

Part 1

Mipham · Mipham

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MIPHAM'S BEACON OF CERTAINTY
(Illuminating the View of Dzogchen, the Great Perfection)
& A commentary by Khro shul 'Jam rdor

[Chapter 9 --
introduction and first 4 topics only]

[see the other file for the other 3 topics and the conclusion]

Sub-section titles are in the form: L#: [...].
These can be used to regenerate the structure using a Word Processor.

Paragraph starting with '¢(i.e. ...' are usually added comments by me.

L1: [CONTENTS] :L1
L1: [CONTENTS] :L1
L1: [THEMES:]
L1: [ORIGINAL SUBDIVISION OF THE TIBETAN TEXT]
L1: [Introduction]
L3: [A commentary on the book from the Internet]
L4: [Authors words]
L1: [Chapter 9. Stainless Light: A Commentary on the Beacon of Certainty]
L1: [9.0. Introduction [The need to induce certainty by the two types of valid cognition –
investigating the real nature of the Two Truths]]
L2: [0.1 The introduction to the composition of the treatise, which is virtuous at the
beginning:]
L3: [0.1.1 The name of the treatise, which is meaningful]
L3: [[0.1.2 How the treatise with that name introduces the discussion]]
L4: [0.1.1.2.1 How to enter the profound and vast subjects of the Buddha's teaching]
L5: [0.1.1.2.1.1 The benefits of certainty, which is induced by two types of valid
cognition]
L6: [0.1.1.2.1.1.1 Since this certainty illuminates the authentic path, developing faith
that desires certainty]
L6: [0.1.1.2.1.1.2 Showing the faults of being without this certainty]
L6: [0.1.1.2.1.1.3 Explaining the reasons for these by example]
L5: [0.1.1.2.1.2 Explaining the necessity of valid cognition, which leads to that certainty]
L6: [0.1.1.2.1.2.1 How the two great system-builders (shing rta) came to this world and
clarified profound and vast subjects [Chandrakirti & Dharmakirti]]
L6: [0.1.1.2.1.2.2 The two valid cognitions, with which those two [system-builders] opened
the way of the path, cause one to understand the topics of dharma-possessor (dharmin, chos
can) and dharmata [Pramana and Madhyamaka]]

L6: [0.1.1.2.1.2.3 Explaining the praise of right-minded persons who abide in that way]

L4: [0.1.1.2.2 The posing of questions that identify those subjects]

L5: [0.1.1.2.2.1 The questions]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.1 The layout of the way the questions are posed]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.2 The qualities of answering perfectly [evaluation grid]]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.3 The defects of pretentious prattling]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.4 Enumerating the topics to be asked about (list of the seven questions)]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.5 Exhortation to give answers based on scripture and reasoning]

L7: [0.1.1.2.2.1.5.1 The subject that is the extraordinary profound point established through both scripture and reasoning]

L7: [0.1.1.2.2.1.5.2 The exhortation to quickly compose the treatise that shows the way to explain it]

L5: [0.1.1.2.2.2 The specifics of how the questions are answered;]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.1 Having generated enthusiasm for answering, how he refrained for a moment]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.2 How other people of outstanding talent and training cannot establish these topics flawlessly]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.3 Therefore, having cast away arrogance, how he propitiated the deity]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.4 How he acquired the eloquence that expounds the answer, induced by reasoning in accordance with scripture]

L1: [9.1. Topic 1 [The problem of negation: Emptiness is also empty; it is not the real non-dual nature beyond all conceptualization]]

L2: [0.2 The composition that is virtuous in the middle, the consummate main body of the treatise that has the [sevenfold] enumeration of royal accouterments:]

L3: [0.2.1 A general explanation of the view of emptiness]

L4: [0.2.1.1 The actual explanation [Question 1: The basis as the coalescence of appearance and emptiness" – The first topic concerns the definition of the Nyingma philosophical view]]

L5: [1.1 How the two systems of negation are generally known in the world]

L5: [1.2 In our own system [the Nyingma very ultimate view beyond all conceptualization, beyond establishment and negation: the dharmata, reached by the direct realization of the inseparability of the Two Truths, beyond the duality of the Two truths]]

L6: [1.2.1 The question about the two negations]

L6: [1.2.2 Plotting the answer, and explaining it]

L7: [1.2.2.1 From the perspective of the meditative equipoise of the coalescence of appearance and emptiness, [the view] is beyond establishment and negation, and there is no conventional distinction of two negations]

L7: [1.2.2.2 From the perspective of the ultimate reality analysis that ascertains that, [the view] is an absolute negation]

L8: [1.2.2.2.1 The emptiness of self-nature is the intention of the great beings of India and Tibet]

L8: [1.2.2.2.2 Having determined the negandum of the ultimate truth analysis, explaining how [phenomena] are intrinsically empty]

L5: [1.3 Refuting other systems [that lead to a reification of emptiness, or back to some realism] [like extrinsic emptiness]]

L6: [1.3.1 Their determination of the negandum of intrinsic emptiness brings the consequence of extrinsic emptiness]

L7: [1.3.1.1 Contradiction of the intention of Chandrakirti]

L8: [1.3.1.1.1 The question about the purvapaksa's Prasangika negandum]

L8: [1.3.1.1.2 Refuting their answer to it]

L9: [1.3.1.1.2.1 Even if one says it is an absolute negation, it becomes an implicative

negation]

L9: [1.3.1.1.2.2 It becomes a species of extrinsic emptiness]

L9: [1.3.1.1.2.3 It contradicts both scripture and reasoning]

L7: [1.3.1.2 The inappropriateness of applying one's own qualifications]

L8: [1.3.1.2.1 The unreasonableness of applying qualifications of latter words]

L9: [1.3.1.2.1.1 Refutation through examination of sameness and difference]

L9: [1.3.1.2.1.2 Refuting the answer that disposes of its faults]

L10: [1.3.1.2.1.2.1 The answer [to our criticism]]

L10: [1.3.1.2.1.2.1 Its refutation]

L9: [1.3.1.2.1.3 Even though that kind of qualification is known in Svatantrika, it is not necessary for the final meaning]

L8: [1.3.1.2.2 The unreasonableness of applying the prior verbal qualification:]

L9: [1.3.1.2.2.1 The fact that there is contradiction in positing the expectation that requires the application of qualification]

L9: [1.3.1.2.2.2 Having asked about it, making a refutation]

L10: [1.3.1.2.2.2.1 The question]

L10: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2 Its refutation]

L11: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2.1 The contradiction of the meaning not being the same]

L11: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2.2 That statement is not reasonable in terms of either of the two truths]

L11: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2.3 Intrinsic emptiness and not being empty are both unreasonable]

L6: [1.3.2 Whether it is deceptive or ultimate reality that is extrinsically empty, they both are negated:]

L7: [1.3.2.1 If one focuses on that system, one will not give rise to the qualities of abandonment and realization]

L7: [1.3.2.2 The coalescence of appearance and emptiness, etc., that transcends narrow-minded perception would be impossible]

L7: [1.3.2.3 If that point of view were the meaning of coalescence, it would be easy for anyone to realize it]

L7: [1.3.2.4 It would not be fitting for great beings to praise that [point of view]

L5: [1.4 How those faults do not apply to us [finally saying the same thing as Tsongkhapa]]

L6: [1.4.1 A summary, using a common example, which teaches how our own tradition of absolute negation [implies] coalescence]

L6: [1.4.2 The extensive explanation:]

L7: [1.4.2.1 It is reasonable because it is directly seen by the wise]

L7: [1.4.2.2 It is reasonable because it is inferred by reasoning]

L7: [1.4.2.3 Perfectly explaining the meaning established with these reasons]

L8: [1.4.2.3.1 The manner of abiding of things is emptiness and relativity abiding inseparably]

L8: [1.4.2.3.2 In explaining that the way it is, it is not necessary to apply qualifications]

L8: [1.4.2.3.3 Even if one does not apply them, one will develop experience]

L1: [9.2. Topic 2 [About the limited realizations of the arhats in the Hinayana: they do not realize the full extent of the emptiness of phenomena; they still reify elementary dharmas, and are stuck hiding in cessation]]

L4: [0.2.1.2 An incidental analysis of whether sravakas and pratyekabuddhas have realization of the view of emptiness: [Nevertheless, arhats do not realize the selflessness of phenomena in its entirety]]

L5: [2.1 Refuting other systems]

L6: [2.1.1 Refuting the assertion of not realizing emptiness]

L7: [2.1.1.1 Setting up the purvapaksa]

L7: [2.1.1.2 Refuting it]

L8: [2.1.1.2.1 If selflessness is not realized, negative emotions are not abandoned]

L8: [2.1.1.2.2 how that kind of self is a mere designation, or a type of conditioned phenomenon]

L8: [2.1.1.2.3 it is proven by scripture and reasoning that (arhats) realize that, and the claim that they do not realize it is not proven]

L6: [2.1.2 Refuting assertions of realization]

L7: [2.1.2.1 The purvapaksa]

L7: [2.1.2.2 Its refutation]

L8: [2.1.2.2.1 The criticisms of others cannot be deflected]

L8: [2.1.2.2.2 Their position is self-contradictory]

L6: [2.1.3 Refuting assertions of realizing emptiness of each and every member of the catuskoti]

L7: [2.1.1.2.3.1 The purvapaksa]

L7: [2.1.1.2.3.2 Refutation based on its internal contradictions]

L5: [2.2. An explanation of our own system:]

L6: [2.2.1 Explanation of the intention of glorious Chandrakirti]

L7: [2.2.1.1 Chandrakirti's explanation in the Auto-commentary [of the Madhyamakavatara] of the purpose of teaching the two kinds of selflessness individually]

L7: [2.2.1.2 Anticipating doubts about the above explanation that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas have realization of emptiness]

L7: [2.2.1.3 Explaining the intention behind it]

L6: [2.2.2 Laying out the position of omniscient Klong chen pa]

L6: [2.2.3 Explaining our own system by examples, in accordance with their [explanations]]

L7: [2.2.3.1 Explaining that system through examples]

L7: [2.2.3.2. Responses that dispose of faults:]

L8: [2.2.3.2.1 Setting forth a fault]

L8: [2.2.3.2.2 The response:]

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.1 Those of inferior lineage do not realize it;]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.1 The actual [response]]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.2 The reason, which adduces the example of not realizing partlessness]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.3 To some extent, lower systems are without fault as mere paths to liberation]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.4 Otherwise, all higher and lower systems would be untenable]

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.2 When conditions are incomplete, it is not realized]

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.3 Distinctions of mental ability:]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.3.1 How realization and non-realization arise according to distinctions of mental ability]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.3.2 How even the dull-witted should eventually become realized]

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.4 Distinctions of time:]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.4.1 Because conditions are not complete, one must realize in gradations of time]

L11: [2.2.3.2.2.4.1.1 Because the bodhisattvas take a long time, it is impossible for sravakas and pratyekabuddhas to realize in a short time]

L11: [2.2.3.2.2.4.1.2 Because the bodhisattvas' realization increases gradually, the sravakas and pratyekabuddhas do not become realized instantaneously]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.4.2 When they are complete, one is realized]

L5: [2.3. Dispelling doubts:]

L6: [2.3.1 Explaining the scriptural passage of the Ratnavali according to our system]

L7: [2.3.1.1 Setting up the meaning of the scriptural passage]

L7: [2.3.1.2 Explaining its intention]

L6: [2.3.2 Explaining the meaning of this [passage], not according to others' opinions, but according to Chandrakirti's interpretive commentary]

L6: [2.3.3 Establishing that meaning through reasoning:]

L7: [2.3.3.1 Provisionally (gnas skabs), how recognizing multiplicity reverses the apprehension of "I"]

L7: [2.3.3.2 Conclusively (mthar thug), how one final vehicle is established]

L7: [2.3.3.3 How this is not established in other systems]

L7: [2.3.3.4 Why our own system is reasonable]

L8: [2.3.3.4.1 On a single path to be traversed, sublime beings progress at many rates of speed]

L8: [2.3.3.4.2 In that respect, Nagarjuna's and Maitreya's intentions are not contradictory]

L8: [2.3.3.4.3 Otherwise, if one holds them to be contradictory, there is great embarrassment in the face of scripture and reasoning]

L1: [9.3. Topic 3 [Sudden vs. Gradual vs. dropping all: Should meditation involve conceptualization, modal apprehension, such as apprehending emptiness?]]

L3: [[0.2.2.] Explaining the particulars of the three different views:]

L4: [0.2.2.1 Explanation of the view of intrinsic awareness, which realizes the equal taste of the coalescence of the two truths]

L5: [[0.2.2.1.1] The actual explanation [topics 3 and 4]]

L6: [[0.2.2.1.1.1] 3. Whether the maintenance of the actual practice of the view involves apprehension or not [Topic 3 - Should meditation involve conceptualization, modal apprehension, such as apprehending emptiness?]]

L7: [3.1 Taking up the subject of analysis through question and answer]

L7: [3.2 Explaining that meaning extensively [of when to use concepts]:]

L8: [3.2.1 [The sudden path] If, by being introduced to the nature of complete awareness and settling in it, one gains realization of the esoteric instruction class [of rDzogs chen], and elaborations are cut off instantaneously, that is authentic non-apprehension]

L9: [3.2.1.1 A brief demonstration that mere non-apprehension is something to accept as well as reject]

L9: [3.2.1.2 Explaining that [the sudden path] extensively]

L10: [3.2.1.2.1 Determining both contexts (mtshan gzhi) of non-apprehension [the two cases of non-conceptualization: faking it, or inducing it with authentic wisdom]]

L11: [3.2.1.2.1.1 [Case 1: non-conceptualization induced by wisdom] If one realizes the total coalescence of calm abiding and insight into reality, which can stop the river of samsara, then intentional apprehension is destroyed]

L11: [3.2.1.2.1.2 [Case 2: non-conceptualization artificially induced – Hashang's way of dropping all mentation] Not understanding that, the mere non-apprehension of calm abiding will become the cause of rebirth]

L11: [3.2.1.2.1.3 [Analysis of the two cases of non-conceptualization: faking it won't work] Demonstrating the reasonableness of those two [positions]]]

L12: [3.2.1.2.1.3.1 Their reasonableness according to examples [with Hashang's method one is only faking wisdom]]]

L12: [3.2.1.2.1.3.2 Their reasonableness in fact]

L13: [3.2.1.2.1.3.2.1 The reason why there is no intentional apprehension in the absence of the four extremes [when one is beyond the four extremes, conceptualization is automatically dropped due to authentic wisdom]]]

L13: [3.2.1.2.1.3.2.2 The reason why, if one does not realize that, non-apprehension that depends only on seeing and studying mere words is erroneous [mere conceptual understanding and artificial dropping won't work]]

L10: [3.2.1.2.2 The extensive explanation [a partial realization is not enough to use the sudden path – it has to be a realization beyond the four extremes, beyond all conceptualization]]

L11: [3.2.1.2.2.1 It is not beneficial to simply recognize the merely delusive mind that has not gone to the depths of truthlessness [a partial realization of the nature of the mind is not enough to use the sudden path]]

L11: [3.2.1.2.2.2 Explanation of the distinction between knowing and not knowing the proper sense of the emptiness of true existence [a partial realization of the authentic meaning of emptiness is not enough to use the sudden path – one has to go beyond the four extremes]]

L12: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1 Whether or not modal apprehension is necessary in "not seeing" depends upon whether or not one has been introduced to the nature of mind]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1 Not being introduced [to the nature of mind]]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.1 The opponent's expression of his understanding]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2 Investigating its meaning]

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.1 The mere non-seeing form, color, etc., has great potential for error]

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.2 In general, mere non-seeing does not qualify as emptiness]

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.3 If merely that were the realization of the nature of reality, it would be easy for anyone]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.2 Generating perfect understanding [directly seeing the real non-dual nature of our own mind]]

L12: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2 The difference between eliminating and not eliminating elaborations: [whether or not modal apprehension is necessary depends upon whether or not one has eliminated elaborations with respect to the object of "neither existent nor non-existent"]]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1 That practitioner investigates our point of view]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1 The question about our point of view]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2 Analyzing it [the need to go beyond the other extremes also]]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2 Explaining the difference between eliminating and not eliminating elaborations]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1 The view of rDzogs chen is non-elaboration [free from all four extremes]]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2 The [false yogi's] meditation is one or another of the extremes of elaboration]

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 The actual way that this is an extreme]

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Explaining why this is no different than non-Buddhist systems that adhere to the same extreme]

L12: [3.2.1.2.2.2.3 The difference between having and not having a reifying focus:]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.3.1 The absence of reifying focus when there is non-elaborated cognition that does not focus on mind or appearances]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.3.2 An elaborated meditation, which does not realize this, is not free of reification]

L8: [3.2.2 [The gradual path] Because one doesn't understand, one gradually eliminates elaborations and meditates with intentional apprehension:]

L9: [3.2.2.1 The beginner eliminates elaborations gradually with intentional apprehension]

L10: [3.2.2.1.1 The way of meditating on selflessness as the antidote to clinging to substantiality]

L11: [3.2.2.1.1.1 Exemplifying the manner of selflessness]

L11: [3.2.2.1.1.2 Having analyzed rationally according to the example, meditating with intentional apprehension]

L12: [3.2.2.1.1.2.1 Having analyzed with respect to the absence of one and many, etc., the actual meditation with intentional apprehension]

L12: [3.2.2.1.1.2.2 Explaining why it is necessary]

L12: [3.2.2.1.1.2.3 Showing why not doing it is problematic]

L10: [3.2.2.1.2 The way of meditating on the absence of extremes as the antidote to clinging to non-existence]

L11: [3.2.2.1.2.1 How the non-apprehending absence of elaboration is the antidote for apprehension of non-existence]

L11: [3.2.2.1.2.2 Why it is appropriate to have confidence in that crucial point, by virtue of the fact that emptiness and relativity are inseparable]

L11: [3.2.2.1.2.3 The reason why foolish meditators who pretend to have realization will be subject to doubts]

L9: [3.2.2.2 Meditating upon the meaning of the main practice of [absorption] non-apprehension [when free of elaboration, in the main practice one meditates on the meaning of "non-apprehension."]]

L10: [3.2.2.2.1 By reason of seeing the object as non-elaborated, the mind does not apprehend any aspect]

L10: [3.2.2.2.2 Although there is no apprehension, it arises as penetrating insight, which is the self-radiance of luminosity [the mind is empty but still radiant]]

L10: [3.2.2.2.3 That certainty is the antidote to both reification and denigration]

L8: [3.2.3 A summary [of gradual vs. sudden]:]

L9: [3.2.3.1 Explanation of the qualities of realization and abandonment of gradual and sudden [enlightenment]]

L10: [3.2.3.1.1 Showing that the fundamental expanse beyond intellect that is the domain of subitists is difficult to realize]

L10: [3.2.3.1.2 Therefore, by properly cultivating the view through study and contemplation, the qualities of abandonment and realization will arise [in stages]]

L9: [3.2.3.2 Explaining the degraded mistaken [Hasang] view that arises because of not analyzing or understanding those two modes]

L9: [3.2.3.3 Inferring from signs [the way of inferring those two through the signs of their difference]]

L10: [3.2.3.3.1 Generally]

L10: [3.2.3.3.2 Specifically]

L11: [3.2.3.3.2.1 The idiot meditator's non-apprehension is not the cause of abandonment and realization]

L11: [3.2.3.3.2.2 The authentic view is the cause of abandonment and realization]

L12: [3.2.3.3.2.2.1 The actual way [the authentic view] is the cause of abandonment and realization [efficient]]

L12: [3.2.3.3.2.2.2 That kind of realization is the dharmata of the coalescence of calm abiding and penetrating insight [leading to the great equanimity]]

L12: [3.2.3.3.2.2.3 Therefore, even if there is no apprehension, confidence is produced [generating certainty]]

L1: [9.4. Topic 4 [The Union of Shamatha vs Vipashyana – we need both depending on the situation]]

L6: [[0.2.2.1.1.2.] 4. The exposition of which is correct—analysis [Vipashyana] or trance [Shamatha]?]

L7: [4.1 The question]

L7: [4.2 The extensive explanation:]

L8: [4.2.1 A brief demonstration that in our own and in other systems as well, it is not appropriate to be prejudiced toward either analysis (Vipashyana) or trance (Shamatha) in meditating upon the view]

L9: [4.2.1.1 One-sided trance]

L9: [4.2.1.2 [One-sided] analysis]

L9: [4.2.1.3 Demonstrating that it is not appropriate to be prejudiced toward either of them]

L8: [4.2.2 Having differentiated the context and meaning of analysis and trance, an extensive explanation of the systems of interpretation of the previous two]

L9: [4.2.2.1 A general discussion, [held in] common [with other systems]]

L10: [4.2.2.1.1 Most transic meditations only produce calm abiding, and cannot dispense with obscurations [we need the coalescence of Shamatha and Vipashyana]]

L10: [4.2.2.1.2 Why one must have penetrating insight that knows the nature of things as the antidote for dispensing with obscurations [only wisdom can remove ignorance, the cause of all suffering; we need both method and wisdom]]

L11: [4.2.2.1.2.1 The view must precede the meditation of the path]

L11: [4.2.2.1.2.2 The necessity of its ally, intense effort [with the two accumulations: merit & wisdom, virtuous methods & correct reasonings]]

L11: [4.2.2.1.2.3 The reason its opposite is very powerful]

L9: [4.2.2.2 Our own uncommon system:]

L10: [4.2.2.2.1 If those with sharp faculties or awakened karmic connections realize the view correctly, they do not need to analyze [sudden path: Direct observation of one's own mind without conceptualization]]

L10: [4.2.2.2.2 If one cannot gain realization that way, one should gradually practice analysis and trance [gradual path: using the symbolic path of Tantrayana]]

L11: [4.2.2.2.2.1 determining the basis of what is to be analyzed and placed upon;]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1 How the three inner tantric vehicles have the Mahayoga view and meditation, which realizes the inseparability of the two truths in pure equanimity as their common basis]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1.1 The actual [explanation] [the many synonymous inseparability]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1.2 How that basis by its very nature does not abide in the extremes of existence and peace]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.1.2 On that basis anuyoga manifests the path of inseparable bliss and emptiness]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.1.3 The effortless arising of the self-arisen result of the three kayas in Atiyoga (Dzogchen)]

L11: [4.2.2.2.2.2 Differentiating the contexts in which one employs analysis or trance:]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1 In order to attain realization, one engages in analysis and trance progressively]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1.1 The beginning practitioner generates understanding through study and reflection]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.1 In order to attain qualities of abandonment and realization, one induces certainty through various methods and analysis]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.2 If one cannot induce certainty, abandonment and realization will not occur]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.3 Therefore, one must induce certainty that realizes the abiding nature of things]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.2 The intermediate practitioner combines reflection and meditation]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.2.1 By occasionally analyzing again and again, certainty is produced]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.2.2 Explanation of the reason why, once one has produced it, one should meditate in that state]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.3 Finally, one attains an excellent certainty that realizes the nature of things]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.3.1 One induces trance after the views of study and reflection]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.3.2 Explaining the reason why one doesn't need to analyze]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.2 When realization is manifest, analysis is not necessary: [we are like bellow conceptualization, beyond thoughts and no-thoughts]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1 Expounding our own system along with the reason for not needing analysis]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2 Refuting the other system, which maintains that if one is without analysis, one will not see the meaning]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Setting up other systems]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Flinging consequences at them]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 The actual set-up of the consequence]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Explaining how the logical reason is established]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Establishing the logical reason through valid cognition]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 The thesis is descended upon by clarification through valid cognition]

L11: [4.2.2.2.2.3 The difference between consciousness and gnosis]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.3.1 By eliminating what is incompatible with certainty, one attains gnosis [this is like a purification of our body, speech and mind]]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.3.2 Explaining the defining characteristics of those two [consciousnesses and ordinary awareness]]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.3.3 Therefore, how gnosis arises in dependence upon consciousness [like empty cause & effect -- In dependence upon dichotomizing analytical wisdom, non-dichotomizing gnosis should be achieved. The ultimate state beyond conceptualization is induced by true wisdom, not by dropping all or faking purity]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.3.3.1 Analytical wisdom and gnosis have a relation of cause and effect]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.3.3.2 Positing the contextual meaning of each of those]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.3.3.2.1 All analyses in the context of differentiation in the aftermath of meditation are analytical wisdom]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.3.3.2.2 The equipoise of seeing the abiding nature of things as they are is gnosis]

L16: [4.2.2.2.2.3.3.2.2.1 The main discussion [the main practice of the Great Vehicle must be based on certainty based on true wisdom]]

L16: [4.2.2.2.2.3.3.2.2.2 Establishing this as the Mahayana]

L11: [4.2.2.2.2.4 The Great Perfection is the pinnacle of vehicles: [the same ending point as all vehicles, in all authentic traditions ...]]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.4.1 Establishing that this is the pinnacle of vehicles by the reasoning of its essential sameness with other tantric classes]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.1.1 Although other systems do not posit it separately as a vehicle, it is the gnosis of the fourth empowerment of the final path]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.1.2 We maintain that the tantric class that emphasizes the gnosis of equanimity is the ultimate tantra [Kalachakra Tantra]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.1.3 This vehicle is similar in being the gnosis of the fourth initiation of the corpus of anuttarayogatantra [the basic intent of all tantric classes]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.1.4 thus, analyzing the vehicles progressively, there is perfect purity here [the culmination of all other vehicles]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.1.5 Eliminating doubts with the reasoning of the three valid cognitions [it is the way things really are]]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2 How this vehicle's view and meditation are more exalted than those of other systems:]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.1 Dispelling the erroneous [reified] concepts that arise from not understanding the meaning of this [reifying one aspect or another]]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.1.1 Were the meaning of this an object of mind, it would contradict the skillful intention of the teacher]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.1.2 Explaining that the reason for this is that this meaning is beyond [conceptual] mind]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2 Explaining the harmonious aspect, which is the authentic view]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1 The actual exposition of the manner of practicing the view and meditation]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.1 The formless view of trekcho]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2 The formal view of togal]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.3 The inseparability of those two in self-arisen gnosis]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2 How this Dharma terminology is just a synonym for the "indestructible drop" of other tantric systems]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3 [How the individual pith instructions of other philosophical systems have the distinction of the mental class:]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3.1 How Mahamudra and so forth actually have the distinction of the mental class [All traditions, all the same]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3.2 How the intention of all of those is identical]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3.2.1 The actual explanation]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3.2.2 Eliminating doubts]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3.3 Moreover, how the gnosis of the fourth initiation of unexcelled yoga tantra is included in this]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.4.4 The extraordinary teaching [Dzogchen]:]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.4.1 There are many instructions, not known to other systems, that take direct [perception] as the path]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.4.2 Although that is the ultimate gnosis, on the path it is done gradually [this Great Perfection has many techniques and stages]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.4.3 Explaining its reasonableness through examples]

L6: [[0.2.2.1.1.3.] 4.3 A summary: [We need both Shamatha and Vipashyana depending on the situation]]

L7: [[0.2.2.1.1.3.1] 4.3.1 Differentiating and summarizing the contexts in which one needs and doesn't need analysis and modal apprehension]

L7: [[0.2.2.1.1.3.2] 4.3.2 Demonstrating that biased apprehension has both advantages and faults]

L1: [9.5. Topic 5 [Basing the Tantric practices on adapted skillful means and views, based on a gradually induced certainty of the inseparability of conventional & Ultimate Truths]] [see the other file for this chapter]

L1: [9.6. Topic 6 [Using the mantrayana technique called "pure vision / deity yoga" in order to realize this coalescence beyond conceptualization]] [see the other file for this chapter]

L1: [9.7. Topic 7 [No absolute, only adapted skillful means – no absolute position, but a conventional position about a view (the inseparability of the Two Truths), a path and the

result // the Great Perfection's meditation]]

[see the other file for this chapter]

L1: [9.8. Conclusion]

[see the other file for this chapter]

L1: [THEMES:]

[Investigating the Two Truths is the basis of all authentic paths]

Introduction [The need to induce certainty by the two types of valid cognition –
investigating the real nature of the Two Truths]

[Clarifying the authentic meaning of emptiness, and of the final view]

-- Topic 1 [The problem of negation: Emptiness is also empty; it is not the real non-dual
nature beyond all conceptualization]

-- Topic 2 [About the limited realizations of the Hinayana's arhat: they do not realize the
full extent of the emptiness of phenomena; they still reify elementary dharmas, and are
stuck hiding in cessation]

[The role of the Two Truths teachings in Madhyamika meditation]

-- Topic 3 [Sudden vs. gradual vs. dropping all: should meditation involve
conceptualization, like a modal apprehension of emptiness, or should we drop all
conceptualization following Hashang's path]

-- Topic 4 [The Union of Shamatha vs. Vipashyana – we need both depending on the situation;
]

-- Topic 5 [Basing the Tantric practices on adapted skillful means and views, based on a
gradually induced certainty of the inseparability of conventional & Ultimate Truths]

[The role of the Two Truths teachings in symbolic Tantrayana]

-- Topic 6 [The importance of investigating the basis of perception in order to induce this
certainty – inseparability of appearances and emptiness]

[Transcending the Two Truths with the Great Perfection]

-- Topic 7 [Whether or not Madhyamikas have a thesis – No absolute, only adapted skillful
means; The Middle Way: not accepting, not rejecting. We need to use the Two Truths together
until we can transcend the duality.]

Conclusion

The six-syllable mantra [résumé of the 7 answers]

L1: [ORIGINAL SUBDIVISION OF THE TIBETAN TEXT]

0.1 The introduction to the composition of the treatise, which is virtuous at the beginning;
[Introduction]

0.2 the consummate main body of the treatise that has the enumeration of royal
accouterments, which is virtuous in the middle;

0.2.1 a general explanation of the view of emptiness;

0.2.1.1 The actual explanation [topic 1]

0.2.1.2 an incidental analysis of whether sravakas and pratyekabuddhas have realization of

the view of emptiness. [topic 2]

o.2.2 a specific discussion of the three views. [Madhyamaka-Sutra, Tantrayana, Great Perfection ?]

o.2.2.1 explanation of the view of intrinsic awareness, which realizes the equal taste of the coalescence of the two truths;

[o.2.2.1.1] The actual explanation;

[o.2.2.1.1.1] 3. Whether the maintenance of the actual practice of the view involves apprehension or not; [topics 3]

[o.2.2.1.1.2] 4. whether analysis or equipoise is correct; [topics 4a]

[o.2.2.1.1.3] 4.3. combining those two into a common meaning. [topics 4b]

[o.2.2.1.2] analyzing which of the two truths is most important by positing the differences of the views of the various vehicles [topic 5].

[o.2.2.2.] explanation of the view of the dharma-possessor (dharmin) through the stages of the manner of pure divine self-appearance; [topic 6]

[o.2.2.3.] explanation of the view of dharmata, which recognizes its nature as equality. [topic 7]

o.3 an excellent auspice of fulfillment, the conclusion that is virtuous in the end.

[Conclusion & Colophon]

L1: [Introduction]

L3: [A commentary on the book from the Internet]

Mipham's Beacon of Certainty: Illuminating the View of Dzogchen, the Great Perfection by Mipham-Rgya-Mtsho Nes Ses Rin Po Chei Sgron Me edited and translated with commentary by John W. Pettit (Wisdom Publications)

This study and translation of one of the more advanced texts on Madhyamika in the Nyingma school is a welcome relief amid the overabundance of geluk-oriented material on the subject. Written by arguably the most influential philosopher and master practitioner of the last 200 years of Nyingma history, the translated text alone makes this a valuable book. Add to that the highly readable analysis and background information, as well as the translation of another, shorter text by Mipham Rinpoche written from a contrasting point of view and you have a very well-rounded read certain to leave you with some enlightening and decidedly Nyingma perspectives. Lama Mipham was one of the most extraordinary thinkers and meditators of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. In his Beacon of Certainty he illuminates some essential points of Madhyamika philosophy according to the view of the Great Perfection (Dzogchen). In the grand spirit of Buddhist debate, 19th century Buddhist philosopher Mipham wrote Beacon of Certainty, a compelling systematic defense of Dzogchen that employs the very logic it was criticized as lacking. Dzogchen--the oft-misunderstood Tibetan meditation practice--is dissected in great detail here, revealing the buried rational origins and interpretation of this spiritual practice.

John Pettit's translation and in-depth presentation is a major contribution to the field of combining Madhyamika and Dzogchen studies, which that remains largely unexplored.

L4: [Authors words]

Large, comprehensive, and all-too-human". I am very grateful to the many reviewers who have

had kind things to say about my book, Mipham's Beacon of Certainty. But I would like to put a human, and hopefully honest, spin on this material.

First of all, the book evolved -- and only a little bit -- from a doctoral dissertation. I spent about five years of intermittent, and often emotionally difficult, periods of research and writing under the guidance of Robert A. F. Thurman, my dissertation advisor at Columbia University. I worked mostly in upstate New York in various idyllic places -- Annandale-on-Hudson, Germantown, Tivoli, Pine Plains -- before moving to Rye, and then to a small room in Manhattan, where most of the final editing and translating was completed. I mostly worked alone, and was not able (or maybe just not willing) to consult very much with Tibetan scholars. While many of my friends did meditation retreats, or found good jobs, or made babies, I stayed home, behind a computer screen. It was lonely and sometimes deeply depressing -- a "dark night of the soul".

I mention all of this because I find it somewhat amusing how different my own writing process has been compared to that of my subject, Mipham Rinpoche. Most of what Mipham wrote was done with minimal editing. He quoted scriptures extensively from memory. He wrote because he saw it would be of benefit to others, or because tutelary deities appeared to him in visions, or because his own teacher told him to do so. He wrote because it came naturally to him, and because he had the confidence of being free of any ulterior motives for his personal benefit.

I wrote this book because I had to. I had to write it because without finishing it, I would never have finished my graduate degree, and I would have fulfilled my own advisor's prophecy (delivered to a few of our mutual acquaintances) that I would probably not finish. I had to write it the way I did because my advisor, Professor Thurman, saw I was capable of more than I was willing to give, so he pushed me and pushed me, and I though I resented it deeply at the time, now I am grateful because he never let me get away with anything shoddy. I wrote it in a piecemeal fashion, sometimes with no idea where I was going.

In fact, I never thought I knew where the book was heading until it was almost done; and even now, I don't really think it has arrived. It is still a work in progress, but rather than let it hang over my head for the rest of my life, I thought it might be better just to publish and be done with it. The result -- if it has any value -- will help other scholars and meditators find a sense of direction. Like Wittgenstein's ladder, they should leave it behind once they get to the next stage of their learning. This is no gospel or authority. In a very roundabout way, it is a call for seekers to find their own authoritative voice within.

I also wrote about Mipham because I thought what he has to say -- about the nature of valid knowledge, the role of intellect in the spiritual path, and about the point where all Buddhist teachings converge in the Great Perfection (i.e. Mahamudra or Dzogchen) -- were important. Important, not just for scholars who like the sound of their own voices, but for true seekers on the spiritual path. I think Mipham's message is important especially for those of us whose faltering efforts at Buddhist spirituality resemble nothing so much as shots in the dark, whose religious-minded gestures often become a mere display, or a self-deception, because we have such shaky confidence in our true nature. Making this book has been a humbling yet inspiring process, because Mipham's writings, like those of all great spiritual geniuses, are a mirror which simultaneously shows who we are, and who we are capable of being.

