’dzin pa bzlog pa’i phyir
phung po khams sogs bstan pa tsel
sens tsham la ni ram gnas nas
bskal chen rnams kyis de yang gzhom
’di dag thams cad sens tsham zhes
thub pa yis ni gang gsungs pa
byis rnams skra pa spang phyir tsel
de ni de nyid ma yin no

Dṛṣṭivibhāga (P, fol. 64a7–b2; D, fol. 7b3–5; S, vol. 63, p. 881.11–19):

due’i dag kyang slob ma’i tshogs la sgros so lta ba tha dad pa ram par phyi ba
mdor bsdu pa’i slob dpon dbu ma’i seng ge’i zhal sgna nas bshad pa’i rdzogs so| due ni pa’di tshen po dbu ma’i seng ge zhes bya bas tso ’di du’i dus su ji skad bshad pa rnams mkhas pa dag gis bzun stel gcig nas gcig tu bshad pa gtsan gyi man ngag ces
bya bar grags pa la slad kyi gzhung du bkod pa’o gcig nas gcig tu byung ba mngon par
brtson pa’i dge bskyen ta ra’i shrī mi tras byas rgya gar gyi mkhan po ta ro shrī mi tra
nyid dang| lo tshas ba dge slong chos kyi shes rab kyi zhus cing bsgyur te gtsan la phab
pa’o

46 nams P
47 kyis mdzad pa D
48 D
49 gzung P
50 ro D
51 add. pa D
52 tswa D
B. Mañjuśrīmitra’s *Bodhicittabhāvanānirdeśa*

*Bodhicittabhāvanānirdeśa* (P, fol. 64a3–b8; D, fols. 51b7–52b1; S, vol. 33, pp. 198.11–200.2; Bg, pp. 290.3–292.1):

(5.2.) rnam par byang\(^{53}\) ba ji\(^{54}\) lta bu yin pa brtag\(^{55}\) pa la\(^{56}\) yang gnyis te| (1) rnam par byang ba 'krul pa nyid la snang bar bstan pa dang| (2) snang ba de nyid kyang ma grub par bstan\(^{57}\) pa’o||

(5.2.1.) de la 'krul pa la rnam par byang ba\(^{58}\) snang ba gang gis bstan ce\(^{59}\) na| bder gshegs byang chub med phyir 'de yi\(^{60}\) rdzu 'phrul sgyu 'dra 'krul la snang||\(^{61}\)

zhes bya bas bstan te| bde bar gshegs pa’i sangs rgyas nyid kyang\(^{62}\) yang dag par ma grub pas| de'i 'rdzu 'phrul\(^{63}\) sgyu ma dang 'dra ba de\(^{64}\) 'krul pa rnam la snang bar mngon no\(^{65}\)||\(^{66}\) de lta bas na rdo rje gcod pa las kyang\(^{67}\) |

gang gis nga la gzugs su mthong||
gang gis nga la sgrar\(^{68}\) shes pa||
log par spong la\(^{69}\) zhugs pa ste||
skye bo de yis nga mi mthong||
'dren pa rnam\(^{70}\) ni chos kyi sku||
chos nyid du ni sangs rgyas blta’o\(^{71}\)||\(^{72}\)

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\(^{53}\) bya Bg

\(^{54}\) ci PD

\(^{55}\) brtags D, rtogs Bg

\(^{56}\) om. Bg

\(^{57}\) ston Bg

\(^{58}\) bar Bg

\(^{59}\) zhe D

\(^{60}\) de'i PBg

\(^{61}\) \textit{conj. throughout. D and P have a single shad for all lines of verse; Bg has no shad at all here, while for the remaining lines it has a single shad.}

\(^{62}\) om. D

\(^{63}\) The syllable rdzu and the prefix ‘ of the syllable 'phrul are found in Bg below the line of writing underneath the previous syllable de’i, obviously a result of some later correction of the text.

\(^{64}\) der PD

\(^{65}\) ro Bg

\(^{66}\) | Bg

\(^{67}\) om. D

\(^{68}\) dgrar Bg

\(^{69}\) ba Bg. *The canonical version of the Vajracchedikā* reads bar.

\(^{70}\) dag PD. *The canonical version of the Vajracchedikā, like Bg, reads rnam.*
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zhes 'byung ba ita bu’o||

(5.2.2.) rnam par byang ba'i73 snang ba ma grub par74 bstan75 pa yang nam pa

(5.2.2.1.) de la80 rnam81 par mi rtog pa’i ye shes ma77 grub par bstan pa dang|| (2) dag pa 'jig rten pa’i ye shes78 ma79 grub par bstan pa’o||

(1) marn par rni rtog pa'i ye shes rna77 grub par bstan pa

dangl

dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes

(2) dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes

·grub par bstim pa'ol!

(5.2.2.1.) de la80 rnam81 par mi rtog pa’i ye shes ji ltar ma grub ce82 na|

de bzhin dag pa’i83 ye shes de84 dag shin tu dge ba’i rgyun ngyid dang||

chos kyi dbyings nyid la ni85 de dag dmigs 'shing skye bar86 brtags87 pa yang88


71 ita’o Bg

72 P and Bg have only one shad at the end of all lines of verse except for line 6.

73 ba PD

74 pa Bg

75 ston P

76 add. pa Bg

77 kyang D

78 The word ye shes is repeated twice in Bg, an obvious case of dittography at the turn of a new page (the first ye shes is the last word on p. 290 and the second one is the first word on p. 291).

79 kyang D. Since the reading kyang instead of ma occurs twice in this sentence, it seems to be a deliberate ‘correction’ on the part of a scribe or editor who shared the common understanding that the two kinds of gnosis exist at the stage of a buddha.

80 ltar PD

81 Bg has space for approximately two letters or ligatures between the syllables nam and par—apparently due to a correction of the text on the block.

82 ces Bg

83 gi’i Bg

84 om. D

85 The syllable ni in Bg was added later: the letter na is found below the line of writing between the syllables la and de, and the vowel sign i is found above the line just before the e sign of the syllable de.

86 shin)l de dag skye bar PD. The line, which in the basic text and in the Bg version of the commentary reads chos kyi dbyings nyid la ni de dag dmigs shing skye bar brtags pa yang, is split into two parts in the canonical version of the commentary by a shad after the particle shing. Shing is then followed by the syllables de dag, which are not found in any of the versions of the basic text. This is probably a corruption that occurred during the process of the textual transmission. That the syllables de dag are likely a later addition to the canonical version is supported not only by the reading of Bg but also by the fact that they are not represented in the explanation by the commentator, and also by the fact that with the addition of the shad and the syllables de dag the line is not only split into two but also has seventeen syllables instead of fifteen. It is hard to believe that the commentator would not have spotted this misquotation.

87 btags P

88 See the corresponding note in the translation for a comparison with the basic text.
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

sems ji ltar ma grub pa\(^89\) de\(^90\) bzhin du ye shes kyang ma grub ste| ci lta zhe na| sangs rgyas\(^91\) kyi\(^92\) spros pa’i ‘mtshan ma\(^93\) thams cad\(^94\) dag pa’i nam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes de dag nifd ges ba’i rtshad med pa’i rgyun dang| chos kyi dbyings ma nor ba la damgs shing rtog\(^95\) pa las skye bar sems shing brtags pa yang\(^96\)

\[\text{rdo rje gnas ‘med phyir}^{97}\text{ na mnyam gnas rang bzhin ‘drar}^{98}, \text{gyur}^{99}\text{ dang}^{100}\]

rdo rje zhes bya ba yang\(^101\) nam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes kyi ‘rgyu ‘am\(^102\) gnas ni sems can gyi sems yin nal gong du sems nyid ma grub cing med ‘par bstan\(^103\) pa’i phyir\(^104\) ‘rgyu med par\(^105\) ‘bras bu yang mi ‘byung bas\(^106\) gnyi\(^107\) ga yang ma grub pa’i\(^108\) tshul du mnyam par gnas pas\(^109\) sems ma grub pa dang ‘dra ba\(^110\) ye shes kyang ma grub par gyur

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\(^{89}\) om. P
\(^{90}\) da Bg
\(^{91}\) add. mams Bg
\(^{92}\) kyis PD
\(^{93}\) bag chags Bg
\(^{94}\) add. yang PD. \textit{On the reading of this sentence, see the corresponding note in the translation.}
\(^{95}\) rtogs Bg
\(^{96}\) om. D
\(^{97}\) med pa’i phyir PD. \textit{The reading med phyir is found in the basic text. Possibly the syllable pa’i was inserted in the canonical version because the line originally had only thirteen syllables. With it, though, the line would have fifteen syllables (like the remaining lines of verse) only if pa’i is read as two syllables. This, however, is not in conformity with the reading of similar cases in verses cited in this work.}
\(^{98}\) ‘dra P
\(^{99}\) gyur DBg
\(^{100}\) This line has only thirteen (in the canonical version fourteen) syllables instead of the fifteen in the remaining verses. This is also the case in the basic text. Concerning this and the difference in the readings of this line as compared with the basic text, see the corresponding note in the translation.
\(^{101}\) om. Bg
\(^{102}\) rgyu’am D
\(^{103}\) om. Bg
\(^{104}\) om. PD
\(^{105}\) pa dang PD
\(^{106}\) om. PD
\(^{107}\) gnyis Bg
\(^{108}\) pas P
\(^{109}\) P \textit{adds here the phrase sems ma grub pa’i tshul du mnyam par gnas pas}, apparently a faulty repetition of the first part of the following sentence and the last part of the previous one.
Works by Indian Authors

pa yin no∥ 'rnam par shes pa pas\textsuperscript{111} rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes skad cig ma\textsuperscript{112} don dam par yod do\textsuperscript{113} zhes\textsuperscript{114} zer ba yang mi 'grub\textsuperscript{115} ste\textsuperscript{116} ci'i phyir zhe na∥

choks dbyings rdo rje rtse mo de dag phyogs nyid med pas skad cig min∥

chos kyi\textsuperscript{117} dbyings rtog\textsuperscript{118} pa'i rnam par\textsuperscript{119} mi rtog\textsuperscript{120} pa'i\textsuperscript{121} ye shes rdo rje dang 'dra ba mchog gam\textsuperscript{122} rtse mor gyur pa de dag ni\textsuperscript{123} ci\textsuperscript{124} lta bu'i phyogs nyid du yang dmigs su med 'pa la\textsuperscript{125} skad cig ma zhes ji skad\textsuperscript{126} bya∥

(5.2.2.2.) dag pa\textsuperscript{127} 'jig rten pa'i ye shes 'ci'i phyir\textsuperscript{128} ma grub ce na∥

dag pa'i dge rtsa gzugs brnyan med pas\textsuperscript{129} 'jig rten ye shes yod mi\textsuperscript{130} gyur\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{110} bas P

\textsuperscript{111} rnam par shes pas PD. \textit{One would expect here} rnam par shes par smra bas \textit{or at least} rnam par shes pa pas, for contextually the meaning should be \textit{Vijñānavāda} or \textit{Vijñānavādin}. While Bg \textit{indeed reads} rnam par shes pa pas, the syllable \textit{pa} is placed between the syllables \textit{shes} and \textit{pas} below the line of writing, and is obviously a later insertion.

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{add.} | Bg

\textsuperscript{113} || P

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{om.} PD

\textsuperscript{115} \textit{add.} pa Bg

\textsuperscript{116} \textit{om.} P

\textsuperscript{117} \textit{om.} PD

\textsuperscript{118} rtogs Bg

\textsuperscript{119} \textit{add.} rdo rje dang 'dra ba mchog gam| P, rdo rje 'dra ba mchog gam| D. \textit{The reading in Bg, which omits this phrase, is preferable for both semantical and syntactical reasons. The occurrence of this phrase in the canonical versions is apparently the result of dittoigraphy.}

\textsuperscript{120} rtogs Bg

\textsuperscript{121} \textit{add.} | Bg

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{add.} | PD

\textsuperscript{123} \textit{om.} Bg

\textsuperscript{124} ji Bg

\textsuperscript{125} pa'ang Bg

\textsuperscript{126} \textit{add.} du Bg

\textsuperscript{127} pa'i Bg

\textsuperscript{128} ji Itar Bg

\textsuperscript{129} pa PD. \textit{The reading pas found in Bg is supported by the reading of the basic text.}

\textsuperscript{130} min P

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{For the difference in the reading of this line as compared with the basic text, see the corresponding note in the translation.}
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

'khor gsum yongs su dag pa'i dge ba'i rtsa ba ni
gzugs brnyan dang 'dra ste med pas| de la brten pas
pa'i dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes kyang yod par ga la 'gyur

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132 om. DBg
133 rten PBg
134 yang PD
135 Bg has here two double shads.
C. Atiśa’s *Ekāsmṛtyupadeśa*

*Ekāsmṛtyupadeśa* (P, fol. 105a1–4; D, fol. 95a3–6; S, vol. 64, pp. 280.15–281.2): 136

Apart from slight differences in the first sentence, the text in Sherburne 2000, p. 416 reads identically. The reading in the Jo bo rje’i gsung ’bum (pp. 808.20–809.6) is also very similar, but towards the end, between zhes gsungs pa dang| brgyud pa’i man ngag ’di yin no|| it adds an entire passage not found in the canonical versions.

Having the two negations in the phrase *mi dmigs pa’i yul med* (i.e. "there is no object which is not perceived") would make no sense here, especially in the context of the following citations from the Suvikrāntavikramiparipṛcchā and the Bodhicittavivaraṇa. The corrupt reading *mi* instead of *ni* can be explained graphically. Moreover, the reading *ni* is confirmed by the reading of the version found in the Jo bo rje’i gsung ’bum (p. 808.20).

136 Apart from slight differences in the first sentence, the text in Sherburne 2000, p. 416 reads identically. The reading in the Jo bo rje’i gsung ’bum (pp. 808.20–809.6) is also very similar, but towards the end, between zhes gsungs pa dang| brgyud pa’i man ngag ’di yin no||, it adds an entire passage not found in the canonical versions.

138 *pa* P

139 *kyis* P

140 *nas* P. The reading *na* is supported by the version found in the Jo bo rje’i gsung ’bum (pp. 808.22).

141 Note that the version found in the Jo bo rje’i gsung ’bum (pp. 808.23–809.1) reads ma gzigs gzigs par *mi ’gyur* tel||.
D. Candraharpāda’s *Ratnamālā*

*Ratnamālā* (P, fols. 69b4–70a3; D, fols. 71b2–72a1; S, vol. 63, pp. 1046.10–1047.9):

''khor ba dang ni mya ngan 'das
tha dad yod pa ma 142 yin te||
''khor ba yongs su shes pa ni||
de nyid mya ngan 'das shes bya||
''khor ba spangs nas gzhan du ni||
mya ngan 'das pa cung zad med||
'di la bsal ba cung zad med||
bsnan par bya ba cung zad med||
yang dag nyid la yang dag lta||
yang dag mthong nas rnam par gro||
stong pa nyid kyi me yis ni||
'gro ba'i bud shing bsregs tsam na||
de bzhin nyid kyi me yang 'gag||
dper na shing gnyis drud pa las||
me 'byung de nyid bsregs pa bzhin||
ye shes me yis rnam rtog gi||
bud shing bsregs nas de nyid zhi||
mya ngan 'das pa dngos po min||
dngos med ma yin gnyi ga min||
gnyis med la ni de mi gnas||
bsam med thogs med spros med lus||
sems can don byed med ce na||
bsod nams tshogs dang snying rje dang||
sgon gyi smon lam shugs kyi ni||
rgya mtsho chu 'dra rgyal ba rnam||
bya'o byed do mi mnga' yang||
sems can don la ro gcig 'gyur||
dper na shing mkhan mkhas pa yis||
bzo byas bya ba byed pa bzhin||
yid bzhin nor bu dpag bsam shing||
bum pa bzang bzhin sku gsum gyi||
sems can don byed rtag tu 'byung||
dper na mchod sdong bsgrubs pas ni||
de 'das yun ring lon gyur kyang||
nad la stogs 143 pa zhi ba lta||
zag med dbyings nas sangs rgyas rnam||
gcig min du ma ma yin te||
mkha' lta lus ni med pa'i phyir||
du ma yang ni ma yin no||
sgon gyi lus rjes 'brangs pa'i phyir||
qcig pa yang ni ma yin no

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142 mi P
143 sogs P
phrin las rnams ni mdzad pa na||
mkha’ la nyi ma stong shar ba’i||
‘od zer gcig tu ‘dres pa ltar||
sems can don la ro gcig ’gyur||
E. Bhavya's *Madhyamakapradīpa*

*Madhyamakapradīpa* (P, fol. 356a1–6; D, fol. 282a–b; S, vol. 57, pp. 1544.18–1545.9):

\[\text{gang gi tshe sa mi g.yo ba la gnas pa'i} \text{ tshe| mtshan ma med pa}^{144} \text{lun gyis grub pas gzugs kyi lus med de| lus grub pa'i rgyu spangs 'pas so}^{145}||

gal te de ltar na can yongs su smin par byed pa dang| sans rgyas kyi chos yongs su rdzogs par yang ji ltar 'gyur zhe na|

\[\text{'di ltar sa mi g.yo ba de ni gzhon nu'i sa pa}^{146} \text{ yin pas rnam pa thams cad du mngal g.yi dri mas mi g.yo mi gos te| rgyu bzhi dang rkyen gcig gis yid kyi lus rdzus}^{147} \text{ te skye ba des ghan g.yi don byed pa dang| sans rgyas kyi chos yongs su rdzogs par byed pa ni rjes las thob pa dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes kyiis so|| gang gi tshe sangs rgyas kyi sa rdo rje lta bu'i ting ne| 'dzin brnyes par gyur nas ni rjes las thob pa}^{148} \text{ mi mnga' ste| rnal 'byor g.yi dbang phyug chen po dus rtag tu mnyam par bzhag}^{149} \text{ cing rang 'byung gi}^{150} \text{ ye shes chos nyid byang chub kyi sems} \text{ chen po la} 'gyur ba mi mnga' zhing 'byung ba dang 'jug pa med pas so||

*Madhyamakapradīpa* (P, fol. 356a7–b5; D, fol. 282b5–283a2; S, vol. 57, pp. 1545.12–1546.5):

de bas na yun ring por pha rol tu phyin pa Inga dang| bsdu ba'i dngos po bzhi la sogs pa'i chos 'khor gsum yongs su dag pas sbyangs pa dang| ma rig pa'i gnyid 'thug^{151} \text{ po la legs par sad pa dang| chos thams cad kyi rang dang spyi'i mtshan nyid skad cig ma gcig la skye ba med par bzod pa dang| phung po lhag ma med pa'i dbyings su yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa na dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes ga la 'gyur}^{152} \text{ gzhan yang sems zhes bya ba'i rdzas kyi ngo bor yod cing grub par gyur na lta| de yongs su dag pa'i gnas su gyur pa'i ye shes kyang yod par 'gyur ba zhig nai} \text{ sems gdod nas rdzas kyi ngo bor med} \text{ par grub pas rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes zhes bya ba ji lta bu zhig yod par 'gyur| de med pas de'i}

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144 par P  
145 pa'o D  
146 om. D  
147 brdzus P  
148 pa conj., par PD  
149 gzhag D  
150 byang chub kyi P. *The reading rang byung g.yi ye shes is supported by another occurrence of the same phrase in a later passage* (P, fol. 358b6–8; D, fol. 284b3–4; S, vol. 57, p. 1550.1–4): "He who has awakened from the sleep of ignorance, who cognizes the whole sphere of objects of knowledge in one moment in virtue of the great self-occurring gnosis, which is true reality, that is, bodhicitta, and who is perfectly awakened, is a buddha." (ma rig pa'i gnyid las sangs shing chos nyid byang chub kyi sems rang byung [P 'byung| gi ye shes chen pos shes bya'i dkyil 'khor thams cad skad cig ma gcig la mkhyen zhing mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa ni sangs rgyas yin tel).  
151 mthug D  
152 'grub D
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gzugs bnyan\textsuperscript{153} du yod par gyur pa'i dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes zhes bya ba yang yod par mi 'gyur ro\| gal te sangs rgyas la de mnga' ba yin na 'khrul pa dang bcas par 'gyur ba dang| mnyam pa nyid la mnyam par bzhag\textsuperscript{154} pa ma yin par 'gyur ba dang| chos kyi sku'i bdag nyid ma yin par 'gyur ba dang| de bzhin gshegs pa la skye ba dang 'gag pa yod par 'gyur ro\|