L1: [Chapter 9. Stainless Light: A Commentary on the Beacon of Certainty]

L1: [9.0. Introduction [The need to induce certainty by the two types of valid cognition – investigating the real nature of the Two Truths]]

¢(i.e. Résumé of the Introduction: Many beginners in Buddhism have much doubts and are not certain about the authentic view, path and result. Many have fallen into the reification of emptiness, or into nihilism. Many think the path consist of dropping all conceptualization and just resting with a blank mind. Many think that conceptualization is just plain bad and have no place on the path since the ultimate realization is beyond all conceptualization anyway. Many are far away from the authentic path and don't even know they are lost. Many are just tired of all of those skillful means and temporary views and want to know what is the truth behind all of this, what is the logic. Mipham wants to bring some light onto those doubts and mistakes with this text. He intends to prove that, even if the goal is beyond conceptualization, this doesn't mean that we should reject all conceptualization, logic, reasonings, and virtuous methods right now. On the contrary, it is when we are not using them that we are fooled by mistakes and end up into one extreme or another. According to him, the only way to remove all doubts, stay away from all extremes, be sure to be on the authentic path, and have a strong faith in the view path and result, is to study, contemplate, and meditate on the theory of the Two Truths as presented by Nagarjuna & al. And this is done using the teachings of both Chandrakirti (pramana or syllogism) and Dharmakirti (prasanga). We need both.)

Namo Buddha-dharmasanghaya

- ~ From the churning ocean of many eons' dual accumulation [of merit and wisdom]
- ~ Springs the moon of the fortunate eon, teacher of gods and men,
- ~ Replete with the multifarious mandalas of the three kayas—
- ~ I bow to the Lord of Sages, the moon of philosophers!
- ~ The essence of the great treasure of wisdom of all Buddhas and their scions,
- ~ Blazing gloriously with marks and signs like brilliant clouds at sunrise,
- ~ Sun of my heart, Bodhisattva Manjusri,
- ~ Ripen the bud of my lotus heart!
- ~ Your appearance is a festive dance of Lord Ajita, Manjusri, and others;
- ~ Your laughing lion's roar of scripture and reasoning is victorious over opponents in all directions;
- ~ You open the door to the jewel treasury of important points and profound meanings of an ocean of sutras and tantras,
- ~ I bow to the Gentle Lord Lama, whose name has four definitive meanings!
- ~ Your fiery halo of wisdom, which is vast and luminous in the sky of profound intention,
- ~ With beautiful radiance embraces and causes my mind's bud to open
- ~ With a brilliant luster of authentic learning, contemplation, and meditation.
- ~ As it overflows with the nectar of exposition, debate, and composition, may all beings benefit!
- ~ Inspired by the stainless unconquered mind, which is the intention
- ~ Of the stainless light rays of good Dharma reasoning,
- ~ I write to discover stainless understanding of the expositions
- ~ Of stainless Dharma eloquence.

The Buddha of great compassion appeared in the world, and all the causal and fruitional vehicles taught by him were gradually introduced from the sublime land of India and propagated in Tibet. The early and later periods of translation are known as "new" and "old," respectively. Here, regarding the profound and vast subjects of sutra and tantra, the profound and crucial aspects of the interpretation and practice of the view, meditation, and so forth, of the exegetical and practice traditions of the great secret Nyingmapa are explained in this treatise of practical instructions (man ngag gi bstan bcos), taught by way of question and answer.

L2: [O.1 The introduction to the composition of the treatise, which is virtuous at the beginning;]

L3: [O.1.1 The name of the treatise, which is meaningful]

\ "The Beacon of Certainty":

Here, if one develops certain knowledge that is free of doubt about the profound and vast subjects of sutra and tantra—which are extremely hard to understand—through the wisdoms of study, reflection, and meditation, the darkness of ignorance will be dispelled. For example, a beacon that has a jewel fire-crystal or water-crystal, etc., dispels darkness. Thus, the name is given metaphorically, and the purpose is as generally [understood].

L3: [[O.1.2 How the treatise with that name introduces the discussion]]

L4: [O.1.1.2.1 How to enter the profound and vast subjects of the Buddha's teaching]

L5: [O.1.1.2.1.1 The benefits of certainty, which is induced by two types of valid cognition]

L6: [O.1.1.2.1.1.1 Since this certainty illuminates the authentic path, developing faith that desires certainty]

\ ###

\ O.1.1.2.1.1.1

\ "Trapped in doubt's net, one's mind

\ Is released by the lamp of Manjuvajra,

\ Which enters one's heart as profound certainty.

\ Indeed, I have faith in the eyes that see the excellent path!

¢(i.e. All of these conceptual explanations (+ studying, reflecting, meditating on them) help to remove doubt and develop faith / certainty in the Buddha-Dharma. They present the way things really are using the four types of authentic individual cognition – see Mipham's four pramanas.)

¢(i.e. And by "authentic" Mipham means "where ultimately method and emptiness are directly seen as inseparable" in opposition to "reifying emptiness", see 7.2.4.3.1.1.3. "Therefore, as long as the dharmadhatu—which is the coalescence of appearance and emptiness—is not free of the projection of dualistic doubt, there is no authentic perfection of wisdom."... "Thus, the coalescence of form and emptiness is just another way of expressing the inseparability of form and emptiness; if the absolute negation of emptiness is an authentic emptiness, it must not be exclusive of appearance. The distinguishing feature of the Prasangika approach according to Mipham is the non-separation of the two truths.")

When someone accepts a philosophical system, practices its path to liberation, and analyzes the profound and vast sublime meanings—which are extremely subtle and difficult to realize—his mind wavers. With respect to higher and lower vehicles, the way in which the

subject of two truths is explained is progressively more profound. To the extent that one lacks the mental ability to investigate them accordingly, one might think, "some parts are all right, others are not all right" and so on. This leads to ambivalence, which is thinking "maybe yes, maybe not." This is doubt, produced by the power of ignorance. The Abhidharmakosa says: "From ignorance, doubt, and from that..." Accordingly, for those who are enveloped by the heavy net of extremely thick obscurations, the unalloyed gnosis that reveals [reality] without any disturbance or error is a beacon that blazes with the light of four types of authentic individual cognition, which is the stainless wisdom of Manjusrivajra.

In this context, that [wisdom] is not only present in the author of the text as the wisdom that illuminates the excellent path. By means of this text, [that wisdom] will enter the heart-minds of certain fortunate disciples as the analysis of dharmas (chos rnam par 'byed pa), which is the inalienable wisdom that is certainty born of studying, etc., a text such as this.

The Uttarantra says:

- ~ Just as the sun without concepts
- ~ Instantly emanates its own light,
- ~ Causing some lotuses to open and
- ~ Others to ripen,
- ~ In the same way the light rays of the
- ~ Tathagatas' sun of holy Dharma
- ~ Enter non-conceptually
- ~ The lotus of the disciples.

This kind of wisdom is like an eye that leads those desirous of liberation to see the excellent path. Therefore, that very certainty that does not stray into the views of others is the authentic view that is aware of the way things are, and is also the wisdom of Manjughosa. So the author of the treatise salutes it, saying, "I have faith."

L6: [0.1.1.2.1.1.2 Showing the faults of being without this certainty]

- \ ###
- \ 0.1.1.2.1.1.2.
- \ Alas! Precious certainty,
- \ You connect us with the profound nature of things;
- \ Without you, we are tangled and confused
- \ In this web of samsaric illusion.

¢(i.e. Generating this certainty through individual valid cognition is the link between conceptual reasonings and non-conceptual realization. It is not that conceptual reasonings are the cause of the non-conceptual realization, but that, without them, one gets lost into the labyrinth of doubts and extremes. Without certainty in the authentic path, one gets off of it and gets lost. One of the biggest problem is to reify emptiness or fall into nihilism. To correct problems like these is the goal of this text.)

Because of not finding the authentic path due to the power of worldly ignorance, he says, "Alas!" Without you—the beacon of certainty, who is induced by valid cognition, which is entered by applying one's mind to the proper view and meditation on the authentic nature of things, which is the true nature of things, the inseparability of the two truths, the profound subject of the sutras and tantras that is to be discussed here—it is difficult even

for the "intelligent" (blo dang ldan pa) and so forth to flawlessly understand this particular path without error. For those who have not been blessed by the tutelary deity, and whose ability to investigate all things in their mode of existence and diversity of appearance (ji lta dang ji snyad) is weak, it goes without saying that it is difficult to realize. Therefore, in this realm of existence, even if one has an idea to follow the path, one is still bound up in delusions cultivated from beginningless time, like a fish in a net. There is no external, truly existent "catcher" by which one is caught; one is enveloped and deluded in the illusory net of one's own doubts. Therefore, by depending upon a text such as this one, one can rend asunder the net of doubts about the profound nature of things and generate certainty through the path of authentic valid cognition.

L6: [0.1.1.2.1.1.3 Explaining the reasons for these by example]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.1.1.3
\ The development of confidence through certainty
\ In the phenomena of the basis, path, and result,
\ And being roused to faith by studying them
\ Are like the authentic path and its reflection.

¢(i.e. Certainty is gained by studying the authentic basis, path and result. Without doing this first, one gets lost and abandons the authentic path and fall into one extreme or another without even being aware of it. All of this studying, reflecting and meditating is to dispel misconceptions, abandon extremes. It is not the cause of the final realization, which is beyond all conceptualization, beyond causality space & time; but it helps a lot.)

In general, followers of lower vehicles maintain

--- the basis, path, and result in terms of the five basic knowables, (five aggregates)
etc.,
--- the four truths of the path and relativity, etc.,
--- and the four pairs and eight aspects of the result, etc.

Mahayanists generally

--- maintain a basis of the coalescent two truths,
--- a path of dual accumulation and integrated method
--- and wisdom, and a result of two coalescent bodies.

[With or without generating "certainty first":]

--- by meditating with
--- certainty induced
--- through dispelling misconceptions
about them with
valid cognition.

the difference between them is that one involves the elimination of doubts and superimpositions, and the other does not. For example, a real butter lamp actually dispels darkness, and its reflection does not.

L5: [0.1.1.2.1.2 Explaining the necessity of valid cognition, which leads to that certainty]

L6: [0.1.1.2.1.2.1 How the two great system-builders (shing rta) came to this world and clarified profound and vast subjects [Chandrakirti & Dharmakirti]]

\ ###

- \ O.1.1.2.1.2.1
- \ The fame of the Moon of the Amazing Dharma
- \ Arises along with the light of elegant speech
- \ In the vast sky of the Buddha's teaching,
- \ Vanquishing the heavy darkness of doubt.

¢(i.e. The basis for all of this studying, reflecting and meditating, about the way things really are, is the teachings of the Madhyamika School: Nagarjuna & al. More precisely, the correct reasonings as explained by Chandrakirti and Dharmakirti. By studying the way to establish the two truths through syllogism and prasanga, one gain this certainty about the view, path and result, and do not fall into extremes.)

Thus, this master of yore sought the siddhi of victory in all directions through Sri Heruka, and was endowed with the fantastic, amazing, and unrivaled liberation of a learned, ethical, and noble person. The sound of his name, "Sri Dharmakirti," completely pervades samsara and nirvana. Also, the glorious Chandrakirti was victorious in many disputes with heretics, established many Brahmins and householders in the doctrine, founded many great Dharma institutions, drew milk from a drawing of a cow, etc., and passed unimpeded through walls, pillars, and so on. He possessed incredible and inconceivable qualities of learning and realization. These two masters, together with the light of the elegant compositions of such as the cycles of Pramana and Madhyamaka—enlightened speech that dispels the darkness of the world's ignorance— arose in the vast sky of the profound and vast teaching of the Buddha, which includes the middle and final turnings of the Dharma wheel. By [rising thus] they vanquished the thick darkness of doubt about all the subjects of the profound and vast scriptures and intentional commentaries of the Mahayana, and cleared up the eyes of the valid cognitions that see the meaning of the two truths.

L6: [O.1.1.2.1.2.2 The two valid cognitions, with which those two [system-builders] opened the way of the path, cause one to understand the topics of dharma-possessor (dharmin, chos can) and dharmata [Pramana and Madhyamaka]]

- \ ###
- \ O.1.1.2.1.2.2.
- \ The valid cognition that examines conventionalities
- \ Is unerring with respect to engaging and avoiding.
- \ Specifically, the textual corpus on valid cognition
- \ Is the only way to acquire confidence
- \ In the teacher and the teaching, and
- \ The Madhyamaka of the Supreme Vehicle
- \ Elucidates the stainless valid cognition
- \ Of ultimate reasoning, which determines the nature of things.
- \ [The two valid cognitions emphasized in] these two [systems]

¢(i.e. So the precise way to develop this certainty, and to stay away from all extremes, through studying, contemplating and meditation, is by using the two approaches to correct reasonings as taught by Dharmakirti and Chandrakirti. That is using the syllogisms that establish conventional truths, and the prasanga techniques that establish the emptiness of all dharmas. These correspond to the Two Truths. We need both, otherwise we fall into one extreme or another, or follow the wrong teachers. The details of those correct reasonings can be found in another text from Mipham: The Sword of Prajna.)

Moreover, according to the meaning intended by Dharmakirti, by the valid cognition that analyzes the conventions of deceptive reality, one should unerringly resolve each and every of the entrances and abandonments of virtue and vice, etc., and the proofs and refutations of Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophical systems.

The Pramanavarttika says:

- ~ Taking the unique identifying characteristic [of something] as a subject of investigation
- ~ And investigating whether it exists or not
- ~ Has the result of accepting or abandoning [that something].
- ~ Thus, everyone engages [such characteristics].

In particular, the ascertainment of the entrance to the authentic teaching through valid inferential reasoning based on direct experience, and the establishment of the valid person [teacher] who is superior to other teachers—the unique point of access to extraordinary confidence free of doubt—is the Pramana corpus consisting of seven treatises with their sutric [sources].

Again, the Pramanavarttika says:

- ~ By superimposing the sixteen forms of wrong view,
- ~ Such as "permanence," "happiness," "I," and "mine,"
- ~ Upon the [phenomena] of the four [noble] truths,
- ~ One is totally attached.
- ~ These (sixteen) contradict reality,
- ~ By meditating well with the authentic view
- ~ That understands the nature of reality,
- ~ One conquers clinging and all that it entails.

And, the Pramanasutra says:

- ~ The person who embodies valid knowledge, who vows the benefit of beings,
- ~ I bow to the Protector, the Teacher, the Sugata!

According to the meaning expressed here, there are explanations of "intention" and so forth, using inductive reasoning according to the path, and explanations of "protection," etc., that cause one to know the [the validity of the teacher] through deductive reasoning. Thus the teaching and teacher are established as valid. Thus, the existence of good qualities in the object itself is taught by the path of reasoning. (i.e. First the use of syllogisms, following the teaching of Dignaga & Dharmakirti. This is like using logical rules of reasonings to establish conventional truths. This permits to understand dependent origination and to stay away from nihilism.)

The Khyad par 'phags bstod says:

- ~ I abandoned other teachers,
- ~ And took refuge in you, Venerable One.
- ~ Why is that?
- ~ You have no faults and have good qualities.

Likewise, according to the meaning experienced by the gnosis of sublime beings in meditative equipoise, the abiding nature of things is ascertained to be free of elaboration. (i.e. Then the path of Prasanga, the vehicle of philosophical dialectics, following the teachings of Chandrakirti & al. This is to establish the emptiness of inherent existence of all dharmas, including emptiness itself. This permits to stay away from realism ...) This is the utterly

non-abiding great Madhyamaka, which emphasizes the stainless valid cognition that rationally cognizes the final ultimate nature. In this world, this system, elucidated according to the profound intention of Chandrakirti, is known as the Prasangika Madhyamaka, and is supreme in the vehicle of philosophical dialectics.

Candrapada said:

~ The explanation that negates production from something else is not simply a view of worldly [perception]. And why? Because it is posited according to the experience of sublime beings.

Thus, these two textual traditions [Pramana and Madhyamaka] cause one to understand the aspect of vast skillful means, and teach the wisdom that opens up the profound, respectively.

In this context, the basis for differentiating the two truths is the totality of phenomena, both afflicted and purified; and in differentiating those,

1. -- there is the differentiation of two truths with respect to valid cognition that analyzes the ultimate reality of the way things are,
2. -- as well as the differentiation of two truths with respect to the conventional valid cognition that analyzes the way things appear.

These two [differentiations] are similar in maintaining ultimate reality as the expanse of great purity and the coalescence of appearance and emptiness—without accepting any elaborated defining characteristic of identity or difference whatsoever. However, with respect to positing the two truths as conventions, the former posits the aspect of appearance and the aspect of emptiness as different isolates of the same essence, while the latter posits the difference that negates their oneness.

Note 712: In other words, as far as valid cognition goes,

1. -- Prasangika emphasizes ultimate valid cognition, which establishes the inseparability of the two truths qua form- and-emptiness,
2. -- while Pramana emphasizes conventional valid cognition, which differentiates the two truths according to the concordance or discordance of the way things are and the way they appear.

Whichever valid cognition is used to engage the two truths, [according to the] former [definition], it is infallible. So in the objective cognandum's way of existing, there is no differentiation of truth and falsity, and that emptiness arises as the nature of relativity. All relative appearances are equal in being empty phenomena, [and hence] pure; from form up to omniscience, these two [form and emptiness] should be understood equally, without holding them to be higher and lower, or good and bad. Thus, the apparent aspects of both samsara and nirvana are equal in being empty and hence are not different. Because the emptiness of each is similar in that it arises both as samsara and nirvana, both appearance and emptiness are the abiding character of an object, and thus both of them are without the difference of "deceptive" and "non-deceptive."

☿(i.e. In short, here, Mipham is warning us against the idea that one of the Two Truths is more "true" or "important" than the other one. He really doesn't like the presentation of one being "less deceptive" than the other; or just calling one "conventional" and the other "Ultimate". According to him, this could lead to thinking that emptiness is the very ultimate truth beyond all conceptualization, and this reification of emptiness could lead to nihilism – losing faith in the view, path and result. This whole text is set up in order to

fix this problem and reestablish certainty in the authentic view, path and result. The whole text is set up in order to prove that the authentic meaning of the sutras, tantras and Great Perfection teachings is “the non-duality of the Two Truths” beyond all conceptualization – and certainly not an “extrinsic emptiness” or a “reified emptiness”.)

[As for which reasoning approach apply to each of the seven questions:]

[i.e. The seven question:

- 1- According to which of the two negations do you explain the view?
- 2- Do arhats realize both types of selflessness?
- 3- Does meditation involve modal apprehension?
- 4- Does one meditate analytically or transically?
- 5- Which of the two realities is most important?
- 6- What is the common object of disparate perceptions?
- 7- Does Madhyamaka have a position or not?]

Since the ascertainment of the basis in the higher vehicles of our tradition is for the most part done only by means of this [latter] way of positing the two truths, the middle three questions are mostly engaged through valid cognition [as explained by] Dharmakirti. Also, in the context of the latter way of positing the two truths, the ultimate is both object and object-possessor for which reality and appearance are concordant, and deceptive reality is posited as object and object-possessor for which reality and appearance are discordant. (i.e. Inseparability of mind/awareness and world) This distinction is made with respect to whether, conventionally speaking, they are non-deceptive or deceptive, respectively. Moreover, insofar as the mere designations [of deceptiveness and non-deceptiveness are concerned], the lower philosophical systems as well as worldly [persons distinguish] deceptive reality as authentic or false in precisely that way. Consider, for example, a worldly person's [interpretation of] the appearance of two moons, or only one; or consider how the Vaibhasikas and Sautrantikas determine whether something is the actual referent of a conventional expression as regards its being liable to destruction or not, or as regards its being a specifically characterized phenomenon (rang mtshan, svalaksana) or a generally characterized phenomenon (spyi mtshan, samanyalaksana).

Here, in fact, the subject for which reality and appearance are concordant is gnosis, and because that gnosis views all phenomena of samsara and nirvana with respect to the concordance of their reality and their modes of appearance, if all phenomena of samsara are posited with respect to ultimate reality, the appearances of nirvana obviously are as well, because they are all are seen to be pure and equal. Deceptive reality is the arising of any and all appearances of samsara and nirvana as the object of a subject for which appearance and reality are discordant. Even if this [subjective] mind engages the kayas, gnoses, and so forth, it is still just an appearance of deceptive reality, so of course the same would be said for samsaric phenomena. Thus, those two truths are said to be taken as deceptive and non-deceptive in relation to one another, and the first two and last two questions should mainly be addressed with this way of positing the two valid cognitions according to Chandrakirti.

L6: [0.1.1.2.1.2.3 Explaining the praise of right-minded persons who abide in that way]

\ ###

\

\ [The two valid cognitions emphasized in] these two [systems]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.1.2.3
\ Are the wisdom eyes of a well-trained intellect.
\ Praise to such enlightened beings who
\ Abide on the path taught by the teacher
\ Without taking detours!"

¢(i.e. So that is the way to develop correct vision and certainty: by analyzing and meditating on the Two Truths and their authentic meaning, using the correct reasonings approaches of Dharmakirti and Chandrakirti. To think one can bypass this and go directly to non-conceptual meditation is to take a great risk of falling into one extreme or another. Without this right view about the Two Truths there is no possible right practice, and instead much doubts and a general lost of faith and energy.)

When one's mind is well versed in the three kinds of wisdom (The wisdoms of learning, contemplation, and meditation) regarding the profound and vast textual traditions of Madhyamaka, Pramana, and so forth, the two eyes of valid cognition will be opened to the nature of things in all their diversity. Then, one will abide firmly on the authentic path with the light of wisdom that is not influenced by other people's opinions—the twofold path of the profound and vast traditions of the system-builders Nagarjuna and Asanga (i.e. The two accumulations, in accord with the goal, the result, the inseparability of the Two Truths), which clearly sets forth the meaning of the causal and fruitional vehicles (i.e. Using virtuous methods while realizing the emptiness of the three: subject, object, actions) that are the excellent paths to liberation and omniscience taught by the Buddha to his disciples. Those who, like Rong zom Pandita, understand [these two systems] together, without contradiction, are worthy of praise.

L4: [0.1.1.2.2 The posing of questions that identify those subjects]

L5: [0.1.1.2.2.1 The questions]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.1 The layout of the way the questions are posed]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.2.1.1
\ As the sage reflected thus,
\ A mendicant who happened along
\ Asked these seven questions
\ In order to critically examine his intellect:

¢(i.e. So this text present the teaching about the authentic meaning of the Two Truths – the essence of all Buddhist paths: like Sutras, Tantras and Great Perfection – in the form of answering seven questions.)

Thus, that sage was thinking, "Having illuminated the excellent path with potent reasoning, this might draw a straight line that would eliminate devious caviling in Tibet." Then, a wandering mendicant happened along who, in order to dispute with and test him in the manner of intellectuals, asked him these seven questions to be explained below—which are the crux of the view and meditation to be explained—in the following manner.

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.2 The qualities of answering perfectly [evaluation grid]]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.2.1.2

\ "What's the point of being a scholar
 \ If you only repeat the words of others?
 \ Give us a quick answer to these questions
 \ According to your own understanding.
 \ Then your philosophical acumen will be obvious.

¢(i.e. Although we cannot validate one's ultimate realization through conceptual analysis, since it is beyond all conceptualization; we certainly can validate that a teacher is not jumping to one extreme or another through conceptual analysis ... and through their convergence toward the realization of the inseparability of the Two Truths beyond all conceptualization, the Union of The Two Truths, the coalescence, ...corresponding to the way things really are, as seen by a Buddha.)

If in answering these questions you just imitate and repeat what other philosophical systems and other persons have to say, then what is the point of being called a scholar? It would be like giving the monastic precept renewal (so sbyong) to worldly people. One might think, "How to answer, then?" Suppose you depend upon the Buddha's speech and the elegant explanations of the sublime beings of India in general, and in particular, upon the stainless, elegant texts that explain the intention of both Rong zom (more in Topic 1) and Klong chen pa (more in Topic 2). Then you analytically determine in a relaxed way, without uptightness, the meaning of those [sources] without simply repeating those scriptures. Then, having differentiated the various objects of investigation—such as Dharma-possessor (topic 6) and dharmata (topic 7), reality and appearance, deceptive reality and ultimate reality. Now, please reply quickly to these questions in terms of how the two types of valid cognitions engage [those objects of investigation]! From your words, which indicate the result [of your knowledge], I will be able to determine clearly, as if with fleshly eyes, your personal mastery of analysis.

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.3 The defects of pretentious prattling]

\ ###
 \ 0.1.1.2.2.1.3
 \ Though they stretch out the elephant's trunk of their learning,
 \ Like well water, the deep water of Dharma is not tasted;
 \ Yet they hope still to become famous scholars
 \ Like low-caste men lusting for a queen.

¢(i.e. Just repeating blindly other's positions or scripture without understanding them will not do the job of developing faith in the view, path and result, staying on the authentic path, and reaching the goal beyond conceptualization. One has to directly realize himself the way things really are. Only then can he teach it to others without leading them to one extreme or another.)

Thus, not only is it pointless to repeat what other [traditions and persons] say, even in our own tradition very erudite scholars, like elephants, hyperextend the trunk of prolixity, adorned with many scriptures, and talk. That well water, as in the popular saying "the well has gone dry," is not to be tasted just by having a long trunk. Likewise, without having experienced the Dharma water of the profound, definitive, and final meaning, those who yearn for worldly renown as scholars are like low-caste persons, such as sudras or candalas, lusting after the wife of a king. It is impossible for them to attain the object of their desires, and it is likewise difficult to attain fame as a scholar.

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.4 Enumerating the topics to be asked about (list of the seven questions)]

- \ ###
- \ 0.1.1.2.2.1.4
- \ 1- According to which of the two negations do you explain the view?
- \ 2- Do arhats realize both types of selflessness?
- \ 3- Does meditation involve modal apprehension?
- \ 4- Does one meditate analytically or transically?
- \ 5- Which of the two realities is most important?
- \ 6- What is the common object of disparate perceptions?
- \ 7- Does Madhyamaka have a position or not?

What are the seven questions?

1. -- The profound view of emptiness must be ascertained by a valid cognition that analyzes ultimate reality, and there is nothing whatsoever established as its object. Therefore, if all clinging to substantiality must be eliminated by the Madhyamika analyses, what sort of negation is involved?
2. -- In the context of Madhyamaka, do sravakas and pratyekabuddhas realize the two types of selflessness to the same degree as in Mahayana? What sort of difference in realization of emptiness differentiates the Hinayana and Mahayana?
3. -- When one engages in equipoise on that Mahayana view, must there be intentional apprehension or not?
4. -- In meditating upon that view, does one analyze and then meditate, or settle in meditation without analyzing?
5. -- In the divisions of that view, which of the two truths is more important, or is there no difference in importance?
6. -- What is the common object that appears differently to sentient beings?
7. -- Does the Madhyamaka free of extremes have a position or not? If in other systems there are many ways of establishing and refuting these topics, how do you of the early translation school interpret them?

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.1.5 Exhortation to give answers based on scripture and reasoning]

L7: [0.1.1.2.2.1.5.1 The subject that is the extraordinary profound point established through both scripture and reasoning]

0.1.1.2.2.1.5.1

- \ Thus, starting with the topic of emptiness,
- \ Give an answer established by reasoning,
- \ Without contradicting scripture,
- \ For these seven profound questions!

¢(i.e. The questioner wants some damn good answers with solid logic and support – as if this was possible in absolute terms.)

Having said that, since when one ascertains the profound meaning of Madhyamaka there are many different streams of philosophical systems with [a concept of] emptiness as their point of departure, please give an answer for these seven questions about profound and crucial points, using stainless valid inferential reasoning, without contradicting any of the scriptures or interpretive commentaries, in accordance with your own tradition; and in this way, your personal [philosophical] inclinations will be established.

L7: [0.1.1.2.2.1.5.2 The exhortation to quickly compose the treatise that shows the way to

explain it]

\ # 0.1.1.2.2.1.5.2
\ Even though pressed with the barbed lances
\ Of a hundred thousand sophisticated arguments,
\ These issues have not been penetrated before.
\ Like lightning, let your long philosopher's tongue strike
\ These difficult points, which have confounded the great!"

¢(i.e. Seems like the questioner is tired of “adapted skillful means” and “adapted views”; he want to know the logic behind all of these and a final view that is fool proof, even to Prasanga arguments. These explanations are not usually taught because this could compromise the efficiency of the so called progressive adapted skillful means and views. You don’t usually say to a kid “come out of the house and I will give you candy” and at the same time “there is really no candy, this is just a trick to get you out of the house because it is on fire”. So, in other traditions, this teaching is usually reserved for very advanced people.)

If one has pure scriptural sources and reasoning techniques, which are like an excellent armor of extraordinary realization of profound subjects, even if one is attacked with a hundred thousand spurious scriptural references and reasoning techniques—such as the acrimonious reductio ad absurdum statements of mean-spirited sophists, which are like the horrible barbs of thorns—one will not be pierced; and of course this goes without saying if such attacks are few. (i.e. This seems to mean that there are absolute truths that cannot be demolished by the Consequentialists. That would mean that there are things that are inherently existing and that can be directly seen. I can’t wait to see if the author can prove that. But that would be contrary to Nagarjuna’s teaching that all dharma are empty of inherent existence and that there is no exception at all.)

The Prasannapada says:

~ By applying well-crafted words, one will not be
~ Shaken by the wind of intellectuals.

Therefore, even though other philosophical systems may be better known to worldly people, in response to these profound questions about difficult points that have mostly confounded those greatly renowned in the world, as soon as the question is asked, he says, "please extend your long philosopher's tongue immediately like a lightning bolt"! This means, please compose quickly, without going off on tangents, using many and lengthy scriptural references and reasonings that definitely resolve the questions at hand. (i.e. as if this was possible using conceptualization)

L5: [0.1.1.2.2.2 The specifics of how the questions are answered;]

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.1 Having generated enthusiasm for answering, how he refrained for a moment]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.2.2.1
\ Thus incited by intellect,
\ The speech-wind wavered somewhat,
\ And that shook the sage's heart
\ Like a mountain in the winds at the end of time.
\ After maintaining a moment of disciplined engagement,
\ he said:

Thus, that question—the slight wavering of the speech wind that exhorted the swift composition of profound points—was incited by the intellect of that mendicant who suddenly appeared. By it, the heart of the scrupulous great sage was shaken, disproportionately to the mendicant's request, like a mountain by the wind at the end of time. [Thus, he had a] very joyful mind to answer, and the power of his wisdom, like the wind at the end of time, was moved to give a perfect answer, without hesitation, that would clear up all doubts and nescience about these important points. For example, like a mountain shaken and agitated, he quietly disciplined negative actions of speech and abided inseparably from the sun of philosophers, Manjusri. After a moment, he again propitiated his special deity. The meaning of "maintaining a moment of disciplined engagement" is explained as follows:

~ To the individually cognized [gnosis] induced...

And:

- ~ May we abide in the expanse of fundamental luminosity
- ~ Beyond mind, which dwells in the original state,
- ~ The state of the Great Perfection—Manjusri.

It seems that one should explain it as being the same [as the meaning of these two quotations]. It is said that the empty container for the meaning of this text is accomplished in this way through the six entrances of mantric eloquence.

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.2 How other people of outstanding talent and training cannot establish these topics flawlessly]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.2.2.2.
\ "Alas! If by undergoing hundreds of difficult tests,
\ And analyzing again and again,
\ The fires of great intellects blazed ever greater
\ Yet were still not refined to a flawless state,
\ How can a low person like myself possibly explain this,

Alas! Even if, after having undertaken austerities for many years, perhaps a hundred, such as depriving oneself of food and clothing, suffering heat and cold, relying again and again upon many spiritual teachers, and continuously blazing more and more with the oppressive fire of intellect, like purifying and testing gold, one still cannot [settle these issues] rationally without faults of contradiction, then needless to say others cannot either.

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.3 Therefore, having cast away arrogance, how he propitiated the deity]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.2.2.3
\ Whose innate brilliance is weak
\ And who has not undertaken lengthy study?"

¢(i.e. In short: What makes you think I can give a better answer than all of those previous great teachers ? What make you think it is possible to describe such a thing in such a way ?)

Likewise, "the innate intellectual brilliance of a low person like me, which is the ripening of previous seeds, is weak. So how can a low person like me, who has not undertaken the task of lengthy training in a hundred austerities as explained before, explain this without any scriptural or logical contradictions?" Thus, he called with intense devotional longing upon

the lord of his spiritual lineage, Manjughosa.

L6: [0.1.1.2.2.2.4 How he acquired the eloquence that expounds the answer, induced by reasoning in accordance with scripture]

\ ###
\ 0.1.1.2.2.2.4
\ Then, as he cried these words of lament to Manjughosa,
\ By what seemed to be His mystic power
\ A light dawned in the mind of the sage.
\ At that moment, as he acquired a little self-confidence,
\ He reasoned analytically according to eloquent scriptures, and spoke.

¢(i.e. In short: Ok ! Since I am your teacher, and you are my student, and since I have great compassion for you, I will do my best. Here it is ... But remember, we are just pointing toward the moon ... no logical reasonings or concepts can fully describe what is beyond all conceptualization and has to be directly realized. But, at least, with those correct explanations about the essence you will not end up lost far from the true Buddhist path, thinking you are still on it. – But, still, the only thing he can use are adapted skillful means; he can never “prove” any absolute truth.)

Then, a sign arose that he thought to be from the force of the cause and condition, respectively, of the equanimity of ultimate reality, and of praying with intense devotion on the level of deceptive reality. That is, a brilliant wisdom unlike any before arose in his mind, like light at the time of dawn, dispelling the darkness of ignorance, and he achieved an opportune eloquence that could exhaustively expound upon the difficult questions. As soon as that happened, he vowed to compose the text, by analyzing all the ways of establishing arguments by means of the rational principles of dependence (Itos), efficacy (bya), and reality (chos nyid), which should be relied upon, according to the meaning of well-spoken scriptures and interpretive commentaries that have the four qualities of brahmacarya

L1: [9.1. Topic 1 [The problem of negation: Emptiness is also empty; it is not the real non-dual nature beyond all conceptualization]]

¢(i.e. Résumé of Topic 1: In this section Mipham clarifies the authentic meaning of emptiness; and shows the danger of misinterpreting it and falling into one extreme or the other. The Tetralemma, or the negation of the four extremes – of existence, non-existence, both, neither – doesn’t mean that emptiness is the very ultimate truth, the Union of The Two Truths, the inseparability of appearances and emptiness, the coalescence. Emptiness is only a part of this Union of the Two Truths. It only means that this coalescence, this union, is beyond all description, all conceptualization. Even if everything is empty of inherent existence, that doesn’t mean that everything is completely non-existent, nor that there is a basis of imputation that is real, that there are real conventional things. It means that, to find the meaning of this, one has to go beyond all conceptualization, to look directly at the real nature of his own mind without using conceptualization. – So the conceptual emptiness is a complete negation without affirming anything, without leaving anything on the base; but ultimately the non-conceptual emptiness is beyond establishment and negation. The very ultimate truth is beyond inherent existence and emptiness, beyond

emptiness and non-emptiness.)