\textit{Madhyamakapradipa} (P, fol. 357b3–4; D, fol. 283b4–5; S, vol. 57, p. 1547.17–21):

sangs rgyas rnams kyis\textsuperscript{155} dus kun tu\textsuperscript{156}||
de bzhin nyid la mnyam par bzhag\textsuperscript{157}||
brjod du med pa'i gnas skabs der||
'jug pa'am\textsuperscript{158} ldog pa yod pa min||
ye shes nyid kyang ji lta bu||
mnyam bzhag\textsuperscript{159} rjes thob ga la zhig||
gal te de la de mnga' na||
sar zhugs rnams kyang khyad ci yod||

\textsuperscript{153} bstan D
\textsuperscript{154} gzhag D
\textsuperscript{155} The ergative \textit{kyis} here is unusual. One would expect rather something like \textit{ni}. See similar citations above in the translation of the \textit{Sangs sa chen mo}, n. 30.
\textsuperscript{156} du D
\textsuperscript{157} gzhag P
\textsuperscript{158} pa'ang D
\textsuperscript{159} gzhag D

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2. Proponents of the Existence of the Purified Dharmadhātu and Non-Conceptual Gnosis

A. Nāgamitra’s Kāyatrayāvatāramukha and Jñānacandra’s commentary, the Kāyatrayāvrtti

Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 2a6–b1; D, fol. 2a1–2; S, vol. 63, p. 4.2–4):

dri med de bzhin nyid dang nil
mi rtog ye shes ma gtogs par
sangs rgyas nams kyi chos gzhan nil
gang yang yod pa ma yin no 6

Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 2b3–6; D, fol. 2a4–b1; S, vol. 63, p. 4.9–15):

rnam par rtog la kun nyon mongs
chos kun ji ltar gdags pa ltar
de bzhin rnam par mi rtog la
sangs rgyaschos kun rnam par bzhag 10
gang phyir rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyaschos
de las gzhanyod ma yin rnam

de yi dbang bi bya ba yis thub pa che la rab tu gdags 11
de phyir kholan de bzhag pa
bye brag rnam psna tshogs bstan
nam mkhar sna tshogs 'jog pa bzhin
rab tu ngo mtshar che zhes bya

Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fols. 2b7–3a3; D, fol. 2b2–3; S, vol. 63, pp. 4.19–5.1):

ji ltar mya ngan 'das pa yi sangs rgyas nams kyi byin rlabs 'dod
de ltar rnam rtog med nams kyil dbang gis bya ba nams kyang 'dod 15
de ltar rnam rtog med mod kyil sngar mngon dus byas dbang gis na

\[160\] la conj., pa PD. *This conjecture is supported by the reading of the commentary.*

\[161\] gzhag D

\[162\] gi conj., gis PD. *This conjecture has been made on the basis of the commentary.*

\[163\] namkhar P

\[164\] yis P

\[165\] gis conj., gi PD

\[166\] mngan D
Works by Indian Authors

Kāytrayavyrtti (P, fol. 13b3–14a2; D, fol. 12a6–b5; S, vol. 63, pp. 30.13–31.11):

ye shes rnam par mi rtog pa yin na spros pa’i dngos po’i yul tha snyad ’di dag thams cad mi rung ba ma yin nam/ ji ltar de ram par mi rtog par ’gyur zhing/ rnam par rtog pa’i dngos po’i rgyur yang ji ltar ’gyur te/ rnam par rtog par gyur na ni de ltar ’gyur na/ rnam par rtog pa med pa la ji ltar ’thad par ’gyur zhe na/ de’i phyir

[ji ltar mya ngan ’das pa yi]\n}sangs rgyas rnam kyis\^[169] byin rlabs ’dod\]
de ltar rnam rtog med rnam kyis\]
dbang gis\^[170] bya ba rnam kyang ’dod\^[15]

ces bya ba smos te’i na re zhig ma’ongs pa’i gdul ba’i skye bo la phan gdags pa’i phyir phung po lhag ma med pa’i mya ngan las’ ’das pa’i gnas skabs brnyes pa rnam dang/’ od srung chen po la sogs pa’i yes pa’i rna’i gyis brels de dang de\^[171] da dung du yang gnas par dmigs par yang ji ltar ’gyur gal te de dag gis sngon de’i rjes la thob pa’i dag pa’i rten pa’i shes pa mngon du gyur pas’i yang thos’i dam skabs la mla’ongs pa’i byin gyis brels dmigs so zhe na mthungs te’i byang chub sems dpa’ spyad pa’i spyod pa’i dus na smon lam gyi sa bon btan pa yongs su smin pa’i shugs kha nas\^[172] de bzhin gsheds pa’i rnam par mi rtog pa spros pa med pa’i dbyings la bzhugs pa rnam kyis dbang gis mdzad pa rnam kyang snang ngo’i de ni’i di skad du’i nyan thos la sogs pa’i dge’i la las chung ngu dang ldan pa rnam kyis mthu yang khyad par du’i phags na’i bsod nam dang ye shes la tshogs mang po bsal pa ni mi nyung bar bsgrubs pa’i sngas rgyas rnam kyis mthu lta smos kyang ci’i dzog zhes de skad bstan par ’gyur ro’i

Kāytrayavyrtti (P, fol. 14a2–7; D, fol. 12b5–13a2; S, vol. 63, pp. 31.11–32.4):

don ’di yang dpe gzhag las brten te bsgrub pa’i phyir

[de ltar rnam rtog med mod kyis\]
sngar mngon\^[173] ’dus byas dbang gis na\]
ji ltar ’gog las ldang ’gyur ba\]
 ’di yang de bzhin ’gyur ba yin\^[16]\]

zhes bya ba smos te’i gog pa la snyoms par’ jug pa po rnam ting nge’i dzin gyi gnas skabs na yid la rnam par rtog pa’i yongs su g.yo ba’i byed pa chung ngu’i ga’i yang med

\^[167] pa P
\^[168] de D
\^[169] The ergative particle kyis in the citation of the verse here is certainly an error, since both the basic text and the corresponding portion of the commentary read kyi.
\^[170] gis conj., gi PD
\^[171] da P
\^[172] nas conj., na PD
\^[173] sngon P
mod kyi 'on kyang sngar mngon par 'dus byas pa'i dbang gis 'gog pa la snyoms par 'jug par 'dod pa'i gnas skabs na'i sgra thos ma thag tu bdag nyid ting nge 'dzin 'di las ldang ngo snyam du sngar gandi la sogs pa'i sgra mtshan mar byed de| de ltar blo la mtshan mar gzung nas snyoms par 'jug la| mnyam par bzhag pa'i gnas skabs na rnam par rtog pa kun tu rgyu ba med mod kyi| 'on kyang sngar 'dus byas pa'i dbang gis ldang ba de bzhin du 'di yang gdul ba'i sems can gyi khamgs mngon par gdon pa'i phyir| bcom ldan 'das rams rtog pa mi manga' yang rnam par rtog pa'i yul tha snyad thams cad kyi rgyu 'di nyid du 'gyur ro zhes de skad bstan to

*Kāyatrāyaṇavatāramukha (P, fols. 2b8–3a3; D, fol. 2b3–5; S, vol. 63, p. 5.1–9):*

dper na nyi ma la sogs pa||
ram rtog med pa rnam dsbang gis||
chu dang bcas pa'i snod rnam su||
gzugs brnyan 'byung bar 'jig rten snang||17

de bzhin mi rtog dbag nyid kyi||174
sangs rgyas rams kyi dsbang gis na||
skal ldan rnam la sku gnyis kyi||
gzugs brnyan rtog tu 'byung bar 'gyur||18

chu dang snod kyi bye brag gis||
nam mkha' yi ni gzugs brnyan yang||
tha dad par ni snang mod kyi||
nam mkha' la ni tha dad med||19
de bzhin gzugs brnyan tha dad pa||
'dul ba'i bsam pa'i bye brag gis||
chos kyi sku las snang mod kyi||
de ni tha dad 'gyur ba med||20

*Kāyatrāyaṇavṛtti (P, fols. 14a7–15a5; D, fol. 13a2–b7; S, vol. 63, pp. 32.4–34.5):*

yang na sngar mngon par 'dus byas pa'i dbang gis ldang ba skye bo thams cad la mngon sum du ma gyur pa'i 'di lta re zhig zhog la khyod nyi ma la ltos shig 'di ltar rnam par mi rtog mod kyi 'on kyang gzugs brnyan 'byung la| chu dang bcas pa'i snod tha dad pa'i nang du so sor snang ste| de'i phyir|

[dper na nyi ma la sogs pa][
ram rtog med pa rnam175 dbang gis][
chu dang bcas pa'i snod rnam su][
gzugs brnyan 'byung bar 'jig rten snang][176 17]
zhes bya ba smos te| rnam par rtog pa yod pa'i phyir rnam par bzhag pa ni ma yin gyi rnam par177 mi rtog bzhin du snang ngo|| zhes de skad ston to|| nyi la sogs pa zhes bya ba ni mdo sde las nyi ma dang nor bu la sogs pa'i dpe 'byung ba rnam s te| de'i dbang du

174 om. P
175 rnam P
176 | P
177 pa P

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byas nas de skad brjod do| de ni 'di skad du nyi ma ni 'di snyam du chu dang bcas pa'i
snod de lta bur ni bdag gi gzugs brnyan 'byung bar gyur cig| de lta bur 'byung bar ma
gyur cig snyam du rnam par mi rtog mod kyi| de lta rnam par mi rtog bzhin du rten cing
'breli bar 'byung ba shin tu sna tshogs pas de lta 'gyur ro| de bzhin du ye shes phul du
byung ba'i mthus 'di yang ci'i phyir mi 'byung zhes 'di yang de skad bstan par 'gyur te|
'bstan pa de'i phyir\178

[de bzhin mi rtog bdag nyid kyi]||
sangs rgyas rnams kyi dbang gis na||
skal ldan rnams la sku gnyis kyi||
gzugs brnyan rtag tu 'byung bar 'gyur[18]||

zhes bya ba smos te| 'dir rnam par rtog pa'am| rnam par mi rtog pas ci zhig bya stel ye
shes kyi mthu 'di 'dra ba des skal pa ji lta ba bzhin du sprul pa dang longs spyod rdzogs
pa zhes bya ba'i gzugs brnyan gnyis 'byung ste 'di ni mdor bstan pa'o| dper na bai
durya'i gzhla brgya byin gyi gzugs brnyan 'byung bar snang na| de mthong bas gdul ba'i
rang bzhin can gyi srog chags rnams| bdag cag kyang 'di 'dra bar gyur kyang ci ma rung
zhes dge ba'i rtsa de btag bskyed do| de bzhin du dge ba'i rtsa ba ji lta ba bzhin du 'gro ba
la bde bar gshegs pa rnams kyi gzugs brnyan 'di gnyis 'byung ste| de mthong nas sngs
rgyas kyi mthus gdul ba'i sems can rnams sam| gzhan sems can gyi rnam pas gdul ba
rnams dge ba'i rtsa ba khyad par du 'phags pa dag sogz par byed do| |
ji lta de lta 'dod na chos kyi sku tha dad pa ma yin pa gzugs brnyan tha dad pa
ngyis kyi gryur ji lta 'gyur| gryu tha dad pa ma yin na gryu las byung ba tha dad par yang
ji lta 'gyur zhe na|
de bstan pa de'i phyir|

dper na chu snod bye brag gis||
nam mkha' yi ni gzugs brnyan dag||
tha dad par ni snang mod kyi||
nam mkha' la ni tha dad med[19]||

ces bya ba smos te| dper na nam mkha' ni tha dad pa'i ngo bo ma yin yang chu'i bye brag
dang| snod kyi bye brag gis ring po dang thung ngu dang ser po la sogz pa'i bye brag tu
tha dad pa'i ngo bo lta bur snang ngo| ji ste sa la chu dang snod kyi bye brag de med na
ni ji lta shin tu bsgrims te dmigs par 'dod kyang dmigs par mi 'gyur la| nam mkhar yang
ji lta yang tha dad par 'gyur ba med do| de bzhin du chos kyi sku la yang rang gi ngo bos
gzugs brnyan tha dad pa'i ngo bo nyid med pa 'di yang tha dad pa'i ngo bo nyid lta bu
snang mod kyi| 'on kyang de la ni tha dad pa shin tu cha phra ba ci yang med de de'i
phyir|

[de bzhin gzugs brnyan tha dad pa]|  
godu ba'i bsam pa'i bye brag gis||
chos kyi sku las snang mod kyi||
de ni tha dad 'gyur ba med[20]|

ces bya ba smos so| rnam par mi rtog bzhin du sems can mtha' dag gi don mdzad pa
bsgrubs pa 'di yod do zhes nges par khas blang bar bya'o||

\178 The reading bstan pa de'i phyir is problematic. One would expect instead either de bstan pa'i
phyir or simply de'i phyir, both of which readings are found elsewhere in the text.
Kāyatrayāvatsāramukha (P, fol. 3a3–4; D, fol. 2b5–6; S, vol. 63, p. 5.9–11):

gal te mi rtog de lta min||
'sangs rgyas179 gzhan don mdzad mi 'gyur||
de lta na ni kun mkhyen nyid||
ma grub pas na gzhan don nyams|| 21

Kāyatrayavṛtti (P, fols. 15a5–b2; D, fols. 13b7–14a4; S, vol. 63, p. 34.5–19):

de ltar ma yin na (1) (a) khams dang 'gro ba dang skye gnas kyi bye brag gis gdul ba’i ris kyi rnam pa mtha’ yas pa dang| ’das pa dang| ma ’ongs pa dang| da ltar dang| phra ba dang| rags pa dang| rtag pa dang| mi rtag pa dang| yod pa dang| med pa la sogs rnam par rtog pa sna tshogs kyiis tha dad pa’i shes pa’i tshogs dang| (b) shes bya thams cad180 ye shes cig car ’jug par ji ltar ’gyur| (2) shes bya cig car yongs su ma bcad na yang thams cad mkhyen pa zhes ji skad du bya| (3) dus tha dad par gdul ba rnam s kyis bsam pa la gzigs par yang ji ltar ’gyur te|181
de bstan pa’i phyir|

[gal te mi rtog de ltar min||
sangs rgyas gzhan don mdzad mi ’gyur| 21ab]
zhes bya ba smos te| de ni ’di skad du| de ltar khas mi len na| bcom ldan ’das de bzhin gshegs pa sa gsum gyi bla ma’i thams cad mkhyen pa nyid kyang bsal182 bar ’gyur la| gzhan gyi don kyang nyams par brjod par ’gyur| ’zhes bstan par ’gyur ro183 zhes de skad bstan par ’gyur te184| de’i phyir|
de lta na ni kun mkhyen nyid||
ma grub pas ni gzhan don nyams|| 21cd]
zhes bya ba smos te|

Kāyatrayāvatsāramukha (P, fol. 5a3–6; D, fol. 4b1–4; S, vol. 63, p. 9.9–18):
rnam par mi rtog ye shes kyis||
ngo bo nyid gsum yongs shes dang||

179 The syllables sangs rgyas are illegible in P due to smudging of the ink.

180 Syntactically one would expect here the particle la or perhaps kyi.

181 om. PD

182 bsal conj., btsal P, brtsal D

183 There is a gap in P between the syllables ro and zhes equivalent to approximately two letters or ligatures. This may be the result of a correction of the woodblock involving the removal of a double shad (which is commonly followed by a space) after the syllable ro.

184 One wonders whether the phrase zhes bstan par 'gyur ro zhes de skad bstan par 'gyur contains corruption in the form of dittography.
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spong dang mngon du mdzad de’i phyir

de yi 'bras bu sku thob bo 66
rnam par mi rtog ye shes las
ye shes dam pa gzhan med do
shes bya chos kyi dbyings las kyang
shes bya dam pa gzhan med do 67
shes bya ye shes bye brag gis
gnyis ni gnyis su med gyur pa\textsuperscript{185}
rnam rtog rnam par mi rtog pa

de lta bu ni gnas gyur yin 68
dri med ye shes rnam mi rtog
blta bar bya ste rnam rtog bzhin
de bzhin nyid kyi bdag nyid ni
gnyis med chos blta\textsuperscript{186} gnyis bzhin no 69
ji ltar chos dbyings gnyis med pas
rab tu phye bar ’dod pa ltar
de bzhin mi rtog ye shes kyang
gnyis mi gzig pas rab tu phye 70

\textit{Kāyatrayavṛtti} (P, fols. 25b4–26b2; D, fols. 23a6–24a2; S, vol. 63, pp. 56.15–58.9):

ngo bo nyid gsum po dag yongs su shes pa dang spangs pa dang dag pas sku gsum po
dag ’thob bo zhes bya ba bstan na ’bras bu ’di rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes kyi yin par ji
skad du brjod ce na
de’i phyir

[rnam par mi rtog ye shes kyis]
go bo nyid gsum yongs mkhyan dang
spong dang mngon du mdzad de’i phyir 66a–c

zhes bya ba smos te ] rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes ’jig rten las ’das pas ngo bo nyid
de dag cig car du yongs su mkhyan rab tu spong mngon sum du mdzad de lta bas na sku
gsum po dag ni de’i ’bras bu nyid du brjod pas de’i phyir

[de’i ’bras bu sku thob bo] (66d)

zhes bya ba smos so

ci’i phyir de rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes kyi ’bras bur brjod kyi gzhan gyi ni
ma yin zhe na
de’i phyir

[rnam par mi rtog ye shes las]
ye shes dam pa gzhan med do
shes bya chos kyi dbyings las kyang
shes bya dam pa gzhan med do 67

\textsuperscript{185} ba P

\textsuperscript{186} blta \textit{conj.}, lta PD. \textit{This conjecture is supported by the reading of the commentary.}

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zhes bya ba smos te| de ni ’di skad du shes pa gzhan ni sgro btags pa’i dngos po la gnas pa’i phyir dang| shes bya gzhan ni log pa’i rnam par zhugs pa’i phyir de gnyis la ma gtogs pa’i bden pa gzhan med do zhes pa bstan par ’gyur ro||
   - chos kyi sku ni gnas gyur pas rab tu phye ba’o zhes brjod pa de ji lta bu zhe na| de’i phyir|

[gnyis ni gnyis su med gyur la187|| 68b]

zhes bya ba smos te| gnyis po yang dag pa ma yin pa kun btags pa’i ngo bo nyid gzung ba dang| ’dzin pa’i mtshan nyid gang yin pa de gnyis su med par gyur188 te| de rang gi ngo bor mi snang ba’i phyir ro||

[rnam rtog rnam par mi rtog pa||
   de lta bu ni gnas gyur yin|| 68cd]

zhes bya ba de la gzhan gyi dbang ni rnam par rtog pa’i ngo bo nyid yin te| de gang gi tshe gnyis kyi rnam par mi snang ba na gnas gyur pa zhes bsams pa’o|| gnas gyur pa de yang rnam par dpyad na shes bya dang shes pa’i bye brag las yongs su brtag pa yin te| de’i phyir|

[shes bya ye shes bye brag gis|| 68a]

shes bya ba smos so||
   gnyis su med pa ni ji lta bu| rnam par mi rtog pa yang ji lta bu yin zhe na| de’i phyir|

[dri med ye shes rnam mi rtog||
   blta bar bya ste rnam rtog bzhin|| 69ab]

zhes bya ba smos so| rnam rtog bzhin zhes bya ba ni dper na rnam par rtog pa brdzun pa yin yang de lta bu’i bdag nyid ston pa bzhin du| de las bzlog na rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes su ’gyur ro||

[de bzhin nyid kyi bdag nyid ni||
  gnyis medchos blta gnyis bzhin no|| 69cd]

zhes bya ba ni gnyis su med pa’i chos kyi dbyings kyang rnam par dag pas rab tu phye ba yin par blta bar bya’o||
   rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes ni de las bzlog pa yin no zhes bya ba de yod par ji lta shes par nus she na| de’i phyir|

[ji lta chos dbyings gnyis med pas||
   rab tu phye ba ’dod pa lta||
   de bzhin mi rtog ye shes kyang||
   gnyis mi gzigs pas rab tu phye|| 70]

zhes bya ba smos te| ji lta chos kyi dbyings yang dag pa ma yin pa kun btags pa med pas rab tu phye ba de bzhin du ye shes ’di yang gzung ba dang ’dzin pa med pa gzigs pas rab tu phye ba yin no||

187 ba P
188 gyur conj., ’gyur PD. This conjecture is supported by the reading of the commentary.
Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 5a8–b1; D, fol. 4b6; S, vol. 63, p. 10.4–6):

dper na gnyis dang rnam par rtog
thad dad dbye bar mi nus ltar
de bzhin nyid dang ye shes kyang
phan tshun tha dad med par gnas 75

Kāyatrayavṛtti (P, fol. 27a8–b4; D, fols. 24b6–25a2; S, vol. 63, p. 60.6–18):

rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes dang chos kyi dbyings las gzhan med do zhes de skad smras pas| shes pa dang shes bya gnyis so sor brjod pa'i phyir de gnyis tha dad par gsal lo| de gal te chos kyi dbyings la dments pa yin nam| chos kyi dbyings dments pa yin na ni de nyid spros pa'i dngos por sgru btags par 'gyur te| ji srid du yongs su rtog pa de srid du spros pa yin pa'i phyir ro| ji ste de la mi dments sam dments pa yang ma yin na ni shes pa dang shes byar ji ltar rnam par bzhag ce na| de'i phyir

[zhes bya ba smos so| de ni 'di skad du don du gnyer ba rnam las sgru btags pa'i sgo nas bye brag tu dbye ba'i phyir de gnyis de skad du bsnyad ky| rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes la ni dngos po btags pa'i rgyu'i tha snyad 'di med do zhes de skad bstan par 'gyur ro]

Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 5b2; D, fol. 4b7; S, vol. 63, p. 10.8–14):

dper na mda' ni 'phangs pa yang
sngar bkang dbang gis 'gro ba ste
de bzhin mi rtog ye shes kyang
sngon gyi shugs kyis 'jug pa yin
rtag la dments pa 'jug phyir dang
'gyur ba med dang ldan pa'i phyir
rnam par mi rtog rtag pa nyid
'dus byas yin pas mi rtag nyid
'byor pa'i rnam kun thob bya'i phyir
sbyin la sogs pa rnam 'jig pas
gzings 'drar brjod pa mdo sde'i don
dgongs pa sangs rgyas rnam la brjod 79

189 190
191 kyi P
192 The text would surely read better with las.
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

*Kāyatrayārvrtti* (P, fol. 28a2–b5; D, fols. 25a7–26a1; S, vol. 63, pp. 61.11–63.2):

gal te nam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes spros pa las ’das pa yin na ’o na des chos ji ltar nam par bzhag| nam par mi rtog bzhin du ’jug par byed par yang ’os par ji ltar ’gyur zhe na| de’i phyir|

[dper na mda’ ni ’phangs pa yang||
sngar bkang dbang gis ’gro ba ste| 77ab]

żhes bya ba smos so||

[de bzhin mi rtog ye shes kyang||
sngon gyi shugs kyls ’jug pa yin 77cd]

żhes bya ba ni dper na lag pa’i rtsol ba’i dbang gis ji srid du gzas 193 par mda’ ’gro ba de bzhin du| nam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes kyang sngon gyi smon lam gyi shugs kyi dbang gis ’du mdzad pa ji srid par rjes su ’jug go||
rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes brjod pa de ci rtag pa zhig yin nam| ’on te mi rtag pa zhig yin| gcig la chos gnyi ga ni med pa’i phyir ro| zhe na| de’i phyir|

[rtag la dmigs pa ’jug phyir dang]| 194 78a]

żhes bya ba smos so|195

gal te de lta na ni shes pa thams cad kyang rtag pa nyid du ’gyur ro zhe na|
de dag ni ma yin te sgro btags pas ’jug pa’i phyir ro| de ni de bzhin nyid la dmigs pa’i phyirchos 196 kyi 197 dbyings ma nor bar mthong ba yin no|

[’gyur med pa dang ldan pa’i phyir||
nram par mi rtog rtag pa nyid| 78bc]

ces bya ba ni gtan tshigs 198 gnyis pa ste| gang la ’gyur ba yod pa de ni mi rtag pa kho na yin gy| nam par mi rtog pa nyid la ’gyur ba med do| de ltar gtan tshigs gnyi ga yul yin pa’i phyir 199 nam par mi rtog pa ni rtag pa yin no|

ji ltar na ni rtag pa nyid kyang yin zhe na|
de’i phyir| 200

[‘dus byas yin pas mi rtag nyid|| 78d]

ces bya ba smos te| ‘dus byas thams cad mi rtag pa nyid 201 du snang ba’i phyir mi rtag pa nyid ces bya’o||
Works by Indian Authors

dge slong dag chos gzings dang 'dra bar shes pa khyed kyis\textsuperscript{202} chos rnams nyid kyang spang bar bya na chos ma yin pa rnams lta smos kyang ci dgos zhes gsungs la| rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes yod cing de bzhin nyid ces bya ba yang dngos por yod na ji ltar 'gal bar mi 'gyur zhe na| de'i phyir|

\begin{verbatim}
[dbang 'byor rnam kun thob bya'|\textsuperscript{203} phyir||
sbyin la sogs pa rnam 'jig pas\textsuperscript{264}||
gzings 'drar brjod pa mdo sde'i don||
dgongs pa sangs rgyas rnams la brjod|| 79]
\end{verbatim}
ces bya ba smos te| rnam pa thams cad kyi mchog dang ldan pa'i dbang 'byor pa thob par bya ba'i phyir| sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rnams kyis sbyin pa la sogs pa rnam par gzhig par mdzad kyi| rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes la ni rnam par gzhigs pa ma mdzad de de bzhin gshogs pa rnams de'i bdag nyid yin pa'i phyir ro| de lta bas na gzings lta bu'o zhes bya ba mdo las 'byung ba'i dgongs pa ni sbyin pa la sogs pa kho na'i dbang du mdzad nas gsungs pa yin par bdag gis shes so||

\textit{Kāyatrayāvatāramukha} (P, fol. 6a7–8; D, fol. 5b4; S, vol. 63, p. 12.4–5):

\begin{verbatim}
mi rtog ye shes gcig pu nyid||
ting nge 'dzin du mchog rnams bzhed||
de min ting 'dzin gang yin rnams||
yang dag min gnas rnam par g.yeng|| 97
\end{verbatim}

\textit{Kāyatrayāvatāramukha} (P, fol. 6b1–2; D, fol. 5b5–6; S, vol. 63, p. 12.9–11):

\begin{verbatim}
yid bzhin nor bu gcig pus kyang||
bsam pa sna tshogs skong byed ltar||
de bzhin mi rtog ting 'dzin gcig||
sems can don ni sna tshogs byed|| 100
\end{verbatim}

\textit{Kāyatrayāvṛtti} (P, fols. 32b5–33a2; D, fol. 29b1–5; S, vol. 63, pp. 71.12–72.5):

ci'i phyir de'i khongs su chud par bstan gyi| de las gzhan pa dag kyang tha dad pa nyid du ma brjod ce na|

de'i phyir|

\begin{verbatim}
[yid\textsuperscript{205} bzhin nor bu gcig gis kyang||
bsam pa sna tshogs skong byed ltar||
de bzhin mi rtog ting 'dzin gcig||
sems can don ni sna tshogs byed|| 100]
\end{verbatim}
ces bya ba smos so||

\textsuperscript{202} kyis conj., kyi PD

\textsuperscript{203} bya P

\textsuperscript{204} pa P

\textsuperscript{205} yin P

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yang na rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes khyad par med pa de la khyad par yod pa’i
dngos po gnas pa’i tha snyad ji ltar ’grub ce na|
del phyir

[yid bzhin gyi nor bu gcig gis kyang206 100a]207

zhes bya ba la sogs pa smos te] ji ltar bsod nams kyi las rnam kyi ’mthu khyad par du208
’phags pa209;210 yo byad ’nam pa211 tha dad pa rgya chen po bsam gyis mi khyab pa’i
char ’bebs mkhas pa’i yid bzhin gyi212 nor bu bsod nams kyi las kyi ’bras bu la spyod pa
mthu che bar grags pa nams kyi bsam pa ji lta ba bzhin du yongs su rdzogs par byed
cing mdun na ’dug pa de bzhin du ye shes ’di yang rnam par mi rtog bzhin du sngon gyi
smon lam gyi shugs kyi dbang gis sems can gyi don sna tshogs mdzad do] de lta bas na
ye shes gcig la tha snyad sna tshogs mi rung ba med do]

Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 6b3–4; D, fol. 5b6–7; S, vol. 63, p. 12.13–17):
dbu ma’i lam las byung ba213 yil]
ye shes rnam par mi rtog de]
rtag dang chad par lta rnam kyi214]
thob par nus pa ma yin no] 102
dbu ma’i lam zhes bya ba yang]
rnam rig tsam nyid ma gtogs par]
rigs215 pas brtags na ’dir gzhan ni]
rnam pa kun du216 mi ’thad do] 103

Kāyatrayāvṛtti (P, fol. 33a4–b4; D, fols. 29b6–30a6; S, vol. 63, pp. 72.10–73.11):
ji skad du brjod pa’i ye shes de ni rtag pa dang chad par lta ba rnam kyi thob par mi nus
tel ’di ltar gal te yod par rnam par rtog na ni de’i phyir rtag pa nyid ’dzin pa’i mthar ltung

206 byang P
207 With the addition of the genitive particle gyi, which does not occur in the basic text, this line of
verse now has eight instead of seven syllables.
208 om. D
209 add. las D
210 If one takes khyad par du ’phags pa to be in an attributive relation to yo byad (as suggested in
my translation), the text should rather read: mthu khyad par du ’phags pa’i yo byad. If, on the
other hand, it is meant to be in attributive relation to mthu, the text should read: mthu khyad par
du ’phags pas yo byad. The reading ... ’phags pa las... in D hints in this latter direction.
211 rnam P
212 om. D
213 pa P
214 kyi conj., kyi PD. The emendation to kyi is supported by the commentary.
215 rig P
216 The reading kun du is found in PD in almost all instances in both the Kāyatrayāvatāramukha
and its commentary, the Kāyatrayāvṛtti.
Works by Indian Authors

bar 'gyur| ji ste med par rnam par rtog na ni de lta na yang chad par lta ba'i mthar ltung
bar 'gyur te| de bas na 'di ni dbu ma'i lam gyis byung ba'i ngang tshul can yin pas ye
shes 'di nyid de lta bur lta ba rnam gyis thob par mi nus so|| de bas na dbu ma'i lam la
brtson par bya'o zhes bstan pa'i phyir|

[dbu ma'i lam las byung ba yi||
ye shes rnam par mi rtog de||
rtag dang chad par lta rnam kyis||
thob par nus pa ma yin no 102]

zhes bya ba smos so|| dbu ma'i lam de yang rnam par dpyad na rnam par rig pa tsam nyid
de217 rnam par rig pa tsam nyid ni| gtsor na rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba'i dngos po
mtshon pa'o|| gzhan gyi dbang 'khrul pa tsam yin pas gzung ba dang 'dzin pa nyid du
snang ba'i phyir gal te ji ltar snang ba de bzhin du yod na ni rtag pa'i mthar 'gyur ro|| ji
ste ci yang med na ni de lta na chad par brjod par 'gyur te| de lta bas na gdags pa'i gzhi
yod pa nyid du khas blang bar bya dgos te218 de'i phyir|

[dbu ma'i lam zhes bya ba yang||
rnam rig tsam nyid ma gtogs par||
rigs pas brtags na 'dir gzhan nil||
rnam pa kun du mi 'thad do|| 103]

zhes bya ba smos219 so||
'o na 'bad sa220 dang rigs mthun pa'i mdo las| kun dga' bo yod ces byas na ni rtag
par 'gyur| med ces byas na ni chad par 'gyur te| de lta bas na de bzhin gshegs pa dbu ma'i
lam gyis chos ston to zhes gsungs pa de ji lta bu zhe na|
de ni nyes pa med de| gtsor bor gang zag dgag pa'i phyir gsungs kyi| gzhan gtsor
bor mdzad pa ni ma yin te| gzhan gtsor bor mdzad pa ma yin pa de yang gang zag bsal221
ba mdzad pas bcom ldan 'das kyis gsungs so||

Kāyatrayāvatāramukha (P, fol. 3b5–6; D, fol. 3a5–6; S, vol. 63, p. 6.14–15):
chos sku brnyes par gyur pa yi||
sangs rgyas rnam ni kun rtog kun||
rnam pa kun du222 chad pa'i phyir||
mchog tu bde ba yin zhes brjod|| 35

217 om. PD
218 om. PD
219 smos smos P
220 bad sa conj., bdas PD. The reading bad sa is attested in Jñānacandra's Yogacaryābhāvanā (P, fol. 150a7; D, fol. 130b7; S, vol. 78, p. 346.8). The misreading bdas, a result of omitting the tsheg between the syllables bad and sa, may have been a deliberate 'correction' on the part of a scribe or an editor who was not aware of the fact that bad sa is a transcription of the Sanskrit word vatsa. See also the corresponding note in the translation.
221 bsal conj., btsal PD
222 tu D
Kāyatrayavṛtti (P, fols. 18b7–19a4; D, fol. 17a6–b2; S, vol. 63, p. 42.4–17):

gsung rab las| sangs rgyas bcom ldan ’das rnams ni| bde mchog dang ldan pa yin no zhes ’byung na| spros pa med par zhugs pa rnams la brjod pa ’di ji ltar rigs she na
de’i phyir|

[chos sku brnyes par gyur pa yi||
sangs rgyas rnams ni kun rto g kun||
rnam pa kun du chad pa’i phyir||
mchog tu bde ba yin zhes brjod|| 35]

ces bya ba smos so| yang na tha dad pa la sogs par rnam par brtag pa ’dis ci zhig bya ste
der bde ba mchog ces de tsam zhig brjod par nus so zhes bstan pa’i phyir|

[chos sku brnyes par gyur pa yi|| 35a]

zhes bya ba la sogs pa smos te| de ni ’di skad du tshor ba thams cad med pa’i phyir de na
bde ba’i tshor ba ni med kyi| rab tu zhi ba’i bde ba ’ba’ zhig go|| zhes de skad bstan par ’gyur ro||

rnam pa gang gis bde ba zhes bya zhe na|
gang sdug bsngal thams cad nye bar zhi ba ’di nyid yang dag pa’i bde ba’o|| bde
ba’i tshor ba ni sdug bsngal dang ’bre’si phyir bde ba nyid du yod pa ma yin na| ’khrul
pas bde ba snyam du sms so||
Works by Indian Authors

B. Dharmamitra’s Prasphuṭapada

Prasphuṭapada (P, fol. 64a3–b6; D, fols. 55b6–56a7; S, vol. 52, pp. 833.19–835.6):

(1) kha cig ni sangs rgyas kyi sa ‘dir ni gnyen po\(^223\) mi mthun pa’i phyogs gnyis kyi char dbye ba med pas na mkhyen pa\(^224\) mi mkhyen pa dangl dag pa dangl bzang ba dangl ngan cing mi gtsang ba la sogs pa\(^225\) mkhyen pa kun rdzob pa mi mngar zin kyangl yid bzhin gyi nor bu la sogs pa ltar mi rtog bzhin du ’gro ba rnams kyi\(^226\) mgon par ’dod pa ’grub pas na gzhan gyi\(^227\) shes pa’i snang ba’i dbang tsam las de rnam pa thams cad mkhyen par brjod do zhes zer te

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{mkha’ lding grub pa jì lta bur} \\
\text{mchod sdong bsgrubs nas ’das gyur nas} \\
\text{de ’das yun ring lon na yang} \\
\text{dug la sogs pa sel ba ltar}
\end{aligned}
\]

zhes bya ba la sogs pa smra bar byed do

(2) yang gzhan dag ni nyon mong pa dangl shes bya dang bag chags kyi sgrib pa ma lus pa spangs pas nal mi shes pa dang bral ba’i\(^228\) thob pa’i ’bras bu lag mthil gyi shing thog\(^229\) ltar ma lus pa sgyu ma ltar bkra’i ye shes rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa ni sgra ji bzhin par nges par khas blang ngo zhes zer ro\((3)\) yang gzhan dag ni shes bya’i mchog ni kun gzhi rnam par shes pa nyid yin te de’i dbang du byas te shes bya’i gnas dang mtshan nyid la sogs ba bcu mkhyen pas na thams cad mkhyen pa’o zhes gsungs par ’dod do\]

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{’dir yang yang dag par rdzogs pa’i sangs rgyas la snang ba dang bcas pa’i ye shes de mnga’ ‘am ci ste ma yin zhes pa las gyur par shes par bya ste\((1)\) kha cig ni snang ba dang bcas pa’i ye shes de mnga’ bar gyur pa’i tshe gzung ba dang ’dzin pa’i nyes par ’gyur bas nal ye shes rnam pa med pa kun rdzob pa tsam zhig ni rang rig par ’gyur ba ste \’di tsam zhig go zhes sgngar bstan pa’i phyogs gsum pa ’dod do\((2)\) gzhan dag ni bskal pa du mar gzung ba dang ’dzin pa rdzun\(^230\) pa’i ngo bo nyid du goms par gyur pa de la snang ba rnams gzung ba dang ’dzin ’pa med par\(^231\) ji ltar ’gyur te ji skad du}
\end{aligned}
\]

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{’di ltar mthong dang thos pa kun\(^232\)} \\
\text{’di la ’dgag par\(^233\) bya med kyii}
\end{aligned}
\]

\(^{223}\) add. dang D

\(^{224}\) add. dang D

\(^{225}\) pa’i D

\(^{226}\) kyis D

\(^{227}\) gyis P

\(^{228}\) The genitive particle here is unusual.

\(^{229}\) tog D

\(^{230}\) brdzun D

\(^{231}\) pa med par conj., pa P, par D. On this conjecture, see the pertinent note in the translation.