L2: [0.2 The composition that is virtuous in the middle, the consummate main body of the treatise that has the [sevenfold] enumeration of royal accouterments:]

L3: [0.2.1 A general explanation of the view of emptiness]

L4: [0.2.1.1 The actual explanation [Question 1: The basis as the coalescence of appearance and emptiness" – The first topic concerns the definition of the Nyingma philosophical view]]

L5: [1.1 How the two systems of negation are generally known in the world]

\ ###

\ 1.1

\ The dGe ldan pas say the view is an absolute negation;

\ Others say it is an implicative negation.

¢(i.e. Generally, in the world, some say the final view of the Prasangika is an absolute negation without affirming anything; and others say it is a negation that is affirming something. We say it is neither of them – see section 1.2.)

The Madhyamika view that is free of elaboration is ascertained by taking all elaborations that involve clinging and adherence to extremes, such as existence and non-existence, as the Madhyamika negandum. However, the views of the lower philosophical systems logically require the two types of partlessness in place of a person whose self has been refuted by means of [establishing] the absence of self-nature of continua and coarse [aggregates]. The Cittamatrins require the consciousness of relativity (gzhan dbang, paratantra) in place of the two kinds of falsely superimposed (kun btag, parikalpita) self that are negated. Thus, it is difficult for them to reverse the intentional apprehension that clings to substantiality. For an implicative negation requires the existence of some other dharma in the empty space left by the negandum, and if in the space of the negation there is some other dharma present as the view of ultimate reality, one cannot stop the intentional apprehension that clings to its substantiality, because it is not required.

Among Madhyamikas also, although it is held that neither Prasangikas nor Svatantrikas have higher or lower final intentions with respect to the ultimate meaning, the adherence of Svatantrikas to each of the two truths individually is a negandum of Prasangika. Accordingly, in the Land of Snows, those who maintain the philosophical systems of the new and old schools each claim that their final view is that of Prasangika. So which of the two negations is their Prasangika view?

In this world, those who are reputed to be exalted with respect to the brilliance of virtue, the Ri bo dGe ldan pas (i.e. note: the Gelugpas), take the view to be an absolute negation. How is that? For example, if the form of the son of a barren woman does not appear, then the form of his death likewise does not appear. In that way, if the aspect of true existence of a thing does not arise, the absence of [that thing's] being established in truth cannot be determined adequately. Thus, they say that the negation of that aspect that is the negandum—that is, true existence—requires skill in apprehending the range of the negandum, and maintain that in the place of the negandum, there is no implication of the existence of another phenomenon.

Other holders of Tibetan philosophical systems say that the emptiness of Madhyamaka is an implicative negation, thus, they must assert that, in the place of the negandum, the existence of either deceptive or ultimate reality is implied. The venerable (rye btsun) Jonangpas (i.e. the syncretism introduced by Dol-bo that contained the view of a permanent,

stable tathagatagarbha, the concept of a positive, independent nature, a substantially ontic tathagatagarbha which is only empty of other phenomena, see Magee's The Nature of Things), who are the most famous among them, claim that in the place of the negation of adventitious obscurations of deceptive reality, the existence of the Buddha nature—which is permanent, stable, changeless, thoroughly established, and not empty of its own essence—is implied.

In general, the reasons that the Madhyamikas use to negate true existence include the three marks of fruition, essence, and non-perception. From those [reasons of non-perception], the reasons of non-perception of cause, pervasion, essence, and result, as well as the perception of incompatibility, and so forth, are variously used in different texts as reasons for negation.

The negandum is also differentiated as the rational negandum and the path negandum, and those are further differentiated as superimposed and innate and so on. Therefore, in the Madhyamika context, some scholars expound both— an absolute negation in refuting the conceptual reifications of lower philosophical systems [of Buddhism] and heretics, and an absolute negation in refuting the Vijnaptivadins, and so forth.

L5: [1.2 In our own system [the Nyingma very ultimate view beyond all conceptualization, beyond establishment and negation: the dharmata, reached by the direct realization of the inseparability of the Two Truths, beyond the duality of the Two truths]]

L6: [1.2.1 The question about the two negations]

\ ###
\ 1.2.1
\ What is our own Early Translation tradition?

"Well, if Tibetans have various ways of ascertaining the view as an absolute negation and as an implicative negation, which of those two do the followers of the Early Translation school of secret mantra take as the Madhyamika negandum?

L6: [1.2.2 Plotting the answer, and explaining it]

L7: [1.2.2.1 From the perspective of the meditative equipoise of the coalescence of appearance and emptiness, [the view] is beyond establishment and negation, and there is no conventional distinction of two negations]

\ ###
\ 1.2.2.1
\ In the state of great gnosis of coalescence,
\ After making a negative judgment of "non-existence,"
\ What other thing such as an exclusive emptiness,
\ Or something that is not [that which is negated],
\ Could be implied in its place?
\ Both are just intellectually designated, and,
\ In the ultimate sense, neither is accepted.
\ This is the original reality beyond intellect,
\ Which is free of both negation and proof.

☿(i.e. Emptiness of emptiness; emptiness is not the very ultimate truth beyond all conceptualization. Isn't it obvious that emptiness alone, or anything else existing, is not the Union of the Two Truths: conventional truths and emptiness. So the very ultimately, in non-duality, there is no emptiness, no more than dependent origination; there is no Two

Truths; those are also conventional truths.)

There are two contexts here with respect to the Early Translation school, namely the conventions that relate to the state of gnosis that is manifest in the great equanimity of dharmata, and the ascertainment of how that [gnosis] is empty of essence through a valid cognition that analyzes ultimate reality. If one asks about the first context: with respect to the great self-arisen gnosis of the coalescence of the expanse and awareness—where one meets the face of naked freedom of elaboration, where the nature [of things] "abides in the womb" —there is no position of "non-existence." The bare emptiness of absolute negation in the place of negating the negandum of true existence is a mental imputation, but is not the actual nature of things. Having implicatively negated the adventitious obscurations, what other "thoroughly established reality" (yongs grub) could be implied in the place of negation? If in ultimate reality, even as an inclusive judgment (yongs gcod, pariccheda), some existent object of cognition existed or were required, emptiness would become a substantial entity. Such notions of "substantial" and "insubstantial" are the mind's conceptual projection and denial, respectively, upon the nature of things. Therefore, in fact, in the state of [sublime] equipoise, neither is maintained. Both of these are concepts of projection and denial, or negation and proof, while dharmata, which is free of all dualistic phenomena and beyond the mind that conceptualizes subject and object, is the primordial basis beyond negation and proof, and beyond eliminating and positing (bsal bzhaḡ).

Therefore, in texts of the profound and vast [lineages of explanation, namely, those stemming from Nagarjuna and Maitreya-Asaṅga], reality is taught to be without negation and proof or eliminating and positing, and in this tradition of the great secret Nyingmapa, [those authors] can be quoted directly and interpreted according [to their actual mode of explanation] .° The reason is that, in reality, all dharmas are not naturally established and are empty of essence. Thus, modes of appearance that are not realized in that way, which are false appearances of adventitious defilement, are found, by practicing the path, to be divisible [from reality] or, [otherwise put], to have the characteristic of emptiness. The natural purity of the expanse is not a bare emptiness, because it has the characteristic of all undifferentiable qualities of the unsurpassable three bodies.

The Great Omniscient One said:

- ~ Having the nature of emptiness, luminosity, and awareness,
- ~ Having great masses of indivisible qualities,
- ~ Spontaneously present and naturally pure like the sun,
- ~ Primordially empty of stains that are differentiable [from it]:
- ~ Such is the primordially pure, luminous dharmata.

The great glorious Rong zom said:

- ~ In the system of the Great Perfection, all dharmas are completely realized to be quite similar to illusions. Having fathomed this completely, one's mind is no longer deluded by the power of appearances, and cannot produce manifest mental constructions. One does not accept, abandon, hesitate, or make effort. Thus, this final realization of the illusion-like nature of things is established by consummating the realization of the inseparability of the two truths.

Otherwise, for those who explain the basis as bare emptiness, reality will empty of the qualities of the formal kayas, and for those who explain the basis as non-empty, reality will be empty of the qualities of the unsurpassable dharmakaya. Furthermore, if one divides

the two truths and explains that the ultimate is an exclusive emptiness (stong rkyang) that is without any removal or placement of something non-empty, because that something else cannot be removed or placed [in relation to an exclusive emptiness], it will not be of benefit to someone else whose mind [functions in terms of] eliminating and positing.

¢(i.e. Postulating a real non-dual nature with three attributes that can be directly seen with the gnosis that is manifest in the great equanimity of dharmata; a state of direct perception where there is no duality, no discrimination, no conceptualization; a state attained by consummating the realization of the inseparability of the two truths. This is still postulating something existing on its own which is contrary to the Middle Way. It is just another skillful means that emphasize the fact that emptiness doesn't mean complete non-existence. It is not different than Tsong Khapa's skillful means.)

L7: [1.2.2.2 From the perspective of the ultimate reality analysis that ascertains that, [the view] is an absolute negation]

L8: [1.2.2.2.1 The emptiness of self-nature is the intention of the great beings of India and Tibet]

\ ###
\ 1.2.2.2.1
\ But if you should ask about the way in which emptiness
\ is established,

¢(i.e. Emptiness is just another conventional truths; it means that the truth is beyond all conceptualization: not existence, not non-existence, not both , not neither – and there is no other possibility.)

Then it is just an absolute negation.

In India the glorious Chandrakirti

And in Tibet Rong zom Chos bzang both

With one voice and one intention

Established the great emptiness of primordial purity.

¢(i.e. There is no real good and bad because all of these are empty of inherent existence; in that sense everything is already pure. They say: everything is already pure in emptiness; but that is just an expression.)

According to the second alternative [elucidated in the first paragraph of 1.2.2.1.], if one only considers the way of analyzing into productionless emptiness that negates production from the four extremes, and asks which of the two negations it is: since one must negate even the slightest intentional apprehension, it is just an absolute negation. For glorious Candara of sublime India and Rong zom chos bzang of snowy Tibet both, with the same enlightened intention and the same melodious speech, established everything, however it appears—fabricated and unfabricated things, samsara and nirvana, good and bad, and so forth—as the great emptiness of primordial purity, without applying any qualification whatsoever.

Therefore, on that the Prasannapada says:

~ If you ask, "If one determines that something is not produced from itself, doesn't that mean that one also does not assert that it is produced from something else?" [the answer is yes], because we wish to say that it is an absolute negation.

And:

~ The Victor explained dharmas as being non-substantial.

And so on. Having referred to this sutra, the Prasannapada says:

~ ... and because [we] wish to say that it is an absolute negation, the meaning of substantial entities [my emphasis] lacking self-nature is the meaning of "absence of self-nature."

And, the great glorious Rong zom said:

~ Unlike the Madhyamika tradition, the Yogacarins view ultimate reality as being [the] existent [subject of attributes], and they do not apply an absolute negation to imagination (parikalpita, kun brtags), saying, "it is totally non-existent"; they say that "an ultimate reality that is established as a negation does not establish the middle way." Thus, since objects of cognition (shes bya) are empty of imagination (kun brtags), we absolutely negate the [status of] being [the subject of attributes] and the existence of an intrinsic identifying characteristic, so there is nothing whatsoever left over as a basis indicated [as the referent of imaginative construction] ,

And so on. Thus, in the Madhyamika expositions of Mipham Rinpoche only an absolute negation is stated. Since some have mixed together the philosophical systems of the new and old schools, and some have thought that they have discovered new interpretations, this is a response to those who have not seen the sources for our tradition, or have seen them but have not understood them.

L8: [1.2.2.2.2 Having determined the negandum of the ultimate truth analysis, explaining how [phenomena] are intrinsically empty]

\ ###
\ 1.2.2.2.2
\ Because these dharmas are primordially pure,
\ Or because they are originally without intrinsic reality,
\ They are not born in either of the two realities;
\ So why fret about the expression "non-existent"?

¢(i.e. Since everything is primordially empty then there is no real emptiness. Emptiness is the mere conceptual opposite of inherent existence. The two form an apparent conceptual duality that is also empty. The absolute nature of everything is beyond this duality. Once nothing is perceived as inherently existing, then there is no more need for its antidote: emptiness.)

Because the ultimate negandum of the Madhyamaka is like that, all these afflicted and purified dharmas are primordially pure, or are without self-nature from the beginning. Therefore, it is not as though something previously arisen is later non-existent or negated, because it is primordially pure; and it is not as though aspects of the object that are present in the context of conventionality are absent in the context of ultimate reality, because they are without self-nature from the beginning.

The Avatara commentary says:

~ If something had a self-nature or essence, and that were something arisen, that self-nature would not be existent [beforehand], so what would arise? This shows that it never arises at any time; from what does arise before, nothing arises later, and something that arises does not arise again. What is it then, you might ask: by its very nature, it is beyond the nature of suffering (rang bzhin nyid kyis yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa). "From the beginning" ('dod nas) does not mean that it does not arise only in the context of the gnosis of a yogi. What does it mean, then? It is taught that even before that, in the

context of worldly conventionality, those dharmas are not born from their own self. The word "beginning" (gdod) is a synonym of "at first" (dang po). One should know that this is stated in the context of worldly conventionality.

Therefore, because things are not born ultimately, nor are they born conventionally either—and are thus not born in either of the two truths—why should one have any doubt about the statement that a subject, such as a pillar, "does not exist"?

☿(i.e. Saying the thing is conventionally existent only means that there is a convention among people to agree to use this name and those characteristics. The thing is empty, its parts are empty, the parts of its parts are empty, the irreducible components are empty, everything is empty of inherent existence.)

For this is the excellent path established by reason, and therefore, since a pillar is primordially pure and is equanimity, by searching for another ultimate negandum and negating it, there is no residual fragment whatsoever of either ultimate or deceptive reality left over.

Thus, the mDo sdud pa says:

- ~ As here one understands that the five aggregates are like illusions,
- ~ One does not take illusions and aggregates to be different.
- ~ Free of various concepts, one experiences peace.
- ~ This is the way of the supreme perfection of wisdom.

Here, the fact that all cognizable dharmas are empty of self-nature or are empty of essence is stated in the scriptures and treatises. Accordingly, since this is established by authentic reasoning, although this tradition of the Nyingmapa school of secret mantra expounds intrinsic emptiness (rang stong), it is not the "intrinsic emptiness" of the "intrinsic emptiness vs. extrinsic emptiness" dichotomy. These two are differentiated by the philosophical systems of the new schools of Mantrayana, so that assertion of [intrinsic emptiness in the context of the new schools] is somewhat incompatible with the reality of the integrated two truths. In that respect there are some differences [between the proponents of intrinsic emptiness in the new schools and ourselves] regarding how the middle and final turnings of the wheel are posited as definitive or provisional, whether the intentions of both the great system-builders are combined together or not, whether the two validating cognitions are emphasized equally or not, etc.

[Objection:] This statement of yours, "only thinking of the manner of emptiness," which you take to mean the instantaneous cutting of the four extremes, is not reasonable. It is not possible to eliminate all the four extremes at once. Therefore, both the Prasangikas and Svatantrikas first ascertain that all dharmas are empty in that they are not produced, and having thus eliminated the extreme of existence of entities, the latter extremes are then eliminated in a similar manner.

☿(i.e. The four components of the Tetralemma are four complementary antidotes used in order to stay away from the four extremes. They are used in turn depending on the situation. But only a Buddha can really realize the perfect Union of The Two Truths, and stay away from all extremes simultaneously.)

[Answer:] The Svatantrikas differentiate the two truths; and it is true, as you have said, that once having ascertained a pillar as emptiness and eliminated the extreme of substantial existence, they gradually eliminate the latter extremes. However, in this Prasangika

context, where it is said that "this dharma is primordially pure," and so forth, by the very fact that the two truths are not differentiated, the pillar as it appears is the equanimity of integrated appearance and emptiness, which qualifies it as birthless emptiness. Since that actually cuts off both extremes of existence and non-existence, it automatically eliminates the extremes of "both" and "neither." For the non-finding of an experiential object of "both" or "neither" in the integrated appearance-emptiness of dharmata is ascertained according to the object of sublime beings' meditative equipoise. Therefore, if one looks honestly, although Prasangika and Svatantrika are similar in ascertaining substantial entities as emptiness, in fact they are dissimilar insofar as they eliminate the four extremes all at once and gradually, respectively, due to the fact that each system posits the presence or absence of a position differently.

Therefore, further on, in the context of explaining the disposal of faults in our system, that freedom from extremes is explained extensively, in the manner of coalescence of appearance and emptiness, and in the manner of coalescence being free from extremes and so forth, by means of examples like the moon's reflection in water. But aside from that, one should understand that the analysis of the two truths is not engaged merely by means of using the verbal expression of the complementary aspects of appearance and emptiness.

☿(i.e. He is saying the same thing: ultimately there is no need to use the Tetralemma when one finally realize the non-duality of everything and is thus able to stay away from all extremes simultaneously. That is done when one transcend the duality existence vs. non-existence, or appearance vs. emptiness.)

L5: [1.3 Refuting other systems [that lead to a reification of emptiness, or back to some realism] [like extrinsic emptiness]]

L6: [1.3.1 Their determination of the negandum of intrinsic emptiness brings the consequence of extrinsic emptiness]

L7: [1.3.1.1 Contradiction of the intention of Chandrakirti]

L8: [1.3.1.1.1 The question about the purvapaksa's Prasangika negandum]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.1.1
\ In the place of a pillar, primordially pure,
\ There is nothing non-empty whatsoever.
\ If you don't negate it by saying, "There is no pillar,"
\ What does it mean to say, "The pillar does not exist?"

☿(i.e. Nothing "exist" and is "empty". Emptiness of inherent existence is not a basic characteristic of a real thing. As Nagarjuna said, characteristic and characterized are inseparable, not the same, not different, non-dual: not two, not one.)

[They say] that with an ultimate validating cognition (don dpyod tshad ma) the dharma-possessor, such as a pillar, is not negated, but must be posited as what is left over as a conventional residue. They say, "Well, but the negandum is not that pillar, and if it were, one would denigrate conventionality"; this is how they explain it.

☿(i.e. This should mean that it is not because things are empty of inherent existence that they are completely non-existent, not dependently arisen, not functional, or from the mind only; that would be idealism or nihilism. It doesn't mean that there is something that is left that is inherently existing.)

[We ask], "If it is not the pillar, then what exactly is it?" to which they answer, "The pillar is not empty of being a pillar, but is empty of being truly existent."

¢(i.e. Emptiness is a total negation; there is nothing left on the basis that is not empty. But this means: not existent, not non-existent, not both, not neither. It doesn't just mean: "not existent" (that would be nihilism), or just mean "not non-existent" (that would be like thinking there is something left that is not empty). It only means that the real nature is beyond all description, beyond all conceptualization. Still, the best way to describe this, to point toward the moon, is to use expression like the Tetralemma, or the inseparability of the Two Truths, or the non-duality, or coalescence...)

L8: [1.3.1.1.2 Refuting their answer to it]

L9: [1.3.1.1.2.1 Even if one says it is an absolute negation, it becomes an implicative negation]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.1.2.1
\ The emptiness that is the negation of the pillar
\ And a left-over appearance
\ Are not fit, as "empty" and "non-empty," to coalesce;
\ It is like twisting black and white threads together.

¢(i.e. Nothing "exist" and is "empty". This absolute reality is not both existence and non-existence together; that is the third point of the Tetralemma. It is called the Union of the Two Truths, but it is not a real union because the two things has never existent independently in the first place.)

On the basis of that subject, such as a pillar, the emptiness that is the negation of true existence and a left-over appearance in the place where the negandum has been eliminated that is not empty cannot become the coalescence of appearance and emptiness, because one is a bare emptiness, and the other is implicated as a non-empty appearance. For example, there is no sense of coalescence in black and white threads wound together. Therefore, even if one proves an absolute negation over and over [in this way], reasoning establishes that in the final analysis it is an implicative negation. (i.e. To grasp at emptiness as an absolute real thing, or to think that there is something left that is not empty, is to miss the point. Emptiness is just another dependently arisen conceptual antidote; not an absolute characteristic.)

L9: [1.3.1.1.2.2 It becomes a species of extrinsic emptiness]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.1.2.2
\ To say, "a pillar is not empty of being a pillar"
\ Or "dharmata is empty of being a pillar"
\ Is to posit the basis of emptiness and something
\ of which it's empty.
\ These are verbal and ontological extrinsic emptinesses.

¢(i.e. So nothing really "exist" and is "empty"; no more than a thing can "inherently exist" and "change" or "cease". To grasp at emptiness is to think that emptiness is not empty, not a mere conceptual tool.)

Thus, both of these two kinds of Madhyamika interpretation—viz., (1) deceptive reality,

where a pillar is not empty of being a pillar, but is empty of being truly existent, and (2) where the thoroughly established (yongs grub) dharmata that is a non-empty ultimate is the emptiness of deceptive reality, [such as] a pillar—posit the basis that is empty of something extrinsic as one or the other of the two truths. Therefore, they both propound an emptiness with respect to an extrinsic true existence and an adventitious deceptive reality, respectively. Therefore, whether or not the [exponents of these systems] apply the name [extrinsic emptiness] or not, they maintain a verbal and ontological forms of extrinsic emptiness, respectively. True existence is not established with respect to either of the two truths and is only an object of verbal designation, hence the term "verbal extrinsic emptiness" (tshig gi gzhan stong); and samsara exists conventionally in deceptive reality, hence the term "ontological intrinsic emptiness" (don gyi gzhan stong).

You might wonder, "We don't maintain extrinsic emptiness, so how can that be?" In your system, whatever exists conventionally is not negated ultimately and is not empty from its own side; and you claim that whatever is negated ultimately and whatever is empty does not appear conventionally. Because what is empty and what is not empty are different, they are [empty of each another, hence] extrinsically empty. If they are not now extrinsically empty, then even the proponents of extrinsic emptiness would not be proponents of extrinsic emptiness.

L9: [1.3.1.1.2.3 It contradicts both scripture and reasoning]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.1.2.3
\ Woe! If this is not empty of this itself,
\ The empty basis is not empty and is left over.
\ This contradicts both scripture and reasoning—
\ "Form is empty of form!"

¢(i.e. Even the basis of imputation is empty of inherent existence. The conventionally thing left is also empty.)

As they do not have a view worthy of such arrogance, he begins with a word of amazement: Woe! If that pillar is not empty of being that pillar, [and one only applies the] negation of emptiness with respect to an extrinsic true existence that does not exist conventionally, then that negandum [of pillar, etc.,] is not empty and is left over. Thus, scripture and reasoning are contradicted. [For example], consider the meaning of scriptural passages [dealing with] the sixteen-fold differentiation of emptiness—"the eye is empty of eye, form is empty of form," etc., and from a sutra, "Kasyapa! Emptiness does not make dharmas empty; dharmas are by their very nature empty," and so forth. As for reasoning, if one analyzes a pillar from the perspective of cause, effect, and essence, it is not established. "Pillar" is the subject, which is non-substantial, because it is not produced from itself, another, both, or without cause, like a dream. Likewise, the subject and probandum are similarly bereft of being the result of an existent or non-existent. And since in essence it is bereft of singleness and plurality, cause, effect, and essence are all dependently arisen. Thus, if there were something non-empty aside from the three doors of liberation, it would contradict the sense of reason. Also, a truly existent thing does not have the distinctions of cause, effect, essence, etc.

Also, there would be the consequence of an emptiness without appearance not existing, because it would not be possible in either of the two truths. If it were possible, it would

consequently not be realizable by anyone, because it would not be connected with an appearance that would serve as means to realize it. Even if it were realized, it would consequently not be able to serve as an antidote to that which must be abandoned, because it would be a separate emptiness. For example, when one is angry with an enemy, it does no good to recognize the emptiness of space.

L7: [1.3.1.2 The inappropriateness of applying one's own qualifications]

L8: [1.3.1.2.1 The unreasonableness of applying qualifications of latter words]

L9: [1.3.1.2.1.1 Refutation through examination of sameness and difference]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.1.1
\ Consider a pillar and the true existence of a pillar:
\ If they are one, then refuting one the other is refuted;
\ If they are different, by refuting a true existence
\ That is not the pillar, the pillar
\ That is not empty of itself would be immune to analysis.

¢(i.e. To say that something is empty of inherent existence but not completely non-existent doesn't mean that the thing really exist conventionally, or that there is a real basis.)

You might think, "It is reasonable to apply the qualification of empty of true existence."
But are the pillar and the negandum based upon pillar, namely, true existence, the same or different? (i.e. It is easy to pick any word, phrase, or sentence out of context and turn it into absurdity. That is proper of the limitation of all conceptualization. To understand the real meaning of the teachings one has to get more than just pieces here and there.) In the first case, if the negandum and the basis of negation are the same, when true existence is eliminated from one [of them], it is also reasonable to eliminate from the pillar what is essentially the same as it, because it also is the same as the true existence [of pillar].
For example, if you burn a pillar, its color also changes.

Also, according to the second alternative, even if one eliminates a true existence that is other than the pillar, then the pillar would consequently have a non-empty essence immune to analysis, no matter how many Madhyamika reasonings one used to examine it. If you accept that consequence, then a non-empty pillar is contradictory to a valid cognition of ultimate analysis, because it [that is, true existence] would be empty of an extrinsic pillar that is truly existent. This would contradict the position that the pillar is empty of its own essence (rang stong). Finally, true existence would not be negated, because something that is immune to analysis [that is, the pillar] is said to be "truly existent."

L9: [1.3.1.2.1.2 Refuting the answer that disposes of its faults]

L10: [1.3.1.2.1.2.1 The answer [to our criticism]]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.1.2.1.
\ "Because true existence is not found to exist,
\ There is no need to debate sameness and difference"—

¢(i.e. Conventionally we say that everything is not different, not the same; but the very ultimate nature of everything is even beyond this discussion; it is beyond all conceptualization. They are not the same, not different, not both, not neither. The Tetralemma is merely a skillful means, not the very ultimate reality.)

"If true existence does not exist because it is not established with respect to either of the two truths, then this examination as to whether it is the same as or different than the pillar is unnecessary."

L10: [1.3.1.2.1.2.1 Its refutation]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.1.2.2
\ Even though true existence does not exist,
\ Individuals still apprehend vases as truly existent.
\ So aside from a non-empty vase
\ What is there to establish as truly existent?
\ And you think you've determined the appearance of
\ the negandum!

Granted, "true existence" does not exist if you analyze it. However, with respect to ordinary individuals who apprehend self and phenomena as truly existent, Madhyamika reasoning ascertains all dharmas as emptiness, because those ordinary individuals apprehend vases, etc., as truly existent. (i.e. Emptiness is the antidote to "inherent existence", not the very ultimate truth beyond conceptualization that is called the Union of the Two Truths, or the coalescence.)

Since vases, etc., are apprehended as true, and the non-empty vase conforms to the mental object of an ordinary individual, the apprehension of true existence is not stopped. Then, if [as you say] there is some form of "true existence" above and beyond [the vase] that must be mastered as the scope of the negandum, whose object would that be? That mode of appearance of the two forms of self that are the negandum of Madhyamaka—of which self-apprehending person will it be the object? What need would there be to ascertain the selflessness through Madhyamika reasoning of that extraneous object? And yet you flatter yourselves with the idea that this is a Madhyamika interpretation never set forth by earlier generations! For example, it is like asserting the horns of a rabbit as the negandum.

Also, all subjects such as vases, pillars, etc., are not immune to analysis. If that [lack of immunity] is not [the same as] absence of true existence, then for whom is that dharma-possessor to be truly existent as the object of the apprehension of true existence? How can one realize that as not truly existent? For even though it is ascertained as not immune to analysis, you claim that it is not non-truly existent. Thus, you think this is how the negandum is explained, or how it appears.

L9: [1.3.1.2.1.3 Even though that kind of qualification is known in Svatantrika, it is not necessary for the final meaning]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.1.3
\ To teach emptiness by applying some qualifier
\ Such as "true existence" to the negandum
\ Is of course well known in Svatantrika texts.
\ But in the context of analyzing ultimate reality,
\ What is the point of applying it?

¢(i.e. The very ultimate nature of everything is beyond all conceptualization, beyond mere "emptiness of inherent existence".)

To teach with the application of any kind of verbal qualification to the two truths, such as "true existence" or "utterly established" (yang dag par grub pa), etc., is admittedly well known in the Svatantrika corpus of the master Bhavaviveka, and so forth. But in the context of the final analysis of ultimate reality, what need is there to apply those qualifications such as "truly existent"? That [analysis] should ascertain the absence of all elaborations of the four extremes, but a bare emptiness of true existence is not sufficient. Thus, the Avatara commentary says:

~ For that very reason, the Master did not make qualifications, and saying "not produced from self," he negated production generally. "There are no substantive entities that are ultimately produced from themselves, because they exist, like sentient beings"—one should I think it pointless to add the qualification of "ultimate" to [a negation already] qualified in this way.

L8: [1.3.1.2.2 The unreasonableness of applying the prior verbal qualification:]

L9: [1.3.1.2.2.1 The fact that there is contradiction in positing the expectation that requires the application of qualification]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.2.1
\ Thinking that if it's empty, then even deceptively
\ A pillar will be non-existent,
\ You try to avoid misinterpretation of the word
\ [non-existent];
\ But this is itself a great contradiction!

¢(i.e. This very ultimate nature of everything is beyond existent (like to say that something is dependently arisen), beyond non-existence (like saying something is empty of inherent existence), beyond both (like something that exist and is empty), beyond neither (like something else))

If one thinks that one needs to add the qualification "the pillar is not empty of being a pillar": (i.e. This only means that even if everything is empty of inherent existence, they are not-completely non-existent, not from the mind-only. Anybody can show the absurdity of any phrase taken out of context. Why ? Because all conceptualization are necessarily imperfect, necessarily leads to absurdity. That is the meaning of "all views are flawed" from Nagarjuna.) Your expectation is that if the pillar is empty of its own essence, then not only ultimately but deceptively as well there will be no pillar. Thinking this, you fail to distinguish the two truths and doubt the words without investigating their meaning, like a crow struck with hesitant curiosity, and although you apply words in this way, it does not remove your doubt, and again you incur the contradictions arising from merely literal understanding.

From the gSung sgros:

~ The reason is that these words are not reasonable even with respect to deceptive reality, because they are not timely, they are unnecessary, and they contradict your own words. Because of these three faults, the logical mark is established gradually: (1) when explaining the way that eye is ultimately empty of being an eye, it is not the time to discuss the fact that conventionally an eye is not empty of being an eye; (2) the fact that conventionally an eye is not empty of itself, but is empty of being a nose and so forth, is the same for everything and is already established for the world, so it is not necessary to establish it again; and (3) if a vase were truly existent conventionally and were not empty

of being a vase, this would contradict the position that "true existence is conventionally non-existent." There the first two cases, which refer to conventionality, and the second two, which refer to ultimate reality, are unreasonable, because they entail the three faults of (1) internal contradiction in the opponent's position, (2) harming the position that emptiness is an absolute negation, and (3) harming the meaning of emptiness arising as relativity. The reasons (rtags) are established gradually: (1) if ultimately the vase is not empty of being a vase, it is truly existent, so there is contradiction of the position of its being empty of true existence; (2) likewise, if the vase is analyzed into parts and part-possessors, etc., down to elementary particles, and is not found, the vase would be empty of vase, and because there is no other way of positing the absence of true existence than this conventional expression of non-existence in truth, this contradicts the statement "a vase is not empty of being a vase."

~

~ Moreover, (3) because your ultimate truth analysis implicates a vase in the space left by the negation of true existence, emptiness becomes an implicative negation. But if the vase is not implicated, when negating true existence, the vase will be empty [which is our position anyway]. Also, those dharmas that are not empty of their own essence do not arise from the emptiness that is empty of other dharmas, because empty and not-empty are mutually exclusive. For example, from the absence of a rabbit's horn, a ruminant horn does not arise.

L9: [1.3.1.2.2.2 Having asked about it, making a refutation]

L10: [1.3.1.2.2.2.1 The question]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.2.2.1
\ You are not satisfied to say simply,
\ "A pillar is deceptively existent."
\ Why must you say, "It is not empty of itself?"

¢(i.e. To say that something is empty of inherent existence means that it doesn't exist as we think it does, nor that it doesn't exist at all. But we should not grasp at the concept of emptiness itself. Emptiness is also empty of inherent existence.)

[The opponent] says, "This statement of ours does not refer to either of the two truths. [What we say] is that a pillar is not empty of being a pillar in terms of deceptive reality, and is empty of being truly existent with respect to ultimate reality. So there is no fault whatsoever." This shows that you are not content to accept the position of previous scholars, who simply said that things are "deceptively existent." For some reason you come up with the new expression "The pillar is not empty of being a pillar." You might say, "Those two expressions are not the same in words, but the meaning comes out the same. We say 'pillar not empty of being a pillar' because it is easier to understand."

L10: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2 Its refutation]

L11: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2.1 The contradiction of the meaning not being the same]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.2.2.2.1
\ You may say, "They are the same in meaning,"
\ But it is not so; "A pillar exists" and
\ "There is a pillar in a pillar" are different statements.
\ The latter means "Something depends on something"—

\ This in fact is what you end up claiming.

¢(i.e. As any other cause and effect that are both empty of inherent existence; emptiness and its basis are also both empty of inherent existence, inseparable, non-dual.)

You say the meaning is the same. But if the different modes of expression are different, then these are statements made according people's [differing] intentions, which indicate different meanings, hence they do not mean the same thing. (i.e. There is no absolute meanings, or absolute concepts. One should not judge everybody according to his own interpretation, thinking it is absolute.) For the statement "a pillar exists" is accepted as what merely appears and is generally known, without damaging the way things are known in the world. That statement, and the statement that "a pillar possesses a pillar," are not the same. The former is a mere conventionality, unanalyzed and uninvestigated; the latter is a case of [epistemological] investigation and analysis, where the former [pillar] is the support and the latter [pillar] is supported by it. This is in fact what you end up claiming. It is like saying, for example, "A pillar exists impermanently." Therefore, insofar as a pillar that exists deceptively is a mere appearance of something empty that is naturally apparent as relativity, it is reasonable to accept that the pillar is empty. If [the pillar] were not empty, then not only are the two statements different in meaning, this would contradict the position that [pillars, etc.,] are mere verbal designations that are conceptually imputed. To say "empty of true existence" with respect to ultimate reality contradicts Chandrakirti's assertion that it is not necessary to apply qualifications, and it is the same as the application of the qualification of true existence to the negandum by the Svatantrikas, who expound [a conception] of substantial existence [conventionally].

L11: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2.2 That statement is not reasonable in terms of either of the two truths]

\ ###
\ 1.3.1.2.2.2.2.2
\ If ultimately a pillar is not perceived,
\ Then how can a pillar not be empty of pillar?
\ In saying "Deceptively a pillar [is not empty of being a]
\ pillar,"
\ You are confused, using the same word twice.

¢(i.e. So there is nothing on the basis, nothing that is not merely imputed as Lama Zopa would say.)

Another fault follows. Does the statement "a pillar is not empty of being a pillar" refer to ultimate reality or deceptive reality? If one analyzes with respect to ultimate reality, analyzing parts and part-possessors, partless components, directional parts, and so forth, as well as establishment as one or many, and so forth, then one cannot imagine even the slightest essence proper to a pillar. This being the case, how can one possibly be intended by the statement that the dharma-possessor "pillar" is not empty of the dharma "pillar"? In the second alternative, with reference to deceptive reality, if in saying "pillar [is not empty] of being a pillar" the two [pillars] are not identical but are different, it makes sense to say "pillar" twice. And if they are not different, in saying this one is just deluded about words. This is an utterly pointless and cumbersome mode of expression that is difficult to read and write.

L11: [1.3.1.2.2.2.2.3 Intrinsic emptiness and not being empty are both unreasonable]

\ ###
 \ 1.3.1.2.2.2.3
 \ If something is not empty of itself,
 \ Then while it exists itself, it must be empty of
 \ something else.
 \ If the negandum is not something else,
 \ This contradicts the claim that it is not empty of itself.

Thus, if a pillar is not empty of being a pillar, then is the pillar itself not empty, or empty? In the first case, even though one claims that something is intrinsically empty, if, when ascertaining the thing itself, for example, a pillar, it is not empty of itself, the only alternative is to accept that it is empty of some extrinsic negandum, because the pillar exists without being empty of itself. For example, it is like the claim that "thorough establishment" [yongs grub, parinispanna] is extrinsically empty of adventitious defilements. In the second case, if the negandum that is negated ultimately is none other than the pillar, and thus the pillar is empty of its own essence, then this contradicts the claim that the pillar is not empty of itself, because it would be empty of its own essence.

The sDud pa says:

~ If through ignorance one conceptualizes form,
 ~ Experiences feelings, and consciously interacts with the aggregates,
 ~ Even if such a bodhisattva thinks, "This aggregate is empty,"
 ~ [S]he interacts with marks, and has no faith in the birthless.

Thus, if you postulate appearances that are empty of something else, you state that there is an appearance that is not empty, and if you say that there is emptiness that is empty of an appearance of something else, then you should analyze how your statement that "something that is not apparent is empty" accords with Nagarjuna's [thought].

L6: [1.3.2 Whether it is deceptive or ultimate reality that is extrinsically empty, they both are negated:]

L7: [1.3.2.1 If one focuses on that system, one will not give rise to the qualities of abandonment and realization]

\ ###
 \ 1.3.2.1
 \ Generally speaking, extrinsic emptiness
 \ Does not necessarily qualify as emptiness.
 \ Although a cow does not exist in a horse,
 \ How could one thereby establish the horse's emptiness?
 \ By seeing that horse, what harm or good
 \ Will it do to the cow?

¢(i.e. So to say that everything is empty of inherent existence except emptiness itself, except the Buddha-nature itself, except Nirvana itself, is contradictory. If emptiness were real, then the object called empty would also be real. These two are not different, nor the same.)

In general, in each philosophical system there seem to be many different ways of explaining what qualifies as, or is disqualified as, existence, non-existence, emptiness, and non-emptiness, etc. In the teachings of the lord father, Lama Manjusri, it says that according to most earlier scholars, if something exists conventionally, it does not

[generally] qualify as something existent, and if something is ultimately non-existent, it [generally] qualifies as something non-existent. Likewise, the earlier scholars who upheld extrinsic emptiness maintain that something that is deceptively existent does not qualify as existent, and that something that is ultimately existent qualifies as existent. Most later scholars say that something that is deceptively existent [generally] qualifies as existent, while something that is ultimately non-existent does not qualify as non-existent [in general]. In the system of intrinsic emptiness, there is only non-existence ultimately, because an ultimately existing thing is impossible. In the system of extrinsic emptiness, if something is non-existent ultimately, it must be deceptive, because what exists ultimately is ultimate reality itself.

These are both distinctions of the later philosophical systems. We Nyingmapas do not explain things according to either of these [systems of conventions regarding existence and non-existence in the two truths]. [We say that] because things do exist conventionally, they qualify as conventionally existent, but do not qualify as ultimately existent. Because things are ultimately non-existent, they qualify as ultimately non-existent, but do not thereby qualify as conventionally non-existent. It is taught [in the Nyingma tradition] that this is a way to understand ultimate non-existence and conventional existence as a single meaning that obtains without contradiction on the basis of existing things. In general, even though in philosophical models of the conventionality of appearances there are various conventions of existence, non-existence, deceptiveness, and non-deceptiveness, and so forth, at the time of ascertaining the dharmadhatu emptiness as the object of [sublime] equipoise, the emptiness of one thing with respect to another does not qualify as emptiness.

The Uttarat Tantra says:

- ~ Originally without center or periphery, indivisible,
- ~ Not dual, not three, stainless, non-conceptual,
- ~ The realization of this nature of the dharmadhatu
- ~ Is seen by a yogi in equipoise.

Since it has to be this way, as there is no dichotomy of dharma-possessors where one is empty and the other not empty, there are no elaborations that adhere to extremes of existence and non-existence; and since there is no eliminating and positing, such as eliminating one thing and positing another, one realizes the equality of all dharmas in birthlessness. Therefore, the extrinsic emptiness of adventitious deceptive reality with respect to the dharmata that is thoroughly established definitely does not qualify as the realization of the emptiness of non-elaboration, which is the support for consummation of the qualities of abandonment and realization, because there is apprehension of the absence of one thing on the basis of something that is other than it existing. For example, even though one realizes that a cow is not established in a horse, that absence of a cow does not suffice to determine that the horse is empty.

The Avatara commentary says:

- ~ It is not reasonable for the emptiness of one thing in another to be non-substantiality, for in scripture we see "Mahamati! That emptiness that is the absence of one thing in another is the most trivial of emptinesses."
- ~
- ~ To say "because a cow is not a horse, it does not exist" is not reasonable, because [a cow] exists [as a cow] by its very nature.

And so on. The opponent says, "By seeing a horse, one automatically knows that there is no

cow there. Likewise, by realizing the very essence of the thoroughly established dharmata, one knows the emptiness that is empty of conceptuality, so that that qualifies as realization of emptiness." Well, even if one has realization of thorough establishment that is not empty of its own essence, what good does that do for realizing the emptiness of adventitious deceptive reality? The consequence is that it would not help, because their essences are different. For example, what good will seeing a horse do for seeing the emptiness of a cow? It won't help. Moreover, even if one knows that [dharmata] is empty of adventitious deceptive phenomena, how will this help one to understand the emptiness of thoroughly established dharmata? That won't help either because their essences are different. The example is as above [the cow and the horse]. Therefore, there is no reason why this should qualify as emptiness.

One might say, "The supreme realization is the realization of the non-empty thorough establishment of reality, so by realizing that, one does not need to realize emptiness." Well then, that kind of realization of reality is the subject. The consequence is that it could do nothing to harm the two obscurations that are to be abandoned, and the reason is that one cannot establish the intentional apprehension and antidotes that oppose the two kinds of self-apprehension that are the root of the two obscurations. For example, by knowing that a cow is not present in a horse, how does that help to stop grasping at the horse itself? It doesn't help.

On that account, the Pramanavarttika says:

- ~ Without refuting this object [of desire],
- ~ That desire cannot be abandoned.
- ~ The abandonment of desire, hatred, and so forth,
- ~ Which is related to [developing] good qualities and [eliminating] faults,
- ~ Is [brought about] by not seeing the objects [of the afflictions]
- ~ But not [by abandoning the] external [objects themselves].

And, from the Sher phyin rgyan:

- ~ Others teach that dharmas exist
- ~ And maintain that obscurations to the knowable
- ~ Are exhausted,
- ~ But I find this incredible.

If it is not different, then like deceptive reality, ultimate reality will also be intrinsically empty.

L7: [1.3.2.2 The coalescence of appearance and emptiness, etc., that transcends narrow-minded perception would be impossible]

- \ ###
- \ 1.3.2.2
- \ Therefore a non-empty nirvana and
- \ An apparent samsara are unfit to be dharma and dharmata.
- \ Here there is no coalescence of appearance and emptiness
- \ Or equality of cyclic existence and peace.

☿(i.e. Samsara and Nirvana are of the same nature, both merely imputed by the mind. Their very ultimate nature is beyond all conceptualization, but we call them : not different, not the same; inseparable; non-dual, ...)

In the scriptures and treatises, samsara and nirvana are said to be dharma-possessor and dharmata.

The Dharmadharmatavibhaga says:

- ~ There, the division of dharmas
- ~ Is samsara, and with respect to dharmata,
- ~ The divisions of the three vehicles
- ~ Have their respective nirvanas.

Because they are different, that non-empty nirvana is not the dharmata of samsara, because as something that is not empty of itself, it is different than samsara. Samsara also cannot be its dharma-possessor, because nirvana is something different. They cannot each [be both dharma and dharma-possessor]. Nirvana cannot be both dharmata and dharma-possessor, because non-empty appearance would become permanent; samsara cannot be both dharmata and dharma-possessor, because of being an exclusive emptiness of absolute negation. There is a pervasion—the dharma-possessor is the appearance of dharmata, and dharmata is the nature of the dharma-possessor, and samsara cannot be both of them. Thus, the hollow [claim that extrinsic emptiness is] the intention of Maitreya's teaching collapses.

Also, in this type of system, the coalescence of appearance and emptiness is impossible, because the bodies and wisdoms are exclusive appearance devoid of the aspect of emptiness, and samsara is the nihilistic emptiness of adventitious defilements, and those two [samsara and nirvana] are different. If one claims that they are empty of intrinsic nature (ngo bo stong pa), then one will contradict the previous thesis that [ultimate reality] is not empty of its own essence, but is empty of something extrinsic and adventitious.

Moreover, there is no sense of the equality of samsara and nirvana here. If there were, then all sentient beings would already have become that equanimity, because one asserts the permanence of a Buddha nature that is not empty of its own essence. If not, then even if sentient beings practiced the path, they would not manifest equanimity, because a permanent reality of equanimity is asserted to be other than samsara. Therefore, "By this syllogism of otherness, differences are vanquished," and "For whomever emptiness doesn't work, nothing works." Thus, because of being non-empty and different, all faults arise.

Not only that, the Acintyastava says:

- ~ "Existence" is the view of eternalism;
- ~ "Non-existence" is the view of nihilism.
- ~ Thus, Lord, you have taught the Dharma
- ~ That avoids these two extremes.

In this system, the middle turning is held to explain the extreme of nihilistic, absolute negation, and the final turning is held to explain the extreme of eternalistic non-emptiness. So if one does fool oneself into believing that this interpretation is terribly profound, that would be better.

The [Samadhiraja]sutra says:

- ~ Both "existence" and "non-existence" are extremes.
- ~ Permanence and impermanence are also extremes.
- ~ Thus, having completely abandoned both extremes,
- ~ A wise person does not abide in the middle either.

Likewise, the glorious Rong zom Chos bzang said:

~ It is taught that neither production nor destruction is established; the actual nature of things is the absence of production and destruction. One should not try to prove that things are characterized by emptiness of something else, as if saying, "Here, the temple is empty of monks," and so forth.

Also, the gSang 'grel says:

~ All dharmas are empty of intrinsic essence. [But if one] sees them as extrinsically empty, one will not realize that they are empty of their own essence, so their essence would be quite obscure.

L7: [1.3.2.3 If that point of view were the meaning of coalescence, it would be easy for anyone to realize it]

\ ###
\ 1.3.2.3.
\ "The moon in the water is not the moon in the sky"—
\ If you think the emptiness of being the moon in the sky
\ And the appearance of the moon in water
\ Are the coalescence of form and emptiness,
\ Then the realization of coalescence would be easy
\ for anyone.

¢(i.e. All conceptualization, like dependent origination, emptiness, the Tetralemma, non-duality, Union, coalescence, ... are just like a finger pointing at the moon. They will never be the moon itself. We cannot realize this very ultimate nature through conceptualization, reasonings, logic, etc. This realization has to be done through direct perception of the real non-dual nature of our own mind in meditation – while uniting Shamatha and Vipashyana.)

According to this [opponent's] system [under consideration], the "coalescence of appearance and emptiness" means something like, for example, saying, "A reflection of the moon in water is other than the actual moon in the sky," where the moon in the sky is the emptiness that is empty of deceptive reality, and deceptive reality is the self-appearing apparent aspect of the moon in water. Taken together, these two would be the coalescence of appearance and emptiness. That kind of abiding reality of coalescence would be easy for anyone to realize, from foolish herdsmen on up. Just by seeing, one would definitely realize it, and expounding, debating, and composition would be completely unnecessary.

According to that example, the combination of emptiness that is the emptiness of adventitious deceptive reality, and the non-empty abiding ultimate reality that is thoroughly established, might be called "coalescence"; but in fact they cannot be combined, because they are different. Therefore, one might be confused because the mere words "coalescence" and "non-elaborated" are the same [in various systems], but one would be very mistaken in holding all systems to be the same. Whichever meaning one considers here, one must discriminate with respect to the actual meaning, because all of these philosophical systems have the mere words "coalescence" and "non-elaborated." Likewise, the Great Omniscient One says in the Comfort and Ease of Illusion?

~ Some people say that this dharma is not present in that, making an excluding judgment of emptiness, and claim that [the latter dharma] is not empty of its own essence. This is a fair-weather emptiness, like the fact that the sun is empty of darkness, but not empty of light rays. If one is attached to "truth," one can never be liberated; since the essence of

the sun is empty of being one or many, its rays are also empty. This appearance-in-emptiness is said to be suchness. The Bodhicittavivarana says:

- ~ The nature of fire is heat,
- ~ And the nature of treacle is sweet.
- ~ Likewise, the nature of all things
- ~ Is taught to be emptiness.
- ~ And, from the Prajnaparamita:
- ~ Form is intrinsically empty of form.
- ~ And, from the Sher rgyan grel chung:
- ~ Because everything is empty of its own essence,
- ~ Twenty types of emptiness are asserted.
- ~ This does not mean that because something is empty, it is non-existent; because the nature of emptiness is inseparable from appearance, all dharmas are reasonable in emptiness—

And so on.

L7: [1.3.2.4 It would not be fitting for great beings to praise that [point of view]

- \ ###
- \ 1.3.2.4
- \ Everyone knows a cow is not a horse;
- \ They directly see the appearance of a cow.
- \ How could the Mahatma have said,
- \ "To realize this is amazing"?

¢(i.e. It is beyond all conventional truths, all concepts.)

Because it is easy for the wise and foolish alike to recognize that a cow is not a horse, to [maintain that] actually seeing that a cow is not a horse is realization was [sarcastically] said to be "a great wonder" by the Great One. If that is a great wonder, then what more ridiculous thing could there be that is not wondrous? For everyone knows that things are, by their individual [conventional] natures, exclusive of other things, and only exist in that way.

L5: [1.4 How those faults do not apply to us [finally saying the same thing as Tsongkhapa]]

L6: [1.4.1 A summary, using a common example, which teaches how our own tradition of absolute negation [implies] coalescence]

- \ ###
- \ 1.4.1
- \ Therefore, in our own system,
- \ If one examines a moon in the water, that moon
- \ Is not found at all, and does not exist as such;
- \ When the moon in the water manifestly appears,
- \ It is negated, but appears nonetheless.

¢(i.e. So when we say everything is still conventionally existent, this doesn't mean that there is something that is left existing on the basis of imputation; that would be reintroducing inherent existence. It only means that it is not completely non-existent, because non-existence is just another concept, the opposite of existence; and that everything is really beyond this duality.)

For appearance and emptiness to be different is totally unreasonable.

¢(i.e. After all the author is saying the same thing as Tsongkhapa. “it is not because everything is empty of inherent existence that they are completely non-existent, not dependently arisen, not appearing, or from the mind only.”)

Therefore, how is it that, in our own early translation tradition, an absolute negation is asserted but doesn't imply that there is an emptiness exclusive [of appearance] and an appearance [exclusive of emptiness]? For example, if one analyzes a reflection of the moon in water with respect to the inside, outside, and middle of the water, and also with respect to its own essence, the reflected moon is not found to exist in even the slightest measure according to its manner of appearance, so it abides in emptiness. Though it does not exist—or, is empty— when it is actually perceived as a sensory object, as the form of the moon reflected in water, that kind of mere appearance and the emptiness of absolute negation are established by valid cognition as being inseparable, and hence there is an absolute negation. For to be that way [that is, an absolute negation], and yet be able to appear, is the dharmata of things.

A sutra says:

- ~ Just as the water-reflected moon at night
- ~ Appears in the clear and undisturbed ocean,
- ~ The reflected moon is empty, and aggregations are without essence.
- ~ All dharmas should be understood in that way.

And, from the Hevajrat Tantra (brtag gnyis):

- ~ Naturally pure from the beginning,
- ~ Neither true nor false, the claim "like a moon
- ~ In the water"
- ~ Is understood by the yogini.

L6: [1.4.2 The extensive explanation:]

L7: [1.4.2.1 It is reasonable because it is directly seen by the wise]

- \ ###
- \ 1.4.2.1
- \ Emptiness and existence are contradictory
- \ In the mind of an ordinary person. But here, this manifest
- \ Coalescence is said to be wonderful;
- \ The learned praise it with words of amazement.

¢(i.e. The Union of the Two Truths, as realized only by a Buddha, also called here the coalescence of the Two Truths, is beyond the duality inherent existence and emptiness of inherent existence. It is neither one of them, nor both together, nor neither – or something else.)

The non-contradictory arising of the natural emptiness of all dharmas and the unobstructed apparent aspect of relativity as one object appear to immature, ordinary beings, from a single basis, as if contradictory. But here, it is established by the direct vision of yogis. This nature of things, the coalescence of appearance and emptiness, is praised by the wise with words of wonderment, as "amazing."

The Pancakrama says:

- ~ If one understands this emptiness of dharmas,
- ~ As the relativity of cause and effect,

- ~ There is no greater wonder than this!
- ~ Nothing is more amazing than this!

¢(i.e. He is saying exactly the same thing as Tsongkhapa: everything is empty of inherent existence because dependently arisen.)

And, from the Great Omniscient One:

- ~ When the yogi free of subject and object perceives
- ~ This appearance-in-non-existence, he laughs in amazement.

L7: [1.4.2.2 It is reasonable because it is inferred by reasoning]

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\    ###
\    1.4.2.2
\    If one examines from the side of emptiness,
\    Because nothing at all is non-empty,
\    One can say simply that everything is "non-existent."
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¢(i.e. So we should not grasp at “emptiness”; it is also a dependently arisen concepts, an adapted skillful means, a conventional truths, something empty of inherent existence, something beyond existence and non-existence.)

For that reason, the previous thesis of absolute negation is reasonable. If one thus investigates from the perspective of emptiness, because there is not the slightest pure or afflicted dharma that is not empty, one can say apodictically, without the slightest doubt, that from the perspective of that valid cognition that investigates ultimate reality, it is an "absolute negation."

¢(i.e. He is saying exactly the same thing as Tsongkhapa: all dharma are empty of inherent existence, there is no exception.)

The Uttaratantra says:

- ~ The nature of mind is like space,
- ~ Without cause or condition;
- ~ It is not an aggregate and has no
- ~ Production, destruction, or abiding.

L7: [1.4.2.3 Perfectly explaining the meaning established with these reasons]

L8: [1.4.2.3.1 The manner of abiding of things is emptiness and relativity abiding inseparably]

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\    ###
\    1.4.2.3.1
\    But that non-existence is not self-sufficient,
\    For it arises unobstructedly as appearance.
\    That appearance is not self-sufficient,
\    For it abides in baseless great emptiness.
```

¢(i.e. Even if everything is empty of inherent existence because dependently arisen, everything is still “appearing” in dependence, and still “functional”. Emptiness and appearances are inseparable; one implies the other. That is the meaning of the Union of The Two Truths, of this coalescence.)

However, "non-existence" is not something other, because it appears to others. That

non-existence or emptiness of essence does not remain on its own as non-existence, but arises unimpededly as the appearance of relativity, which is the basic reality of luminosity. It is not the case that something that existed before later becomes non-existent; whatever appears in samsara and nirvana does not remain on its own as appearance. It is not like "reversal to the basis" of emptiness in philosophical systems that propound existence; because self-liberation in baseless emptiness is taught according to the abiding nature of reality, which is coalescence free of elaboration, the meaning [of this teaching] abides in the Great Middle (dbu ma chen po).

¶(i.e. He is saying exactly the same thing as Tsongkhapa: it is not because everything is empty of inherent existence that they are completely non-existent, not appearing, not dependently arisen, not functional, or from the mind-only. Emptiness doesn't deny conventional truths, doesn't deny appearances, Those two are in fact inseparable, non-dual: not two, not one. That is the meaning of the Union of The Two Truths, the coalescence, the inseparability of appearances and emptiness, ...)

Therefore, the Great Omniscient One said:

~ Existence is not established in appearance; emptiness does not veer into non-existence. This should be understood as the nature of non-dual great spontaneous presence.

L8: [1.4.2.3.2 In explaining that the way it is, it is not necessary to apply qualifications]

\ ###
\ 1.4.2.3.2
\ There, distinctions such as "This is empty of that,"
\ Or "That is empty of this,"
\ Or "This is emptiness and that is appearance,"
\ Are never to be found;

¶(i.e. So nothing really exist and is empty, as if the two could have existed separately and then be united. They have always been inseparable – like any two poles of any apparent duality – merely imputed by the mind.)

When ascertaining that kind of Madhyamaka, although an extrinsic true existence or adventitious deceptive reality is the empty aspect that is absolutely negated, this negandum is not used to qualify the emptiness of pillars or Buddha nature, nor do we ever find any distinctions of dualistic dharmas, such as the twofold partlessness of [the Sautrantikas and Vaibhasikas], or the conventional establishment by way of identifying characteristics in Svatantrika. All such divisions of dualistic dharmas are never to be found, because they are the inseparable equanimity.

¶(i.e. He is saying exactly the same thing as Tsongkhapa: things do not “exist” and are “empty”. Emptiness is not an absolute or basic characteristic of real things. Emptiness is also empty of inherent existence; it should not be grasped.)

The Shing rta chen po says:

~ Those people who propound a nihilistic emptiness of non-existence do not understand the nature of emptiness, and are similar to the heretical Lokayatas (phyi rol pa rgyang 'phen pa). The emptiness of "this is empty, this is not empty" is a trivial emptiness similar to views of eternalism and the views of sravakas and pratyekabuddhas. Because these views fall into the extremes of nihilism and eternalism, one should simply not rely upon them.

Also, the great Rong zom Chos bzang said:

~ There all dharmas are without the establishment of the modes of dharma-possession and dharmata, and are thus empty of intrinsic essence. There no is postulation of "this being empty of that."

L8: [1.4.2.3.3 Even if one does not apply them, one will develop experience]

\ ###
\ 1.4.2.3.3
\ When one develops inner confidence in this,
\ The one who searches won't be frustrated
\ By pointless analysis,
\ But will attain peace of mind—amazing!

¢(i.e. Knowing this, that the real non-dual nature of everything is beyond all of our capacity of conceptualization, then one is ready to let go of trying to understand everything conceptually, and ready to try to directly see the real nature of his/her own mind without using conceptualization.)

In the equanimity of inseparability one does not have to rely upon the opinions of others, and thus, free from the fetters of one's doubt, one acquires certainty within oneself.

Other scholars, through the power of not understanding in this way, have investigated the nature of reality again and again, and as much as they have tried to find it, they have just worn out and frustrated themselves, without realizing the meaning of dharmata. Without such frustration or regret, one becomes extraordinarily happy, even if others are dissatisfied.

Though others do not see it, one conceives irreversible confidence and thinks, "Amazing!" I say:

~ If one analyzes the meaning of things with an honest mind,
~ One sees with a mind that conforms to the meaning of emptiness.
~ If this statement about the nature that is sought on the path of liberation
~ Seems wearisome to anyone, I beg your pardon.

L1: [9.2. Topic 2 [About the limited realizations of the arhats in the Hinayana: they do not realize the full extent of the emptiness of phenomena; they still reify elementary dharmas, and are stuck hiding in cessation]]

¢(i.e. Résumé of Topic 2: In this section Mipham confirms that emptiness is a concept also used in the Hinayana; but that they do not cover the full extent of its authentic meaning by applying it to all dharmas without exception. They still believe in real elementary external and internal dharmas. And, this way, they still grasp at the seeds of their self; they still hold on to the causes for a subtle self, and thus cannot reach true authentic Liberation. So they do realize the two emptinesses of persons and phenomena, but not completely. To realize the selflessness of person is not enough. At one point or another, the arhat stuck in cessation (rejection and hiding) will have to realize that the job is not finish and continue within the Mahayana.)

L4: [0.2.1.2 An incidental analysis of whether sravakas and pratyekabuddhas have realization

of the view of emptiness: [Nevertheless, arhats do not realize the selflessness of phenomena in its entirety]]

L5: [2.1 Refuting other systems]

L6: [2.1.1 Refuting the assertion of not realizing emptiness]

L7: [2.1.1.1 Setting up the purvapaksa]

\ ###
\ 2.1.1.1
\ Some say that sravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats
\ Do not realize phenomenal selflessness.

¢(i.e. The two emptinesses: emptiness of person or self, emptiness of phenomena.)

Now, the meaning of the second question is as follows. Some earlier scholars (snga rab pa) have said that sravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats realize only the selflessness of persons, but do not realize the selflessness of phenomena.

The Abhidharmakosa says:

- ~ If the conception of something such as a vase or water
- ~ Does not arise when it is destroyed or analytically divested [of properties],
- ~ That is deceptively existent;
- ~ Otherwise, it is ultimately existent.

Quoting this, the self of persons is said to be non-existent, and to know it as such is the authentic view of selflessness. Because the dharmas of the coarse skandhas, dhatus, and ayatanas have the nature of the two kinds of subtle partlessness, they are not understood as the emptiness of selflessness; but the attainment of the twice-four and eightfold liberation is nonetheless asserted.

L7: [2.1.1.2 Refuting it]

L8: [2.1.1.2.1 If selflessness is not realized, negative emotions are not abandoned]

\ ###
\ 2.1.1.2.1
\ As long as the self that is the apprehension
\ Of the aggregates as the mere "I" is not eliminated,
\ By the power of that, emotional disturbances are not
\ abandoned.

¢(i.e. Realizing selflessness of our person is not enough.)

Let us examine that system: if the selflessness of phenomena is not realized, then to that extent there is apprehension of the five appropriating (nyer len, upadana) skandhas as a single substantial entity, and then there is the apprehension of "I." As long as the self that is the apprehension of a mere "I" is not eliminated, there is the root of the suffering of samsara, which is the apprehension of self. By the power of that, negative emotions are not abandoned.

The Ratnavali says:

- ~ As long there is apprehension of the skandhas,
- ~ There is the apprehension of them as "I."
- ~ If there is apprehension of "I," there is karma,
- ~ And from that comes rebirth.

As it is said here, there are karma and negative emotions, and by their power one is unable to abandon samsara, or attain the result [of liberation].

The Pramāṇavarttika says:

- ~ Everything that is harmful
- ~ Arises from the view [of the self] of the perishable assemblage.
- ~ That is ignorance, and attachment [arises] there,
- ~ And from that arise anger and so forth.
- ~ For that very reason, the cause
- ~ Of harm is said to be ignorance.
- ~ In other [treatises] it is [called] the view of the perishable assemblage,
- ~ Because when it is abandoned, [ignorance, etc.,] are abandoned_____

L8: [2.1.1.2.2 how that kind of self is a mere designation, or a type of conditioned phenomenon]

\ ###
\ 2.1.1.2.2
\ That self is a designation made
\ With respect to the aggregates; it is the object
\ Of innate I-apprehension. That, and vases, etc.
\ Aside from being different, bases of emptiness
\ Are no different in their modes of emptiness;
\ For phenomena and persons are both
\ Empty of intrinsic establishment.

☿(i.e. Both persons and phenomena are empty of inherent existence the same way. The real problem is not only the illusion of a self, but the ignorance about the real non-dual nature of all dharmas.)

For that reason, generally speaking the cause of samsara is said to be ignorance, and the special result (nyer len) of that is the view of the perishable assemblage ('jig tshogs lta ba, satkāyadrsti). The self that is the object [of that view] is nothing but a designation made in dependence upon the five skandhas, and has not one iota of true existence. Nevertheless, from beginningless time there is the object that is apprehended as a self by the innate apprehension of "I," and the objects that are clung to by the apprehension of a self of phenomena; these exist from the perspective of delusion. If they are investigated as having a nature of unity or multiplicity, the self of persons and the self of phenomena are both found to be empty. Those two are differentiated as bases upon which emptiness is established, but are not at all different with respect to how emptiness is established. If the dharmas that are the bases of designation of vases and so forth are analyzed into their component parts, their inherent existence is not established; if the five aggregates that are the basis of the designation of "person" are analyzed into their component parts, the self is found to be empty of intrinsic establishment. [Thus, both the self of persons and the self of phenomena are] empty, but the way in which they are empty is identical. If this Mādhyamika analysis of parts, which shows that all dharmas are not established, means that [all dharmas] are empty, then the non-establishment of the continuum and coarse [aggregates according to the systems of] śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas is also emptiness. If the way in which the self of persons is non-established is not emptiness, then the way in which the self of phenomena is non-established would not be emptiness either.

Thus, the Abhidharmakosa says:

~ If the conception of something, such as a vase or water, Does not arise when it is destroyed or analytically divested [of properties]_____

And the Bodhicaryavatara says:

~ The body is not the feet or the calves,
~ The body is not the waist or the thighs —

Since the manner of reasoning is identical, there is no difference in [the manner of] emptiness. Thus, it is pointless for sravakas to find anything unreasonable with the Mahayana explanation of emptiness.

L8: [2.1.1.2.3 it is proven by scripture and reasoning that (arhats) realize that, and the claim that they do not realize it is not proven]

\ ###
\ 2.1.1.2.3
\ Thus, this is proven by scripture and reasoning.
\ To go beyond this and state that
\ "Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas do not realize emptiness"
\ Is just a claim.

Thus, as explained above, the fact that arhats realize the emptiness of selflessness is proven in the Madhyamakavatahabhasya with seven scriptural quotations and three rational arguments, and is thus directly proven. To go beyond this and state, "Sravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats do not realize emptiness" is just to make an unprovable claim.

L6: [2.1.2 Refuting assertions of realization]

L7: [2.1.2.1 The purvapaksa]

\ ###
\ 2.1.2.1
\ At this point, some draw unwarranted conclusions and
\ claim that
\ The paths of vision of the three vehicles are the same
\ And that there are no distinctions of levels of realization.
\ They interpret the Prajnaparamita and mantra,
\ all of sutra and tantra,
\ As texts of provisional meaning.

¢(i.e. Some think that all paths are equal.)

Thus, some later scholars draw unwarranted conclusions from Chandrakirti's proof based on scripture and reasoning, and conclude that the path of vision of sravakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas is the same, and make the assertion that their realizations of the meaning of the all-pervasive dharmata is without any distinction of profundity. However, in the Prajnaparamita it is said that the basic awareness (gzhi shes) has distinctions of near and far with respect to the resultant mother ('bras yum); and that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas realize the object of [wisdom, namely] the absence of inherent existence, but do not realize the absence of inherent existence of the subject that realizes it, and do not abandon [that misapprehension of the inherent existence of the subject]. In addition, most texts of Maitreya explain that cognitive obstructions are to be abandoned from the first bhumi onward; and, in the tantras of the Mantrayana, various distinctions of the vehicles are

explained.

[Thus, since] the texts of sutra and mantra expound differences among the types of realization attained in the three vehicles, how should they be interpreted? "In the far-reaching [stage], the intellect becomes distinguished...." Thus, basing themselves on a single verse of the root text and commentary, the [purvapaksa] interprets all sastras as being of provisional meaning, even though there is no threefold evidence of purpose, intent, and contradiction-if-taken-literally.

L7: [2.1.2.2 Its refutation]

L8: [2.1.2.2.1 The criticisms of others cannot be deflected]

\ ###
\ 2.1.2.2.1
\ There, when those who have already traveled lower paths
\ Achieve the Mahayana path of vision and so forth
\ There would be such faults as not having anything
\ to abandon;
\ By reasoning, harm would befall them irrevocably.

¢(i.e. It would be wrong to think that after being an arhat there is nothing else to realize.)

In this kind of system, other scholars [have said], in accordance with your system, that those who have previously traversed the paths of the lower vehicles, such as sravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats, must once again attain the path of vision and the second bhumi, and so forth. [Here] there is the fault that they would not have anything at all to abandon, for one would have to assert that a sravaka or pratyekabuddha arhat, who has already abandoned emotional obscurations, would not have to abandon cognitive obscurations on the seven impure [bodhisattva] bhumis. Moreover, [the particle] "and so forth" [implies that, in addition to there being] nothing to abandon, there would not be any primordial awareness of realization to be attained anew. Even if there were, there would be no use or ability [for one to abandon anything]—the dual accumulation of countless eons' duration would be pointless; the distinctions of higher and lower and faster and slower vehicles [would be senseless]; there would be no distinction of sharp and dull faculties among the three lineages (rigs can) of practitioner; and so on. Thus, many faults of logical contradiction would descend like spring water, and the refutations that are cast by perfect reasoning would descend irrevocably.

L8: [2.1.2.2.2 Their position is self-contradictory]

\ ###
\ 2.1.2.2.2
\ Moreover, though having realized what must be realized,
\ They say that in abandoning what must be abandoned,
\ [One must] ally [one's practice with the accumulations]—
\ [But this means] non-realization, which contradicts the
\ claim of realization.
\ To claim that the rising sun must rely on something else
\ In order to vanquish the darkness—quite strange!

¢(i.e. The realization of the arhat is not enough to abandon the cognitive obscurations; so

they are still dependent on their ignorance.)

There is still another fault. If sravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats have realization of both forms of selflessness, then they have abandoned the obscurations to liberation through realizing the selflessness of persons. So likewise, why wouldn't they [also] have abandoned the obscurations to omniscience by realizing the selflessness of phenomena—as those two are equivalent? Then they say, "[The reason] the [obscurations to omniscience] are not abandoned is because, although both forms of selflessness have been realized, in order to abandon cognitive obscurations, [one's practice] must be allied with the ornament of boundless accumulations [of merit and wisdom]." However, the accumulations are not the actual antidote to the abandonment [of cognitive obscurations].

The Pramanavarttika says:

- ~ Since love and so forth do not oppose ignorance,
- ~ They do not eliminate the worst of evils.

Well, then, what does? In order to attain realization, one needs [both] accumulations. If one attains realization through accumulations, one will eliminate what is to be abandoned, since the actual opponent is the attainment of realization, just as the rising sun eliminates darkness.

Then they say, "If one meditates extensively in terms of time and forms (dus dang rnam pa), that is the antidote for cognitive obscurations." Well then, is that extensive meditation the antidote for emotional obscurations or not? If it is, then sravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats would not eliminate emotional obscurations, because they do not have such extensive meditation [as is taught in the Mahayana]. If not, then during the seven impure bhumis bodhisattvas would not have to undertake such meditation, because if during that time they only abandon emotional obscurations, that would not be the antidote for those [emotional obscurations]. Moreover, if obscurations are not abandoned by the primordial wisdom of realization, then sravakas and pratyekabuddhas also would not abandon emotional obscurations, because they are not adorned with boundless accumulations. If they did abandon them, sravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats would abandon both obscurations, because they have the antidote—the realization of both forms of selflessness.

If it is the case that they do not abandon the cognitive obscurations, because they have not realized the selflessness of phenomena, this contradicts the position that they do realize [both forms of selflessness]; if they do realize them both, this contradicts the position that they have not abandoned cognitive obscurations. This would be like the sun rising, but not dispelling darkness.

The Uttarantra says:

- ~ Without wisdom, the other [virtues]
- ~ Are not able to remove [obscurations].. .

And, from the Pramanavarttika:

- ~ Because the view of emptiness contradicts that,
- ~ It is proven to oppose
- ~ All evils that have the nature of that [ignorance]___

If, without being adorned with boundless accumulations, one does not abandon them, then from the first bhumi onward cognitive obscurations would be abandoned, because one would be adorned with the accumulations. If one does not at that point abandon them, because one does

not have the boundless accumulations of the eighth bhumi, then one would not abandon them on the eighth bhumi either, because there one does not have the accumulations one does on the tenth bhumi. For example, it would be like the rising sun requiring assistance in vanquishing the darkness—quite strange! There, if "obscuration" that is obscuration of the nature of things—which is emptiness—were not obscuration, then even if the object of obscuration that is emptiness were apparent, it would not be abandoned, and the adornments of accumulation would be hard [to achieve].

L6: [2.1.3 Refuting assertions of realizing emptiness of each and every member of the catuskoti]

L7: [2.1.1.2.3.1 The purvapaksa]

\ ###
\ 2.1.1.2.3.1
\ Some say that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas realize
\ the emptiness
\ Of the five aggregates of their own continua of experience,
\ But do not realize selflessness of other phenomena.

Some later [scholars] say that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas realize the emptiness that is the absence of true existence of the five aggregates that are the cause of the apprehension of self in their own continua of experience (rang rgyud), because they have the realization of selflessness of persons that is the result of that. However, [they also assert] that they do not realize the selflessness of other phenomena, such as the latter alternatives, and so forth.

L7: [2.1.1.2.3.2 Refutation based on its internal contradictions]

\ ###
\ 2.1.1.2.3.2
\ If one realizes the five aggregates to be empty,
\ Then, aside from noncomposite phenomena [like space and
\ cessation],
\ What other dharma would be left unrealized?

In your system, if sravakas and pratyekabuddha arhats realize the emptiness that is the lack of inherent existence of the five aggregates, then since, except for noncomposite ('dus ma byas, asamskrta) [phenomena], there are no phenomena not included [in the five aggregates], and moreover, since in the Sautrantika system noncomposites are also held to be non-substantial designations (dngos med btags yod), there would be no phenomenon that sravakas and pratyekabuddha arhats would not realize to be without true existence. So, would the emptiness realized by that arhat be the selflessness of continua and coarse [aggregates], or would it be the emptiness taught in Madhyamaka? The first case would contradict the realization of the baseless emptiness of the five aggregates, because in the [abhidharma] two kinds of partlessness are asserted to exist ultimately. The second case would contradict the assertion that the selflessness of other phenomena are not realized, for in the [Madhyamaka] it is said that all dharmas, composite and noncomposite, are empty.

"That fault does not apply to us. In the path of the Hinayana, continuity and coarse [aggregates] are realized to be without inherent existence. For example, if one knows the interior of a reed to be empty, one can gradually come to know others to be so also. Likewise, having eliminated the first extreme of existence as explained in the Madhyamaka,

which is the true existence of all phenomena, one gradually realizes selflessness. As the explanation of the latter three extremes is unique to the Mahayana, those other dharmas are not realized [by sravakas and pratyekabuddhas] to be empty."

Well then, they would also realize [the emptiness] of the latter three extremes, for if they realize gradually, they should realize the [latter three extremes gradually], as in your example of the empty interior of a reed; and whatever you say in response, for example, "they don't specifically try to," could also be applied to the first extreme. Also, lacking the middle two extremes could only apply to the systems of the pratyekabuddha and Cittamatra, for if there are differences in the views of the three vehicles, then the sravakas are the ones who eliminate the first extreme, and the Madhyamika view eliminates all four extremes. Thus, these assertions that sravakas realize emptiness would have to posit a new classification of paths and results that do not belong to either the Mahayana or the Hinayana, for the view is identical, while the meditation and conduct are dissimilar.

L5: [2.2. An explanation of our own system:]

L6: [2.2.1 Explanation of the intention of glorious Chandrakirti]

L7: [2.2.1.1 Chandrakirti's explanation in the Auto-commentary [of the Madhyamakavatara] of the purpose of teaching the two kinds of selflessness individually]

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\    ###
\    2.2.1.1
\    So what is our own tradition?
\    Glorious Chandrakirti's Auto-commentary
\    Says that, in order to abandon obscurations, the Buddhas
\    Teach sravakas and pratyekabuddhas
\    personal selflessness,
\    And in order to abandon cognitive obscurations, they teach
\    Bodhisattvas how to realize phenomenal selflessness.
```