\(^{232}\) dang P. The reading of the end of the first and the beginning of the second line of verse in P is corrupt. The reading in D is clearly closer to the reading in Bhattacharya 1960, p. 191.
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gang phyir sdbusngal rgyur ’gyur ba] [234]
bden pa nyid du rtog pa zlog [235]

ces bshad pas na| nges par snang ba dang bcas pa’i ye shes med na ji ltar rnam pa thams
cad mkhyan par brjod ces zer ro] (3) la la ni rang bzhin gyis ’od gsal ba tsam la dmigs nas
brjod du med pa’i rang bzhin du yod ces ’dod pas phyogs gzhhan du [235] gyur pa’o]
ha cang spros pas ci zhig bya ste ’di ni nye bar ‘bzhag go’ [236]

Prasphuṭapadā (P, fol. 108a8–b5; D, fol. 93a6–b3; S, vol. 52, p. 926.9–21):
de’i phyir gang dag sangs rgyas kyi sa [237] kun tu bzang po la snang ba dang bcas pa’i ye
shes mi ’dod cing| rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes tsam zhig ’dod pa yang ji ltar rnal ’byor
spyod pa pa rnam pa med par smra ba rnam s kyis]

mi rtog [238] ye shes rgyu ba la]
don kun snang ba med phyir yang]
don med khong du chud par bya]
de med pas na rnam rig med]

ces bya ba dang]
don ni don du grub gyur na]
mi rtog ye shes med par ’gyur]
de med pas na sangs rgyas nyid]
’thob [239] par rigs [240] pa ma yin no]

zhes bstan pa dang khyad par med par ’gyur ro] de’i phyir de bzhin gshegs pa rnam s

ni don dam pa’i bden pa rab tu zhi ba de thugs rje chen pos ched du mngon sum du mi
mdzad kyi [241] bden pa gnyis su dbyer med cing pha rol gyi don dang rnam par shes pa

gnyis gang du yang btag [242] tu med mod kyi| chos kyi dbyings kyi mthu rlab sna tshogs
su snang ba’i rnam par ri mor bris pa lta bu rnam pa ma lus pa gsal bar gyur pas bzhugs
par nges so]

233 dag pa P
234 bzlog D
235 dag tu D
236 gzhag pa’o D
237 om. P
238 rtogs P
239 ’thob conj., thob PD
240 rig P
241 kyi D
242 btag conj., rtag PD

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3. Proponents of the Existence of Pure Mundane Gnosis

A. Śrīgupta’s *Tattvāvatāravṛtti*

*Tattvāvatāravṛtti* (P, fol. 47b2–6; D, fol. 42a6–b2; S, vol. 63, p. 108.3–13):

```
sems can gyi ni don mdzad thabs||
rmam rtog ye shes mnga’ ba na||
di yi kun mkhyen rtsom243 pa ni||
di don yin phyir nyes pa med||
di ni byang grol la sog pa lung ’bogs244 pa’i rgyu rnam par rtog pa’i ye shes mnga’ ba ni245 nyes pa la brten par ’os pa ma yin te| de’i bdag nyid kyi ngo bo ni sems can la phan
gdags pa’i ched yin pa’i phyir ro||
dngos po yod na kun mkhyen la||
don ni gsal bar snang bar ’gyur||
nor ba tsam la gzhi med phyir||
gsal dang mi gsal su zhig sems||
rmam rtog rjes su ’brel pa la||
don snang gsal ba ma yin zhes||
bya ba phyi rol lta bas gsungs||
gang yin de ’dir skabs med do||
de bas don kun stong pa nyid||
thub pas kun rdzob brjod pa na||
rtog bzhin du yang sems can don||
mdzad dang ldan na ci zhig nyes||
zhes bya ba ni bar skabs kyi tshigs su bcad pa dag go||
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243 brtsom P
244 ’bog P
245 || P
Works by Tibetan Authors

1. Ye-shes-sde’s ITa ba’i khyad par

For the edition of the following passage, I have compared the versions included in the Peking (P) and the sDe-dge (D) bsTan-'gyur editions. I have followed the same principles as in the editions of the passages from the Indian works above, for which the same two bsTan-'gyur editions have been employed. Contrary to what one has come to expect from these two editions,¹ my own critical edition of this short passage bears witness to an unusually large number of faulty readings in D, which is generally known to be the bsTan-'gyur edition that has undergone the most editorial scrutiny with the aim of providing a smooth reading.

ITa ba’i khyad par (P, fols. 259B–260a5; D, fols. 219b4–220a6; S, vol. 116, pp. 576.16–578.6):

sku gnyis la rtog² pa mnga’ ’am mi mnga’ zhe na| de gnyis te chos kyi sku rnam par rtog pa mi mnga’ ba las byung bas rtog pa mi ’mnga’ ’o³|| de ltar ci mngon zhe na| ’phags pa gser ’od dam pa’i mdo las kyang

rtog pa yod pa ’dra mod kyi de bzhin nyid la ni rtog pa med do|| gsum du bgrang ba yod mod kyi dngos po ni gsum du med do

zhes gsungs so|| mdo sde du ma las kyang de bzhin gshegs pa ni rtag tu mnyam par bzhag⁴ pa’o zhes bka’ stsal to|| de bzhin gshegs pa la dag pa ’jig rten pa’i ye shes mnga’ ’am mi mnga’ thams cad mkhyen pas dngos po rnas kyi rang gi mtshan nyid mkhyen tam| spyi’i mtshan nyid mkhyen| rtog pa dang bcas pas mkhyen tam⁵ rnam par mi rtog par mkhyen ce⁶ na| rnam par mi rtog bzhin du rang dang spyi’i mtshan nyid thams cad

¹ See the introductory remarks on the critical editions.
² rtogs P
³ mnga’o D
⁴ gzhag D
⁵ || P
⁶ zhe D
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mkhyen te sngon byang chub sems dpa’ mdzad cing sgrib pa ma byang⁷ lhun gyis ma grub dbang bsam gyis mi khyab pa ma brnyed⁸ pa’i tshe mnyam par bzhag⁹ pa’i dus na ni rnam par mi rtog pa’i ye shes kyi dngos po thams cad kyì¹⁰ spyi’i mtshan nyid stong pa nyid du gzigs la| de las bzhengs¹¹ nas rjes las thob pa dag pa ’jig rten pa’i ye shes kyi sgyu ma tsam¹² du rang gi mtshan nyid mkhyen pa de gong nas gong du sbyangs pas| rtog pa bsa| te sgrib pa ’byang ba’i¹³ ’bras bu| sangs rgyas kyi sa la lhun gyis ’grub ste¹⁴ mnyam par ’jog pa dang| bzhengs pa mi mnga’ bar shes bya ji snyed pa de¹⁵ thams cad dus gcig tu mgon du gyur te| rnam par rtog pa mi mnga’ bas rang gi mtshan nyid sgyu ma tsam du¹⁶ mkhyen kyang dngos por mi dmigs| mtshan mar mi ’dzin pa’i phyir¹⁷ gzung ba dang ’dzin pa’i skyon du ’gyur ba¹⁸ yang med de| sangs rgyas phal po che’i mdo las kyang|

sangs rgyas bcom ldan ’das rnam kyi dgongs pa ni chags pa mi mnga’ ste¹⁹ bskal pa²⁰ bye ba ’khrag khrig²¹ brgya stong brjod du med pa’i yang brjod du med par yongs su sbyangs pa’o|| ’jig rten gyi kham s thams cad ma lus par yul du gyur pa’o|| chos kyi dbyings ma²² lus pa thams cad yul du gyur pa’o|| dus gsum thams cad la dgongs pa geig gis²³ chags pa med par²⁴ mkhyen cing²⁵ thugs su chud pa’i²⁶ yul dang ldan pa’o

---

⁷ byed D
⁸ brnyed conj., rnyed P, rnyes D. Cf. Jäschke 1881, s.v. rnyed pa, where both brnyed and brnyes are given as possible perfect forms.
⁹ gzhag D
¹⁰ kyi P
¹¹ bzhings D
¹² can D
¹³ byang chub pa’i P
¹⁴ te D
¹⁵ nga D. Note that the tsheg is also missing.
¹⁶ tu P
¹⁷ byir P.
¹⁸ pa D
¹⁹ sta D
²⁰ illegible D
²¹ brag khreg D
²² illegible D
²³ ges D
²⁴ partly illegible D
²⁵ zhing D
²⁶ pa partly illegible D

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Works by Tibetan Authors

zhes bya ba la sogs pa rgya cher gsungs so|| 'phags pa chos thams cad yang dag par sdud pa’i mdo las kyang||

dper na sgyu ma’i mkhan po zhig27||
sprul pa thar par bya phyir28 birtson||
des ni snga nas de shes pas||
sprul pa de la chags pa med||
srid gsum sprul pa 'dra ba ni||
rdzogs pa’i byang chub mkhas pas shes||
’gro ba’i ched du go bgos te||
’gro ba de ltar29 snga30 nas shes31

zhes gsungs so|| de bas na sangs rgyas kyi sa la dag pa ’jig32 rten pa’i ye shes mnga’ bar mi ’gyur ro||

27 zhing D
28 pyir P
29 dag D
30 lnga P
31 om. P
32 'jeg D

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2. Gro-lung-pa’s *bsTan rim chen mo*

The following passage is based on the only available version of the *bsTan rim chen mo*—namely, a print from the xylographic edition prepared in the nineteenth century at the Zhöl printing house at the behest of some dGe-lugs teachers. Apart from a few emendations suggested by me, the text is provided in its original form.

*bsTan rim chen mo* (fol. 511a6–512b2):

des na ye shes gnyis po 'di la ni don dam pa dang kun rdzob pa'i don yod pa'am med pa'am bden pa'am brdzun pa'am rtag pa'am mi rtag pa'am gzugs can nam gzugs can ma yin pa la sogs pa'ang rung ji ltar grub bo cog ma lus pa ji lta ba bzhin du snang du rung ba las| don dam par ni ji lta par med pa ci'ang mi dmigs pa yin la| kun rdzob pa ni 'jig rten gyi khams thams cad kyi sa la sogs pa'i rdul phra rab thams cad dang sems can thams cad kyi sms kyi rgyu ba rab tu phra ba thams kad kyang ji lta bar snang ba kho na'o| 'di la kha cig
gnas skabs 'dir ni shes pa dang shes byas bsdus pa'i spros pa thams cad dang bral ba thob pa yin pa'i phyir| dag pa 'jig rten pa rjes thob kyi ye shes kyang med pa kho na ste| snang ba dang bcas pa'i blo yod na 'khrul pa'i yul snang bas 'khrul pa dang bcas par 'gyur la| thub pa chen po rnam rtag tu mnyam par bzhag pa la sogs par gsungs pa'i lung du ma dang yang 'gal lo

zhes brjod pa ni don ma rtogs pa'i rnam 'gyur nyid de| rjes thob yin pa tsam gysis gzhan du g'yengs pa la sogs par mi 'gyur bas rtag tu mnyam par bzhag par gsungs pa dang 'gal ba thag ring la| 'khrul pa'i yul snang ba tsam gysis 'khrul par brjod pa'ang bab col nyid de| nye bar brtags pa'i don dang yid kyi rgyal srid 'jog pa'i blo ltar| gzhan gysi shes ngo'i 'khrul yul tsam du thams cad snang yang de 'dzin pa'i blo ma lus pa 'khrul pa nyid du shes bzhin du 'gro ba rnam kyi mtho ris dang byang grol gyi rgyu nyid du brten par zad pas 'khrul bcas su ga la 'gyur| des na|

'khrul pa tsam du yongs shes na]| ma 'khrul nyid du nges par gzung

zhes gsungs la|                           

glang chen gzigs stangs nyid mdzad nas]| phyi rol don la btag snyoms mdzad

ces gsungs pa ltar yang ngo]| gzhan yang rig pa tsam gyi nye bar len pa dang| blang bya'i rgyu 'bras kyi mtshan nyid ni thog ma dang tha ma med pa yin la| de'i ma dag pa dang dag pa la sogs pa'i nyes pa dang yon tan dang 'brel pa ni rkyen gysis byed pa'i yul yin pas na| yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pas sbyar ba'i nyes pa dang sgrib pa thams cad zad kyang| dge ba rnam par dag pa'i rgyu can gyi ye shes yon tan thams cad dang ldan pa ci ltar rgyun chad par rigs te|
zhes gsungs pa ltar ro|| gzhan yang de ltar na ni sde pa 'dod pa nyan thos dang rang rgyal ba'i phung po lhag ma med pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa dang khyad par med <512b> par 'gyur te] nyes pa dang sdu g bsgal zhi ba tsam du zad kyi bde ba dang yon tan dam pa thams cad dang ldan pa'i ye shes med pas na smon lam dang dge ba'i tshogs dpag tu med pa thams cad kyang don med par 'gyur la| rten med pa'i phyir gzhan gyi don yang mam pa thams cad kyi thams cad du rgyun chad par 'gyur ba'i phyir ro|| gser 'od dam pa las|
sangs rgyas ni mam par dag pa gsum gyi rab tu phye ba ste] nyon mongs pa dang| sdu g bsgal ba dang| mtshan ma thams cad mam par dag pa'o|| de ni gser dang chu la sog pa dag pa ltar sgrib pa dag pas dag pa ste| med pas ni ma yin no|| des nachos kyi dbyings kyi ni mam rtog dang bag la nyal ba thams cad mi skye bas dag pa yin gyi| sans rgyas kyi yang dag pa'i sku med ni ma yin no

zhes so|| des na ye shes gnyis po 'di ni gdon mi za bar gnas pa ste|
snga ma ji lta nyid mkhyen nil|| 'khrul med mnyam gzhag blo 'jug med|| phyi ma ji snyed mkhyen pa nil|| 'khrul snang rjes thob blo 'jug can

zhes gang gsungs pa nyid do|| de ltar spangs pa dang ye shes phun sum tshogs pa 'di gnyis ni sans rgyas kyi cho mador bsdus pa ste|
sgrib pa kun gyn dri med pa||
mam pa thams cad mkhyen nyid thob||
rin chen snod ni phye ba ltar||
sangs rgyas nyid ni yang dag bstan||
zhes bya ba dang|
sangs rgyas nyid ni dbyer med pa||
dag pa'i cho kyis rab phye ba||
nyi mkha' bzhin te spangs pa dang||
ye shes gnyis kyi mtshan nyid do

zhes gang gsungs pa'o|| byang chub sems dp'i sa las kyang|
mdor bsdus na spangs pa gnyis dang ye shes gnyis ni byang chub ces bya ste| (1) nyon mongs pa dang (2) shes bya'i sgrib pa spangs pa dang dang| (1) nyon mongs pa'i dri ma med pa'i ye shes dang| (2) shes bya thams cad la thogs <35> pa med pa'i ye shes so|| yang ye shes gsum dang spangs pa gnyis ni byang chub ste| (1) nyon mongs pa bag chags dang bcas pa ma lus pa spangs pa dag pa'i ye shes dang| (2) khams thams cad dang| dngos po thams cad dang| nmam pa thams cad dang| <512b> dus thams cad dang| rang bzhin thams cad la mkhyen pa thogs pa med pa thams cad mkhyen pa'i ye shes dang| (3) lan cig dgongs pa tsam gys thams cad du thogs pa med cing myur bar ye shes chags pa med pa par <37>'jug gi| yang dang

<sup>35</sup> rig conj.; the text reads rigs.
<sup>36</sup> thogs conj.; the text reads thog.
<sup>37</sup> par conj.; the text reads pa.
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yang du dgongs par mi mdzad pa chags pa med pa'i ye shes dang| (1) nyon mongs pa'i bag chags thams cad yang dag par bcom pa dang| (2) nyon mongs pa can ma yin pa'i ma rig pa thams cad spangs par
gsungs so||
3. sGam-po-pa’s Thar rgyan

For the following edition I have employed the following versions:

B = a reproduction of a xylographic edition prepared in Bhutan in the early seventeenth century, published in Delhi by Konchhog Lhadrepa in 1988

T = a xylographic edition from the rTsisib-ri prints commissioned by 'Khrul-zhig Padma-chos-rgyal (1876–1958) and published in Darjeeling by the Kargyud Sungrab Nyamso Khang between 1978 and 1985

R = a xylographic edition published in Rumtek

N = a digitally prepared edition included in sGam-po-pa’s collected writings published in Nepal by Shedup Tenzin and Thinley Namgyal in 2000

S = a modern edition from Sichuan said to be a faithful copy of a xylographic edition found in the temple of bKra-shis-chos-'khor-lhun-po’i-gling

There exists a critical edition by Sonam Gyatso published in Sarnath in 1999, for which four versions were used, namely, our B, T, R, and S. This edition, however, is unsatisfactory since the editor did not record all variants but only the small number of them considered by him to be significant. It does, however, locate some of the citations. (The passage edited here is found there on pp. 295.16–301.17.)

Based on the edition of the passage found below, no clear stemmatic relation between the five versions employed can be determined. There is, however, no doubt that BTRN build one group going back to a single manuscript independently of S. The latter clearly represents an older version since it lacks the glosses found in all other four versions. It also contains a rather archaic orthography, along with words or phrases that are missing in the other four versions, and which appear to have been erroneously omitted in some (rather early) copy of the text of which all four are indirect descendants. Among BTRN, one can identify two subgroups each consisting of two versions that are more closely related to each other, namely, BT and RN. This is particularly evident from the fact that the passage containing Mi-la-ras-pa’s stance on the issue at hand, which was originally only a gloss added at a later point in time, is integrated into the main text in the same spot in each pair. Nonetheless B and T, and R and N as well, differ quite often in their readings, especially in regard to their orthography. All of them (or at least their separate ancestors) seem to have undergone independent editing. The woodblocks of R seem to have often been erroneous, for there is evidence that many of them were corrected. It also appears that some of the blocks were damaged. Particularly notable is the unsystematic employment of punctuation in R.

**Thar rgyan** (B, pp. 302.1–308.5; T, fols. 206a3–211a2; R, fols. 167b1–171b2; N, pp. 620.4–631.1; S, pp. 331.2–338.2):

I. ye shes phun sum tshogs pa la bzhed pa tha dad de| de la kha cig na re|38 sangs rgyas la mam rtog kyang mnga’| ye shes kyang mnga’ zhes zer ro| kha cig na re sangs rgyas la mam rtog ni mi mnga’ la ci yang sa ler|39 mkhyen pa’i ye shes ni mnga’ zhes zer ro| kha cig na re ye shes rgyun chad pa yin zhes zer ro| kha cig na re sangs rgyas la ye shes yod ma myong ba yin zhes zer ro|

38 || R

39 le BRNS
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de yang mdo dang bstan bcos gnyis char gyi gzhung las ni sangs rgyas kyi ye shes bshad de| ji skad du| phags pa sdud pa las|
de lta bas na gal te sangs rgyas ye shes mchog\|
reg par 'dod na rgyal ba'i yum 'dir dad par gyis\|
zhes\*\*41 gsungs so|| shes rab kyi pha rol tu\*\*42 phyin pa stong phrag brgya pa las kyang|
yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas ni chos thams cad la sgrib pa med pa'i ye shes brnyes pa ste|
zhes gsungs so|| yang de nyid kyi le'u nyer gcig pa las kyang|
bla na med pa'i sangs rgyas kyi ye shes yod do||
chos kyi 'khor lo bkor ba yod do||
sems can yongs su smin par byed pa yod do||
zhes gsungs so|| mdo gzhan las kyang ye shes bshad pa mang po yod do|| bstan bcos kyi dbang du byas na\*\*43 mdo sde rgyan las kyang\*\*44|
ji ltar nyi ma'i 'od zer gcig\|
byung na 'od zer kun 'byung ba\|
de bzhin sangs rgyas mams kyi yang\|
ye shes 'byung bar shes par bya||
zhes sogs dang\*\*45
me long ye shes mi g.yo ste||
ye shes gsum ni de la brten\|
mnyam pa nyid dang so sor rtog\*\*46\||
bya ba sgrub\*\*47 pa kho 'na 'o\*\*48\||
zhes gsungs so|| bstan bcos gzhan las kyang sangs rgyas kyi ye shes bshad do||

II. gzhung de dag la brten nas kha cig sangs rgyas la ye shes mnga’ bar bzhed do|| de yang mnga’ lugs bshad na\*\*49 ye shes de mdor bsdu na ji lta ba mkhyen pa’i ye shes dang| ji snyed pa mkhyen pa’i ye shes gnyis yin la\*\*50 de la ji lta ba mkhyen pa’i ye shes ni| don

\*\*40 \*\* R
\*\*41 shes R
\*\*42 du R
\*\*43 \*\* R
\*\*44 om. S
\*\*45 \*\* R
\*\*46 rtogs TN
\*\*47 sgrub conj., grub BTRNS
\*\*48 na’o TRNS
\*\*49 \*\* R
\*\*50 \*\* R

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dam mkhyan pa ste\| sngar brjod pa ltar rdo rje lta bu'i ting\textsuperscript{51} nge 'dzin gyi mthar thug\textsuperscript{52} pa de kho na\textsuperscript{53} yongs su goms\textsuperscript{54} pa las\textsuperscript{55} yul gyi spros pa ma lus par\textsuperscript{56} bcad pa na blo'i 'jug pa mtha' dag rab tu zhi bas\textsuperscript{57} chos kyi dbyings spros pa med pa dang| ye shes spros pa med pa gnyis ro gcig pas| chu la chu bzhag pa'am\textsuperscript{58} mar la mar bzhag pa ltar dbyer med pa'am\textsuperscript{59} gzung gi yang ma mthong ba la nam mka' mthong bar bsnyad pa\textsuperscript{60} ltar ram\textsuperscript{61} snang ba med pa'i shes rab chen po yon tan rin po che thams cad kyi rten du gyur pa ste\| de ltar yang|
\[
\text{ji ltar chu la chu bzhag dang|}\\textsuperscript{62}
\text{mar la mar ni rjes zhugs ltar|}\\textsuperscript{63}
\text{shes bya spros bral de nyid dang|}\\textsuperscript{64}
\text{dbyer med ye shes ram 'dres pa|}
\text{de ni sangs rgyas thams cad kyi|}
\text{rang bzhin chos sku zhes byar brjod|}
\]
ces pa dang|
\[
\text{nam mka' mthong zhes sems can tshig tu rab}\textsuperscript{65} brjod pa|\n\text{nam mka' ji ltar mthong ste don 'di brtag}\textsuperscript{66} par gyis|\n\text{de ltar chos mthong ba yang de bzhin gshegs pas bstan|}
\text{mthong ba dpe gzhan gyi ni bsnyad}\textsuperscript{67} par nus ma yin|
\]

\text{\textsuperscript{51} teng R, possibly due to damage to the block.}
\text{\textsuperscript{52} R has space for approximately one letter after the syllable thug, possibly due to thugs being corrected to thug on the block.}
\text{\textsuperscript{53} add. nyid BTRN. The original reading here seems to have been de kho na, as found in S, while later manuscripts have the additional syllable nyid, and thus the more usual form de kho na nyid. Compare below, (§2), the phrase de kho na'i don (for which there are no variant readings).}
\text{\textsuperscript{54} gom R}
\text{\textsuperscript{55} \| R}
\text{\textsuperscript{56} om. S}
\text{\textsuperscript{57} \| R}
\text{\textsuperscript{58} pa 'am B}
\text{\textsuperscript{59} pa 'am B}
\text{\textsuperscript{60} R has space for approximately eight letters from after the syllable pa to the end of the line.}
\text{\textsuperscript{61} \| R}
\text{\textsuperscript{62} \| R}
\text{\textsuperscript{63} \| R}
\text{\textsuperscript{64} \| S}
\text{\textsuperscript{65} T has space for approximately one letter after the syllable rab.}
\text{\textsuperscript{66} brtags T}
\text{\textsuperscript{67} bsnyon R}
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zhes gsungs so|| ji snyed pa mkhyen pa\'i ye shes kun rdzob tha snyad pa\'i don rnam pa thams cad du\(^68\) mkhyen pa yin te\| rdo rje lta bu\'i ting nge 'dzin la brten nas sgrib pa\'i sa bon thams cad bcom pas shes rab chen por 'gyur\(^69\)/\(^70\) de\^i stobs kyis shes bya\'i tshogs dus gsum gyis bs dus pa\'i don mtha' dag skyu ru ra rlon pa lag mthil du bzhag pa ltar mkhyen zhing\(^71\) gyzigs pa yin no\|| mdo las kyang sangs rgyas kyis kun rdzob mkhyen par bshad de| ji skad du|

'gyu yi\(^73\) nam pa tha dad pa\^||\(^74\)

kun mkhyen min pa\'i shes bya min\|
de shes pa ni kun mkhyen stobs\|

shes\(^75\) gsungs so\||\(^76\) rgyud bla ma las kyang|

thugs rje chen pos 'jig rten mkhyen\|

'jig rten kun la gyzigs nas ni\|^77|

zhes gsungs so\|| de yang ji ltar mkhyen zhing\(^78\) gyzigs na dngos 'dzin lta bu ma yin te\| sgyu ma lta bur\(^99\) mkhyen zhing\(^80\) gyzigs pa\^o\'^81\|| de\(^32\) ltar yang chos yang dag par sdud pa\'i mdo las|

dper na sgyu ma mkhan po 'ga\|^|

sgyu ma thar bar\(^69\) bya phyir brtson\|
gang phyir de ni mgon shes pas\|

sgyu ma la ni de mi chags\|
de bzhin srid gsum sgyu ma ltar|
r dzogs pa\'i byang chub mkhas pas mkhyen\|^84|

\(^68\) tu T, om. R
\(^69\) gyur RN
\(^70\) || R
\(^71\) cing BR
\(^72\) || R
\(^73\) rgyu\^i R
\(^74\) || R
\(^75\) zhes BTN
\(^76\) | R
\(^77\) | R
\(^78\) cing B
\(^79\) bu BTRN
\(^80\) cing B
\(^81\) pa ni BTRN
\(^82\) da B
\(^83\) par N
\(^84\) | R
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zhes gsungs so∥ yab sras mjāl ba'i85 mdo las kyang∥

sgyu ma mkhyen pos sgyul sprul pa86∥
sgyu ma lags87 par 'tshal bas na∥
de la rmongs par 'gyur ma lags∥
khyod kyi'sgro kun de bzhin gzigs∥
thams cad88 gzigs la phyag 'tshal bstod∥

ces gsungs so∥

yang kha cīg na re| yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas la89 ji ltā ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes shes30 bya ba91 don dam mkhyen pa ni mnga' la92 ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes shes93 bya ba94 kun rdzob mkhyen pa mi mnga'95∥ de ltār mkhyen rgyu yod pa la ma mkhyen pa ni ma yin te96 mkhyen rgyu kun rdzob med pas de mkhyen pa'i ye shes med pa'o∥ de yang kun rdzob 'ji ltār med na| kun rdzob97 ni nyan mong pa can gyi ma rig pas rgyu byas pa'i byis pa so so skye bo rnam la snyang| nyan mong pa can ma yin pa'i ma98 rig pas rgyu byas pa'i 'phags pa gsum la snyang ste| dper na mig nad can la skra shad dang rab rib snang ba ltā bu yin99 sangs rgyas ni rdo rje ltā bu'i ting nge 'dzin gyi mjug100 tu ma rig pa spangs nas| chos 'ga' yang mthong ba med pa'i tshul du de kho na'i don gzigs pas| kun rdzob 'khrul pa 'di sangs rgyas la mi mnga' ste| dper na mig nad dag pa'i gang zag la skra shad dang rab rib mi snang ba ltā bu'o101 des na kun rdzob snang ba 'di ma raig pa'i dbang gis yin pas| 'jig rten la ltos nas bzhag par zad kyi| sangs rgyas la ltos nas med pas de mkhyen pa'i ye shes kyang med pa yin no∥ gal te sangs rgyas la snang ba dang bcas pa'i blo yod na| 'khrul pa'i yul snang bas sangs rgyas nyid kyang 'khrul bcas su 'gyur la|

85 pa'i R
86 ba B
87 legs S
88 R has space after the syllable cad for approximately three letters.
89 add. | S
90 zhes BTN, om. R. The omission of shes in R is obviously due to the fact that the previous syllable is also shes.
91 om. RN
92 ∥ R
93 zhes BTRN
94 ∥ S, om. RN
95 mnga' 'o B
96 ∥ R
97 om. BTNR, apparently due to aberratio oculi
98 om. S
99 ∥ R
100 'jug B

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thub pa chen po rnam srtag tu mnyam par bzhag\(^{101}\) pa la sogs pa’i lung dang yang\(^{102}\) ’gal lo|| (rgya che rol pa las)