The explanations that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas realize both types of emptiness completely, or not at all, are both unreasonable. Thus, in our early translation tradition, how do we take the intention of glorious Chandrakirti?

On the statement of the Madhyamakavatara that

- ~ This selflessness, in order to liberate beings,
- ~ Was taught as the selflessness of phenomena and persons...,

the Auto-commentary says that in order to abandon emotional obscurations that involve the three realms, to sravakas and pratyekabuddhas the victors teach the selflessness of persons and liberate them from samsara; in order to abandon cognitive obscurations that obstruct omniscience, to the victors' heirs—the bodhisattvas—the victors teach the selflessnesses of phenomena in their entirety, [and thus] both [types of selflessness] are realized.

The Auto-commentary says:

- ~ There, the selflessness of persons is taught in order to liberate sravakas and pratyekabuddhas; and in order to liberate bodhisattvas in the attainment of omniscience, both are taught. Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas see the conditioned nature of dependent origination, but in that [context] they do not meditate upon the entirety of phenomenal selflessness. This is just a method for abandoning the negative emotions that involve the three realms of existence.

L7: [2.2.1.2 Anticipating doubts about the above explanation that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas have realization of emptiness]

\ ###
\ 2.2.1.2
\ "Well then, what does it mean to say
\ That both sravakas and pratyekabuddhas
\ Have realization of emptiness?"

"Well then, why is it that in the Dasabhumikasutra it is said that, in the context of the far advanced [bhumi], 'both sravakas and pratyekabuddhas realize emptiness'? Thus goes the Auto-commentary..."

L7: [2.2.1.3 Explaining the intention behind it]

\ ###
\ 2.2.1.3
\ In order to abandon just the emotional afflictions
\ Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas meditate on
\ personal selflessness;
\ But "They do not meditate on the entirety
\ Of phenomenal selflessness"—thus teaches [our tradition].

The meaning of that statement is as follows. The doubt concerning the "realization of emptiness by sravakas and pratyekabuddhas" was already anticipated in the context of teaching the distinctions of emptiness [for example, as the selflessness of persons and phenomena]. As for the statement that "Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas have realization of emptiness": in order to abandon the samsaric emotional afflictions, by realizing the emptiness that is the lack of inherent existence of continuity and coarse [aggregates] of all outer and inner phenomena, there is realization and meditation upon the selflessness of persons. Although sravakas and pratyekabuddhas do have realization of the lack of inherent existence of continuity and coarse [aggregation], that kind of "selflessness of phenomena is not meditated in its entirety." According to this statement [in the Auto-commentary], one should be able combine the meanings of the earlier and later [statements] without any contradiction.

L6: [2.2.2 Laying out the position of omniscient Klong chen pa]

\ ###
\ 2.2.2
\ Klong chen rab 'byams said of yore
\ That although earlier masters all disputed
\ Whether they did or did not
\ [realize both forms of selflessness],
\ Our own position is that whatever types of sravakas and
\ pratyekabuddhas
\ Appeared of yore and reached arhatship
\ Did not become liberated without
\ Realizing the emptiness of the self
\ That is the apprehension of the aggregates;
\ But just having that realization does not mean
\ That they realized selflessness entirely.

\ Just like the space inside a sesame seed
\ That is eaten out by a worm,
\ [Their realization] is said to be a lesser selflessness.
\ Thus, with words that refute the lesser [of possible
\ realizations],
\ It is said that "They do not realize emptiness."
\ This is a most excellent eloquent explanation;
\ There is nothing else like it.

The position of our own early translation tradition, according to the omniscient Klong chen pa: Klong chen rah 'byams... In accordance with the intention of Chandrakirti, Klong chen rab 'byams has said that all the earlier scholars of India and Tibet have disputed whether [śravakas and pratyekabuddhas] realize both forms of selflessness, with some saying that they do, and some saying that they do not. Our own position is as follows. We do not accept either of these onesided approaches. The earlier holders of the eighteen philosophical systems of the śravakas and pratyekabuddhas had various views concerning whether or not there was a personal self (gang zag gi bdag, pudgalatman). But regardless, in the final analysis, [they all agree that] in order to realize arhatship one must abandon the obscuration of emotional defilements, and in order to abandon it, one must realize the emptiness of the object that is clung to by innate self-apprehension, which is the apprehension of the five skandhas as a self-sufficient entity (phung po Inga ril por 'dzin pa), for otherwise, there is no liberation. That [śravakas and pratyekabuddhas] have realization of precisely that is established by scripture and reasoning in the sutras and sastras. If one must realize the selflessness of persons in order to realize the result of arhatship, its necessary and sufficient cause is to realize the absence of the inherent existence of continuity and coarse [aggregation] of all phenomena.

Nevertheless, they do not realize the selflessness of phenomena in its entirety. In some sutras, the example used is a droplet of water carried by a spra rtsi, and in some it is the space inside a sesame seed that has been eaten by a worm. In that way, śravakas' and pratyekabuddhas' realization of emptiness is said to be extremely limited. Thus, with "words that negate the small," it is said that they do not realize emptiness.

On this, the commentary of the Wish-fulfilling Treasury (Yid bzhin rin po che'i mdzod) says:
~ If one wonders whether śravaka and pratyekabuddha arhats realize emptiness, some earlier masters said that, aside from the selflessness of persons, they do not realize it, and that pratyekabuddhas realize only half of phenomena to be without inherent existence, and thus do not realize both. Some assert that they do realize emptiness, so there are disputes. This is how I understand it: in earlier times when the various śravaka schools were spreading, some asserted a self, some did not, some asserted it to be like a reflection, and so forth. [In this way], [basing themselves on distinct conceptions about the self], they established their paths. In the context of fruition, based on the paths followed, one can surmise that some did realize emptiness and some did not. Also, the arhats who followed the path of the Vaibhāsikas, who previously had strong clinging to existence, are said to have realized only the selflessness of persons, but not of phenomena, because of their apprehension of characteristics. The Sautrantikas [on the other hand] understood it better, saying that [the self] is like a reflection, so I think they realized [both]. Now, those of sharp faculties would infer that everything is equivalent to the dharmas of the form [aggregate], while the dull would not understand anything other than what was actually taught to them. Since both are in agreement as far as realizing the nature of selflessness,

both must realize the emptiness of apprehending the aggregates [as a self], and so forth.

Thus, this interpretation is an extraordinary eloquent explanation. In the Land of Snows, there is no other system like it.

L6: [2.2.3 Explaining our own system by examples, in accordance with their [explanations]]

L7: [2.2.3.1 Explaining that system through examples]

\ ###
\ 2.2.3.1
\ For example, if one drinks a single gulp
\ Of the water of the great ocean,
\ One cannot say that one has not drunk the ocean.
\ Because they see the selflessness of the mere "I,"
\ Which is one phenomenon among others, it is held that
\ [Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas] see emptiness.
\ Just as by drinking a single gulp one cannot say
\ That one has drunk the entire ocean's water;
\ Because they do not realize the nature of all knowables
\ To be emptiness, it is held that they do not see selflessness
\ perfectly.

"Well then, if this is an eloquent explanation unlike any other, what exactly does it mean?"

The realization by sravakas and pratyekabuddha arhats that all dharmas are emptiness is like taking a gulp of the water of the vast ocean; if one drinks it, it is not correct to say that "I have not drunk the water of the ocean." The sravakas and pratyekabuddhas exemplified here realize the mere "I"—which is one of all the phenomena realized by bodhisattvas to be empty—to be empty or selfless; thus, they are asserted to see and realize emptiness.

The Madhyamakavatara says:

~ Thus, seeing the emptiness of "I" and "mine,"
~ The yogi is fully liberated.

Thus, it actually says that to see selflessness is to realize emptiness. For that reason, all the results of the three vehicles depend on the realization of emptiness, which is the non-dual doorway to peace. Thus, for those who think that sravakas' and pratyekabuddhas' vision of [the noble] truths is not the same as the meaning of emptiness, it is proven by the great system-builders [of the Mahayana, such as Chandrakirti] that the "vision of the truths" and the realization of emptiness mean the same thing, insofar as they are just a general case and specific instance. However, just as drinking a single gulp one does not suffice to ingest all the water of the great ocean, since they do not entirely realize the empty nature of all knowable things, such as the two kinds of partlessness, it is asserted that they do not see the selflessness of phenomena in its entirety.

The Sutra Teaching the Two Truths says:

~ Bodhisattva mahasattva! It is better to abide on the stage of faith that aspires to non-reification, even though one has emotional disturbances; for sravakas and pratyekabuddhas who have reifications, have attained liberation, and are without emotional disturbances do not have such [an aspiration] .

And further:

~ Consider this. For example, just like a droplet of butter that clings to a fragment of

a hair split a hundredfold, the objectified uncompounded wisdom of sravakas and pratyekabuddhas is small, and is reified. Consider this, Kasyapa! Just as though the four oceans were filled with butter, a bodhisattva mahasattva is endowed with all sublime ways of acting, in the manner of non-action, on the stage of action through faith that does not reify anything; (s)he sees in the manner of non-seeing that all the accumulations of merit and wisdom are all collected, yet are not compounded. Moreover, the blazing fire of ultimate reality fully matures (the bodhisattva). (S)he comes to realize, in a non-reifying way, the omniscient wisdom endowed with all sublime qualities. Likewise, Kasyapa, the bodhisattva mahasattva overwhelms, in a non-reifying manner, all the sravakas and pratyekabuddhas who have attained the non-compounded and who reify things.

L7: [2.2.3.2. Responses that dispose of faults:]

L8: [2.2.3.2.1 Setting forth a fault]

\ ###
\ 2.2.3.2.1
\ If one sees the emptiness of a single thing,
\ Why wouldn't one see the emptiness of everything?

If one sees one dharma as being truthless and empty, one should see all dharmas in the same way. For example, as in the case of the empty interior of a reed, when one sees the selflessness of persons, why wouldn't one see the selflessness of other things as well?

L8: [2.2.3.2.2 The response:]

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.1 Those of inferior lineage do not realize it;]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.1 The actual [response]]

\ ###
\ 2.2.3.2.2.1.1
\ If, with scripture, reasoning, and pith instructions,
\ They were to examine things, of course they would see it.
\ But, for the most part, those who are destined
\ To be sravakas and pratyekabuddhas
\ Are attached to the selflessness of persons,
\ So it is hard for them to realize the latter extremes
\ [of the catuskoti],
\ Just as those who analyze a vase
\ Might assert its particles to exist substantially.

Generally speaking, among the sravakas there are those whose spiritual destiny is determinate (rigs nges pa) and must go to peace, and those whose destiny is indeterminate, whose minds are changeable. If those whose destiny is indeterminate and who have sharp intelligence analyze according to the Buddha's scriptures, their own reasoning, and a teacher's instructions, and try to see in this way, it is possible for them to see [both forms of selflessness]. Not only that, in the long run, all will realize [both forms of selflessness]. However, in the short run, because they have a determinate spiritual destiny, those who have the destiny of being sravakas—who are progressing toward peace—are afraid of samsara, and in order to abandon it, they cling to its antidote, the selflessness of persons. For that reason, it is obviously difficult for them to realize [the emptiness] of the latter extremes. They do not cut off the subtle extremes of inanimate things and mind. With the reasoning of "blowing and scattering coarse aggregations" (rags pa'i bsil rtor),

they assert that a vase [for example] is a non-substantially existent designation, but that partless atoms are the substantially existent basis for the composition [of things such as vases].

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.2 The reason, which adduces the example of not realizing partlessness]

\ ###
\ 2.2.3.2.2.1.2
\ If the mind that realizes [selflessness]
\ After analyzing a vase also were to
\ Analyze particles, it would be reasonable to realize
\ [their emptiness];
\ But usually, they do not realize [their emptiness].

If one were to analyze not only [composites like vases], but also the partless particles [that compose them], it would be reasonable to realize them to be non-existent. If one were to transfer the mode of reasoning from one case to another similar case and investigate [the latter] in this way, the mind that analyzes a vase and realizes it to be a designation would also realize that atoms are merely non-existent. However, with respect to individual dispositions, mental abilities and aspirations, usually (re zhig) the two [types of] partless [atoms] are not realized to be truthless, and the [emptiness] of the extreme of existence is not completely realized. Accordingly, the other extremes would be difficult to realize.

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.3 To some extent, lower systems are without fault as mere paths to liberation]

\ ###
\ 2.2.3.2.2.1.3
\ Though coarse bases and partless atoms appear
\ contradictory,
\ Since [sravakas and pratyekabuddhas] are mostly bereft
\ Of those scriptures, modes of reasoning, and pith
\ instructions,
\ They practice systems that do not contradict [the possibility
\ of personal liberation].

Well, if they don't realize emptiness perfectly, do Hinayanists reach liberation? If one investigates, although it seems contradictory for something to be both the basis for the composition of a macroscopic phenomenon (rags pa'i gzhi) and to be a truly existent partless atom, while those who have the spiritual destiny of aspiring to personal peace (nirvana) are reaching the temporary result [of personal nirvana], they are bereft of the scriptures, reasoning, and personal instructions of the Mahayana, and they accomplish the systems that do not contradict the paths of liberation from samsara—for just those can vanquish deluded concepts (tshul min yid byed kyi rtog pa). [These systems] are not like the mistaken systems that teach the existence of a self of persons.

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.1.4 Otherwise, all higher and lower systems would be untenable]

\ ###
\ 2.2.3.2.2.1.4
\ Likewise, followers of the Cittamatra system

\ Do not accept the existence of external objects,
 \ So why wouldn't they also accept the non-existence of
 \ the subject?
 \ Why wouldn't Svatantrikas use the reasoning that establishes
 \ Ultimate truthlessness to understand the conventional
 \ Non-establishment of intrinsic characteristics (rang mtshan)?
 \ So, for you everyone would become a Prasangika!
 \ How would it be possible for sravakas and pratyekabuddhas
 \ To denigrate the Mahayana [if they were Prasangikas] ?

"If Hinayanists realized the lack of inherent existence of coarse [aggregations], they should also realize [the lack of inherent existence of] the subtle partless particles that compose them—for if one applies the reasoning of one context to another, this would be established." Well then, since Cittamatrins realize the non-existence of external objects, by applying that reasoning to the subject, why would they not also realize its truthlessness? For they are of similar types. And why wouldn't Svatantrikas also be able to reapply the reasoning that establishes that ultimately things are not established in truth, and thus realize that even conventionally, the intrinsic characteristics of things are not established? In your opinion, these realizations would be entailed. Therefore, for you, all philosophical systems would become the Prasangika system.

Accordingly, if those sravakas and pratyekabuddhas understood the intent of the Mahayana, then how could they possibly denigrate the Mahayana, saying that it is not the teaching of the Buddha, and so forth? Moreover, just think what would happen with the [Samkhya teaching],

- ~ Whatever is visible
- ~ Is insubstantial like magic...

How could that be possible? Think about it.

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.2 When conditions are incomplete, it is not realized]

\ ###
 \ 2.2.3.2.2.2
 \ Thus, although the nature of one thing
 \ Is also the nature of everything,
 \ As long as the collection of external and internal causes
 \ and conditions
 \ Is not complete, realization will come slowly.

When conditions are incomplete, it is not realized: Thus, although... For that reason, between the nature of objects and the way in which the object possessing mind engages them, as far as the object is concerned, the nature of one thing (chos can) is equally the nature of all other things. If the internal and external causes and conditions for realizing how it is are complete, the object-possessor mind can engage things accordingly.

As the Pramanavarttika says:

- ~ When causes are complete,
- ~ What can prevent a result from occurring?

Similarly, as long as one has not assembled the outer condition of the support [of a teacher] (yongs 'dzin) and the internal condition of skillful methods, to that extent, one's

realization will come slowly; it will take long to become realized.

Thus, the Abhisamayalamkara says:

- ~ Because there is reification,
- ~ There is no method, and it is far....

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.3 Distinctions of mental ability:]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.3.1 How realization and non-realization arise according to distinctions of mental ability]

- \ ###
- \ 2.2.3.2.2.3.1
- \ Generally speaking, those with sharp minds become realized
- \ Under their own power, while dullards
- \ Do not necessarily reach realization immediately.

Generally speaking, the nature of an object is engaged by the object-possessor mind; the speed with which this occurs is determined by the completion or non-completion of external and internal conditions. Specifically, the mental ability of the object-possessor is distinguished as "sharp" or "dull." Those of sharp abilities who follow the Dharma achieve realization quickly by their own power, while those of dull faculties do not necessarily reach realization immediately under their own power, because someone who does not have a complete set of mental abilities as a condition must rely upon [other] conditions.

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.3.2 How even the dull-witted should eventually become realized]

- \ ###
- \ 2.2.3.2.2.3.2
- \ At some point, realization is inevitable;
- \ At the end of ten thousand eons, it is said,
- \ The arhat wakes up from the state of cessation,
- \ And enters the Mahayana path.

When a sravaka who has gone to peace is aroused by Buddhas from the obscuration of his destiny, at that point, it is certain that one will realize emptiness, the nature of things. For the sravakas and pratyekabuddha arhats have dried up the ocean of blood and tears, and cast away the heap of flesh and bones, and reached nirvana, where they are absorbed in the state of cessation for ten thousand eons. Finally, when those arhats arise or spring up from that state, it is said that they must enter the Mahayana.

It is said:

- ~ Although in what is called "nirvana"
- ~ You are free from the suffering of samsara,
- ~ Now you are stuck in nirvana,
- ~ And should look for this vehicle of the Buddhas.

L9: [2.2.3.2.2.4 Distinctions of time:]

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.4.1 Because conditions are not complete, one must realize in gradations of time]

L11: [2.2.3.2.2.4.1.1 Because the bodhisattvas take a long time, it is impossible for sravakas and pratyekabuddhas to realize in a short time]

- \ ###

\ 2.2.3.2.2.4.1.1
 \ To properly abide on the Mahayana path,
 \ One must cultivate oneself for a countless eon.
 \ So why shouldn't it be impossible for
 \ Sravakas and pratyekabuddhas, who strive for their own
 \ happiness,
 \ Not to realize all forms of selflessness
 \ During those [ten] thousand eons [they spend in cessation]?

Otherwise, when the disciple who has the Mahayana spiritual destiny and who has sharp faculties, but who does not have the complete assemblage of outer and inner conditions, dwells properly on the path of the coordinated dual accumulation of the Mahayana, (s)he must make efforts to cultivate direct realization of the meaning of equality, which is the realization of the two forms of selflessness, for one countless eon. If that is so, then how could it be impossible for sravakas and pratyekabuddhas—persons of inferior spiritual destiny whose acumen is dull, and who strive for personal peace on their respective paths—not to perfectly realize the two forms selflessness in just the same amount of time as bodhisattvas must practice, that is, in one thousand eons, or one countless eon? It would not make sense for it to be possible. How could it happen that those who have the spiritual destiny of sravakas and pratyekabuddhas—who have entered the paths of accumulation and preparation on the paths of sravakas and pratyekabuddhas, and who have only cultivated the selflessness of persons without incorporating skillful means into their practice—suddenly enter the path of vision of the Mahayana, without having to make efforts for one countless eon, that is, without possessing the causes for such realization? If it couldn't happen, then we can dispense with the idea of the path of vision of the great and lesser vehicles being identical. If it could, then one must specify a reason why it is impossible for sravakas and pratyekabuddhas not to realize selflessness during a countless eon, and why it is possible for bodhisattvas.

L11: [2.2.3.2.2.4.1.2 Because the bodhisattvas' realization increases gradually, the sravakas and pratyekabuddhas do not become realized instantaneously]

\ ###
 \ 2.2.3.2.2.4.1.2
 \ Don't those who have attained the bhumis
 \ Gradually clarify and perfect their realization?

Not only that, those who have realized the path of vision of the Mahayana and who have thus attained the bhumis realize the all-pervasive nature of the dharmadhatu. In traversing one bhumi to the next, they gradually increase and then perfect their understanding just like waxing moon, don't they? That being the case, it goes without saying that, on the accumulation and perfection paths of the Mahayana, realization increases gradually.

The Dharmadhatustava says:

~ Just as the waning moon
 ~ Is barely visible on the fourteenth day,
 ~ To those who aspire to the Mahayana,
 ~ The dharmakaya is barely visible.
 ~ Just as the waxing moon
 ~ Is seen to grow bit by bit,
 ~ So does the vision of those who dwell

- ~ On the bhumis gradually increase.
- ~ Just as the orb of the waxing moon
- ~ Is perfectly brilliant on the fifteenth day,
- ~ So too the dharmakaya that
- ~ Is perfectly luminous on the ultimate bhumi.

Thus, how could it be the case that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas, by following their respective paths, could suddenly develop the extraordinary realization of the Mahayana? If that were the case, then the dull-witted would have the destiny of subitists, and the sharp-witted would have the destiny of gradualists!

L10: [2.2.3.2.2.4.2 When they are complete, one is realized]

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\   ###
\   2.2.3.2.2.4.2
\   With the help of the accumulations,
\   Infinite modes of reasoning, bodhicitta,
\   The conduct [that follows from it], and perfect dedication—
\   When these conditions are complete, it is certain
\   That one will achieve realization,
\   Just as complete knowledge of skillful means is a condition
\   For swift realization on the mantra path.
```

When conditions are complete, there is realization: With the help of the accumulations... Thus, in order to realize the two forms of selflessness perfectly, one must have all the causes and conditions complete. That means one must have the help of the vast accumulation of merit, the infinite means of analyzing the triad of cause, effect, and essence—which are the reasonings that ascertain emptiness, the bodhicitta that has two dimensions—the six perfections that are encompassed by that bodhicitta, and the affirmation of perfect dedication. If those causes and conditions are flawless and complete, there is no doubt that the complete assemblage of causes will give rise to the result, and one will come to realize perfectly the two forms of selflessness. For example, if there is a Vajrayana disciple, a spiritual guide to teach it, and the creation and completion phases of the practice, and so on—if the conditions of skillful means are complete—that mantra practitioner will quickly become realized.

L5: [2.3. Dispelling doubts:]

L6: [2.3.1 Explaining the scriptural passage of the Ratnavali according to our system]

L7: [2.3.1.1 Setting up the meaning of the scriptural passage]

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\   ###
\   2.3.1.1
\   Even if one has abandoned notions of permanent self,
\   Instinctive apprehension of "I" occurs in relation to the aggregates.
\   Therefore [it is said], "[As long as] there is apprehension of the aggregates,
\   There is apprehension of T"—this statement [from
\   the Ratnavali]
```

☐(i.e. Realizing the no-self of the Hinayana is not enough; one has to realize the emptiness of all dharmas without any exception.)

"Well then, since in your system sravakas and pratyekabuddhas do not realize the emptiness

of all phenomena, including the two kinds of partless atoms, then how do you interpret the statement of Lord Nagarjuna, 'As long as there is apprehension of the aggregates, [there is apprehension of "I"]?' The meaning of that [passage] is as follows. There are two things to be abandoned: conceptualized [apprehension of "I"] and innate [apprehension of "I"]. The object of the first is the permanent self. But even if that is abandoned, as long as the object that is clung to by the second—which is designated in relation to the five skandhas—is not eliminated, there will be conceptions of "I." Therefore, as long as the five skandhas are apprehended as a single self-sufficient entity, there will be apprehension of "I." From that comes karma and emotional disturbances, and birth in cyclic existence—so says the Ratnavali.

L7: [2.3.1.2 Explaining its intention]

```
\   ###
\   2.3.1.2
\   Means that, as long as there is a basis of designation in the aggregates
\   And a mind that apprehends them,
\   The causes for designating a self are complete,
\   And as a result, apprehension of self will not cease.
```

¢(i.e. By only realizing the no-self, and still reifying the elementary dharmas, all the conditions for this self to come back are still there.)

The statement means that, as long as one does not realize the emptiness of the object that is clung to by the innate misapprehension of "I," one cannot abandon cyclic existence [simply] by cognizing the absence of a permanent self. With the five skandhas as the basis of designation, as long as there are subtle and extended thoughts that apprehend them, all the causes for designating a self are complete, and if they are not eliminated, the result of misapprehension of self will not be stopped. This is said [in the passage at hand] to go along with the complete assemblage of causes.

The Abhidharmakosa says:

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~ The subtle and extended are not abandoned,
~ One dwells upon objects,
~ And from deluded mental activity
~ Emotional disturbances are born.
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L6: [2.3.2 Explaining the meaning of this [passage], not according to others' opinions, but according to Chandrakirti's interpretive commentary]

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\   ###
\   2.3.2
\   Thus, in abandoning emotional disturbances,
\   The assertion "One must realize the aggregates and so forth
\   to be empty"
\   Is not the meaning of the passage [in the Ratnavali].
\   That meaning was explained in this way by Chandrakirti:
```

Thus, even though the conceptualized permanent self taught by heretics is abandoned, in dependence upon the five aggregates that are the basis for its designation, the designated self, which is the object clung to by innate misapprehension of "I," is not eliminated. Thus, even if the manifestation of emotional disturbances is repressed through meditative

absorption, their tendencies are not abandoned, and thus the causes for the reappearance of the misapprehension of self are complete. This is what obstructs the realization of selflessness. That is the meaning of the scriptural passage at hand.

Some say, "In order to abandon emotional disturbance, one must realize all dharmas as empty," but this does not explain what the Ratnavali passage actually means. The reason for this is that the meaning of this passage, which has been explained above, has been explained in the same way by Chandrakirti.

"Well, if the meaning of this passage from the Ratnavali is not that one must realize the emptiness of all dharmas, including the skandhas, why then did Chandrakirti quote the Dasabhumikasutra in the Madhyamakavatara in the context of the [seventh bhumi, the] 'far advanced,' to the effect that a first bhumi bodhisattva cannot overwhelm sravakas and pratyekabuddhas with his intellect? That was said in order to inform [the reader] that sravakas and pratyekabuddhas have realization of the emptiness of all dharmas, such as the skandhas, even though this passage and others were not quoted as a proof thereof."

The meaning of that [scriptural quotation] is not as you claim. Because those aryas—sravakas and pratyekabuddhas—are similar to the bodhisattvas of the sixth bhumi and below (as explained in the Madhyamakavatara), insofar as they have a mental construction of objectification in the state [of samadhi] wherein the movement of mind and mental factors has ceased, it is said that those Hinayanists are not overwhelmed by [the bodhisattva's] samadhi. At the "far advanced" bhumi, meditative absorption reaches the reality limit (yang dag pa'i mtha', bhutakoti) of cessation, and thus the intellect becomes distinct from earlier absorptions. The Madhyamakavatara says, "because the absorption in cessation is absorption in the reality limit."

If that were not the case, and if one did not know entities that are continua and aggregations to be without inherent existence, one would have no way of knowing selflessness. For example, a worldly person who is free of desire enters into absorption, but cannot [know the lack of inherent existence]. Thus, the absorption of a first bhumi bodhisattva would be able to overwhelm [an arhat]. Moreover, to the extent that one is without such realization, even if one knows there is no permanent self, that will not suffice to abandon the subtle and extended [forms of emotional obscuration], because one would have a mistaken reification of the essence of form, etc., as being truly existent. Accordingly, it says below [in the Madhyamakavatara]:

~ If then the permanent self is abandoned, for that reason your mind, or aggregates, would not be the self. [But that would not mean] that by seeing selflessness in meditation you would realize the nature of form and so forth [to be empty]. Because [you would still] reify and engage forms, desire and so forth would [still arise] because you have not realized their nature [to be emptiness].

Thus, the apprehension of self would not be abandoned, because there is the cause of imputing a self, the reification of the aggregates:

- ~ "When selflessness is realized, the eternal self is abandoned"—
- ~ But that [eternal self] is not said to be the basis for the apprehension of "I";
- ~ Thus, one would have to assert that once having realized selflessness,
- ~ One would again have to dispel the view of self—amazing!

Both the earlier and later examples are made with reference to heretical [systems]. Thus, both the earlier and later examples are identical in words and meaning, and should be

understood to be proven by the passage from the Ratnavali, and so forth. Otherwise, if the statement "without cognizance of the absence of inherent existence" meant being without realization of emptiness as explained in the Mahayana, and if one were to adduce the consequence of it being reasonable for [arhats] to be overwhelmed, then even though from the sravaka perspective there is no Mahayana emptiness, that does not necessarily entail the consequence of being overwhelmed.

On this, the Bodhicaryavatara says:

- ~ By seeing truth one will be freed;
- ~ By seeing emptiness, what is accomplished?

Accordingly, just because one is without the emptiness of the Mahayana does not necessarily entail the consequence of being a worldly person free of desire, because there are Hinayanists who are without desire. Therefore, that example is pointless. Also, as for the latter two lines of reasoning: one might adduce the consequence that, as long as there is no realization of emptiness according to the Mahayana, there is still mistaken reification of the entities of form, etc., and of the aggregates; that the subtle and extended [forms of mentation] are not abandoned; and that apprehension of self is not abandoned. However, the reason is not established, because the purvapaksa does not accept that form and so forth are substantial entities, that the five aggregates are a single self-sufficient entity, nor that, as a single thing, they are reified as the self. Even if apprehension of the two types of partless atoms is not given up, there is no way to prove, either by valid cognition or logical proposition, that this would necessarily entail that neither subtle and extended forms of mentation, nor apprehension of self, are not abandoned. The reason is that someone who has realization of the selflessness of persons, through cognizing continua and coarse [aggregations] as not inherently existent, has accomplished the antidote that opposes modal apprehension [of a personal self]. Using the example of a heretic cannot necessarily entail the consequence, as explained above.

L6: [2.3.3 Establishing that meaning through reasoning:]

L7: [2.3.3.1 Provisionally (gnas skabs), how recognizing multiplicity reverses the apprehension of "I"]