\[\text{yang dag par rdzogs pa’i sangs rgyas||} \]
\[\text{dus thams cad mnyam par bzhag go||} \]
\[\text{zhes gsungs so||}^{105}\] zhes zer ro||

del \(\text{de la ’dod pa snga ma ba}^{106}\) na re| rjes thob yin pa tsam gyis g.yeng ba la sogs par mi ’gyur bas| rtag tu mnyam par bzhag\(^{107}\) pa la sogs pa’i lung dang yang mi ’gal ’la|^{108}\) ’khrul yul du\(^{109}\) snang ba tsam ’khrul par brjod pa yang mi ’thad de| gzhan gyi ’shes ngo’|’^{110}
’khrul yul thams cad snang yang|^{111}\) de|^{112}\) ’dzin pa’i blos ma lus pa ’khrul pa nyid du shes^{113}\) ’bzhin du ’gro ba rnam s kyis mtho ris dang| byang grol gyi rgyu^{114}\) nyid du brten par zad pas ’khrul bcas su ga la ’gyur| des na^{115}\)

\(^{101}\) gzhag B

\(^{102}\) om. S. Compare the reading in Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo, which also reads yang.

\(^{103}\) | TRN

\(^{104}\) gzhag B

\(^{105}\) This citation, that is, the passage rgya che rol pa las| .... zhes gsungs so|| is found as a gloss in B, T, R, and N. In B it is found in the line below (after the phrase zhes gsungs so|| and before the sentence beginning with ’khrul yul ...), is written in smaller script, and is connected to the word ’gal with a dotted line. T, N, and R place it immediately following the phrase ... ’gal lo||, as in the edition above. In T and N it is written in smaller script. In the former it is marked as a gloss by means of a dotted line that connects the end of the previous sentence and the beginning of the gloss. In R it is written in a script of the same size as the rest of the text and is marked as a gloss by a numeral 3 beneath the syllable ’gal at the end of the previous sentence and beneath the syllable che at the beginning of the gloss. The gloss is missing in S.

\(^{106}\) pa R

\(^{107}\) gzhag B

\(^{108}\) | zhes gsungs so|| BTRN. This is clearly a later interpolation. Compare above the virtually identical passage in Gro-lung-pa’s bsTan rim chen mo. Note also the use of the honorific gsungs, which is out of place here.

\(^{109}\) om. BTRN

\(^{110}\) shes pa po’i R. B has space for one letter after the syllable shes, apparently from the syllable pa having been removed after erroneously being carved into the block (i.e. it, too, probably originally read shes pa po’i).

\(^{111}\) om. T

\(^{112}\) der T

\(^{113}\) add. pa S

\(^{114}\) rgyud RN

\(^{115}\) om. T

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'khrul pa tsam du yongs\textsuperscript{116} shes\textsuperscript{117} na||\textsuperscript{118} ma 'khrul nyid du nges par gzung\textsuperscript{119}||

zhes gsungs so|| zhes zer ro|| yang kha cig na re| bden zhen med pa’i kun rdzob yul du byas pa la tshad\textsuperscript{120} ma’i\textsuperscript{121} gnod pa med la| gnod pa med pa de| sangs rgyas kyi\textsuperscript{122} yul du\textsuperscript{123} byas kyang 'khrul par mi ’gro\textsuperscript{124} zhes kyang zer ro|| des na ‘dod pa snga ma ni| ji snyed pa ‘mkhyen pa\textsuperscript{125} zhes bya ba sangs rgyas la rjes thob kyi ye shes mng\textsuperscript{a^\textsuperscript{126}} bar ‘dod pa ste| ji skad du|

snga ma ji ltar mkhyen pa ni||
‘khrul med mnyam bzhag\textsuperscript{127} blo ’jug med||
phyi ma ji snyed mkhyen pa ni||\textsuperscript{128}
‘khrul\textsuperscript{129} snang rjes thob blo ’jug can||

zhes gsungs so|| ‘dod pa phyi ma ni| sangs rgyas la rjes thob kyi ye shes mi mng\textsuperscript{a}’ bar ‘dod pa ste| ‘phags pa sgo mtha’ yas pa sgrub\textsuperscript{130} pa’i mdo las|

de bzhin gshegs pa mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas nas| chos gang yang thugs su ma chud ma mkhyen no| de ci’i phyir zhe na\| mkhyen par bya’i yul gang yang med pa’i phyir ro||

zhes gsungs so|| gzhan las kyang\textsuperscript{131}.

mu stegs byed pa kha cig ni||\textsuperscript{132} thar par ‘gro dang ldan zhes smra\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{116} om. TRN
\textsuperscript{117} add. pa RN. With the addition of the syllable pa, R and N—which, like T, omit the syllable yongs in this line of verse—come to have, as required, a total of seven syllables, as opposed to T, which has only six.
\textsuperscript{118} | T
\textsuperscript{119} bzung BTRN
\textsuperscript{120} mtsphan T
\textsuperscript{121} mas T
\textsuperscript{122} kyis T
\textsuperscript{123} om. S
\textsuperscript{124} || R
\textsuperscript{125} om. BTRN
\textsuperscript{126} R has space for approximately four letters from after the syllable mng\textsuperscript{a} to the end of the line.
\textsuperscript{127} gzhag BT
\textsuperscript{128} | R
\textsuperscript{129} mkhrul S
\textsuperscript{130} bsgrub S
\textsuperscript{131} || SR
\textsuperscript{132} | TR
\textsuperscript{133} | R

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khyod ni zhi bar gshegs gyur nas\(^{134}\)
zhugs gum lta bur\(^{135}\) bgrang du med\(\)

ces gsungs so\(\) de ltar na ’dod pa tha dad pa nams bshad zin to\(^{136}\)

III. dge bshes pa ni| yang dag par rdzogs pa’i sungs rgyas dngos ni chos kyi sku yin la| chos kyi sku zhes bya ba ni| nor ba\(^{137}\) thams cad zad pa’am\(^{138}\) rang bzhin log pa tsam zhig la\(^{139}\) de skad du tha snyad byas pa tsam yin| don lachos sku skye med spros bral yin no\(^{140}\) mdo sde rgyan las kyang|

thar pa nor ba\(^{141}\) zad tsam\(^{142}\) nyid\(^{143}\)

ces gsungs so\(\) des na sungs rgyas ni chos kyi sku yin la\(^{144}\) chos sku ni skye med spros bral yin pas ye shes mi mnga’o\(^{145}\) ’o na mdo las ye shes gnyis gsungs pa dang ’gal lo\(^{146}\) zhe na\(^{147}\) mi ’gal te| mig gi rnam par shes pa sngo\(^{148}\) snang du skyes pa la\(^{149}\) sngon po mthong zhes zer ba bzhin du| ye shes nyid chos kyi dbyings su gyur pa la ji lta ba mkhyen par bzhed la| ji snyed pa mkhyen pa kun rdzobs yin pas gdul bya’i snång ba la ’jog pas na| lugs ’di bde ba yin zhes ’gsungs so\(^{150}\)

\(^{134}\) R
\(^{135}\) bu N
\(^{136}\) te R. Possibly R initially also read to, later damage to the block causing one wing of the na ro sign to break off.
\(^{137}\) pa BT
\(^{138}\) pa ’am B
\(^{139}\) \(\)
\(^{140}\) B and T here have the passage rje btsun mi la’i …. de ltar du bzhed pa med pa yin no\(\) (found in the following passage within braces).
\(^{141}\) pa B, om. T
\(^{142}\) add. pa T
\(^{143}\) \(\)
\(^{144}\) \(\)
\(^{145}\) mnga’ ’o B
\(^{146}\) add. \(\) RN
\(^{147}\) om. T
\(^{148}\) sngor BTNS
\(^{149}\) add. \(\) BRN
\(^{150}\) gsung ngo BRN
Works by Tibetan Authors

[[rje btsun mi la'i bzhed kyid ye shes bya ba yangi (de lta) shes pa bzog bcos ma phog pa 'di la yod med damj rtag chad so gos tshig dang blo las 'das pa 'di rang yin 'di la ci lta brjod kyang gel ba ma yin pa'i ye shes kyang de lta bu yin tej mkhas su re ba'i blos byas pas][sangs rgyas rang la zhus kyang phyogs geig pa cia gsung du yod mi smayi chos skyi blo 'das skye med spros bral yin nga la ma dri' sems la llos dangi de 'dra zhig yin gsungs pas de lta du bzhed pa med pa yin no'||]

de lta na spangs pa phun sum tshogs pa 'am[162] ye shes phun sum tshogs pa de sangs rgyas kyi ngo bo'am[163] rang bzhin yin[164] no|| rgyud bla ma las kyang

sangs rgyas nyid ni[165] dbyer med pa][
dag pa'i chos kyi's rab phyed[166] ba[
nyi[167] mkha' bzhin te spangs pa dang]
ye shes gnyis kyi mtshan nyid do]

zhes gsungs so|| mdo sde rgyan las kyang[168]
gang la nyon mongs shes bya'i sgrib pa'i sa bon dus ring rtag ldan pa[169]
spong ba shin tu[170] rgya chen rnam pa kun gyis[171] 'rab tu[172] bcom gyur zhing]

151 da lta'i T
152 gzo B
153 om. BT
154 brdzod R
155 illegible R
156 om. T
157 gcig BTN
158 yong B
159 cia BRN
160 bzhin N
161 The passage rje btsun mi la'i .... bzhed pa med pa yin no|| is missing in S.
162 pa 'am B
163 bo 'am BR
164 om. BRN
165 du BRTN. Compare the citation in Gro-lung-pa's bsTan rim chen mo upon which sGam-po-pa relied and which, like S, reads here ni. The reading ni is also supported by the canonical version (see the corresponding note to the translated passage from the bsTan rim chen mo).
166 che BT
167 R adds beneath the line (between the syllables nyi and mkha') the syllable ma in smaller script.
168 || R
169 | R
170 du R
171 gyi S. The reading gyis is supported by the canonical reading found in P. D, however, reads gyi. For the canonical version of this verse, see the corresponding note to the translation above.
Rong-zom-pa's Discourses on Buddhology

gnas gyur\textsuperscript{173} chos dkar yon tan mchog ldan thob pa sangs rgyas nyid||\textsuperscript{174}
ces gsungs so||

\textsuperscript{172} om. S. Together with the syllables rab tu, also found in the canonical version, this line of verse has altogether fifteen syllables, as called for.

\textsuperscript{173} 'gyur N

\textsuperscript{174} This line has only thirteen instead of the fifteen syllables required. The canonical version reads mchog rab ldan pa instead of our mchog ldan, thus yielding the proper number of syllables.
Appendix
Klong-chen-pa’s Presentation of Various Conceptions of Buddhahood in His *Yid kyi mun sel*

1. Introductory Remarks

Klong-chen-pa, in his general outline of the *Guhyagarbhatantra* entitled *Yid kyi mun sel*, sets forth the Three Jewels in a way somewhat similar to Rong-zom-pa’s presentation in the *dKon cog ‘grel*. There can be no doubt that Klong-chen-pa was inspired by Rong-zom-pa in this portion of his text, and I provide here as an appendix a translation of part of his presentation. Klong-chen-pa’s excursus\(^1\) has three main points. He starts, just like Rong-zom-pa, with the analogy of rain in order to illustrate the theme (*dpe don nye bar dgod pa*). Under the second point, he marks out different conceptions (*rnam grangs so sor bshad pa*) of the Three Jewels, and under the third point, which is translated below, he gets down to the specifics of the topic (*don ngos bzung ba*), that is, he presents the different conceptions of the Jewel that is the Buddha according to various systems, with special reference to a *buddha’s* appearance in the world, and also attempts to provide an exact identification of each system. He discusses the conceptions of three main strands:

1. The conception of the Vaibhāṣikas (*bye brag pa = bye brag tu smra ba*) of the Śrāvakas (who represent for him Hinayāna). This corresponds to the conception described in the *dKon cog ‘grel* as an undisputed view based on common Hinayāna *sūtras*.

2. The conception of the Sautrāntikas, whom he seems to take as representing a kind of borderline case between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna. This corresponds to the conception described in the *dKon cog ‘grel* as an undisputed view based on common Mahāyāna *sūtras*, that is, such that share common features with the *sūtras* of the Śrāvakas.

3. The conceptions of the various systems of Mahāyāna, including various systems of Pāramitāyāna (he considers only Madhyamaka) and Mantrayāna. The presentation here more or less corresponds to the remaining conceptions described in the *dKon cog ‘grel*, which are said to be based on uncommon Mahāyāna *sūtras* and on various *tantras*, and to be influenced by the various theories of knowledge advanced by Yogācāra.

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\(^1\) *Yid kyi mun sel* (pp. 49.6ff.).
Klong-chen-pa’s presentation of the various views regarding the existence of gnosis amongst the Madhyamikas is, however, somewhat different from that of Rong-zom-pa, as a result of his different subcategorization of Madhyamaka in this context, which may be an attempt to incorporate Rong-zom-pa’s subcategorization, while remaining faithful to his own scheme found elsewhere in his work. He divides Madhyamaka (here considered as the Pāramitāyāna) into two main parts, namely, Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and ‘Jig-rten-grags-sde-spyod-pa-Madhyamaka, and then further subdivides the former into Lower Svātantrika and Higher Svātantrika, and finally further subdivides Lower Svātantrika into Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda. The positions of Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda described by Klong-chen-pa seem, however, to correspond to what Rong-zom-pa takes to be the positions of the proponents of Yogācāra proper. Since these views led to a dispute among Yogācāra-Madhyamikas, an implicit correspondence to what is presented by Rong-zom-pa under disputed views (a.1) and (c) can be inferred. Klong-chen-pa does not consider in his presentation here what is referred to under disputed view (b) by Rong-zom-pa as Alīkākāravāda (or, as we have already seen, what Klong-chen-pa himself considers to be Samala-Alīkākāravāda, as opposed to Nirmala-Alīkākāravāda, which is actually discussed by him here under the name Nirākāravāda). Furthermore, it seems to me that there is no substantial difference between the positions of what Klong-chen-pa calls Higher Svātantrika and the ‘Jig-rten-grags-sde-spyod-pa-Madhyamaka. (The latter clearly corresponds to the position of the Madhyamaka branch referred to by Rong-zom-pa as Sarvadharmapratisṭhānavāda.) Since, in Klong-chen-pa’s presentation of the former, reference is made to the conventional level, it may be that for him the difference between the two is that Higher Svātantrika does not maintain the indivisibility of the two truths (though for Rong-zom-pa, if we assume Higher Svātantrika to be Apratīṣṭhānavāda, it does). This discrepancy is obviously due to the fact that Klong-chen-pa, unlike Rong-zom-pa, additionally has the subdivision of ‘Jig-rten-grags-sde-spyod-pa-Madhyamaka (apparently equated by him with Prāśāṅgika-Madhyamaka), which he seems to place doxographically higher than Sarvadharmapratisṭhānavāda.

2 In his Yid bzhin mdzod ‘grel, Klong-chen-pa explains this division of Svātantrika as follows: “In this regard, there are two [subdivisions, namely], Lower and Higher Svātantrika. As to the first [subdivision], in general, Cittamātra is referred to [by some] as Lower Svātantrika, and yet if one subdivides the scriptural systems that do not maintain [the existence] of a knowable that is self-cognition on the absolute level (i.e. scriptural systems of Madhyamaka), [there are] those who maintain that on the absolute level appearances are illusory by nature and inherently empty, and those who do not [do so], and [it is these] two that are considered Lower and Higher, [respectively]. Therefore, those who maintain that the adherents of Yogācāra are [Lower] Svātantrikas simply do not understand the doxographical system” (Yid bzhin mdzod ‘grel, vol. 2, p. 628.1–3: ‘di la] rang rgyud ‘og ma dang gong ma gnyis so] dang po nl spiyir sems tsam la rang rgyud ‘og mar grags kyang shes bya rang rig don dam du mi ‘dod pa’i gzhung la phy e nal snang ba sgv ma’i ngo bo rang bzhin gvyi stong pa don dam du ‘dod pa dangj mi ‘dod pa gnyis la gong ‘og tu bzhag pa’i phyir] rnal ‘byor spyod ‘pa’i sa’ [= pa la?] rang rgyud du ‘dod pas grub mtha’i don ma go bar zad do]). Thus, according to his remarks here, the Lower Svātantrikas seem to be Māyopamādavyavādins, and Higher Svātantrikas Sarvadharmapratisṭhānavādins. Nonetheless, as proponents of Lower Svātantrika, Klong-chen-pa names Sāgaramegha (ibid., p. 628.3) and Śrīgupta (p. 632.2), though he notes a difference between their positions, and as proponents of Higher Svātantrika he names Jñānagarbha, Śāntarakṣiṣṭa, and Kamalaśīla (p. 635.1). Except for Sāgaramegha, who is associated with the Yogācāra school, all scholars mentioned by him here are commonly considered Yogācāra-Madhyamikas.
Klong-chen-pa’s presentation of the conceptions of Buddhahood within various Mantra systems is also somewhat different from that of Rong-zom-pa, in both form and content. Rong-zom-pa presents three Tantric conceptions of Buddhahood: the first from the Kriyā- and Ubbhayatantra systems, the second from the Yogatantra system, and the third from the Greater Yoga systems. The first two are discussed by Klong-chen-pa under the category of Exoteric Yogas, while the third corresponds to Klong-chen-pa’s category of Esoteric Yogas, under which he describes three different conceptions of Buddhahood, namely, those of Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga. Notable here is Klong-chen-pa’s association of the notion of various kinds of bliss (of which he otherwise makes no mention) only with Anuyoga, which clearly corresponds to disputed view (a) presented by Rong-zom-pa. The conceptions of Buddhahood he assigns to the scriptures of Mahāyoga and Atiyoga have no parallels in Rong-zom-pa’s presentation. Also to be noted is that while he employs the distinctly assertive verb ‘dod in connection with all conceptions within the Sūtra systems, in the case of the Tantric systems he employs it only in the case of Atiyoga, while in connection with the Exoteric Yoga systems and Mahāyoga he employs the term zer, commonly expressing scepticism, and in connection with Anuyoga the rather neutral bya. This may be a subtle attempt to follow Rong-zom-pa’s division into undisputed views (that is, for Klong-chen-pa, the various conceptions of Buddhahood found in the scriptures of Hinayāna, non-Tantric Mahāyāna, and Atiyoga) and disputed views (that is, for Klong-chen-pa, the conceptions of Buddhahood found in all Tantric systems except for Atiyoga). The table below shows the positions presented by Klong-chen-pa in comparison with the positions presented by Rong-zom-pa in his dKon cog 'grel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yid kyi mun sel</th>
<th>dKon cog 'grel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vaibhāṣikas (Hinayāna)</td>
<td>= undisputed (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sautrāntikas (borderline case between Hinayāna and Mahāyāna)</td>
<td>= undisputed (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Lower Svātantrika (≈ Māyopama-vāda)</td>
<td>= undisputed (c) disputed (a.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nirākāravāda</td>
<td>= undisputed (d) disputed (c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ‘Jig-rten-grags-sde-spyod-pa-Madhyamaka (≈ Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka)</td>
<td>≈ position 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Exoteric Yoga</td>
<td>= position 1, i.e. disputed view (a.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anuyoga</td>
<td>= position 1, i.e. disputed view (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Atiyoga</td>
<td>no parallel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: The positions presented in the Yid kyi mun sel in comparison with the positions presented in the dKon cog 'grel
2. A Translation

III. The third [point], the actual topic in its specifics, [has] three [subpoints]:

1. The first [subpoint concerns the system of] Hīnayāna. According to the Vaibhāṣikās among the Śrāvakas, [the Buddha] was an ordinary person of sharp faculties in his final existence. Having become awakened through great diligence, [he] engaged in salvific activities here in Saha[loka] (mi mjad ['jig rten], i.e. the ‘[world of] endurance’) on the strength of his resolution and worthy disciples. Having turned the Wheel of the Dharma, [he] passed into [pari]nirvāṇa, and, forever abiding in the sphere of tranquillity (zhi ba), [he] has not, [they] maintain (‘dod), engaged in salvific activities since then.

2. The Sautrāntikas maintain (‘dod) that [the Buddha was] a bodhisattva in his final existence and that [his] body was produced through a resolution and generated by, as causes, the residual impressions relating to the view of a self and the ‘place of abode where [one is engrossed in] ignorance’ (gnas kyi sa’i ma rig pa = ma rig pa’i gnas kyi sa: avidyāvāśabhūmi). Thus [they] maintain that after becoming awakened, [the Buddha] passed into [pari]nirvāṇa, and if [he can] be of benefit to disciples, [he] effortlessly manifests [himself] from the sphere of tranquillity. This [tradition] is known as Sautrāntika because it follows the stūras, that is, for the most part [those of] the scriptural tradition (gzhung lugs) of the Śrāvakas, and [to a lesser degree also those of] the Mahāyāṇa [scriptural] system (tshul).

3. [The third subpoint, namely,] Mahāyāṇa, [has] in turn two [subdivisions], namely, Pāramitā[yāna] and Mantra[yāna].

3.1. The first [subdivision has] in turn two [further subdivisions], namely, Yogācāra-Madhyamaka and [‘Jig-rten]-grags-sde-spyod-pa-Madhyamaka.

3.1.1. The first (i.e. Yogācāra-Madhyamaka) [has] two [branches], namely, Lower Svātantrika and Higher Svātantrika.

3.1.1.1. The first [branch, Lower Svātantrika, has] in turn two [further subbranches, namely, Sākāravāda and Nirākāravāda].

3.1.1.1.1. The Sākāra[vāda subbranch] maintains (‘dod) that what appears as external objects is not outside the mind, but rather the mind itself appears as bodies, abodes, and objects of enjoyment. Even after [one] becomes awakened, [one’s] gnosis, which is free

3 I understand the phrase rgyu dang as meaning rgyu ni. Compare also the unusual use of dang in §3.1.1.1 below.

4 Klong-chen-pa’s use of the formulation gnas kyi sa’i ma rig pa rather than the common formulation of the term, namely, ma rig pa’i gnas kyi sa, is notable. This might be an influence of Rong-zom-pa. On this term, see the translation of the Sangs sa chen mo (§IV.2.C.i), n. 95, and the cited passage from Bhavya’s Madhyamakapradīpa found above (“Works by Indian Authors,” §1.E).
from all defilements, appears as objects of enjoyments,\(^5\) such as \(\text{rūpakāyas}\) and \(\text{buddha-}
\)fields, along with their ornaments, and it is because of this that \(\text{a buddha can}\) act for the
sake of living beings. Furthermore, [they] maintain that since \(\text{he}\) appears in the form of
\(\text{a nirmāṇa[kāya]}\) to impure [living beings] and in the form of a \(\text{sambhogakāya}\) to pure
living beings [his activities] are never-ceasing.

3.1.1.2. The Nirākāra[vāda subbranch] maintains (\('dod\)) that even the minds [of living
beings] of the three spheres [of existence] are free from images that appear as [external]
objects. Yet appearances [arise due to] residual impressions, which cannot be expressed
in terms of mind, [the appearance] itself, or anything else. But once the residual
impressions have been utterly cleansed at the level of a \(\text{buddha}\), gnosis that is free from
images and is characterized by momentariness arises continuously, while benefit arises to
living beings—like [those that arise from a wish-fulfilling] jewel or a wish-fulfilling
tree—[in the form of] manifestations of \(\text{rūpakāyas}\), by virtue of [previous] resolutions,
compassion, and the great gnosis.\(^6\) Thus they claim that gnosis as a continuous stream of
moments is existent at the ultimate level.

3.1.1.2. The second [branch], Higher Svātantrika, maintains (\('dod\)) that when [someone]
becomes awakened into the state attained through the accumulation of beneficial
resources and gnosis, on the ultimate level, [such an Awakened One can] not be
established as [having] the nature of anything, and hence there are no salvific activities
[for him] to engage in, nor does [he] do so. Still, [he] does engage in salvific activities on
the conventional level, appearing, on account of [previous] resolutions and great
compassion, in the form of \(\text{sambhogakāyas}\) to beings who are abiding at the
[boddhisattva] stages, and in the form of \(\text{nirmānakāyas}\) to ordinary beings, Śrāvaka
[saints], and \(\text{pratyekabuddhas}\).

3.1.2. The second [subdivision of Pāramitāyāna, \(\text{Jig-rten}\)-grags-sde-spyod-pa-
Madhyamaka, maintains (\('dod\)) that when [one] becomes awakened, the activities of the
mind and the mental factors come to rest in the \(\text{dharmadhātu}\), like clouds disappearing in
space, [which is clear by] nature, and hence although no Body or gnosis is established,
from the perspective of others who are disciples, [a \(\text{buddha}\)], on account of [his] previous
resolutions, manifests the two \(\text{rupakayas}\) and thus performs salvific activities.

3.2. The second [subpoint], Mantra[\(\text{yān}\)], also [has] two subdivisions, [namely, Exoteric
Yoga and Esoteric Yoga systems].

3.2.1. The first [subdivision, that of] Exoteric [\(\text{Yoga}\)], claims (\(\text{zer}\)) that a \(\text{buddha}\) is the
product of immeasurable accumulations of beneficial resources and gnosis, that [he] is
characterized by the great gnosis and that [he possesses] a Body of great enjoyment,
which [abides] in an utterly pure realm and is surrounded by pure beings, that [he]

\(^5\) I take the particle \(\text{dang}\) in the phrase \(\text{longs spyod dang snang bas}\) to be used in a terminative
sense, as if reading \(\text{longs spyod du snang bas}\). Also compare the use of \(\text{dang}\) in the sense of \(\text{ni}\) in
\(\text{§2}\) above.

\(^6\) As pointed out earlier, the term 'great gnosis' refers to the gnosis accumulated on the path,
particularly non-conceptual gnosis. See the translation of the \(\text{Sangs sa chen mo}\), n. 101.

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engages in salvific activities according to the capabilities of [his] disciples, but that [he] does not indulge in an assembly of consorts, for this would be a reproachable matter. To be sure, in the view of some [he might] appear to be an emanated consort, but there is no copulation. From out of that [Body of great enjoyment] he appears as various nirmāṇakāyas, by means of which [he] engages in salvific activities.

3.2.2. The second [subdivision, that of] Esoteric [Yogas, has] in turn three [subdivisions, namely, Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga].

3.2.2.1. Mahāyoga—that is, the [scriptures of the] Generation [Phase]—claims (zer) that [a buddha], being primordially awakened, becomes manifest through [the skilful use of] stratagems and insight. Then, from out of the luminous and naturally pure state of the dharmakāya and sambhogakāya, the nirmāṇakāya appears, and thus [the constituents of a buddha?] are perpetually and spontaneously present.

3.2.2.2. Anuyoga—that is, the Āgama [Section]—states (bya) that [a buddha] is Samantabhadra-Bodhicitta, the great Vajradhara who possesses a Body that is eternally as if it had just arisen—a [Body of] great enjoyment, the source of all manifestations—[and] who constantly abides in an utterly pure realm in a circle of countless assemblies of consorts without being separated from any [kind of] bliss. As to bliss, [he] is endowed both with the bliss of having obtained command over the samādhi associated with the dharmadhātu, the object that is true reality, and with mental bliss. [He also] possesses [the forms of] supreme bliss, including the bliss [induced by] external [objects of] desire, such as [agreeable] visible matter, and the bliss of copulating with a consort. [He is further] endowed with undefiled bliss, immeasurable bliss, immutable bliss, and great bliss, and with [the ability to] generate bliss in disciples.

3.2.2.3. The Great Perfection (i.e. Atiyoga) maintains ('dod) that [a buddha] is the inseparability ('du 'bral med pa nyid) of Bodies and gnosis, which are spontaneously present from primordial time, that in the realm of grand (lhun) Ghanavyūha, [his] luminous mandala pervades the realm of space, and that [he] is devoid of the characteristics of blissfulness and luminosity [expressible in terms of] dissimilarity or identicalness, is free from manifoldness, and the like. On account of [his] self-occurring compassion and salvific activities the three nirmāṇakāyas appear in the world of [his] disciples, reaching far and wide (phyogs mthas gtugs pa), and engage in salvific activities according to [their] individual devotion.7

The Tibetan text reads as follows (P, fol. 12b8; D, fol. 11b2–3; S, vol. p. 827.9–11):

bzo dang skye dang byang chub che

mya ngan 'das pa rtog ston pas [P pa]| |
sangs rgyas sprul pa'i sku 'di ni| |
rnam par grol ba'i thabs chen no| |

The three nirmāṇakāyas are referred to in Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra 9.64:

śilpajanmanmahābodhisadānirvānadarśanaīh | buddhanirmāṇakāya 'yam mahopayo' vimocane ||. (a) Lévi has mahāmāya.

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These are a presentation of the Jewel [that is the Buddha], shown together with the way [it] manifests great compassion.

Mi-pham, in his *mKhas 'jug*, explains these forms of emanations as follows: (1) The Emanation of Great Awakening (*byang chub chen po*), or the Supreme Emanation (*mchog gi sprul sku*), is an emanation of a Teacher (*ston pa*), such as Śākyamuni Buddha, who demonstrates the ‘twelve deeds’ (*mdzad pa bcu gnyis*). (2) The Emanation of Artistry (*bzo sprul sku*) displays itself—for the sake of taming others—as various sorts of beings, such as the emanation as a *gandharva* musician (*dri za'i pi wam len pa*), who manifested in order to tame the *gandharva* Rab-dga'. According to Mi-pham, this kind of *nirmānakāya* does not appear in the form of a *buddha*, relics, lotuses, precious stones, or the like, as asserted by some people. These, states Mi-pham, belong to a fourth category, namely, the Emanation of Various [Forms] (*sna tshogs sprul sku*) for the benefit of others. (3) The Emanation of Birth (*skye ba sprul sku*) is an emanation that takes birth, and it can appear as various sentient beings, such as animals, in order to tame others (*ibid., pp. 223.3–224.1*: *sangs rgyas sprul pa'i sku ni sríd pa ji sríd du phyogs dus kyi 'gro ba rnam la phan bde sna tshogs pa dag dus mnyam du mdzad pa ste* de la dbye na ston pa sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das lta bu mdzad pa bcu gnyis kyi tshul ston pa byang chub chen po'am mchog gi sprul skur dri za rab dga' 'dul phyir dri za'i pi wam len par sprul pa lta bu sogs 'dul ba'i dbang gis gang zag rnam pa sna tshogs kyi gzugs su sprul pa bzo sprul sku ste sprul sems kyi dbang gis dper na bzo byas pa'i gzugs litar gdul bya'i nor de dang der snang ba tsam yin pa'i phyir de liar brjod do kha cig sangs rgyas kyi sku rten rnam kyang bzo sprul gyi khongs su gtogs par 'dod pa yod kyang sna tshogs sprul skur gtogs so| sems can rnam s'dul ba'i dbang gis bryga byin dang ri dwags ru ru sogs skye gnas sna tshogs su skye bar ston pa snye na sprul pa'i sku dang gsum du bzhed la gzhon yang ring brel dang padma dang nor bu dang zas gos shing rta sogs sems can phan bde la sbyor ba'i gzugs sna tshogs su ston pa la sna tshogs sprul pa'i sku shes kyang bya'o||). Cf. NSTB, vol. 1, pp. 128–134, where these three forms, referred to as (1) *rang bzhin sprul pa'i sku* or 'natural emanation,' (2) *mchog gi sprul pa'i sku* or 'supreme emanation,' and (3) *sna tshogs sprul sku* or 'various emanations,' are explained (a summary is found on p. 21). The notion that a *buddha* can manifest in various ways, including curious forms, such as prostitutes—which is found even in non-Tantric sources—takes on a new dimension in the Tantric Buddhist systems, particularly those in which wrathful manifestations play a central role. As scriptural support for the notion that a *buddha* can manifest in various ways, including in the form of wrathful deities, hunters, or prostitutes, Klong-chen-pa, in his *Grub mtha' mdzod* (p. 14.4–6) cites a certain *gsang ba yid bzhin rin po che bkod pa'i rgyud*:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{See also Wangchuk 2007, pp. 28 & 230, where various possible emanation forms of a \textit{buddha} are briefly discussed.}
\end{align*}
\]
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

3. The Tibetan Text

III. gsum pa don ngos bzung ba la gsum las

1. dang po theg pa chung ngu nyan thos bye brag pa ltar na| so so’i skye bo dbang po rnon po srid pa tha ma zhig| brtson pa chen pos sangs rgyas nas bdag gi smon lam dang| gdul bya’i skal bas mi mjed ’dir don mdzad cing| chos kyi ’khor lo bskor nas mya ngan las ’das te zhi ba’i dbyings su gtan du bzhugs nas phyis don mdzad par mi ’dod do||

2. mdo sde pa ltar na byang chub sens dpa’ srid pa tha ma pa’i lus ni smon lam gyis bsgrubs te| rgyu dang9 bdag tu lta ba’i bag chags dang gnas kyi sa’i ma rig pas bskyed pa yin par ’dod pas sangs rgyas te mya ngan las ’das nas| gdul bya’i don du ’gyur na zhi ba’i dbyings las sprul pa ’bad rtsol med par ’dod do|| ’di nyid gzhung lugs phal cher nyan thos la| tshul theg pa chen po’i mdo sde’i rjes su ’brangs pas mdo sde pa zhes grags so||

3. theg pa chen po la’ang gnyis te| pha rol tu phyin pa dang| sngags so||

3.1. dang po la’ang gnyis te| mal ’byor spyod pa’i dbu ma dang| grags sde spyod pa’i dbu ma’o||

3.1.1. dang po la gnyis te| rang rgyud ’og ma dang| gong ma’o||

3.1.1.1. dang po la’ang gnyis las|

3.1.1.1.1. rnam bcas pa ltar na| phyi rol gyi don du snang ba sens las gud na med la| sens nyid lus dang gnas dang longs spyod lta bur snang ba ste| sangs rgyas nas kyang nyon mongs pa mtha’ dag dang bral ba’i ye shes gzugs kyi sku| sangs rgyas kyi zhung dang| de’i rgyan la sols pa’i longs spyod dang10 snang bas ’gro ba’i don byed par ’dod la| de’ang ma dag pa la sprul pa dang| dag pa’i ’gro ba la longs skur snang bas dus rgyun mi ’chad par ’dod do||

3.1.1.1.2. rnam med pa ltar na| khams gsum pa’i sens kyang don ltar snang ba’i rnam pa dang bral ba yin la| snang ba ni sens dang| de nyid dang gzhan du brjod du med pa’i bag chags te| sangs rgyas pa’i dus na bag chags yongs su dag nas ye shes rnam pa dang bral ba skad cig ma’i mtshan nyid rgyun ’brel bar skye zhung| smon lam dang thugs rje dang ye shes chen po’i dbang gis| gzugs kyi sku mngon par snang ba nor bu dang dpag bsam gyi shing ltar ’gro ba’i don ’byung bar ’dod de| de las ni skad <61> cig ma’i rgyun dang ’brel ba’i ye shes nyid don dam par yod pa nyid du khas len to||

3.1.1.2. gnyis pa rang rgyud gong ma ltar na| bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs las grub pa’i ngang du sangs rgyas pa naj don dam par gang gi’ang rang bzhin du ma grub pas don bya ba dang byed pa med kyang| kun rdzob tu smon lam dang thugs rje chen pos sar gnas

8 Yid kyi mun sel (pp. 59.2–63.4).
9 On the use of the particle dang here, see above n. 3.
10 On the use of the particle dang here, see above n. 5.

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Appendix

kyi sems dpa’ la longs sku| so so’i skye bo dang nyan rang la sprul pa’i skur snang bas don mdzad par ‘dod do||

3.1.2. gnyis pa grags sde spyod pa’i dbu ma ltar na| sangs rgyas pa’i tshe rang bzhi’i mkha’ la sprin dengs pa ltar sems dang sems byung gi ‘jug pa chos kyi dbyings su zhi bas sku dang ye shes su grub pa med kyang| sngon gyi smon lam gyis gdul bya’i gzhavan snang du gzugs sku gnyis snang bas don mdzad par ‘dod do||

3.2. gnyis pa gsang sgags la’ang gnyis las|

3.2.1. dang po phyi pa ltar na| sangs rgyas ni bsod nams dang| ye shes kyi tshogs tshad med pa las grub pa’i ye shes chen po’i bdag nyid| yongs su dag pa’i zhing na longs spyod chen po’i sku dag pa’i sems dpas bskor bai ji ltar ’dul ba’i dbang dang bcas pas don mdzad cing| btsun mo’i tshogs la mi spyod de smad pa’i gnas yin pa’i phyir ro|| ‘on kyang ‘ga’ zhig gi dong [= ngor?] sprul pa’i yum du snang yang lhan cig sbyor ba ni ma yin no| de las sprul pa’i sku sna tshogs su snang bas don mdzad pa’o zhes zer ro||

3.2.2. gnyis pa nang pa’ang gsum las|

3.2.2.1. bskyed pa ma hā yo ga ltar na| ye nas sngas rgyas su gnas pa thabs dang shes rab kyis mngon du byas pa na| chos kyi gsal la rang bzhi’i gnyis dag pa’i ngang las| sprul pa’i sku snang bas rtag tu lhun gmis grub pa’o zhes zer ro||

3.2.2.2. lung a nu yo ga ltar na| kun tu bzang po byang chub kyi sems rdo rje’chang chen po rtag tu da ltar byung ba lta bu’i sku mnga’ ba| longs spyod chen po| sprul pa thams cad kyi ‘byung gnas| rtag tu yongs su dag pa’i zhing kham na btsun mo’i tshogs dpag tu med pa’i dkyil ‘khor na| bde ba thams cad dang mi ‘bral bar bzhugs te| bde ba de yangchos kyi dbyings de kho na nyid kyi don la ting nge ‘dzin gyi mnga’ brnyes pa’i bde ba dang ldan pa| yid bde ba dang ldan pa| gzugs la sogs pa phyi rol gyi ’dod pa’i bde ba dang| yun dang mnyam par sbyor ba’i bde ba la sogs te| bde ba mchog dang ldan pa| bde ba zag pa med pa dang| bde ba tshad med dang| bde ba mi ’gyur ba dang| bde ba chen po dang| gdul bya thams cad la bde ba bskyed pa dang ldan pa’o zhes bya’o||

3.2.2.3. rdzogs pa chen po ltar na| ye nas lhun gmis grub pa’i sku dang ye shes ’du ’bral med pa nyid| lhun stug po bkod pa’i zhing na| ’od gsal ba’i dkyil ‘khor nam mkha’i dbyings khyab pa las| bde ba dang gsal ba zhes tha dad pa’am geig pa la sogs pa’i mtshan nyid med cing spros pa dang bral ba rang byung gi thugs rje dang| mdzad pas sprul pa’i sku gsum gdul bya’i ’jig rten du phyogs mthas gtug [= gtugs] par snang zhiing| so so’i mos pa dang mthun par don mdzad pa’o zhes ’dod do||

‘di dag ni dkon mchog gi rnam par bzhag pa ste| thugs rje chen po’i ’char tshul dang bcas pa bstan pa’o||
Abbreviations and Bibliography

1. Sigla Used in the Critical Editions and in Citations of Tibetan Texts

A  Rong zom bka' 'bum (= RZKB)
B  In citations from Rong-zom-pa’s works: Rong zom gsung ’bum (= RZSB)
B  Thar rgyan, Bhutanese edition
Bg  Bai ro'i rgyud 'bum (= BG)
C  Rong zom gsung ’bum, the Yeshe De Project Edition (= RZSB-YDPE)
D  In citations from Rong-zom-pa’s works: Rong zom chos bzang gi gsung ’bum (= RZChZSB)
D  In canonical citations: sDe-dge bKa’-gyur and bsTan-’gyur
F  dKon cog ’grel, in the NyK
G  dKon cog ’grel, Zhol-par-khang edition
N  Thar rgyan, Nepalese edition
NyK  rNying ma bka’ ma rgyas pa (= NyK)
P  Peking bsTan-’gyur
R  Thar rgyan, Rumtek edition
S  In canonical citations: Chengdu, Sichuan bsTan-’gyur (= Sichuan)

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The material included in this study was prepared and critically edited over a fairly long period of time, and not always with the intention of including all of it within a single study. As a result, in four cases (the sigla B, D, S, and T) the same siglum has been employed to designate two different things. Expanding these sigla was considered, but given the number of edited and cited Tibetan texts, it was feared that numerous errors could have resulted. Since in all cases the context and material used are clearly distinguishable, I have decided to keep the sigla as assigned originally, trusting that there will be no confusion.
Rong-'zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

S Thar rgyan, bKra-shis-chos-'khor-lhun-po'i-gling edition
T In canonical citations: sTog bKa'-gyur
T Thar rgyan, rTsib-ri edition
Tb mTshams-brag edition of the rNying ma rgyud 'bum (= NyG)
Tk gTing skyes Edition of the rNying ma rgyud 'bum (= NyG)

2. Journals, Collections, Series, and Institutes

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>BG</td>
<td>Bai ro'i rgyud 'bum. The rGyud 'bum of Vairocana. A collection of ancient tantras and esoteric instructions compiled and translated by the eighth century Tibetan master. Reproduced from the rare manuscript belonging to the Venerable Tokden Rimpoche of Gangon. Leh: Tashi Y. Tashigangpa, 1971. 8 vols. (following the siglum employed in the catalogue published online in the THDL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIHTS</td>
<td>Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBK</td>
<td>Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū = Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies (JIBS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IeT</td>
<td>Indica et Tibetica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIBS</td>
<td>The International Institute for Buddhist Studies</td>
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<td>IIJBS</td>
<td>The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is.M.E.O.</td>
<td>Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente</td>
</tr>
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<td>IsIAO</td>
<td>Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAOS</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society</td>
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<tr>
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<td>JNRC</td>
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<td>PIATS</td>
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### 3. Primary Sources: Indian Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/Editor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Abhidhānaśānti (Abhidhānaśānti)</td>
<td>Anonymous, <em>Ekasabdababvarthapraavartanābhidhānaśānti.</em></td>
<td>- Tib. Ōtani 5899; Tōhoku 4454; Sichuan 3691, vol. 120.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Abhidharmaśastra (Abhidharmashastra)</td>
<td>Vasubandhu, <em>Abhidharmaśastra.</em></td>
<td>- See <em>Abhidharmaśastra.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Abhidharmaśastra (Abhidharmashastra)</em></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- Tib. Ōtani 5591; Tōhoku 4090; Sichuan 3319, vol. 79.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Abhidharmaśastra (Abhidharmashastra)</em></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- See also Lee 2005.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Works that the Tibetan tradition claims to be of Indian origin but which have no (reconstructed) Sanskrit title are listed under §4 (“Primary Sources: Tibetan Works”).
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

**Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya**

Jinaputra, *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*.
- Tib. Ötani 5554; Tōhoku 4053; Sichuan 3282, vol. 76.

**Abhisamayālāṃkārā**

Maitreya (ascribed), *Abhisamayālāṃkāra*.

**Abhisamayāmāṇjarī**

Śubhakaragupta, *Abhisamayāmāṇjarī*.

**Akutobhāyā**

Nāgarjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakavṛtti*akutobhāyā.
- Tib. Ötani 5229; Tōhoku 3829; Sichuan 3056, vol. 57.

**Anavatapanāgarajaparipṛcchā**

Āryānnavatapanāgarajaparipṛcchānāmaṁamahāyānasūtra.
- Tib. Skorupski 309; Tōhoku 156.

**Aṣṭāsāhasrikā**

Āryāṣṭāsāḥsārikā Prajñāpāramitānāmaṁamahāyānasūtra.

**Avatamsaka**

Buddhāvatamsakanāmaṁamahāvaipulyasūtra.
- Tib. Skorupski 10; Tōhoku 44.

**Bhadramāyākārvyākaraṇa**

Āryabhadramāyākārvyākaraṇanāmaṁamahāyānasūtra.
- Tib. Skorupski 11.21; Tōhoku 65.
- See also Régamey 1938.

**Bhadrapālasūtra**

Pratyutpānabuddhasammukhāvasthitasamādhiśūtra.

**Bhāvanākramopadeśa**

Jñānakirtī, *Pāramitāyānabhāvanākramopadeśa*.
- Tib. Ötani 5317; Tōhoku 3922; Sichuan 3151, vol. 64.

**Bodhicaryāvatāra**

Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.
Abbreviations and Bibliography

*Bodhicittabhāvana* Mañjuśrīmitra, *Bodhicittabhāvanā*.
- Tib. Ōtani 3418; Tōhoku 2591; Sichuan 1497, vol. 33; Tb 22; Tk 38; Bg 119.