```
\   ###
\   2.3.3.1
\   If one recognizes the designated mere "I,"
\   That is enough to stop the apprehension of "I."
\   Though one does not know a rope to be non-existent,
\   By seeing the lack of snake, the apprehension of snake is
\   stopped.
```

If one investigates the multiplicity of the five aggregates that are the basis of designation for the self that is the object of innate "I" apprehension, and thus cognizes the mere "I" that is dependently originated and dependently designated, then one will dispel both conceptualized "I"-apprehension and innate "I"-apprehension, and that is sufficient. For example, when one mistakes a rope for a snake, one does not have to know that the rope is not existent in order to dispel the apprehension of "snake." Even if one does not know [it to be non-existent], by directly seeing a rope-entity, one stops the apprehension of a snake. A sutra says, "form is like foam" and so forth. [The meaning of this] way of knowing the multiplicity [of things] is explained in the Bodhicittavivarana as "sravakas see the five skandhas as bubbles..." and so forth. This is similar to the statements that

bodhisattvas see form, etc., as bubbles, etc.:

- ~ Form, feeling, perception,
- ~ Conceptualization, and consciousness
- ~ Are the five aggregates; these were taught by those
- ~ Who wished to benefit sravakas.
- ~ Form is like foam.
- ~ Feeling is like a water bubble,
- ~ Perception is like a mirage,
- ~ Conceptualization is like the plantain,
- ~ Consciousness is like an illusion.
- ~ To teach the aggregates in this way
- ~ Is how the best of men
- ~ Always teaches bodhisattvas.

L7: [2.3.3.2 Conclusively (mthar thug), how one final vehicle is established]

- \ ###
- \ 2.3.3.2
- \ Finally, one will definitely realize both kinds of selflessness.
- \ The suchness of all phenomena is unique,
- \ And the way of seeing suchness is the same,
- \ So Nagarjuna and his son [Chandrakirti] have expounded
- \ A line of reasoning that establishes the finality of a single vehicle.

Though incidental liberation from cyclic existence is sufficient, finally, in order to attain omniscience, one must realize the nature of dharmadhatu, [which means] both kinds of selflessness. The reason is that all knowable phenomena are identical in suchness, and are not dissimilar; the gnosis that sees it is likewise unitary in character. Thus, although the three vehicles are distinct, in the final analysis there is only one vehicle, and this was explained through scripture and reasoning by Nagarjuna and his disciples.

Nagarjuna said:

- ~ Because dharmadhatu is indivisible,
- ~ The chief of vehicles is not divisible.
- ~ The teaching of three vehicles
- ~ Is designed to place sentient beings [in it].

Chandrakirti said:

- ~ Other than by realizing reality, to remove all stains
- ~ There is nothing else to do. Reality does not admit of divisions,
- ~ And likewise, what perceives reality is not differentiable.
- ~ Therefore, you have taught sentient beings a single, indivisible vehicle.

L7: [2.3.3.3 How this is not established in other systems]

- \ ###
- \ 2.3.3.3
- \ If, as in your system, sravakas and pratyekabuddhas
- \ Had already seen reality, what would that line of reasoning
- \ Do to establish a single vehicle?
- \ It is just an assertion.

Thus, if in establishing a single vehicle it were the case, as it is in your system, that the paths of vision of the Sravakayana and the Mahayana were the same, then because sravakas would have already seen reality, if they were to achieve a resultant arhatship different from the result of the Mahayana, then what would that reasoning, [which establishes] that reality is unique, do to establish a single vehicle? Aside from being a mere assertion, it would accomplish nothing, because when what is realized is one, both lower and supreme results would already be accomplished.

L7: [2.3.3.4 Why our own system is reasonable]

L8: [2.3.3.4.1 On a single path to be traversed, sublime beings progress at many rates of speed]

\ ###
\ 2.3.3.4.1
\ Here, the primordial wisdom of coalescence
\ That sees the ultimate
\ Is precisely identical with suchness;
\ All sublime beings head toward it, and enter it.

ϕ(i.e. All dharmas are equal (non-dual: not two, not one) because all are empty of inherent existence. The two emptinesses and the coalescence have the same very ultimate meaning.)

Here in this exegetical tradition of the early translations, the coalescence of the expanse and awareness is the primordial wisdom of awareness, in which totally pure primordial wisdom—which sees the ultimate meaning of the abiding nature—is the unique suchness of dharmata, the primordial wisdom of awareness. This unique abiding nature is what all sublime beings of the three vehicles are headed toward and will enter into—by longer and shorter paths, more quickly and more slowly—in the manner of livestock wagons [as taught in the Lotus Sutra].

On this, the Great Omniscient One said:

~ Therefore, the "three countless eons" and so forth that are taught And that [lead to] quick perfection, long [awaited] perfection, and Liberation in this life, depend upon the power of one's mind. One who practices with supreme method, diligence, and wisdom— Such a person has the greatest power.

L8: [2.3.3.4.2 In that respect, Nagarjuna's and Maitreya's intentions are not contradictory]

\ ###
\ 2.3.3.4.2
\ Therefore, if one understands this system well,
\ The systems of Nagarjuna and Asanga are like
\ Molasses and honey combined;
\ A hungry person will easily digest them.

For the reasons explained above, if one understands all the points made in this system [of explanation], such as the context of the "far advanced" [bhumi], one will not [falsely discern] faults of mutual contradiction in the profound system of Nagarjuna and the texts of Maitreya, or see one to be logically established at the expense of the other. Instead, [persons] hungry [for knowledge] will take the texts of the great system-builders together, like the sweet taste of molasses and honey mixed together, and having easily digested them, their wisdom bodies will greatly increase in strength.

L8: [2.3.3.4.3 Otherwise, if one holds them to be contradictory, there is great embarrassment in the face of scripture and reasoning]

\ ###
\ 2.3.3.4.3
\ Otherwise, as with inappropriate food,
\ One feels the discomfort of cancer within.
\ Poked and jabbed with a hundred sharp lances
\ Of scripture and reasoning, one is afraid.

Otherwise, if one holds them to be contradictory, one will not have an appetite, and as if one had eaten the wrong kind of food, one will suffer various internal contradictions of study and reflection upon the texts of the profound and extensive [lineages], like unpleasant cancers within oneself. In order to free [such a person] from his illness, other scholars with profound and vast minds will poke and jab him with a hundred sharp scalpels of scripture and reasoning, and like a person with cancer who has internal blockages, that person will be profoundly terrified. When he sees the antidote of scripture and reasoning, which contradict his own point of view, he will be embarrassed.

I say:

~ When inferior disciples realize
~ The meaning of equality, they go on the quick path.
~ Because there are doubts about the renowned Mahayana,
~ They have been discussed here.

L1: [9.3. Topic 3 [Sudden vs. Gradual vs. dropping all: Should meditation involve conceptualization, modal apprehension, such as apprehending emptiness?]]

¢(i.e. Résumé of Topic 3: About sudden vs. gradual vs. Hashang's method of dropping all How to meditate on the way things really are. Should we drop all conceptualization, or concentrate one pointedly on the idea of emptiness? Mipham discusses the dangers of misinterpreting the instructions for meditating on emptiness. It is true that ultimately one meditate in a state beyond conceptualization, but this state cannot be faked by artificially dropping all conceptualization and making the mind blank like a rock. Going beyond all conceptualization has to be a natural consequence of directly seeing the real nature of our own mind and of everything. Faking it will not bring us closer to this direct realization. Until then we need to analyze the way things really are using the teachings and reasonings based on the Two Truths. This permits to stay away from all extremes in meditation and out of meditation. And going beyond conceptualization doesn't mean to reject all conceptualization as if they were essentially bad; it means to directly see their real nature and not being attached or conditioned by them. It is a state beyond thought and no-thought; beyond emptiness and non-emptiness; where a mind with or without thoughts are seen as not different, not the same, or inseparable, non-dual: not two, not one. It is a state where there is no acceptance, no rejection of thoughts, or anything else. It is a state of great equanimity.

~ This state can be reached very fast by some immediately after having been introduced to the real nature of his mind by their teacher. But for most of us it is a state that is

reached after a long gradual process using techniques from either the sutras or the tantras. Those techniques are there in order to create a mind state that is not bending toward any one of the four extremes. But the final realization is beyond those four extremes, beyond any analysis, or concepts, beyond all causality.

~ And while meditating on it, it is important to go beyond simple non-existence (reifying emptiness), beyond the duality existence vs. non-existence (the Two truths), beyond thinking they are the same: dependent origination and emptiness.)

L3: [[0.2.2.] Explaining the particulars of the three different views:]

L4: [0.2.2.1 Explanation of the view of intrinsic awareness, which realizes the equal taste of the coalescence of the two truths]

L5: [[0.2.2.1.1] The actual explanation [topics 3 and 4]]

L6: [[0.2.2.1.1.1] 3. Whether the maintenance of the actual practice of the view involves apprehension or not [Topic 3 - Should meditation involve conceptualization, modal apprehension, such as apprehending emptiness?]]

¢(i.e. Modal: in philosophy -- describing logical modalities: used to describe propositions involving necessity or probability, and those relating to knowledge, belief, and obligation. Apprehension: idea: an idea formed by observation or experience. – ability to understand: the power or ability to grasp the importance, significance, or meaning of something (formal))

¢(i.e. "... although this tradition of the Nyingmapa school of secret mantra expounds intrinsic emptiness (rang stong), it is not the "intrinsic emptiness" of the "intrinsic emptiness vs. extrinsic emptiness" dichotomy. These two are differentiated by the philosophical systems of the new schools of Mantrayana, so that assertion of [intrinsic emptiness in the context of the new schools] is somewhat incompatible with the reality of the integrated two truths. In that respect there are some differences [between the proponents of intrinsic emptiness in the new schools and ourselves] regarding how the middle and final turnings of the wheel are posited as definitive or provisional, whether the intentions of both the great system-builders are combined together or not, whether the two validating cognitions are emphasized equally or not, etc.")

L7: [3.1 Taking up the subject of analysis through question and answer]

\ ###
\ 3.1
\ When pursuing the main practice of the view,
\ Some say one should not apprehend anything.
\ The meaning of "not apprehending anything"
\ 3.2.1.1
\ Can be understood well or wrongly.

When meditating and maintaining the actual practice of the view of the meaning of reality, if one asks whether there is an intentional apprehension, such as apprehending emptiness:

Some people say that one should have an intentional apprehension that sees the abiding character of emptiness, and they claim that having no intentional apprehension whatsoever is a fault for meditation on the object of the view.

Some people say that one should meditate on the nature of things without apprehension, "apprehending nothing whatsoever," and that if anything is apprehended, it is a fault.

L7: [3.2 Explaining that meaning extensively [of when to use concepts]:]

L8: [3.2.1 [The sudden path] If, by being introduced to the nature of complete awareness and settling in it, one gains realization of the esoteric instruction class [of rDzogs chen], and elaborations are cut off instantaneously, that is authentic non-apprehension]

L9: [3.2.1.1 A brief demonstration that mere non-apprehension is something to accept as well as reject]

\ ###

\ The meaning of "not apprehending anything"

\ ###

\ 3.2.1.1

\ Can be understood well or wrongly.

¢(i.e. We have to know when to use conceptualization, and when to not use it. The path / goal is not to drop all conceptualization; otherwise a rock would be enlightened, and getting a lobotomy would be the fast path. But that is the view of idiots.)

Here we must discriminate the various contexts in which one should or should not have an intentional apprehension when maintaining the actual practice of the view. But if one makes the one-sided statement "Do not apprehend anything," both a proper and an erroneous understanding are possible.

L9: [3.2.1.2 Explaining that [the sudden path] extensively]

L10: [3.2.1.2.1 Determining both contexts (mtshan gzhi) of non-apprehension [the two cases of non-conceptualization: faking it, or inducing it with authentic wisdom]]

L11: [3.2.1.2.1.1 [Case 1: non-conceptualization induced by wisdom] If one realizes the total coalescence of calm abiding and insight into reality, which can stop the river of samsara, then intentional apprehension is destroyed]

\ ###

\ 3.2.1.2.1.1

\ The first [way of understanding]

\ Is free of the elaborations of the four extremes.

\ For the gnosis of sublime beings,

\ Nothing is seen to remain,

\ So modal apprehension automatically subsides;

\ It is like looking at the empty, luminous sky.

¢(i.e. Ultimately, when one really gets the way to really do it, one meditate in the Union of Shamatha and Vipashyana, there is no accepting, no rejecting. That is the ultimate practice in perfect accord with the real non-dual nature of everything. So it is beyond apprehension and non-apprehension.)

"If meditation without apprehension is the system of most learned and accomplished beings, how could that have both aspects of abandonment and acceptance?" In the following way: if one understands the first [alternative] well, that is [to realize] the coalescence of appearance and emptiness—which is the nature of reality, the gnosis of sublime beings, free of all elaborations of the four extremes such as existence and non-existence, which abides in the state of dharmadhatu like salt dissolving in water. From the perspective of that gnosis, it is seen that no elaboration is present as the object of an intentional apprehension; there is no need to destroy intentional apprehension on purpose, because it is

destroyed automatically. The innate radiance of the essence of emptiness is the purity of inseparable emptiness and clarity, which is without obstruction. For example, it is like gazing at the autumn sky free of clouds—although there is no intentional apprehension, there is no fault, because it is unnecessary.

L11: [3.2.1.2.1.2 [Case 2: non-conceptualization artificially induced – Hashang’s way of dropping all mentation] Not understanding that, the mere non-apprehension of calm abiding will become the cause of rebirth]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.1.2
\ The second is the mindless system of Hashang:
\ Letting the mind rest blankly without analysis and
\ Without the clarity aspect of penetrating insight,
\ One remains ordinary, like a rock in the ocean depths.

In the second context, that of misunderstanding, one abides in a dark mindless state of non-conceptuality, without apprehending anything. This is how the view is maintained according to the Chinese Hashang system. Without analyzing anything as "empty" or "not empty," and leaving the mind as it is, one might generate a bit of stability, bliss, clarity, non-conceptuality, and so forth. But without the clarity aspect of penetrating insight, no matter how long one cultivates the state of apprehending nothing whatsoever, one will not be able to abandon any concepts or emotional afflictions. For example, like a stone at the bottom of the wet ocean that doesn't soak through, one will still be an ordinary person. As it is said, "When well fed and the sun is shining, a Dharma practitioner; when things get tough, an ordinary person." Because that meditation is faulty, one should once again meditate with intentional apprehension.

L11: [3.2.1.2.1.3 [Analysis of the two cases of non-conceptualization: faking it won’t work] Demonstrating the reasonableness of those two [positions]]

L12: [3.2.1.2.1.3.1 Their reasonableness according to examples [with Hashang’s method one is only faking wisdom]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.1.3.1
\ For example, though both say "There is nothing at all,"
\ The Madhyamika sees there really is nothing,
\ And the other one just imagines the absence of form;
\ Likewise here, though the words are the same,
\ The meaning is different like earth and sky.

You might think that those two are equally faultless, because they are both without apprehension; but even though they have the same name, in fact they are different. For example, even though the term "[apprehending] nothing whatsoever" is the same, their meaning is different. One is to see the abiding nature of things by realizing the absence of elaboration through Madhyamika reasoning, and the other is just wishing for nothingness, thinking "There is no form, so there is nothing whatsoever." They are similar, both using the term "absence" [or "nothing," med pa], but in fact they are completely dissimilar, like the earth and the sky. Thus, in mere non-apprehension it is possible to have both a perfect and a mistaken path.

L12: [3.2.1.2.1.3.2 Their reasonableness in fact]

L13: [3.2.1.2.1.3.2.1 The reason why there is no intentional apprehension in the absence of the four extremes [when one is beyond the four extremes, conceptualization is automatically dropped due to authentic wisdom]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.1.3.2.1
\ Therefore, if in the absence of elaboration of the four
\ extremes,
\ One does not apprehend the four extremes anywhere,
\ One is beyond the four extremes, and modal apprehension subsides;
\ Because it no longer exists, we say there is no modal apprehension.

You might wonder why, if one understands well, one doesn't need an intentional apprehension (i.e. no need to fake it). As said above, dharmadhatu is free of all elaborations of the four extremes; if there were something to apprehend in it, it would have to fall into one of those four extremes. If the object is not established in one of the four extremes, the subject cannot apprehend any of the four extremes. Because there is no intentional apprehension beyond the four extremes, we maintain for that reason that there is no intentional apprehension.

The Bodhicaryavatara says:

~ When neither entities nor non-entities
~ Abide before the mind,
~ Then because there is no other aspect,
~ Without reification, it is utterly pacified.

L13: [3.2.1.2.1.3.2.2 The reason why, if one does not realize that, non-apprehension that depends only on seeing and studying mere words is erroneous [mere conceptual understanding and artificial dropping won't work]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.1.3.2.2
\ If some idiots think "Since there is no modal apprehension,
\ From the very beginning one should relax and not grasp anything"—
\ Then because all beings are quite relaxed in their ordinary state,
\ Always wandering in the three worlds of samsara,
\ There is no reason to encourage or remind them!

¢(i.e. It is not because everything is empty of inherent existence that we can "fake it". This has to be directly seen. Just understanding it conceptually is not enough. And its true meaning is beyond all conceptualization; it is not the conceptual emptiness.)

Thus, if one has thoroughly understood the reason, it is reasonable for there to be no intentional apprehension. Some idiots analyze this meaning but gain no experience at all, just following the words "no intentional apprehension." From the very start they think "free of extremes, inexpressible. ..." and stare into space. Unfortunately, they think "without any apprehension whatsoever, I'll just relax," and practice without relying on the actual meaning of those words. However much they relax, they will not be able to cut the root of samsara. From beginningless time, all beings have been extremely relaxed, just letting things happen in an ordinary state of mind, experiencing three kinds of suffering in one life after another in the three realms of existence. Since they have always been wandering, someone who thinks this is practice need not read this, or be encouraged to practice!

The Wish-fulfilling Treasury says:

~ If one is lost in the pointless [mere] words of "non-elaboration," These are conceptual fabrications, with the [verbal qualification] of "non-elaboration."

L10: [3.2.1.2.2 The extensive explanation [a partial realization is not enough to use the sudden path – it has to be a realization beyond the four extremes, beyond all conceptualization]]

L11: [3.2.1.2.2.1 It is not beneficial to simply recognize the merely delusive mind that has not gone to the depths of truthlessness [a partial realization of the nature of the mind is not enough to use the sudden path]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.1
\ Some might say, "We have recognized the nature of mind,"
\ Without really understanding it; in recognizing the ultimate,
\ One must definitely realize the absence of true existence.
\ That "Deluded appearances are one thing, and I am
\ another"
\ Is obvious and requires no meditation.

¢(i.e. To simply realize the inconveniences of delusions and conceptualization is not enough. One has to go beyond the duality deluded, non-deluded; beyond simple rejection of the so called bad, and see the already pure nature of the mind and everything.)

Of course, if one relaxes without apprehending anything, one should realize the view. But those people who do not apprehend anything do not recognize the face of fundamental mind, and putting on great airs of being yogis they say "we know the nature of the mind." There is the fundamental mind of dharmata, which is beyond the eightfold mind that includes the alayavijnana; and the dharma-possessor, which comprises the eightfold consciousness, which is the deluded mind. In recognizing the first one, which is the ultimate reality of dharmata, one must either have definite confidence in the crucial points of vast scriptures and reasonings, or realize the meaning of profound pith instructions received from a master who has reached the stage of "heat" in his own practice, thus determining the emptiness of true existence of one's own mind, which is pure from the beginning, and thus, tear out the deluded mind from its root and basis. If one does not do it that way and says, "This clear knowing mind that apprehends the deluded appearances of the eightfold aggregation is me, and what is not this, is something different"—then that mind whose essence is to experience happiness, suffering, and so forth, is easy for anyone, stupid or wise, to realize. What need is there to meditate on it?

As it is said:

~ Having introduced the clear and cognizant nature of mind
~ And settled on that non-conceptually,
~ Thinking this to be the intention of Mahamudra and the
~ Great Perfection,
~ One contradicts the holders of philosophical traditions and their texts.
~ Both are nothing but lunatic ravings.

L11: [3.2.1.2.2.2 Explanation of the distinction between knowing and not knowing the proper sense of the emptiness of true existence [a partial realization of the authentic meaning of emptiness is not enough to use the sudden path – one has to go beyond the four extremes]]

L12: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1 Whether or not modal apprehension is necessary in "not seeing" depends upon whether or not one has been introduced to the nature of mind]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1 Not being introduced [to the nature of mind]]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.1 The opponent's expression of his understanding]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.1
\ You might say, "When examining the color, form, origin, cessation,
\ And so forth, of the mind nothing is seen;
\ That is realization of emptiness."

¢(i.e. A superficial understanding of emptiness is not enough.)

Obviously, it is not enough to know that there is only mind; one must thoroughly fathom the emptiness of true existence. When analyzing the mind—whether it has a color such as blue or yellow, whether it has a shape such as round or square, where it arises, where it stays, and where it goes—one does not see any shape, color, etc., and that you say "is to realize the emptiness of mind."

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2 Investigating its meaning]

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.1 The mere non-seeing form, color, etc., has great potential for error]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.1
\ This system of teaching is extremely profound,
\ And there are also great mistakes one can make;
\ Because mind does not have a form,
\ It is impossible for anyone to see its color, etc.

¢(i.e. The real meaning of emptiness is not that simple to get.)

In general, it is difficult to realize the actual teaching of Dharma in the sutras and tantras.

The Lalitavistara says:

- ~ Profound, peaceful, unelaborated, unfabricated—
- ~ I have found a Dharma like nectar.
- ~ If I teach it, nobody will understand.
- ~ Without speaking, I will remain in the forest.

This path of the supreme vehicle is extremely profound. Because with respect to different disciples there can be both good and harm [from this teaching], the possibility for error in this is extremely great. The reason is that the mind has no form, so it is impossible for anybody to recognize color, form, and so forth, whether they recognize [the nature of mind] or not, because that distinction of each dharma-possessor does not belong to anything else.

As it is said:

- ~ The mind is subtle, profound, and difficult to examine;
- ~ It cannot be differentiated by various and sundry methods.
- ~ Unstable and deceptive, it causes confusion.
- ~ Even though it's yours, the mind is hard to fathom.

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.2 In general, mere non-seeing does not qualify as emptiness]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.2
\ However, it is a very great mistake to think that merely not seeing them
\ Is the same as being introduced to emptiness.
\ Though you examine your head a hundred times,
\ A ruminant's horns cannot be found.

Therefore, you might think that merely by not seeing inanimate dharmas in the mind, you have been introduced to the nature of mind, the dharmata, which is empty of being truly existent. But this is a great mistake. For example, if you investigate one hundred times, it is impossible to find an animal's horns on a human head. Simply not to see it does not mean that you have understood the human mind and body's emptiness of true existence.

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.3 If merely that were the realization of the nature of reality, it would be easy for anyone]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.1.1.2.3
\ To say that not seeing something is to realize its
\ emptiness—
\ Wouldn't that be easy for anybody?

¢(i.e. Usually the method consists of first being convinced that the thing we are looking for should be in one of the places we will be looking in. Only then, and after finding nothing, can we really be convinced that the thing is really not inherently existing.)

Therefore, your meditation on the view is a mere non-seeing of shape, etc., in the mind. Though you might think that [meditation] can realize the suchness of dharmata or emptiness of the mind, because that kind of dharmata of not seeing anything is easy for anybody to realize, what would be the point, then, of the statements in the sutras and tantras to the effect that the nature of dharmas is extremely difficult to realize? As it is said, "The fact that you don't see something doesn't mean it is non-existent." There are many things that, with respect to location, time, and aspect, are remote and hence invisible. But the mere fact of not seeing them doesn't qualify as a realization of the nature of the dharmata of those things, which is difficult to realize. This is similar to what has already been explained above [in topic i]—that realizing that one thing is empty of another does not qualify as realization of emptiness.

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.1.2 Generating perfect understanding [directly seeing the real non-dual nature of our own mind]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.1.2
\ Therefore, if by this rational analysis
\ One sees the nature of things precisely,
\ One will profoundly realize the essential unreality
\ Of the illusion mind, which is like an illusion.
\ Then, just like looking directly into space,
\ One will derive profound certainty in
\ the nature of one's mind,
\ Which though moving is empty.

¢(i.e. Only by examining and reasoning the proper way can we really gain certainty that the thing is really not inherently existing, not completely non-existing, not both, not neither, and go beyond the duality of existence and non-existence. Where everything is empty but still dependently arisen and functional, still appearing. That is pointing toward the realization of the inseparability of appearances and emptiness, the coalescence, the Union of The Two Truths.)

Gaining understanding of the nature of things: Therefore, if... For that reason, if one properly investigates with the reasoning of pith instructions that destroy the hovel of the mind, and generally with the power of analyzing the three natures of cause and effect, one will see intrinsic awareness directly, without mixing the ambivalence of concepts with the nature of mind, which one has clearly, precisely, and unmistakably settled upon. The nature of the mind arises in any form whatsoever, similar to various forms of illusion. At the time of arising, it is liberated in the primordial purity of the lack of truly existent essence. If one realizes this in the depths of one's mind without any doubt, then, just like looking at the sky in front of oneself, which is clear, empty, and without center or limits, one will become certain that the effulgence of this mind that moves without obstruction is the self-radiance of the emptiness of dharmata, which does not exist anywhere in particular, and does not reduce to any particular appearance. If one understands in this way, then one has seen the reason for not needing to modify [one's mind] or [cultivate] intentional apprehension.

Nowadays, practitioners pretend that lack of understanding is understanding, and that uncertainty is certainty. But even those practitioners can know that they are still ordinary persons, like rocks at the bottom of the ocean, through inferential valid cognition.

L12: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2 The difference between eliminating and not eliminating elaborations: [whether or not modal apprehension is necessary depends upon whether or not one has eliminated elaborations with respect to the object of "neither existent nor non-existent"]]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1 That practitioner investigates our point of view]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1 The question about our point of view]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.1
\ You ask, "Well then, this mind of yours—
\ Is it non-existent, like space,
\ Or does it have disparate awarenesses?"

¢(i.e. This question is based on dualism: thinking it must be either empty or operational; either existent or non-existent.)

"Well then, you who pretend to be a yogi (rtogs ldan): is this mind of yours insubstantial like empty space? Or does it have the nature of various movements and changes, and is it able to know all phenomena? What is it?"

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2 Analyzing it [the need to go beyond the other extremes also]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.2.1.2
\ Because the vibrant mind that we all possess
\ Doesn't rest for a moment, surely everyone would say
\ There is some sort of awareness.

\ Thus, you say that mind,
 \ Which is neither existent nor non-existent,
 \ Is the luminous dharmakaya.
 \ Although he hasn't done much study,
 \ Such a person who claims to introduce the nature of mind
 \ Thinks this is a teaching such that
 \ "Knowing one liberates all."

☿(i.e. But simply saying that it is not existent, not non-existent is not enough either. That is not complete. Even the whole Tetralemma: not existent, not-non-existent, not both, not neither – is not enough. That is still only conceptualizing it; just pointing at the moon.)

How to express it? [In the context of investigating the mind], there is a mere non-seeing of shape, color, and so forth. But the mind that doesn't even rest for a moment but jumps around after various objects is present in all embodied beings. Therefore, even though everyone knows for certain that such a consciousness is in each of our bodies, this charlatan says that this is the nature of mind! If you analyze this idea, it cannot exist by the reasons that he gives, viz., because one cannot see its shape or color; and it cannot not exist, because it is a mind that doesn't stay still for a moment and changes constantly. Saying that this kind of mind is "the realization of the dharmakaya of luminosity explained in the rDzogs chen tantras," they deceive others. They bombastically claim "this is the introduction to the nature of the basic dharmadhatu." In their grand pretense, they show little regard for karmic cause and effect. Without a general knowledge of the sutras and tantras in general, nor great learning in the dialectical vehicle, etc., in particular, and without making much effort on the path of the three trainings, they say, "I have realized the luminosity that by knowing one, liberates all." If one analyzes this, it is just like the saying, "Not having seen one's true nature, but beating the dead horse of introduction." Even if they have understood one thing (gcig shes), there is no good evidence that they have liberated everything (kun grol), so I think this unfortunate idea is wrong.

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2 Explaining the difference between eliminating and not eliminating elaborations]

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1 The view of rDzogs chen is non-elaboration [free from all four extremes]]

\ ###
 \ 3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1
 \ The teaching of "neither existent nor non-existent" in the Great Perfection
 \ Is the freedom from the four extremes of elaboration.
 \ If you examine this mind carefully,
 \ You cannot say it exists,
 \ Nor can you say it does not exist.

☿(i.e. Simply saying that it is not existent, not non-existent is not enough either. That is not complete. The whole Tetralemma is: not existent, not-non-existent, not both, not neither – is not enough. That is still only conceptualizing it; just pointing at the moon. The real meaning is more like non-duality: not two, not one, the Union of The Two Truths, the coalescence, the inseparability of appearances and emptiness. But that is also just pointing at the moon.)

That "not existing, not non-existing" may indeed be your system's dharmakaya of luminosity. The nature of rDzogs chen as intended by the knowledge-holders dGa' rab rDo rje and so forth is not existent, abiding in the primordial basis, and not seen even by the Buddhas; and not non-existent, as it is the basis for the appearance of samsara and nirvana. That is the expanse of the equality of samsara and nirvana, the coalescence of awareness and emptiness free of all elaborations of the four extremes.

Therefore, these two are not the same.

The Thal 'gyur says:

- ~ Dharmakaya is without elaboration,
- ~ Without unconscious apprehension of characteristics.
- ~ Its essence is inseparable clarity and emptiness —

And the Klong drug pa says:

- ~ The nature of the primordially pure dharmakaya,
- ~ Free of elaboration, the perfectly pure basis___
- ~ How can this possibly be the same as what you are saying? It cannot.

L14: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2 The [false yogi's] meditation is one or another of the extremes of elaboration]

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1 The actual way that this is an extreme]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.1
\ But in fact, your mind does not go beyond either
\ The extreme of both existence and non-existence
\ Nor the extreme of neither existence nor non-existence.
\ You are just thinking about the mind on the basis
\ Of "neither existence nor non-existence."

¢(i.e. So still grasping at the duality existence vs. non-existence is not enough, nor rejecting the duality completely enough. Transcending the duality means directly seeing the real nature of the duality: not accepting it, not rejecting it. All of this is pointing toward the Middle Way away from the four extremes of realism (existence), idealism or nihilism (non-existence), dualism (both), monism (neither). Accepting and rejecting is still being stuck in dualism, still reifying something, still being stuck in realism, still samsara.)

If the nature of mind that you see is analyzed well in accordance with scripture and reasoning, it cannot be said to have the identity of shape, and so forth. Because it wanders and wavers all over the place, internally and externally, it cannot be said to be non-existent. Therefore, your "nature of mind" does not go beyond either the extreme of "neither existent nor non-existent," nor the extreme of "both existent and non-existent." Thus, you are just mulling something over in your head, on the basis of one of these two extremes; [we know this] because a person's idea can be deduced from what they say.

L15: [3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2 Explaining why this is no different than non-Buddhist systems that adhere to the same extreme]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.2.2.2
\ Aside from a difference in name, the mind,

\ Spoken of in that way, is no different than
\ The "inconceivable self" of the apostate.

¢(i.e. So we have to be careful when thinking that the mind, or anything else, is not existent, not both, not neither. If we still think there is a mind that is like that, then we are missing the point. It is like saying that there is a mind but that we do not have the capacity to describe it, like saying that only God can. This is like saying that there is a real mind, a raw mind, but that it is corrupted by conceptualization, and all we have to do is to drop all conceptualization to rediscover this pure real mind.)

Once again, because this is a way of cultivating an intentional apprehension of analysis, it is nothing other than the way the "inconceivable self is propounded by non-Buddhists, even though the names given to them are different. Both of them maintain a reified object on an inexpressible basis.

L12: [3.2.1.2.2.2.3 The difference between having and not having a reifying focus:]

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.2.3.1 The absence of reifying focus when there is non-elaborated cognition that does not focus on mind or appearances]

\ ###
\ 3.2.1.2.2.2.3.1
\ The mind and dharmas other than it
\ Are determined to be unreal, and on that basis
\ Appearances arise as relativity,
\ Which is beyond thought and expressions of "existence"
\ and "non-existence."
\ This is the crucial point of freedom from elaborations of the
\ four extremes,
\ Which is without a focal point and all-pervasive.

¢(i.e. No conceptual description like existence, non-existence, both, neither, can really describe what is beyond conceptualization, what is beyond all dualities. The Tetralemma, or the "non-conceptuality", or "non-elaboration" should not be taken as is. Everything is much more subtle.)

Thus, the important points of establishing the view cannot be determined by words alone; they must be known through reliance on the actual meaning. Therefore "non-elaboration" is not simply a statement about how extremes are eliminated in relation to the existence of some dharmas and the non-existence of others. Whatever appears as the internal mind or as external phenomena is determined as the emptiness of primordial purity, which is the negation of true existence. On the basis of that confidence in the absence of the extreme of "existence," all these internal and external appearances appear as the relativity of the nature of unobstructed self-radiance, and are free of the extreme of non-existence. Likewise, the nature of things is not both [existent and non-existent], because a dharma that can be differentiated as both existent and non-existent on a single basis does not abide in reality, since reality is non-dual. Also, there is no tertium quid (phung gsum pa.) that is neither existent nor non-existent. If there were, it would have to be something expressible as "being like this," and if it were thus expressible, it would be none other than an existent object of cognition or a non-existent object of cognition. So there is no way of knowing the tertium quid that is neither existent nor non-existent.

Generally speaking, ultimate reality is not an object of cognition.

The Prajnaparamita says:

- ~ Ultimate reality is not an object of cognition.
- ~ It cannot be cognized.

Moreover, just as in the case of positing something in terms of existence or non-existence, here "both" and "neither" also do not go beyond the extremes of the two [former extremes, for example, existence and non-existence, because the latter two extremes are likewise posited in those terms] . Therefore, [reality] is beyond the thought and expression of all four extremes of elaboration. As it is said, "Manjusri asked perfectly, and the bodhisattva remained without answering."

By experiencing that crucial point—freedom from the darkness of the elaborations of the four extremes—and not just following after the mere words of scripture, reasoning, and pith instructions, that bare naked state that is pure and brilliant, homogenous, without contamination, naturally radiant, and free of all focal points, is known to be "unobstructedly arisen." The Rig pa rang shar says, "The self-purification of the stains of the four extremes..." Therefore, the maintenance of the main practice of the view is said to be an authentic non-apprehension.

L13: [3.2.1.2.2.3.2 An elaborated meditation, which does not realize this, is not free of reification]

- \ ###
- \ 3.2.1.2.2.3.2
- \ [But] just saying "This is free of both existence and non-existence"
- \ Is to place a target in front of your mind.
- \ Depending on this apprehension of self and others as real
- \ entities,
- \ One enters the river of samsara continuously.

¢(i.e. Grasping at any conceptual formula, any description, any view, is still grasping, still reifying something, still thinking something is empty of inherent existence, and missing the point. Dropping all, like Hashang proposed, is thus missing the point.)

If you don't understand it in that way, and your mind is distracted with the mere statement "Look at the nature of mind," you might focus on a kind of blank state where there is nothing in particular. But here you don't recognize whether or not there is a subtle intentional apprehension or reifying focus, and you fool yourself into thinking that the intentional apprehension wherein one ceases to perceive superficial forms, shapes, and so forth, is the absence of reifying focus and non-apprehension. This meditation has as its object the extreme of "neither-nor," which you think is "free of extremes." This object abides like a target in front of a mind that has a subtle intentional apprehension, and you are simply unconscious. By cultivating that state, you are not freed from samsara, and in dependence upon this kind of apprehension of substantially existing "I" and "other" that has been present from beginningless time, you pass from one life to the next in this great river of suffering, like a bee passing from one bottle to the next. It is said that such a person must meditate again upon selflessness with intentional apprehension.

L8: [3.2.2 [The gradual path] Because one doesn't understand, one gradually eliminates elaborations and meditates with intentional apprehension:]

L9: [3.2.2.1 The beginner eliminates elaborations gradually with intentional apprehension]

L10: [3.2.2.1.1 The way of meditating on selflessness as the antidote to clinging to

substantiality]

L11: [3.2.2.1.1.1 Exemplifying the manner of selflessness]

\ ###
\ 3.2.2.1.1.1
\ The antidote that ends all of this
\ Is the modal apprehension of selflessness.
\
\ If one does not know the manner of absence,
\ To imagine non-existence does not help; (i.e. Hashang method)
\ If you mistake a rope for a snake,
\ It doesn't help to think "There's no snake;"
\ But if you see how it does not exist, it disappears.

¢(i.e. Until one can really go beyond the duality existence vs. non-existence, and realize the Union of The Two Truths – the coalescence, then one should use conceptualization, correct logical reasonings, the two accumulations. Just faking the result by dropping all is not going to help at all. All of the conceptualization, the logical reasonings, the modal apprehension, will help in removing all the wrong views, and to gain certainty in the possibility of going beyond all of this by directly seeing the real non-dual nature of our own mind.)

Thus, the antidote that stops all the reifying focusing discussed above is an intentional apprehension that considers selflessness.

On that, Aryadeva said:

~ Seeing selflessness in the object,
~ The seeds of existence are blocked.

And, the Avatara says:

~ If [reifying] thoughts had substantial entities [as their objects], they would [always] happen.
~ [But, since] the substantial entities have been established not to exist [inherently],
~ Without substantial entities, these [thoughts] do not arise.
~ For example, without firewood there is no fire.

If one does not understand the sense of non-existence in that selflessness perfectly by means of the pure path of scripture and reasoning, like the seventh dhyana in the scriptural tradition, one will be obsessed with non-existence, and it will do no good for cutting the root of samsara. For example, if one mistakes a coiled rope for a snake, to think, "It is not a snake" does not help to eliminate one's fear. If through conditions such as "the fact of appearance" one correctly sees that the rope is not a snake, fear will go away.

L11: [3.2.2.1.1.2 Having analyzed rationally according to the example, meditating with intentional apprehension]

L12: [3.2.2.1.1.2.1 Having analyzed with respect to the absence of one and many, etc., the actual meditation with intentional apprehension]

\ ###
\ 3.2.2.1.1.2.1
\ Thus, having realized emptiness through analysis,
\ You should not rest content with analysis.

\ Since the habit of clinging to real entities is beginningless,
\ You should meditate again and again with modal apprehension.

¢(i.e. This is like creating a wholesome habit in order to fight the usual unwholesome habits. It is the method of the antidote. But, of course, this is just creating another conceptual habit at first; just creating more wholesome karma. But it is good karma because it is aiming at being able one day to transcend all karma formation by directly seeing through the whole process of karma formation. But at one point one will have to go beyond this conceptual realization of emptiness.)

Therefore, by analyzing through the many types of reasoning explained in the gradual view and gradual meditation of Madhyamaka, one will come to understand selflessness and the emptiness of all dharmas. When first determining selflessness and emptiness, one should not simply rest content with having analyzed, but rather one should cultivate it. The reason is that one has been extremely addicted to clinging to substantial entities from beginningless time, so as the antidote to that propensity one should meditate again and again with analysis and an intentional apprehension that accords with its object, the object of analysis.

L12: [3.2.2.1.1.2.2 Explaining why it is necessary]

\ ###
\ 3.2.2.1.1.2.2
\ By meditating on selflessness the view of self
\ Is uprooted, so it's been called necessary
\ By many seers of truth who practiced intensely.

¢(i.e. By doing this repeatedly one ultimately realize the emptiness of all dharmas. So it is not really that one sees the real nature of everything, but that one finds nothing really existing, or not-existing, or both, or neither. The wrong views are eliminated, the illusions are seen for what they are: illusions. And directly seeing the illusory nature of everything then automatically all attachments are dropped. It is not faked here. It is based on wisdom. Here conceptualization are dropped automatically and one enter the Great Perfection meditation.)

Why does one need to meditate in that way? By accustoming oneself to the meaning of selflessness, one will not just abandon the manifestation of egotism, but will tear its seed out from the root. Therefore, many learned and accomplished beings who have seen the meaning of reality have forcefully established the need to meditate analytically in this way.

The Alamkara says:

~ Why is that? The Buddhas
~ Have realized it, and because they do not see dharmas__

L12: [3.2.2.1.1.2.3 Showing why not doing it is problematic]

\ ###
\ 3.2.2.1.1.2.3
\ If this is the fail-safe entry way for beginners,
\
\ To say that modal apprehension should be abandoned
\ From the very beginning is a rumor spread by Mara.

¢(i.e. Here, Mara is Hashang.)

Generally speaking, the first entry to the gradual path is selflessness. Moreover, in realizing the inseparable equal purity on the path of the Vajrayana, one must first realize equality. Thus, cultivating this entryway for beginners is the infallible method for [entering] transic meditation. Some people who are confused about the important points of the path say that meditation with intentional apprehension is, from the very beginning of the path, a fault, and that it should be abandoned. Because these are rumors spread by Mara in order to obstruct progress on the path, one should not confuse what is to be accepted and what is to be abandoned.

L10: [3.2.2.1.2 The way of meditating on the absence of extremes as the antidote to clinging to non-existence]

L11: [3.2.2.1.2.1 How the non-apprehending absence of elaboration is the antidote for apprehension of non-existence]

\ ###
\ 3.2.2.1.2.1
\ When you acquire outstanding certainty in truthlessness
\ Induced by that modal apprehension,
\
\ The mere apprehension of non-existence
\ Is not the final nature of things,
\
\ So meditate on the great emptiness free of elaboration,
\ Free of conceptual ambivalence.

¢(i.e. Once one realize the emptiness of dharmas, one has to go beyond and realize that this doesn't means that they are completely non-existent either. Then later one has to go beyond the duality of existence and non-existence itself: not accepting it, not rejecting it. So while meditating on emptiness, one should not grasp at emptiness.)

When, through the force of that modal apprehension, one has perfectly induced a confidence free of doubt in the secret pith of all dharmas—the emptiness of true existence of the unborn nature of mind— that modal apprehension, which is a mere apprehension of "non-existence," is just an aspect of the subjective mind. It is not the final reality of all objective knowables, so then one must meditate upon the great coalescence of appearance and emptiness, the non-conceptual ultimate, free of elaborations of projected doubts, as the antidote to that intentional apprehension.

L11: [3.2.2.1.2.2 Why it is appropriate to have confidence in that crucial point, by virtue of the fact that emptiness and relativity are inseparable]

\ ###
\ 3.2.2.1.2.2
\ When you've really understood truthlessness,
\ Emptiness arises as relativity,
\ Without apprehension of either form or emptiness.
\ This is worthy of confidence just like
\ Gold refined by fire.

¢(i.e. It is important to realize this: that the real non-dual nature of everything is

beyond simple conceptual emptiness, beyond simple conceptual dependent origination, beyond both, beyond neither. To realize that emptiness is not contradictory to dependent origination, to appearances; that they are in fact inseparable. If one get stuck on dependent origination, or emptiness, of the duality of the two, or think they are the same, then one will not be able to progress.)

You might think, "I doubt that not apprehending anything can end samsara," but that is not so. If one realizes from within the emptiness of true existence, which is the absolute negation of all afflicted and purified dharmas, that emptiness of absolute negation is not an exclusive emptiness, but is understood to arise as the illusory display of unobstructed relativity. At that time, one does not fall into either extreme of appearance or emptiness, and does not at all apprehend appearance and emptiness separately. Although it is not [specifically] apprehended, not only does one not fail to cut the root of samsara, one is confident in transcending the extremes of both existence and peace, just as one is confident in gold that has been purified in fire, so of course one cannot be dissuaded from it. This is the excellent teaching of the non-apprehension that gradually eliminates elaborations.

L11: [3.2.2.1.2.3 The reason why foolish meditators who pretend to have realization will be subject to doubts]

\ ###
\ 3.2.2.1.2.3
\ Though this extremely profound matter
\ Has been realized with long-standing effort
\ By the great scholar-yogis of India and Tibet,
\ Woe to those idiots who say it can be realized
\ In a moment—they are plagued with doubts!

¢(i.e. It is hard to get to this point, contrary to those fools who tell you to drop it all now, and that it is that simple. Nobody has ever succeeded this way. Enlightenment is “ultimately sudden” in the sense that it is beyond causality space & time, but cannot be gained by thinking that the cause is to drop all. That rejection is still reifying things.)

On the other hand, if having only seen and heard the words of the introduction to the nature of mind, one pretends to realize the nature of reality from the very beginning without eliminating elaborations gradually, or having to rely upon distinctions of "good" and "bad," or "sharp" and "dull" faculties, then it is in fact difficult to dispense with intentional apprehension. The reason is that the object of sublime persons, which is the extraordinarily profound, crucial aspect to be realized, has been striven for with great effort for long periods of time by the great, extraordinarily learned, and accomplished beings of India and Tibet. About that profound aspect they have said, "Alas! Nowadays, pretentious beings of the degenerate age say that they have realized that profound reality in a single moment, without having to make any effort," and they doubt those statements of clever speakers. They say, "I wonder how the result can arise when causes and conditions are not complete?"

L9: [3.2.2.2 Meditating upon the meaning of the main practice of [absorption] non-apprehension [when free of elaboration, in the main practice one meditates on the meaning of "non-apprehension."]]

L10: [3.2.2.2.1 By reason of seeing the object as non-elaborated, the mind does not apprehend any aspect]

\ ###

\ 3.2.2.2.1
 \ In the main practice of absorption,
 \ Actual and potential phenomena, samsara and nirvana,
 \ Are beyond existence and non existence.
 \ If in the nature of things
 \ Existence and non-existence are nowhere established,
 \ Biased apprehension is [nothing but] conceptual elaboration.
 \ Therefore, when analyzing rationally,
 \ One does not see anything established anywhere;
 \ So how can apprehension come about?

¢(i.e. Because one has directly seen that the objects of meditation are empty of inherent existence, but still not completely non-existent, then one is not attached to any of those aspects. So even emptiness is automatically dropped because one can see though this also. And this is not done artificially as in the case of Hashang's method. And since one is abiding without abiding in any of the four extremes, then this feels like Nirvana.)

Thus, that gradual path eliminates elaborations alternately. Then, in the way that one practices the main practice of transic meditation, samsara and nirvana, actual and potential phenomena, are beyond all extremes, such as the eternalist extreme of existence and the nihilist extreme of non-existence. This is not something that has been fashioned or fabricated anew by someone, but is the way things are primordially. Likewise, if the proper mode of being of knowable things is not at all established as existing or non-existing, then the apprehension of non-empty appearances, or emptinesses that are not combined with appearances, does not exist in the object, but is rather the adventitious fabrication of elaboration wrought by the mind. Therefore, when one analyzes with authentic scriptural references and conclusive reasoning, whatever objects are apprehended cannot be conceptualized and do not possess even the slightest atom. Because [the conclusion of] dharmata reasoning does not admit of degrees, how could one adhere to any possible extreme, through not seeing the utter lack of [true] establishment in things? For the production of consciousness has to arise in the form of an existing object, and here there is no object whatsoever.

The Bodhicaryavatara says:

~ Having analyzed the object of analysis,
 ~ The analysis itself has no basis.
 ~ Because it has no basis, it is not produced.
 ~ That is called "nirvana."

L10: [3.2.2.2.2 Although there is no apprehension, it arises as penetrating insight, which is the self-radiance of luminosity [the mind is empty but still radiant]]

\ ###
 \ 3.2.2.2.2
 \ However, if you analyze the nature of
 \ Freedom from the four extremes of elaboration,
 \ certainty is gained.
 \ By this the penetrating insight of self-arisen
 \ Luminous wisdom becomes clear like a lamp.
 \ Its opposite—the dark night of the
 \ Four extremes of inferior intellects—

¢(i.e. So the mind is free from all extremes, but it is not “blank” or “killed” like with Hashang’s method. That is the difference between a rock and a Buddha. The mind is thus in a position to directly see its real nature beyond all conceptualization and extremes, the primordial awareness, the intrinsic awareness. It is empty but still radiant, still luminous.)

However, this not like the sravaka in his nirvana, who does not cognize anything at all.

When one meditates within the view of irrevocable certainty induced by analysis of the way in which reality is free of the four extremes, one is not completely without knowledge of "this" or "that." The lamp of Manjusrivajra, the penetrating insight that is the unobstructed effulgence of the wisdom of luminosity, is radiant like an ordinary lamp. As it is said:

- ~ Desire, your root
- ~ Is known to arise from concepts.

Thus, conceptuality is stopped, and the effulgence of penetrating insight blazes.

L10: [3.2.2.2.3 That certainty is the antidote to both reification and denigration]

- \ ###
- \ 3.2.2.2.3
- \ Is uprooted by this very antidote;
- \ So when you meditate upon it, certainty should arise.

¢(i.e. In that state, beyond existence and non-existence, beyond thought and no-thought, one finally realize that there is nothing to accept as absolute, and nothing to reject. There is no need to stop thoughts; knowing their real nature is enough to be liberated from any conditioning. Everything is already pure and perfect, the display of luminous emptiness. With this “flash” of Enlightenment, one gain very strong certainty, faith in the view, path and result.)

Wherever any elaboration of the four extremes—which is contradictory to that penetrating insight in terms of its forms and intentional apprehension—apprehends something, the antidote, which pulls up the seed of the obscurity of the darkness of that mistaken view that stupid minds have about the ultimate meaning, is this penetrating insight. When one meditates on the antidote for what is to be abandoned, certainty should arise, because in this context one abandons what needs to be abandoned, and the [appropriate] antidote should arise.

L8: [3.2.3 A summary [of gradual vs. sudden]:]

L9: [3.2.3.1 Explanation of the qualities of realization and abandonment of gradual and sudden [enlightenment]]

L10: [3.2.3.1.1 Showing that the fundamental expanse beyond intellect that is the domain of subitists is difficult to realize]

- \ ###
- \ 3.2.3.1.1
- \ The fundamental space beyond intellect where
- \ The elaborations of the four extremes are eliminated instantly
- \ Is difficult to see all at once
- \ At the level of an ordinary person.

¢(i.e. The ultimate meditation that is the perfect Union of Shamatha and Vipashyana is difficult to realize; so most people have to get there gradually by accumulating both merit and wisdom together.)

As far as disciples' abilities and talents are concerned, there are subitists and gradualists, and of course that distinction also applies to how they eliminate the objects of elaboration. However, only a few persons with that karmic potential and sharp intelligence, and sublime beings, are able to enter the fundamental expanse beyond intellect by eliminating the four extremes all at once without having to eliminate them one by one. For most persons at the ordinary level, it is difficult to dispense with gradual cultivation and see dharmata all at once.

L10: [3.2.3.1.2 Therefore, by properly cultivating the view through study and contemplation, the qualities of abandonment and realization will arise [in stages]]

```
\   ###
\   3.2.3.1.2
\   The system of study and reflection
\   Is for eliminating the elaborations of the four extremes
\   in stages.
\   To the extent that one grows accustomed to it,
\   Certainty grows ever greater;
\   One's intellect, which causes mistaken reification to subside,
\   Improves like the waxing moon.
```

Therefore, because [most people] cannot realize enlightenment in that way, they cultivate this successive cessation of the elaborations of the four extremes according to the graded view of the Madhyamaka; that is the tradition of study and reflection. Even if elaborations are not eliminated all at once, to the extent that one cultivates that view, the opponent of certainty will become clearer and clearer, and finally one will cause the object of abandonment—the erroneous darkness of reifications—to gradually subside. One's intellect, or wisdom of realization, will increase like the waxing moon, and having realized ultimate reality, the object of abandonment will be eliminated.

L9: [3.2.3.2 Explaining the degraded mistaken [Hasang] view that arises because of not analyzing or understanding those two modes]

```
\   ###
\   3.2.3.2
\   The unsound view that doesn't apprehend anything
\   (i.e. Hashang's method)
\   Cannot produce the confidence that
\   No real entities are established anywhere;
\   Therefore, it cannot remove obscurations.
```

¢(i.e. Trying to fake it by dropping all now will not result in anything.)

Like a frog who tries to follow a lion's leap, if one has the base view of not apprehending anything, existence or non-existence, without having understood anything from the start, how can one generate certainty that the self of persons and phenomena is not established anywhere? Without that certainty, that degraded meditation that doesn't apprehend anything cannot function as an antidote for objects of abandonment. Therefore, such a view cannot

abandon any emotional afflictions or cognitive obscurations, because it does not realize emptiness.

On that, the Bodhicaryavatara. says:

- ~ The antidote for emotional and cognitive
- ~ Obscurations is emptiness.
- ~ Those who wish to attain omniscience quickly
- ~ Should not meditate on it in such a way.

L9: [3.2.3.3 Inferring from signs [the way of inferring those two through the signs of their difference]]

L10: [3.2.3.3.1 Generally]

- \ ###
- \ 3.2.3.3.1
- \ Therefore, just like inferring fire by smoke,
- \ The difference between these meditations
- \ Is known from the dividend of abandoned defilement and
- \ acquired realization.

¢(i.e. The only way to produce results is to follow a gradual path and to gradually develop certainty as described above.)

For that reason, the difference between the correctly cultivated non-apprehension meditated on by both gradualists and subitists, and the ersatz non-apprehension that is meditated on by neither of those, can be known from the way that qualities of abandonment and realization are gained or not gained as the reward [of practice], like inferring fire from the sign of smoke.

L10: [3.2.3.3.2 Specifically]

L11: [3.2.3.3.2.1 The idiot meditator's non-apprehension is not the cause of abandonment and realization]

- \ ###
- \ 3.2.3.3.2.1
- \ The ordinary idiot's meditation
- \ Is not a cause for abandoning defilements or realization.
- \ Because it is an obstacle to producing good qualities,
- \ It is like pouring tea through a strainer—
- \ Scriptural learning and realization slip away,
- \ While emotional disturbances accumulate.
- \ In particular, one has little confidence in cause and effect.

¢(i.e. The disadvantages of trying to drop all now, following Hashang's method.)

For the reason that qualities do not arise from this [mistaken view], remaining ordinary in the idiot's meditation that does not recognize anything is not the cause of any gnosis of abandonment and realization. As it is said:

- ~ If one gains confidence in the real meaning,
- ~ A hundred thousand Dharma treasures spring from the heart.

[The idiot's meditation] produces obstacles to this kind of discriminating wisdom, love, compassion, and so forth—indeed, for all the good qualities of the path and result. Without

having the slightest purity of moral discipline, [practicing this meditation] is like straining the dregs of tea and calling that "tea." One's previous qualities will decrease further and further and will not be reproduced; faults and emotional afflictions that one did not have before will be produced and will increase further and further. In particular, this mindless "view of emptiness" will cause one's confidence in causality to decrease. Finally, one will be obsessed with senseless nihilistic ravings.

L11: [3.2.3.3.2.2 The authentic view is the cause of abandonment and realization]

L12: [3.2.3.3.2.2.1 The actual way [the authentic view] is the cause of abandonment and realization [efficient]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.3.3.2.2.1
\ If one has the eyes of the authentic view,
\ Scriptural learning, experience, and realization blaze up.
\ By virtue of seeing emptiness,
\ Confidence in the infallible relativity of cause and effect
\ Will increase, and emotional disturbance will lessen.

¢(i.e. Benefits of a correct gradual path.)

If one has the eyes of the authentic view that realizes the inseparable reality of dependent origination, it goes without saying that the good qualities one already possesses will increase, and that the qualities of scriptural [learning] and experiential realization will blaze like dry wood heaped on a fire. From the quality of one's realization and vision of all dharmas as emptiness, one will be extremely confident in the arising of the nature of emptiness as the infallible relativity of cause and effect. To the extent that one develops its power as an antidote, objects of abandonment—emotional afflictions and concepts—will decrease. Even if one does not meditate on it specifically, great compassion will arise effortlessly, and with discriminating wisdom one will be able to master the ocean of sutric and tantric subjects on one's own. Such are the qualities that will arise.

L12: [3.2.3.3.2.2.2 That kind of realization is the dharmata of the coalescence of calm abiding and penetrating insight [leading to the great equanimity]]

\ ###
\ 3.2.3.3.2.2.2
\ With the samadhi that abides one-pointedly
\ In the state of certainty induced by analysis,
\ The ultimate meaning is seen by non-seeing.

¢(i.e. The very ultimate realization beyond all dualities (beyond emptiness and non-emptiness) gained through a meditation uniting Shamatha and Vipashyana. Gaining certainty through correct logical reasonings is a requirement, because otherwise we just waste our time on wrong views and non-productive methods.)

Thus, with respect the fundamental expanse of coalescence that is beyond all elaborations of extremes, one does not just bask in the glow of excellent certainty induced by rational analysis. In that state, one-pointed formless samadhi sees dharmata, which is the object wherein nothing in particular is seen. That authentic object of seeing, which is the way ultimate reality abides, does not fall into any extreme of emptiness or non-emptiness.

On that way of not falling into extremes, the mDo sdud pa says:

- ~ "I see space"—this is an expression of sentient beings.
- ~ But analyze this—how could one see space?
- ~ Seeing phenomena is also like this, taught the Tathagata;
- ~ Seeing cannot be explained by any other example.

L12: [3.2.3.3.2.2.3 Therefore, even if there is no apprehension, confidence is produced
[generating certainty]]

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\    3.2.3.3.2.2.3
\    One does not succumb to any particular object of seeing
\    And of course does not apprehend anything.
\    Like a mute's taste of molasses,
\    Confidence grows in a yogi who cultivates it,
\    But it cannot be produced by analysis alone.
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Therefore, when one sees the authentic reality of things, obviously no essence is apprehended at all, but this doesn't mean that, since nothing at all is certain, nothing is apprehended. For example, if a completely mute person tastes molasses, he has no doubt that it is sweet. Likewise, in the explanation that one does not need an intentional apprehension of ultimate reality, the extraordinary confidence of being freed from the fetters of doubt is produced in the yogi who cultivates the coalescence of calm abiding and special insight. But other positions—such as the idea that one should cultivate analysis exclusively, and the idea that one should cultivate the calm abiding of equipoise exclusively—cannot eliminate doubts, and it is difficult to gain confidence in them.

Moreover, since nowadays there are people who suppose that to meditate is to drift away in the dreamy expanse of mindless obscurity, without having to eliminate any doubts at all, it is obvious that they need to think about what needs to be accepted and abandoned.

I say:

- ~ Because the light of the lamp of biased modal apprehension
- ~ Cannot penetrate the gloom of biased obscuration,
- ~ By seeing this orb of the sun that dispels darkness,
- ~ Good and bad are like the disk of the quarter moon.

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L1: [9.4. Topic 4 [The Union of Shamatha vs Vipashyana – we need both depending on the situation]]

¢(i.e. Résumé of Topic 4: More on how to meditate and finally directly see the real non-dual nature of our own mind – intrinsic awareness. This is the continuation of the theme started with topic 3, whether we should use conceptualization and analysis in meditation, or simply drop all apprehension, all analysis, all conceptualization. In other words, which is the best: to develop concentration without conceptualization (Shamatha), or to analyze the real nature of everything using Vipashyana. The answer is again on the Middle Way: one alone is not enough, we need the Union of the Two. All traditions agree on that. To correctly determine when to use one or the other, we need to understand about the distinction between the sudden and gradual path. It is true that the final meditation is beyond all analysis or

conceptualization, but in order to get there we need to use analysis and conceptualization so we do not fall into any extremes. Whether we use the sutric path or the symbolic tantric path, our practice needs to be based on a correct understanding and certainty about the basis, the inseparability of the Two truths. Just faking a state of non-conceptualization, or faking a state of perceiving oneself as a deity and everything else as pure, without basing those practices on true wisdom, is not going to work. They just become like going to an extreme, and missing the whole point. These practices have to be based on a certainty induced by virtuous methods and correct reasonings.)

L6: [[0.2.2.1.1.2.] 4. The exposition of which is correct—analysis [Vipashyana] or trance [Shamatha]?)

L7: [4.1 The question]

\ ###

\ 4.1

\ In meditating the view of the supreme vehicle,

\ Which is right—to analyze [Vipashyana] or focus the mind [Shamatha]?

In meditating upon the meaning of the view of reality, the profound definitive meaning of the supreme vehicle, which is the infallible method taught by the Buddha. Which is correct—to exclusively meditate with analysis, or to exclusively meditate transically, without analysis?

¢(i.e. Mipham sees to insist on the fact that we need both depending on the situation, but that ultimately we don't need analysis when we can work at the level of direct perception. In other traditions they seem to insist on the fact that we need both in alternation, and then ultimately in Union. But I think the meaning is the same.)

L7: [4.2 The extensive explanation:]

L8: [4.2.1 A brief demonstration that in our own and in other systems as well, it is not appropriate to be prejudiced toward either analysis (Vipashyana) or trance (Shamatha) in meditating upon the view]

L9: [4.2.1.1 One-sided trance]

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\ 4.2.1.1

\ Some say, "Don't analyze, but meditate transically.

\ Analysis obscures the nature of things,

\ So without analyzing, sit like a bump on a log."

In general, regardless of who practices what is renowned as "the wandering yogi's transic meditation" or "the pandit's analytical meditation," if there is a one-sided prejudice toward either one, it is obviously a fault. In particular, nowadays it is said that people who cannot persevere in study and reflection should meditate by resting quietly without analyzing anything, and without analyzing according to the meaning of scripture, reasoning, and pith instructions, the reason being that to analyze the meaning of what is studied is just so much conceptualization, which obscures ultimate reality. Therefore, without analyzing what should be accepted or abandoned, such as the topics of abiding nature vs. apparent nature, consciousness vs. gnosis, and so forth, all those things being equal, one should be like a bump on a log. Because this is the crucial point of pith instructions, it is enough, so they say.

L9: [4.2.1.2 [One-sided] analysis]

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\ 4.2.1.2
\ Some say, "Only do analysis.
\ Meditation without analysis
\ Is like going to sleep and doesn't help,
\ So one should always analyze."

Some scholars say that one should only analyze the absence of true existence, which is the toot of penetrating insight. If one does transic meditation without analysis, it is like going to sleep, and will not eliminate the apprehension of true existence. Because it does not help generate the qualities of abandonment and realization, they say that one should always analyze, both in meditation and in its aftermath.

L9: [4.2.1.3 Demonstrating that it is not appropriate to be prejudiced toward either of them]

\ ###
\ 4.2.1.3
\ To adhere exclusively to analysis (Vipashyana) or transic (Shamatha)
\ Meditation is not appropriate.

You might think, "Well then, what is your position on these two?" We do not accept either of these, since they are both prejudiced positions. In meditating upon the meaning of the view, to focus exclusively on either analysis or trance is inappropriate, because one must integrate calm abiding and penetrating insight.

L8: [4.2.2 Having differentiated the context and meaning of analysis and trance, an extensive explanation of the systems of interpretation of the previous two]

L9: [4.2.2.1 A general discussion, [held in] common [with other systems]]

L10: [4.2.2.1.1 Most transic meditations only produce calm abiding, and cannot dispense with obscurations [we need the coalescence of Shamatha and Vipashyana]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.1.1
\ Most transic meditations without analysis
\ Can become a mere calm abiding,
\ But meditating thus will not produce certainty.
\ If certainty, the unique eye of the path of liberation,
\ Is abandoned, obscurations cannot be dispelled.

¢(i.e. Developing concentration alone, Shamatha, is not enough. The benefits of jnanas are only temporary. Only wisdom can remove ignorance. Hiding in the higher realms has no long term benefits. But that doesn't mean that developing concentration is useless.)

It is pointless to practice only transic meditation. Why is that? If at first one does not analyze what is to be accepted and abandoned, it is probable that most forms of transic meditation will accomplish a mere calm abiding or one of the worldly realms of formal meditation that are common [to Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions]. To whatever extent one meditates in that way, one will bring about the cessation of mind and mental events, but one will not generate even the slightest certainty, which is induced by the power of analyzing the nature of things. The unique eye for traveling the path of liberation is precisely this

confidence free of doubt. If one is bereft of the authentic view, one cannot eliminate obscurations just by meditating. Therefore, one must have the coalescence of calm abiding and penetrating insight, which is cause for consummating qualities of abandonment and realization. The Bodhicaryavatara says:

- ~ By penetrating insight thoroughly suffused with calm abiding,
- ~ One will know complete victory over emotional afflictions

L10: [4.2.2.1.2 Why one must have penetrating insight that knows the nature of things as the antidote for dispensing with obscurations [only wisdom can remove ignorance, the cause of all suffering; we need both method and wisdom]]

L11: [4.2.2.1.2.1 The view must precede the meditation of the path]

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\    4.2.2.1.2.1
\    If you do not know the nature of dharmas,
\    However much you meditate, you are still
\    Meditating on ordinary concepts. What's the use?
\    It's like travelling on a path with your eyes closed.
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The cause for eliminating obscurations and giving birth to realization is knowing the nature of dharmas by means of study and so forth; this is the authentic view. If one does not know it, no matter how much one meditates on the authentic object, insofar as one does not know the abiding nature of the object of meditation, one is only subject to ordinary, instinctual thought. Meditating on that is of no use for producing good qualities and traveling the path of liberation. Therefore, like a blind person, one will get lost and will not progress on the path that leads to the attainment of omniscience.

L11: [4.2.2.1.2.2 The necessity of its ally, intense effort [with the two accumulations: merit & wisdom, virtuous methods & correct reasonings]]

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\    ###
\    4.2.2.1.2.2
\    The habits of beginningless delusion
\    Produce clinging to mistaken notions about the nature of things.
\    Without endeavoring to investigate
\    With a hundred methods of reasoning,
\    it is difficult To achieve realization.
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Therefore, although it is difficult to enter the difficult subjects of the profound and vast scriptures, treatises, etc., through study, reflection, and meditation, if one does not undergo many hardships, it is not possible to attain a result.

Pha dam pa Sangs rgyas (rgya gar dam pa) said:

- ~ Buddhahood is rare for a person who is not steadfast;
- ~ Undergo hardships, people of Ding-ri!

Through clinging from beginningless time to true existence and solidity in things, again and again, because of not having abandoned the propensity for delusion, and contrary to the nature of emptiness, one has erroneously clung to the intrinsic reality of purity, happiness, permanence, and self.

The Avatara says:

- ~ Because it is obscured by the nature of ignorance, it is called "deceptive."

~ That which is fabricated appears as though real.. ..

Accordingly, in order to stop those erroneous delusions, there are a hundred methods, such as love, compassion, generosity, morality, and meditation; the four great Madhyamika reasonings, which analyze the nature of equality, etc.; the four reasonings of realization, which realize the nature of purity, and so forth. As long as one does not investigate with a hundred reasonings, it is difficult to gain realization.

A sutra says:

- ~ Empty, peaceful, without birth—
- ~ Not knowing this Dharma, beings wander.
- ~ Through the power of compassion, with method
- ~ And a hundred reasonings, they will be made to enter it.

¢(i.e. The Two accumulations: accumulating merit through virtuous methods and accumulating wisdom through using correct logical reasonings.)

L11: [4.2.2.1.2.3 The reason its opposite is very powerful]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.1.2.3
\ Insofar as clinging to mistaken appearances
\ And seeing the authentic meaning are mutually exclusive,
\ Here, in the darkness of existence to which
\ Sentient beings are well habituated,
\ It is difficult to obtain a glimpse of reality.

¢(i.e. It is not the appearances or the conceptualization per se that are “bad”, it is the idea that we have about them, the grasping / clinging at them. It is the way we see everything that is wrong. This is called the view dependent on ignorance.)

For the very reason that one needs that kind of intense effort, clinging to the true existence of the two forms of self—which is deluded appearance contrary to the authentic path—and having the vision of the two forms of selflessness through the authentic view, are mutually exclusive and cannot abide together. Therefore, in this heavy darkness of the nescience of clinging to true existence and circling in existence through the power of karma and emotional afflictions deeply cultivated from beginningless time, it is difficult to obtain the authentic vision of wisdom that clarifies the nature of suchness, so one should strive to master both innate and acquired wisdom.

The Bodhicaryavatara says:

- ~ In existence there are many precipices,
- ~ And in it [knowledge] of reality is absent.
- ~ Also, [emptiness] and [misknowledge] contradict each other,
- ~ But in existence there is no such thing.

L9: [4.2.2.2 Our own uncommon system:]

L10: [4.2.2.2.1 If those with sharp faculties or awakened karmic connections realize the view correctly, they do not need to analyze [sudden path: Direct observation of one’s own mind without conceptualization]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.1

- \ Through the ripening of the karma of previous practice
- \ And the master's blessing,
- \ By just examining the origin, abiding, and cessation of the mind,
- \ It is possible to determine truthlessness.
- \ But this is extremely rare;
- \ Not everyone can achieve realization this way.

¢(i.e. There is the fast path for those who can readily see the real nature of their own mind, thus of all dharmas, when introduced to it by their guru. But most are not able to see reality even if told, because of their thick layer of sticky illusions and misconceptions. Then there is the gradual path.)

You might wonder, "Is that explanation of the necessity of effort definitely for everyone?" It is possible, in this corporeal frame, to gain realization without having to practice. With the ripening of the karma of practicing the path in previous lives, or through the conjunction of the conditions of a sharp-minded disciple and the blessing of a realized master, it is perhaps possible that by analyzing just the origin, abiding, and cessation of mind one can acquire authentic certainty in the emptiness of true existence without extensive practice of the path. However, there are very few persons like that. It is not possible for everyone to gain realization in that way, regardless of intelligence, previous practice of the path, and so forth. Therefore, all gradualists should practice according to the above quote: "If this is the fail-safe entryway for beginners____"

L10: [4.2.2.2.2 If one cannot gain realization that way, one should gradually practice analysis and trance [gradual path: using the symbolic path of Tantrayana]]

L11: [4.2.2.2.2.1 determining the basis of what is to be analyzed and placed upon;]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1 How the three inner tantric vehicles have the Mahayoga view and meditation, which realizes the inseparability of the two truths in pure equanimity as their common basis]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1.1 The actual [explanation] [the many synonymous inseparability]]

- \ ###
- \ 4.2.2.2.2.1.1.1
- \ In cutting through to primordial purity,
- \ One needs to perfect the Prasangika view.
- \ As for the aspect of non-elaboration,
- \ Those two are said to be no different.
- \ In order to prevent clinging to blank emptiness,
- \ The Mantrayana teaches great bliss.
- \ This causes an experience of
- \ The expanse of non-dual bliss and emptiness,
- \ Free of subject and object.
- \ Appearance, clarity, and awareness (i.e. body, speech, mind)
- \ Are synonyms of that bliss.

¢(i.e. Whatever methods used in Vajrayana, or in any other paths, it always comes down to realizing the inseparability of the Two Truths, whatever it is called in those particular vehicles: inseparability of bliss and emptiness, of compassion and emptiness, of dependent origination and emptiness, of appearances and emptiness, etc. It always mean that everything is beyond the duality existence vs. non-existence. The Middle Way between the two (or four) extremes.)

According to this reality of all dharmas that is the uncommon teaching of the great secret Nyingma tradition, by the logical reasonings of the four understandings in the context of the three classes of inner tantras, the basis is determined as the pure equality of the inseparability of the [two] truths. This means that one should determine

- ~ the nature (rang bzhin) as unborn,
- ~ its display (rol pa) as unobstructed,
- ~ its essence (ngo bo) as indivisible,
- ~ and its defining characteristic (mtshan nyid) as beyond intellect.

"Unborn nature" means that when one breaks through to the equanimity that is from the beginning unborn with respect to the four extremes—the primordially pure nature of the basic essence—by getting to the heart of the matter by means of analysis, one needs the final view of the Prasangika Madhyamaka. With respect to illuminating the dharmadhatu that is the epistemic object free of all elaborations of the four extremes, its nature is unborn. That is not different from "unborn from the four extremes" in Madhyamaka.

From the Penetration of Sound Root Tantra:

- ~ The limit of the perfection of wisdom
- ~ Is included in directly cutting through appearance (trekcho).

Likewise, from the Great Omniscient One's commentary to the Jewel Treasury of Dharmadhatu:

- ~ The ways in which this tradition of the natural Great Perfection investigates "freedom from extremes" are for the most part the same as Prasangika Madhyamaka. But while Madhyamaka mainly considers an emptiness like space, here it is primordially pure, naked awareness, not established, a mere absolute negation that is taken as a basis.

¶(i.e. The Madhyamika teachings insists on the emptiness of all dharmas without any exception, and teach to stay away from the four extremes: existence, non-existence, both, neither. The Tantrayana, on the other hand, insists on the fact that emptiness doesn't mean complete non-existence, and thus uses concepts like "unborn Buddha-nature, or primordial awareness, dharmadhatu ...". Both have the same essence. They are just insisting on different aspects as introduction. It is important to seek a very subtle nature of the mind during meditation. Its non-dual nature is realized later. All of these adapted skillful means are just pointing at the moon anyway.)

In order to stop clinging to the emptiness taught by Madhyamaka, the Mantrayana teaches the great bliss of unobstructed display. That changeless great bliss and the emptiness supremely endowed with all forms are identical in the essence of bliss and emptiness. The defining characteristic of that unique indivisible expanse that is primordially pure is that it is experienced in a manner beyond intellect, free of subject and object, and without dualistic appearance.

The rNgam klog says:

- ~ Understanding (rtogs pa) has four aspects
- ~ That are accepted by Buddhist yogis.
- ~ One cause, the manner of words,
- ~ Blessing, and direct experience—
- ~ These induce entry to the meaning of the Great Perfection.
- ~ "Cause" means that the two truths simultaneously
- ~ Are one, and thus have the defining characteristic of oneness.
- ~ In the mandala of enlightened body, speech, and mind

- ~ The nature of all dharmas is realized;
- ~ And from the blessing of the unborn expanse,
- ~ All dharmas are known as appearance.
- ~ If that sort of nature,
- ~ Which does not depend on something else and is without contradiction,
- ~ Is determined and known directly,
- ~ The yogi reaches the bhumis.

And, from the Instructional Garland of Views: "The way of the Great Perfection is to gain confidence through the path of the four understandings ..." and so on. Having determined [the view] through these and other statements, one meditates on the cycles of the dharmata of deity and mantra by the stages of methodically generating body, speech, and mind as the display of that basis.

The three meditations of

- the body-vajra of appearance-emptiness,
 - the speech-vajra of clarity-emptiness,
 - and the mind-vajra of awareness-emptiness
- are not considered separately.

By knowing them to be mere synonyms for the vajra of gnosis of non-dual bliss and emptiness and practicing accordingly, the primordial purity of the causality of samsara and the causality of nirvana are demonstrated to be spontaneously present.

¶(i.e. To transmute our impure body speech and mind into the pure body speech and mind of a Buddha, all we have to do is to directly realize their real non-dual nature – the inseparability of the Two Truths. That is to realize that the real nature of our body speech and mind are respectively: inseparable appearances & emptiness, inseparable clarity & emptiness, inseparable awareness & emptiness; and to realize the inseparability of the three kayas. All of this is called inseparability of bliss and emptiness in some Tantras, or inseparability of compassion and emptiness in some Mahayana sutras and sastras. It all comes down to the inseparability of Two Truths, or of existence and non-existence.)

¶(i.e. Mahayoga: The appearances of phenomena, existence of relative truth, present primordially as the nature of the three cycles, vajra body, vajra speech and vajra mind of the Buddha, while they are emptiness, are the "superior relative truth". The indivisibility of emptiness, the non-existing nature, from the Buddha-bodies and primordial wisdoms is the "superior absolute truth". Mahayoga is based on the realization and progress of experience of the indivisibility of the "two superior truths," one attains liberation. In Mahayoga one meditates all the phenomenal existences as the mandalas of the deities. According to the scriptures of tantras and saddhanas, one trains on two yogas:

- (a). The yoga with characteristics: one trains on two stages, the Development Stage and Perfection Stage
- (b). The yoga without characteristics: one contemplates on suchness, the ultimate nature.

The main goal is the attainment of state of fourfold knowledge-holders and achieves the five Buddha-bodies in this life or in the intermediate state.)

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1.2 How that basis by its very nature does not abide in the extremes of existence and peace]

\ ###

\ 4.2.2.2.2.1.1.2
 \ Here the appearance aspect is the formal Buddha bodies,
 \ Which protect all beings and bring them to happiness
 \ As long as samsara exists;
 \ It has the nature of ultimate compassion.
 \ Therefore great gnosis by its very nature
 \ Does not abide in either existence or peace.
 \ Because it abides in the basis,

¶(i.e. Here it is said that the meaning of “great compassion” is the same as “great bliss” or “appearances” or “dependent origination”, ... The important point is their inseparability with emptiness; their non-duality: not two, not one. This ultimate non-dual nature, or inseparability, is the reason why those adapted skillful means (bliss, compassion, morality) are efficient on the path. A path that combines the two aspects, in accord with the real nature of everything, that combine both virtuous method and wisdom, is an efficient path leading to Enlightenment. Otherwise it is just creating more karma. To drop all of those virtuous skillful means and adopt Hashang’s method of dropping all is to miss the whole point, and not being in accord with the real nature of everything.)

The causal vehicle of the perfections achieves the final result of Buddhahood. Because it puts an end to both extremes of cyclic existence and peace, (i.e. The Middle Way: not accepting, not rejecting) by striving for three countless eons, etc., to collect the dual accumulation (i.e. merit and wisdom) that integrates emptiness and compassion, the result of the two kayas is attained.

¶(i.e. On the path, the two accumulations should be inseparable to be in accord with the real non-dual nature of everything; and the result is explained as being the inseparable kayas, or the inseparability of body, speech and mind of a Buddha. All of this means the inseparability of the Two Truths, the Union of The Two Truths, the coalescence. It is to be not in accord with the real non-dual nature of everything that is creating karma and suffering. Knowing this, one doesn’t make any more mistakes not in accord with reality, no more cause for suffering.)

Having manifested the emptiness aspect of the dharmakaya from the accumulation of gnosis of cultivated emptiness, the apparent aspect of the two formal kayas appears. These [formal kayas] protect sentient beings from all the fears of samsara by establishing disciples in temporary and ultimate bliss. Thus, the ultimate result of the accumulation of merit is the formal kayas, which have the nature of compassion. The fruitional Mantrayana contains all of the important points of the path and result of the causal vehicles, as the direct experiential meaning that is individually cognized by yogis, as the inseparable equality of the nature of emptiness endowed with all forms, and as supreme bliss having the nature of non-reifying compassion. Therefore, the path that causes the attainment of Buddhahood in mantra is more exalted than that of sutra.