  - See also *Byang chub sems bsgom pa'i rgyud*.

*Bodhicittabhāvanānirdeśa* Mañjuśrīmitra (ascribed), *Bodhicittabhāvanādvādaśārtha-nirdeśa*.
- Tib. Ōtani 3405; Tōhoku 2578; Sichuan 1484, vol. 33; Bg 115 (incomplete).

*Bodhicittavivaraṇa* Nāgārjuna (ascribed), *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*.

*Bodhipatāla* *Bodhipatāla* of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.
  - See *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.
  - See Nakamura 2004.

*Bodhisattvabhūmi* Asaṅga (ascribed), *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.
- Tib. Ōtani 5538; Tōhoku 4037; Sichuan 3267, vol. 73.

*Buddhabhumisūtra* Āryabuddhabhūmināmahāyānāsūtra.
- Tib. Skorupski 39; Tōhoku 275.

*Buddhabhumivyākhyāna* Śīlabhadra, *Āryabuddhabhūmisūtra*.
- Tib. Ōtani 5498; Tōhoku 3997; Sichuan 3229, vol. 66.

*Buddhānusmṛtivṛtti* Asaṅga (ascribed), *Buddhānusmṛtivṛtti*.
- Tib. Ōtani 5482; Tōhoku 3982; Sichuan 3213, vol. 65.

*Buddhasamayogatantra* Sarvabuddhasamayogādākinījālasamvarottaratāntra.
- Tib. Skorupski 395; Tōhoku 366; Tb 404.

*Caryāmelāpapakrādipa* Āryadeva, *Caryāmelāpapakrādipa*.

*Caturāsītaka* Āryadeva, *Caturāsītakasāstraṅāmakārikā*.
- Tib. Ōtani 5246; Tōhoku 3846; Sichuan 3073, vol. 57.

*Caturāṅgārthāloka* Hüṃkāra, *Caturāṅgārthāloka*.
- Tib. Ōtani 2548; Tōhoku 1676; Sichuan 0578, vol. 14.

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Rong-zom-pa's Discourses on Buddhology

*Catusparīṣatsūtra*  *Catusparīṣatsūtra.*
- See Ernst Waldschmidt 1957.
- See also Kloppenborg 1973.

*Dharmasamgītisūtra* *Āryadharmasamgītīnāmamahāyānasūtra.*
- Tib. Skorupski 113; Tōhoku 238.

*Dharmasamgraha* Nāgārjuna (ascribed), *Dharmasamgraha.*

*Dhātupātha* Pāṇini, *Dhātupātha.*

*Dṛṣṭīvibhāga* *Madhyamakā-Sīṁha, Saṁskṛtanānādṛṣṭīvibhāga.*
- Tib. Ītani 5295; Tōhoku 3898; Sichuan 3127, vol. 63.

*Drumakinnararājaparipṛcchā* *Drumakinnararājaparipṛcchāsūtra.*

Ekāśarakoṣa  *Puruṣottamadeva, Ekāśarakoṣa.*

Ekasmṛtyupadeśa  *Atiśa, Ekasmṛtyupadeśa.*
- Tib. Ītani 5323; Tōhoku 3928; Sichuan 3157, vol. 64; in Jo bo rje'i gsung 'bum, pp. 808–809.
- In Sherburne 2000, pp. 414–419 (Tibetan text and English translation).

Ghanavyūha *Āryaghanavyūhanāmamahāyānasūtra.*
- Tib. Skorupski 250; Tōhoku 110.

*Guhyagarbhatantra* *Śrīguhyagarbhatattvavinīścaya.*
- Tib. Ītani 455; Tōhoku 832.

*Guhyagarbhatantra-vyākhyāna* *Sūryasimhaprabha, Śrīguhyagarbhatattvanirnayavyākhyānātīkā.*
- Tib. Ītani 4719; Sichuan 2595, vol. 43; in NyK, vol. 24 (ya); [not found in D].

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Abbreviations and Bibliography

**Guhyasamājatantra** Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittarahasyo guhyasamājanāmamahākalparāja.

- Tib. Skorupski 408; Tōhoku 442.

**Guṇavati** Ratnakarasānti, *Guṇavatītikā*.

- See *Mahāmāyātantra*.

**Hevajratantra** Śrīhevajramahātantrarāja.


**Jñāṇālokālaṃkāra** Sarvabuddhaviṣayāvatārajñāṇālokālaṃkāranāmamahāyāna-sūtra.

- Tib. Skorupski 65; Tōhoku 110.

**Kāśyapaparivarta** Kāśyapaparivarta.


**Kāyatrāyāvatāraramukha** Nāgamitra, *Kāyatrāyāvatāraramukhanāmaśāstra*.

- Tib. Ōtani 5290; Tōhoku 3890; Sichuan 3119, vol. 63.

**Kāyatrāyavṛtti** Jñānacandra, *Kāyatrāyavṛtti*.

- Tib. Ōtani 5291; Tōhoku 3891; Sichuan 3120, vol. 63.
Rong-zom-pa’s Discourses on Buddhology

Krṣṇayamārintantrapāñjikā Padmapāni, Krṣṇayamārintantrapāñjikā.

- Tib. Īṭatī 2785; Tōhoku 1922; Sichuan 0824, vol. 23.

Lalitavistara Āryalalitavistararanāmamahāyānasūtra.


- Tib. Skorupski 35; Tōhoku 95.

Lāṅkāvatārasūtra Āryalāṅkāvātāramahāyānasūtra.


- Tib. T 245; D 107.

Madhyamakālaṃkāra Śāntarakṣita, Madhyamakālaṃkāra.


Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti Śāntarakṣita, Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti.

- Tib. Īṭatī 5285; Tōhoku 3885; Sichuan 3114, vol. 62.

Madhyamakapradīpa Bhavya, Madhyamakaratnapradīpa.

- Tib. Īṭatī 5254; Tōhoku 3854; Sichuan 3081, vol. 57.

Madhyamakavatāra Candrakīrti, Madhyamakāvatārakārikā.


Madhyamakavatārabhāṣya Candrakīrti, Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya.

- See Madhyamakāvatāra.

Madhyāntavibhāga Maitreya (ascribed), Madhyāntavibhāgakārikā.

- See Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya.

- Tib. Īṭatī 5522; Tōhoku 4021; Sichuan 3253, vol. 70.

- See also Yamaguchi 1934.

Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya Vasubandhu, Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya.


Mahābalatāntara Śrīmahābalatāntararāja.

- Tib. Skorupski 353; Tōhoku 391.

Mahāmāyātantra Mahāmāyātantra.


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Abbreviations and Bibliography

**Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra** Āryamahāparinirvāṇanāmamahāyānasūtra.

**Mahāyānasamgraha** Asaṅga, *Mahāyānasamgraha*.

**Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāra** Maitreya (ascribed), *Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāarakārikā*.
- Tib. Ōtani 5521; Tōhoku 4020; Sichuan 3252, vol. 70.
- See also Funahashi 1985 (for an edition of chapters 1, 2, 3, 9 & 10).

*(Mahāyāna)sūtrālāṃkāravyākhyā* Sthiramati, *Mahāyānasūtrālāṃkāravyākhyā*.
- Tib. Ōtani 5531; Tōhoku 4034; Sichuan 3266, vols. 71–72.

**Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgiti** Mañjuśrīnāmasattvasya paramārthānāmasaṅgiti.

**Mantrābhidhāna** Anonymous, *Prakārāntaramantrābhidhāna*.
- In Rai 1978, pp. 9–33.

**Mātrkānighaṇṭu** Śrī Madhvācārya, *Prakārāntara Mātrkānighaṇṭu*.
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Mūlamadhyamakārikā
Nāgārjuna, Mūlamadhyamakārikā.
– Tib. Ōtani 5224; Tōhoku 3824; Sichuan 3051, vol. 57.

Munimatālaṃkāra
Abhayakaragupta, Munimatālaṃkāra.
– Tib. Ōtani 5299; Tōhoku 3903; Sichuan 3132, vol. 63.

Nāmasaṃgitipratyaлокavṛtti
Anupamarakṣita, Āryamaṇjuśrīnāmasaṃgitiṃtabinduprata­vyāлокavṛttināma.
– Tib. Ōtani 2112; Tōhoku 1396; Sichuan 0294, vol. 8.

Nāmasaṃgitiṣṭikā
Rāja Puṇḍarīka, Āryamaṇjuśrīnāmasaṃgitiṣṭikāvimalaprabhā.
– Tib. Ōtani 2114; Tōhoku 1398; Sichuan 0296, vol. 8.

Nāmasaṃgitiṭippani
Raviśrījñāna, Amṛtaṇikanāmāryanāmasaṃgitiṭippani.
– Tib. Ōtani 2111; Tōhoku 1395; Sichuan 0293, vol. 8.

Nāmasaṃgitiṃvṛtti
Vimalamitra, Nāmasaṃgitiṃvṛttināmrthroprakāśakaranadīpa­nāma.
– Tib. Ōtani 2941; Tōhoku 2092; Sichuan 1001, vol. 25.

Nāmasaṃgitiṃvyākhyāna
Maṇjuśrīnirmāṇa Narendrakīrti, Āryamaṇjuśrīnāmasaṃgiti­ṃvyākhyāna.
– Tib. Ōtani 2113; Tōhoku 1397; Sichuan 0295, vol. 8.

Nāmasaṃgitiṃyarthālokaṅkara
Surativajra, Āryamaṇjuśrīnāmasaṃgitiṃyarthālokaṅkaraṇāma.
– Tib. Ōtani 2942; Tōhoku 2093; Sichuan 1002, vol. 25.

Nirvikalpapravesadhāraṇi
Nirvikalpapravesadhāraṇī.
– Tib. Skorupski 170; Tōhoku 142.

Pañcakrama
Nāgārjuna (the Tantric), Pañcakrama.
– Tib. Ōtani 2667; Tōhoku 1802; Sichuan 0704, vol. 18.

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_Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā_  
_Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā._
- Tib. Ōtani 5188; Tōhoku 3790; Sichuan, 3015, vols. 50–51.

*Perojāvakhīnasopānananavaka*
_Vimalamitra (ascribed), *Perojāvakhīnasopānananavaka._
- Tib. Ōtani 4729; Sichuan 2605, vol. 43; [not found in D].

_Pitāputrasamāgamāsûtra_  
_Pitāputrasamāgamāsûtra._
- Tib. Skorupski 11.6; Tōhoku 60.

_Prajñāpāramitāpiṇḍārtha-pradīpa_  
_Atiśa, _Prajñāpāramitāpiṇḍārtha-pradīpa._
- Tib. Ōtani 5201; Tōhoku 3804; Sichuan 3029, vol. 53.

_Prajñāpradīpa_  
_Bhāviveka, _Prajñāpradīpa mūlamadhyamakavṛtti._
- Tib. Ōtani 5253; Tōhoku 3853; Sichuan 3080, vol. 57.

_Pramāṇavārttika_  
_Dharmakīrti, _Pramāṇavārttikakārikā._

_Prassannapadā_  
_Candrakīrti, _Mūlamadhyamakavṛttiprasannapadā._

_Prassphūtapadā_  
_Dharmamitra, _Abhisamayālamkārikā prajñāpāramitopadesāstrāvikā prassphūtapadā._
- Tib. Ōtani 5194; Tōhoku 3796; Sichuan 3021, vol. 52.

_Pratimokṣasūtrapaddhati_  
_dPa’bo (?), _Pratimokṣasūtrapaddhati._
- Tib. Ōtani 5605; Tōhoku 4104; Sichuan 3333, vol. 84.

_Ratnagotravibhāga_  
_Maitreya (ascribed), _Ratnagotravibhāga Mahāyānottara-tantraśāstra._
- Tib. Ōtani 5525; Tōhoku 4024; Sichuan 3256, vol. 70.

_Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā_  
_Asāṅga, _Ratnagotravibhāgavyākhyā._
- See _Ratnagotravibhāga._
- Tib. Ōtani 5526; Tōhoku 4025; Sichuan 3257, vol. 70.
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Ratnagunasaṃcaya  Prajñāpāramitāratnagunasaṃcayaśātāḥ.
- Tib. Skorupski 19; Tōhoku 13.

- Tib. Ōtani 5325; Tōhoku 3930; Sichuan 3159, vol. 64; in Jo bo rje’i gsung ‘bum, pp. 791–807.

Ratnamālā  Candragharipāda, Ratnamālā.
- Tib. Ōtani 5297; Tōhoku 3901; Sichuan 3130, vol. 63.

Ratnāvalī  Nāgārjuna, Ratnāvalī.

Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra  Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra.
- Tib. Skorupski 141; Tōhoku 113.

Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra  Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra.

Satyadvayāvatāra  Atiśa, Satyadvayāvatāra.
- Tib. Ōtani 5298; Tōhoku 3902; Sichuan 3131, vol. 63; in Sherburne 2000, pp. 352–359 (Tibetan text and English translation).

Sekodderasatīkā  Nāropā, Paramārthasamgrahānāmasekoddesatīkā.
Abbreviations and Bibliography

Śīkṣāsamuccaya Śāntideva, Śīkṣāsamuccaya.
- Tib. Ōtani 5336; Tōhoku 3940; Sichuan 3170, vol. 64.

Subāhuparipṛchchāntara Āryasubāhuparipṛchchānāmatantra.
- Tib. Skorupski 758; Tōhoku 805.

Sugatamatavibhaṅgabhāṣya Jitāri, Sugatamatavibhaṅgabhāṣya.
- Tib. Ōtani 5868; Tōhoku 3900; Sichuan 3129, vol. 63.

Śūtrasamuccaya Nāgārjuna, Śūtrasamuccaya.
- Tib. Ōtani 5336; Tōhoku 3940; Sichuan 3170, vol. 64.

Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtra Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra.

Suvikṛntavikṛtimparipṛchchā Suvikṛntavikṛtimparipṛchchā Prajñāpāramitā Śūtra.
- Tib. Skorupski 16; Tōhoku 14.

Tantrārthavatāra Buddhaguhya, Tantrārthavatāra.
- Tib. Ōtani 3324; Tōhoku 2501; Sichuan 1404, vol. 27.

Tarkajvālā Bhavya, Madhyamakavādayavṛtti-tarkajvālā.
- Tib. Ōtani 5256; Tōhoku 3856; Sichuan 3083, vol. 58.

Tattvamārgadarśana Jñānavajra. Tattvamārgadarśananāma.
- Tib. Ōtani 4538; Tōhoku 3715; Sichuan 2413, vol. 41.

Tattvasaṃgrahāsūtra Sarvatathāgatatarattvasaṃgrahanāmamahāhāyānasūtra.
- Tib. Skorupski 438; Tōhoku 479.

Tattvāvatāra-vṛtti Śrīgupta, Tattvāvatāra-vṛtti.
- Tib. Ōtani 5292; Tōhoku 3892; Sichuan 3121, vol. 63.
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**Trailokyavijaya**

- Tib. Skorupski 441; Tōhoku 482.

**Trīṃśikābhasya**

- Tib. Ōtani 5565; Tōhoku 4064; Sichuan 3293, vol. 77.

  - For fragments of the Sanskrit text, see Lévi 1925.

**Trīṃśikātīkā**

- Tib. Ōtani 5571; Tōhoku 4070; Sichuan 3299, vol. 78.

  - For fragments of the Sanskrit text, see Jaini 1985.

**Triśaranaśaptati**

- Candrakīrti, *Triśaranaśaptati*.

  - See Sørensen 1986.

**Triyānavaṇavasthāna**

- Ratnakaraśānti, *Triyānavaṇavasthāna*.

  - Tib. Ōtani 4535; Tōhoku 3712; Sichuan 2410, vol. 41.

**Udānavarga**


**Upāyapāśatantra**

- Tib. Ōtani 458; Tōhoku 835.

**Vairocanābhisaṃbodhitāntara**

- Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhīvīrūpavaiṣṇava-piḷṣṭānāmadharmaparyājya.

  - Tib. Skorupski 454; Tōhoku 494.

**Vairocanābhisaṃbodhitāntara-piṇḍārtha**


**Vajracchedikā**

- Āryavajracchedikānāma Prajñāpāramitā Mahāyānasūtra.

  - See Conze 1957.

  - Tib. Skorupski 20; Tōhoku 16.

**Vajrapāṇyabhiṣekatantra**

- Āryavajrapāṇyabhiṣekakamahātantra.

  - Tib. Skorupski 456; Tōhoku 496.
Abbreviations and Bibliography

Vajrasattvasādhana  Thu-bo Rājahasti, Bhagavacchātugāhāvajrasattvasādhana.
  – Tib. Ōtani 2553; Tōhoku 1681; Sichuan 0583, vol. 14.

*Vajravyūhatantra  De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi thugs gsang ba'i ye shes don gyi snying po khro bo rdo rje'i rigs kun 'dus rig pa'i mdo rnal 'byor grub pa'i rgyud = rGyud kyi rgyal po rdo rje bkod pa kun 'dus rig pa'i mdo [according to the colophon].

Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra  Āryavimalakīrtinirdeśanāmamahāyānasūtra.
  – Tib. Skorupski 171; Tōhoku 176.

Vimalaprabhā  Kalkin Śrī Puṇḍarīka, Vimalaprabhānāmālātantrānu-sārināvādaśāhasrikālaḥukālacakraṭararājaṭīkā.
  – Tib. Ōtani 2064; Tōhoku 1347; Sichuan 0244, vol. 6.

Vimśatikā  Vasubandhu, Vimśatikākārikā.
  – See Lévi 1925.

Viniścayasamgrahāṇi  Asaṅga (ascribed), Viniścayasamgrahāṇī.
  – Tib. Ōtani 5539; Tōhoku 4038; Sichuan 3268, vol. 74.

Viśeṣastava  Udbhataśiddhavāmin, Viśeṣastava.
  – In Naga 1988, pp. 61–70 (Tibetan text).

Yogacarāyābhāvanā  Jñānacandra, Yogacarāyābhāvanātātparyārthainirdeśa.
  – Tib. Ōtani 5578; Tōhoku 4077; Sichuan 3306, vol. 78.

Yogaratnamālā  Kāṇha, Yogaratnamālāhevajrapaṇḍikā.
  – Tib. Ōtani 2313; Tōhoku 1183; Sichuan 0078, vol. 2.

4. Primary Sources: Tibetan Works

- **bDen gnyis kyi 'bum** Atiśa (ascribed), bDen gnyis kyi 'bum. In Jo bo rje'i gsung 'bum, pp. 668–696.

- **bKa' brgyad rnam bshad** Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, dPal sgrub pa chen po'i bka' brgyad kyi spyi don rnam par bshad pa dngos grub snying po. In MS, vol. 21, pp. 1–207.

- **bKa' gdam chos 'byung** Las-chen Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan, bKa' gdam kyi rnam par thar pa bka' gdam chos 'byung gsal ba'i sgron me (on cover: bKa' gdamchos 'byung gsal ba'i sgron me). Lhasa: Bod-ljongs-mi-dmangs-dpe-skrun-khang, 2003.


- **brDa dkar gser gyi me long** bTsan-lha Ngag-dbang-tshul-khrims, brDa dkar gser gyi me long. Beijing: Mi-rigs-dpe-skrun-khang, 1997.

- **brGal lan nyin snang** Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, brGal lan nyin byed snang ba. In MS, vol. 14 (ca), pp. 97–189.


- **bsTan rim chen mo** Gro-lung-pa Blo-gros-'byung-gnas, bDe bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa rin po che la 'jug pa'i tan gyi rim pa rnam par bshad pa. Lhasa: Zhol-par-khang, [1800s].


- **Byang chub sms bsgom pa'i rgyud** Byang chub sms bsgom pa'i rgyud. Tb 37; Tk 69.


- **dBu ma rgyan 'grel** Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, dBu ma rgyan gyi rnam bshad 'jam dbyangs bla ma dgyes pa'i zhal lung. In MS, vol. 13 (nga), pp. 1–359.
Abbreviations and Bibliography

dGongs pa 'dus pa'i mdo  De bzhiin gshegs pa thams cad kyi thugs gsang ba'i ye shes don gyi snying po rdo rje bkod pa'i rgyud rnal 'byor grub pa'i lung kun 'dus rig pa'i mdo theg pa chen po mngon par rtogs pa chos kyi rnam grangs rnam par bkod pa zhes bya ba'i mdo (in colophon: Sangs rgyas kun gyi dgongs pa 'dus pa'i mdo chen po). 'Otani 452; Töhoku 829.


'Grel pa rin phreng  Padmasambhava (ascribed), 'Grel pa rin chen phreng ba. In TDz, vol. 92 (i), pp. 16–163.

Grub mtha' bstan pa'i sgron me  Rog Shes-rab-'od, Grub mtha' so so'i bzshed tshul gzhung gsal bar ston pa chos 'byung grub mtha' chen po bstan pa'i sgron me. A Detailed Survey of Comparative Siddhanta in the Context of Mahayana Buddhism and in Particular the rNyin-ma-pa Tradition of Tibet. Edited from a Tibetan Blockprint by the Ven. 'Khor-gdo'n gTer-sprul 'Chi-med-rig-'dzin. Ladakh: Tshul-khrims-'jam-dbyans, 1977.


Grub mtha' mdzod  Klong-chen-pa Dri-med-'od-zer, Theg pa mtha' dag gi don gsal bar byed pa grub mtha' rin po che'i mdzod. In mDzod bdun, vol. ja.


gSang bdag zhal lung  Lo-chen Dharma-shrī, dpal gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po sgyu 'phral drwa ba spyi don gyi sgo nas gtan la 'bebs par byed pa'i legs bshad gsang bdag zhal lung. 2 vols (e & wam). In NyK, vols. 33–34 (g-i-ngi).

gSang sngags lam rim  Nyang-ral Nyi-ma-'od-zer (discovered, ascribed to Padmasambhava), gsang sngags lam gyi rim pa gsal ba'i sgron me. In TDz, vol. 92 (i), pp. 1–6.


gSung rab rin po che  sKa-ba dpal-brtsegs, gsung rab rin po che'i gtag rgyud shākya'i rabs rgyud. Otani 5844; Tōhoku 4357.

gZhan stong seng ge nga ro  Mi-pham rnam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, gZhan stong khas len seng ge nga ro. In MS, vol. 12 (ga), pp. 359–378.

gZhi'i le'u  Mi-pham rnam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, Le'u bco brgyad pa'i tshig 'grol. In MS, vol. 21, pp. 565–573.

'Jig rten snang byed  rGyud kyi rgyal po chen po dpal 'jig rten snang byed. Tb 667.


Abbreviations and Bibliography

ITa ba'i khyad par
Ye-shes-sde, ITa ba'i khyad par. Ōtani 5847; Tōhoku 4360; Sichuan 3605, vol. 116.

ITa ba'i rim pa'i bshad pa
sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs, ITa ba'i rim pa'i bshad pa. Ōtani 5843; Tōhoku 4356.

= Cf. ITa ba'i rim pa'i man ngag snang ba bcu bsdun. Ōtani 4728; Sichuan 2604, vol. 43.

ITa phreng
Padmasambhava (ascribed), Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba. Ōtani 4726; Sichuan 2602, vol. 43; NyK, vol. 23 ('a), pp. 159–175.

ITa phreng 'grel pa

mChims chen
mChims 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs, Chos mgon pa mdzod kyi tshig le'ur byas pa'i 'grel pa mgon pa'i rgyan (on cover: mdZod 'grel mgon pa'i rgyan). Reprint: Delhi: Siddhartha's Intent Yashodhara Publications, 1992.

mDo sngags grub bsdus

mDzod bsdun

mKhas 'jug
Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, mKhas pa'i tshul la 'jug pa'i sgo zhes bya'i bstan bcos. In MS, vol. 22, pp. 1–327.

mKhas 'jug sdom byang

mNgon rtogs rgyan gyi spyi don

mNyam sbyor 'grel pa

mTshan brjod 'grel pa

Nam mkha' che'i rgyud
rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud. Tb 63.

Nges shes sgron me
Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, Nges shes rin po che'i sgron me. In MS, vol. 9 (shrf), pp. 71–123.
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'Od gsal snying po  Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, gSang 'grel phyogs bcu mun sel gyi spyi don 'od gsal snying po. In MS, vol. 19, pp. 1–271.


Phyogs bcu'i mun sel  Klong-chen-pa Dri-med-'od-zer, dPal gsang ba snying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud kyi 'grel pa phyogs bcu'i mun pa thams cad sel ba. In NyK, vol. 26 (la).


rDor sems zhus lan  dPal-dbyangs alias Śrīghoṣa, rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan. Ōtani 5082; Sichuan 2911, vol. 48; [not found in D]; Dunhuang version: IOL Tib J 470.

rgya nag chos 'byung  mGon-po-sknyabs, rGya nag gi yul du dam pa'i chos dar tshul gtsor bor bshad pa blo gsal kun tu dga' ba'i rna rgyan. Chengdu: Si-khron-mi-rigs-dpe-skrun-khang, 1983.


rin chen 'bar ba'i gur  sNgags-’chang bSam-grub-rdo-rje alias sNgags-’chang Nam-mkha'-chos-dbang, dPal gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa'i rgyud kyi khog dbub rin po che 'bar ba'i gur. In NyK, vol. 28 (sa), pp. 591–713.

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Rong zom gsung 'bum dkar cag
Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, *Rong zom gsung 'bum dkar chag me tog phreng ba*. A: in *RZKB*, pp. 1–39; B: in *RZSB*, vol. 1, fol. [i–xx]; D: in *RZChZSB*, vol. 1, pp. 1–22.

Sam bod shan sbyar

Sangs rgyas gtsos bo'i 'grel pa

Sangs sa chen mo

Sāsttsha gdab pa
Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po, *gsang sngags kyi lugs su sāsttsha gdab pa* 'phrin las bzhis sogs bsgrub tshul. B: in *RZSB*, vol. 1, fols. 313–326; D: in *RZChZSB*, vol. 1, pp. 369–383 under the title *rDo rje sems dpa'i sgyu 'phrul drwa ba las 'byung zhin gsang sngags kyi lugs su sāsttsha gdab pa* 'phrin bzhis sogs bsgrub tshul.

sBrul nag po

sDe dge bstan 'gyur dkar chag
Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims-rin-chen, *Kun mkhren nyi ma'i gnyen gyi bka' lung gi dgongs don rnam par 'grel ba'i bstan bcos gangs can pa'i skad du 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi chos sbyin rgyun mi 'chad pa'i ngo mtshar 'phrul gyi phyi mo rdzogs ldan bska' pa'i bsod nams kyi sprin phung rgyas par dkarigs pa'i tshul las btsams pa'i gtam ngo mtshar chu gter 'phel ba'i zla ba gsar pa* (on cover: *bsTan 'gyur dkar chag*). Lhasa: Bod-ljongs-mi-dmangs-dpe-skrun-khang, 1985.

sGra sbyor
sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa.


– In rTa-rdo, ed., *dKar chag 'phang thang ma'i sgra' byor bam po gnyis pa*. Beijing: Mi-rigs-dpe-skrun-khang, 2003, pp. 69–205. (= B)

sGyu 'phrul brgyad cu pa
*gsang ba'i snying po de kho na nyid nges pa* [= the long, eighty-two-chapter version of the *Guhyagarbhatantra*]. Tb 423.

sGyu 'phrul le lhag
sGyu 'phrul le lhag. Tb 420.

sNang ba lhar bsgrub

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*spyod 'jug lam rim*  Atiśa (ascribed), *spyod 'jug 'khor lo lta bu lam rgyud la ji ltar skye ba'i rim pa*. In Jo bo rje'i gsung 'bum, pp. 834–864.


*Tshad ma rnam 'grel bshad pa*  Mi-pham rNam-rgyal-rgya-mtsho, *Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi gzhung gsal por bshad pa legs bshad snang ba'i gter*. In *MS*, vol. 20.


*Tshig don mdzod*  Klong-chen-pa Dri-med-'od-zer, gSang ba bla na med pa 'od gsal rdo rje snying po'i gnas gsun gsal bar byed pa'i tshig don rin po che'i mdzod. In *mDzod bdun*, vol. nga.


*Ye shes gsang ba sgron ma'i rgyud*  *Ye shes gsang ba sgron ma'i rgyud*. Tb 44.

*Yid bzhin mdzod*  Klong-chen-pa Dri-med-'od-zer, *Theg pa chen po'i man ngag gi bstan bcos yid bzhin rin po che'i mdzod*. In *mDzod bdun*, vol. e, 88 pp. (separate pagination).


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Matsunaga 1978 See *Guhyasamājatantra*.


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Mvy Mahâvyutpatti.


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Obermiller 1937 See Ratnagāvīśamāyā.


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**Prasannapadā-Index**  

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