In the path of mantra, suchness—the abiding reality of the luminosity of mind, which is the coalescence of awareness and emptiness, or the inseparability of bliss and emptiness—is directly experienced for oneself. It is not absolutely necessary to have recourse to inducing intellectual understanding of the meaning of emptiness through inference.

For example, those who have attained divine vision do not need to rely upon human vision in order to perceive forms. Likewise, the non-elaboration that is ascertained unerringly as the

view through inferential valid cognition is more easily perceived directly on the path of skillful means.

¢(i.e. Compared to Paramitayana (ordinary Mahayana), the Tantrayana uses a faster method that do not rely on much conceptualization and correct logical reasonings. But this method is much more dangerous and should be used only by a few, and under close supervision by a guru that has gone through the whole process himself. Instead of reasoning about the real nature of our own mind and the appearances, one directly experiments with the most basic components of his mind (pre conceptual components) and see their real nature directly. The findings are the same.)

Therefore, the meaning of emptiness, which is coalescence free of elaboration as explained in the Prajnaparamita sutras, is seen just as it is on our Vajrayana path. It is entirely impossible that [this] is a path without the meaning of that kind of emptiness. Therefore, because the dharmakaya abides as the primordially pure essence and the formal bodies abide as the spontaneous presence of the aspect of the nature of clarity, the dual accumulation is by nature primordially complete and spontaneously present. It is the great self-arisen gnosis that by nature does not abide in either cyclic existence or peace. Once this is manifest, there is no need to purposefully negate the extremes of existence or peace.

L12: [4.2.2.2.1.2 On that basis anuyoga manifests the path of inseparable bliss and emptiness]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.1.2
\ By practicing the path Evam of bliss and emptiness
\ In this very life, one will manifest
\ The fruitional coalescence.

¢(i.e. Again the meaning is the same: the Union of The Two Truths.)

While the mode of appearance of the kayas and wisdoms, and the extraordinary great dharmakaya that is the inseparable two truths of appearance and emptiness—which is the expanse of coalescence—is ascertained to abide as the basis according to the mahayoga system, anuyoga is understood with the view that determines that the expanse of emptiness is the mandala of Samantabhadri and the method of bliss is the mandala of Samantabhadra, and that these together are the all-pervading lord of the lineages and mandalas, the mandala of bodhicitta that is essentially inseparable emptiness and bliss. Because the path of bliss and emptiness is accomplished through the completion phase of the wisdom of coalescence of the Evam of the yogas of one's own and another person's body, there is no recourse to extensive external practices, and one penetrates the vital points of the channels, bindus, and winds of the internal vajra body. The result is that in this very life one manifests the resultant coalescence where there is nothing more to learn.

¢(i.e. Anuyoga: Anuyoga ascertains that all the appearances of phenomenal existence are Samantabhadra (the father), the spontaneously accomplished man, data of the deities. The emptiness nature (of phenomenal existence), free from all the extremes, is Samantabhadri (the mother), the mandala of primordial suchness. The essence both of appearances and nature is indivisibly present as equalness nature, and that is the great blissful son, the mandala of enlightened mind.

One meditates that all the deities are completed within one's own vajra-body. Things appear

in various forms of good and evil, acceptance and rejection, and one becomes attached to them. To dispel those obscurations one trains in the method of actualizing the great blissful wisdom by penetrating the channels, air and essence of the body, and one progresses through the five paths gradually. In Anuyoga there are two major paths of training:

- (a) The path of skillful means (Thabs-Lam): the training with the four cakras or six cakras of one's body, which brings innate wisdom gradually, or by means of the lower entrances (A'og-sGo), the union with consort, which brings innate wisdom instantly.
- (b) The path of liberation (Grol-Lam): The meditation on the signs or characteristics is the elaborate contemplation on the deities. By mere utterance of the mantra one visualizes instantly the world and beings as the mandala of the deities clearly without confusion.

The main goal of this yoga is the attainment of the Great Blissful Body with the four Buddha-bodies and five Primordial Wisdoms.)

L12: [4.2.2.2.1.3 The effortless arising of the self-arisen result of the three kayas in Atiyoga (Dzogchen)]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.1.3
\ In fact the basis, path, and result
\ Are not divided; the path of the fourth empowerment,
\ Which is the culmination of the Vajrayana,
\ Is the self-arisen gnosis of awareness and emptiness.
\ This is exclusively emphasized
\ In the path of the vajra pinnacle of luminosity,
\ Which is the final point where all vehicles converge.

☿(i.e. The result is the inseparable three kayas and five wisdoms of a Buddha. This has the meaning of the inseparability of the Two Truths, the Union of the Two Truths, the coalescence. This is the essence of all Buddhist paths.)

The triad of basis, path, and result are, with respect to the meaning of the abiding nature of things, inseparable. This is the Atiyoga of the Vajrayana. But in the apparent nature of things, they are different.

Therefore, the Tantra of the Mirror of Vajrasattva says:

- ~ The generation of mahayoga is like the basis of all Dharmas.
- ~ The completion of anuyoga is like the path of all Dharmas.
- ~ The Atiyoga or Great Perfection is like the result of all Dharmas.

According to this, Atiyoga is like the result of the two lower yogas. Since it is the fourth empowerment that is the entrance to the paths of generation and completion, which are manifested as the gnoses of the four vajras by those [lower yogas], among those this is the gnosis of the completion phase, which is without characteristics and is free of effort. This is the meaning of the three bodies, which are complete in themselves, and which are introduced by the path of the fourth empowerment. Without relying upon external elaborations and effort, or internal yogic discipline of the body, the inseparability of generation and completion—the self-arisen gnosis that is the coalescence of awareness and emptiness—is exclusively emphasized in the practice of the equipoise of primordial liberation. This vehicle, which is the method where the self-radiance of luminosity appears manifestly, is the tradition of the supreme secret Great Perfection, the pinnacle of vehicles, the final

swift path that is the destination of the results accomplished by all lower vehicles.

Atiyoga (= Dzogchen): : Atiyoga is a means to liberate the meaning of primordial Buddhahood into its own state, and it is the nature of freedom from abandonments and acceptances and expectations and fears. The six million four hundred verses of Atiyoga scriptures are divided into three divisions by Jampal Shenyen. These divisions are:

1. The Series of the Nature of the Mind (Semde): for people who are (include to) mind.
2. The Series of Primordial Space (Longde): for those who are (include to) space.
3. The Series of Oral Instructions (Mengagde): for those who are free from gradual efforts.

The first two of these were introduced into Tibet by Vairochana; the third by Vimalamitra. Those teachings that were originally transmitted by Padmasambhava and then hidden in various places in Tibet are also part of the Series of Secret Instructions. This kind of text, known as "terma" (gter ma) or "treasures," began to be rediscovered from the 13th century onwards. Those texts which, on the other hand, were transmitted orally from the time of Garab Dorje onwards, are known as the "oral tradition" (bka' ma).

There are two major categories of training in Mengagde:

(a). Thregchod (Cutting Through): there are four stages of realizations through meditation: dwelling, unmoving, equalness, and spontaneity.

(b). Thodgal (the Direct Approach): there six crucial means of training, the four visions arise gradually. The four visions are: the direct realization of Ultimate Nature, development of Experiences, perfection of Intrinsic Awareness, and Dissolution of phenomena into the Ultimate Nature.

Thodgal is for breaking out of the cycle of existences (samsara) by directly experience of "naked," or "ordinary," mind, which is the basis of all activities of consciousness. In addition to approaches of this kind that are oriented toward emptiness and intended to be applied without goal-oriented effort, Thregchod places the emphasis on the clear light aspect of primordial knowledge. Their goal is realization of the "rainbow body," i.e., the dissolution of the physical body that is, of the four elements that constitute the body into light.

L11: [4.2.2.2.2.2 Differentiating the contexts in which one employs analysis or trance:]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1 In order to attain realization, one engages in analysis and trance progressively]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1.1 The beginning practitioner generates understanding through study and reflection]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1.1.1 In order to attain qualities of abandonment and realization, one induces certainty through various methods and analysis]

\ ###

\ 4.2.2.2.2.1.1.1

\ As long as certainty has not been born,

\ One should induce it with skillful means (i.e. virtuous methods) and analysis (i.e. wisdom).

\

\ If certainty is born, one should meditate

\ In that state without separating from that certainty.

\ The lamp-like continuity of certainty

- \ Causes false conceptuality to subside.
- \ One should always cultivate it.
- \ If it is lost, then induce it again through analysis.

¢(i.e. But even in Tantrayana, before one can directly play with his own mind, like with pure visualizations, one has to develop certainty by using much conceptualization and correct logical reasonings – the two accumulations. Certainty is the link between conceptual meditation and non-conceptual realization.)

As long as one has not generated authentic certainty about the meaning intended by the Vajrayana that teaches the final abiding nature of things, by making effort in the practice of many methods and by referring to authentic scriptures for the meaning of the great pure equality of actual and potential phenomena for potent and analytical reasonings about the two truths, one will induce certainty. If certainty is produced, one must meditate without separation from the heat of that certainty.

Why is that? If one has that continuity of certainty that, like a lamp, causes the appearance of the authentic meaning, it will become a cause for the gnosis of realization, which causes the base conceptuality of inauthentic improper meditation to disappear like darkness. This should be done diligently, and if one is ever without certainty, one should induce [certainty] again through analysis.

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1.2 If one cannot induce certainty, abandonment and realization will not occur]

- \ ###
- \ 4.2.2.2.2.1.1.2
- \ At first, analysis is important;
- \ If you don't start out with analysis,
- \ How can you induce an excellent certainty?
- \ If an excellent certainty is not born,
- \ How can miserable projections cease?
- \ If miserable projections do not cease,
- \ How can the foul wind of karma be stopped?
- \ If the foul wind of karma is not stopped,
- \ How can this awful samsara be abandoned?
- \ If this awful samsara is not abandoned,
- \ What can be done about this dismal suffering?

¢(i.e. If certainty is not induced using much virtuous methods and logical reasonings, then one would not be able to progress with the symbolic tantric practices; one will only be faking pure perceptions, and Yidam generation. Some people might think that by doing those practice again and again they will start to really believe in them and make progress. But that would only be faking and self-generated hallucinations – that is not developing wisdom beyond conceptualization – it is only creating more karma.)

When one first practices the path, this analysis is important. The reason is that if one doesn't begin with an excellent analysis, there is no way to generate an excellent certainty thereafter. If excellent certainty is not generated, one will not have authentic experience, so how will one be able to make the darkness of miserable projections disappear? If one does not make miserable projections disappear, how will one stop the foul winds of karma? If those are not stopped, how will one abandon this awful samsara? If one does not abandon

samsara, what will one do about dismal suffering? If one doesn't do anything about it, these will have the characteristic of conditions and things conditioned, and like the wheel of a chariot, one will cycle in endless suffering. Therefore, if one induces certainty with excellent analysis and stops miserable projections, by the power of that, one will be able to stop the winds of karma. If bound-up winds are stopped, then one can stop degraded concepts. Thus, one should strive in the methods for abandoning samsara with whatever strength one can muster.

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.1.3 Therefore, one must induce certainty that realizes the abiding nature of things

[The most important point of the path: To realize the equanimity of neither good nor evil Is the nature of excellent certainty – before practicing Tantrayana.]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.1.1.3
\ In reality, there is no good or evil
\ In samsara and nirvana;
\ To realize the equanimity of neither good nor evil Is the nature of excellent certainty.
\ With excellent certainty, nirvana is not attained
\ By abandoning samsara.
\ The mere words may seem contradictory,
\ But in fact they are not.
\ This is the most important point of the path,
\ A crucial secret instruction on the view and activity—
\ You should examine and savor its meaning!

¢(i.e. The only way to practice the “pure vision” of Tantrayana, is to base it on this certainty, acquired through much logical reasonings. That is why Mahayana is required before Tantrayana. Otherwise it is only faking, and going nowhere.)

If one induces certainty by analyzing some object, in the final analysis of samsara and nirvana, there is no good thing called "nirvana" and no bad thing called "samsara," because if one analyzes them, neither is established.

The Mulamadhyamakakarika says:

- ~ The intrinsic nature of the Tathagata
- ~ Is the intrinsic nature of these sentient beings.
- ~ The Tathagata has no intrinsic nature;
- ~ These sentient beings also have no intrinsic nature.

¢(i.e. Buddhas and sentient beings are not different, not the same. They are non-dual: not two, not one. The same for samsara and Nirvana. One should try to go beyond these dualities. The Middle Way: not accepting, not rejecting. Everything is already pure in non-conceptual emptiness, in non-duality.)

According to this passage, samsara and nirvana have no good and bad, nor anything to accept or abandon. Their nature is the equality of dharmata, which does not abide in any extreme of cyclic existence and peace (i.e. not accepting, not rejecting) and is the basis of the perfection of wisdom. The excellent certainty that realizes that as it is, is the path of the perfection of wisdom. Because such a certainty does not establish a true "nirvana" by

rejecting a true "samsara," the apparent contradiction that this poses for the explanation above—that one must have certainty as the antidote for abandoning samsara—depends upon the words alone. If one relies upon the actual meaning, there is no contradiction so far as the distinction of "manner of abiding" and "manner of appearance" is concerned. The making of this kind of distinction is the most important feature of the paths of sutra and tantra. (i.e. The Two Truths and their inseparability.)

On that, the Mulamadhyamakakarika says:

- ~ Without abandonment, without accomplishment,
- ~ Without annihilation, without permanence,
- ~ Without cessation, without production—
- ~ This is said to be nirvana.

And Lord Maitreya said:

- ~ In this, there is nothing whatsoever to remove;
- ~ There isn't the slightest thing to add.
- ~ Look at authenticity authentically.
- ~ If you see authentically, you will be liberated.

When one practices all the causal vehicles of "profound views" and "vast activities," the secret advice that rolls all important points of pith instructions into one, is this. As explained above, when one realizes the basis of the inseparable two truths and analyzes this way of practicing without eliminating or positing samsara and nirvana, one should not simply rest content with words, but experience the flavor of the meaning—this is Mipham's exhortation. (i.e. The Two Truths and their inseparability.)

¶(i.e. "The view which establishes a clear idea or determination of what must be understood lta-ba: view, a clear understanding based in primordial wisdom, the pristine cognition of reality as-it-is.

This has three aspects:

- ~ 1. view of objects and phenomena (chö-chin lta-ba)
- ~ 2. view of absolute reality or truth (chö-nyid lta-ba)
- ~ 3. view of self-awareness in non-duality (rang-rig lta-ba)

1. view of objects and phenomena (chö-chin lta-ba) has two categories; pure and impure. We are already well acquainted with the impure view. To recognize the five aggregates and elements as non-separate from the male and female Buddhas is the purified form of the relative truth, symbolized by the Deity of Initial Attraction. This marks the beginning of the developing stage practices and the path of accumulation. As your channels become more refined on the path of application, this becomes the Deity Buddha of the Winds. On the path of seeing, the Yidam deity is the Buddha of the Clear Light. On the path of meditation, s/he is the Buddha of Great Equanimity. Ultimately, practicing in this way will transform the three gates into the kayas of indestructible reality.

2. view of absolute reality or truth (chö-nyid lta-ba) presents the unborn, unoriginated, beginningless and endless sunyata as the transcendent cosmic matrix, the absolute beyond time and change, birth and death, bondage and liberation, the primordial ground. See Nagarjuna's refutation of logical systems (which posit the inherent existence of separate objects) implying that phenomena have no discernible source or destination (reality).

3. view of self-awareness in non-duality (rang-rig lta-ba) the four-fold formula of the Heart Sutra (i.e. the Tetralemma) realizes the absolute view, the virtual fusion of phenomena (samsara) and emptiness (nirvana) as the state of rig-pa or true presence. That which is born is truly unborn. Having discovered the unconditional source, the true mode

of existence and real destiny of the mind, all emotions and mind-forms are self-liberated as they arise through mere recognition of subject-object dualism in light of interdependent origination, clearly understanding the machinery of appearances and intuitively recognizing the Unborn and True Nature of Guru, self and Reality. This is the essence of Dzogchen. To pursue this inquiry to its empowering and enlightening end is called 'firmly establishing oneself in the view.'

☿(i.e. The Two Truths and their inseparability.))

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.2 The intermediate practitioner combines reflection and meditation]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.2.1 By occasionally analyzing again and again, certainty is produced]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.1.2.1
\ Next, you should alternate analysis (i.e. Vipashyana) and trance (i.e. Shamatha).
\ If you analyze, certainty will be born;
\ When you don't analyze, and cling to the ordinary,
\ Analyze again and again, inducing certainty.
\
\ When certainty is born, rest in that state
\ Without distraction and meditate one-pointedly.

☿(i.e. Uniting both Shamatha and Vipashyana, first in sequence, and ultimately like a real transcendental union, where they become indiscernible, inseparable, non-dual.)

In the intermediate phase of practice, one should combine analysis and trance and cultivate one's practice in that way. If one analyzes, one will give rise to certainty in equanimity. If, when one does not analyze, one clings to ordinary [appearances], in order to reverse that one should analyze again and again, and in that way certainty is induced. If certainty is produced, then one should meditate one-pointedly in that state, without wavering.

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.2.2 Explanation of the reason why, once one has produced it, one should meditate in that state]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.1.2.2
\ Certainty and the projecting mind
\ Are mutually exclusive;
\ So by the analysis that roots out projection,
\ You should increase certainty more and more. (i.e. Doing it again and again; it becomes more and more easy and powerful.)

What is the reason for meditating in that way? Because the antidote of certainty and the object of abandonment—the ambivalence of reification—are mutually exclusive and cannot exist at the same time, reification can be dispelled by the power of analysis, and certainty should thus be increased further and further.

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.1.3 Finally, one attains an excellent certainty that realizes the nature of things]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.3.1 One induces trance after the views of study and reflection]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.1.3.1
\ Finally, if even without analysis

\ Certainty arises naturally, rest in that very state;
\ Since it has already been established through analysis,
\ There is no need to accomplish it again.

¢(i.e. Once all conceptualization are calmed, then rest in that state, and look ... be just aware ... and directly see ... this is directly seeing the real nature of our own mind in the present without using conceptualization, directly seeing the real nature beyond conceptualization ... from this point you can ultimately directly see the root of all conceptualization and not being fooled by its appearances anymore. This is like seeing with your own eyes the source of the illusions; this is stronger than any conceptual proofs.)

Finally, having cultivated the view in that way, even if one doesn't induce it through analysis, certainty automatically arises by the power of previous cultivation. While practicing transic meditation in that very state of clear appearance, because one has already accomplished [certainty] previously, one does not have to do it over again.

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.1.3.2 Explaining the reason why one doesn't need to analyze]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.1.3.2
\ If you understand that a rope is not a snake,
\ That very certainty blocks the perception of a snake.
\ To say "Still you must go on analyzing
\ The absence of a snake" is silly, isn't it?

To illustrate the reason for that: when one mistakes a rope for a snake, and then realizes through conditions that it is not a snake, that very certainty eliminates the apprehension of "snake." If one then said that one should still analyze, saying, "There is no snake" over and over again, that would be silly, wouldn't it?

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.2 When realization is manifest, analysis is not necessary: [we are like bellow conceptualization, beyond thoughts and no-thoughts]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.2.1 Expounding our own system along with the reason for not needing analysis]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.2.1
\ When realization of the sublime paths occurs,
\ You will not meditate with analysis;
\ What need is there to apply
\ Inferential analysis to direct realization?

¢(i.e. Ultimately there is no more distinction between thought and no-thought, between Shamatha and Vipashyana. They become perfectly United, non-dual. There is nothing to stop, nothing to not-stop. No analysis, no no-analysis. There is no meditator, no object of meditation. Everything is non-dual: not two, not one. – To know that this is possible is the “certainty”. – This state is like bellow all conceptualization. Here one directly see without using conceptualization. So the arising of anything is directly seen for what it really is, and it cannot fool us anymore. – This is the ultimate state of learning the way things really are, including our own mind.)

When the result of that cultivation is manifest as the realization of the dharmadhatu on the paths of seeing and meditation by sublime beings, one no longer meditates with analysis, as

one has directly realized the dharmata, which is without any dualistic appearance of analysis and the object of analysis. There is no need for any application of mental analysis that ascertains a cognandum through inferential valid cognition in dependence upon the application of a logical reason.

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Refuting the other system, which maintains that if one is without analysis, one will not see the meaning]

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Setting up other systems]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1
\ If you think that "When you leave off analysis
\ There is no realization of the ultimate,"

¢(i.e. So ultimately it is not about holding on to analysis, nor about rejecting all analysis. Ultimately a mind with thought, and a mind without thought, are seen to be not different, not the same. Analysis, or thoughts, are inseparable appearances and emptiness.)

In some systems, in order to see the meaning of selflessness through penetrating insight, one needs only analysis. They maintain that one does not attain the realization that sees the ultimate reality of dharmata when one is without analysis, because one does not know whether the object is this or that, that merely positioning or keeping the mind stationary is a mistake, and that even non-Buddhists have this kind of meditation.

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Flinging consequences at them]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 The actual set-up of the consequence]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1
\ Then for you the gnosis of Buddhas and sublime beings,
\ And the undistorted perceptions of worldly beings,
\ Would all be mistaken.

¢(i.e. To say that ultimately there is still analysis, or thoughts, is to assume that there is still analysis like we do. That is unacceptable for a Buddha. On the other hand to say that there is no thought at all is to forget that the Buddha is still using the skillful means of thoughts and speech to teach. The reality is more subtle than those two extremes. To know what it is one has to realize the real nature of thoughts, the inseparability of appearances and emptiness, the real non-dual nature of the mind. The Buddhas and sublime beings are not without perception or thought or capacity to act at all; they are just never fooled by any of this and are never creating karma.)

If that were the case, then the equipoise of sublime beings, the omniscient gnosis of the Buddhas, and even the cognition of the unimpaired sensory faculties of worldly beings—all apprehension of ultimate and deceptively real objects—would consequently be mistaken for you, for those objects are already understood [hence not in need of analysis], and because those subjective minds that directly perceive their objects are without analysis at that time.

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Explaining how the logical reason is established]

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Establishing the logical reason through valid cognition]

\ ###

\ 4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1
\ Because they have already been perceived,
\ They are not subject to analysis.
\ Therefore, in the context of extraordinary certainty
\ Free of elaborations of the four extremes,
\ There is no occasion for analyzing or focusing on
\ Thoughts of "this" and "that."

¢(i.e. In that state there is no need to rationalize the emptiness of inherent existence of everything because it is directly seen: the appearances are seen as empty as they arise. So it is said that they are self-liberated. It is like a watcher below the level of conceptualization that is directly seeing the emergence of each concepts, each appearances, in dependence of their causes and conditions, and then later their cessation. The watcher is not fooled by them anymore; he is not chasing after them anymore, or trying to terminate them; he is just aware of them, admiring the natural show. He observe that even the idea of a self is like that; and then there is no more watcher watching the show. They are inseparable.)

In general, a logical mark (nags) that is set up for an absurd consequence (thai gyur) requires a thesis and establishment through valid cognition. Here, the disputant accepts the logical reason of unimpaired sensory faculties, but because he claims that there is analysis in the realization of the sublime paths, the reason must be established by valid cognition. The way to do that is from the perspective of the extraordinary certainty that is free of all elaborations of the four extremes. If its object is free of "existing," "non-existing," "both," and "neither," then there is no object different from it that is objectively focused upon as "this" or "that." If that object does not exist, then what occasion will the subjective mind have for analysis? There is no such occasion.

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 The thesis is descended upon by clarification through valid cognition]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2
\ When the analytical apprehension of characteristics
\ Binds the thinker like a silkworm in its silk,
\ The authentic nature will not be seen as it is.

¢(i.e. Obviously, at that stage, there cannot be any grasping at concepts like “emptiness”. We are beyond emptiness and non-emptiness; beyond the Two Truths as two, or as one. Beyond all reification or rejecting. Beyond the duality Shamatha and Vipashyana.)

If at the time of equipoise there is an analytical modal apprehension, then just like apprehension of true existence, that apprehension of a characteristic will obscure and bind up that person with analytical conceptualization, just like a silk worm who ties himself up with his own saliva. For if the correct vision of the meaning of the authentic abiding nature of things were harmed by valid cognition, one would not see it.

L11: [4.2.2.2.2.3 The difference between consciousness and gnosis]

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.3.1 By eliminating what is incompatible with certainty, one attains gnosis [this is like a purification of our body, speech and mind]]

\ ###

\ 4.2.2.2.3.1
 \ When this extraordinary certainty
 \ Dispels the darkness that obscures reality,
 \ One realizes the actual fundamental luminosity
 \ And the flawless vision of thatness,
 \ Which is the individually cognized gnosis.
 \ How could this be analytical wisdom, a form of
 \ mentation?

¢(i.e. So it is like a purification of the mind. After having eliminated all the defilements belonging to the four extremes, one can directly see the real non-dual nature of his own mind, and thus of everything. This is beyond all conceptual establishment or negation. This mind is called inseparability of awareness and emptiness, intrinsic awareness; but this is still just pointing at the moon. – The main point is that to get there one has to induce this certainty using various progressive adapted skillful means and correct reasonings, and maybe some symbolic techniques based on Tantras.)

For that reason, with this extraordinary certainty in the nature of all dharmas, one dispels the darkness of ignorance and imagination that obscures the way things are. Then, just as one can see things at dawn, the actual fundamental luminosity is manifest. The self-arisen effulgence of luminosity that sees suchness unerringly, which is the radiance of that state, is the gnosis that is individually cognized. Mental events that have dualistic apprehension have no such wisdom as this.

L12: [4.2.2.2.3.2 Explaining the defining characteristics of those two [consciousnesses and originary awareness]]

\ ###
 \ 4.2.2.2.3.2
 \ The object of analytical wisdom is "this" or "that,"
 \ Which is differentiated and conceptualized,
 \ Whereas this gnosis of equanimity
 \ Does not reify subject, object,
 \ Appearance, or emptiness in any way;
 \ It does not abide in the characteristics
 \ Of mind or mentation.

¢(i.e. This is beyond all discrimination, beyond existence and non-existence, beyond appearances and emptiness, beyond all dualities. Consciousnesses are based on the belief of something inherently existing and recognized; this originary awareness is beyond discrimination based on this ignorance – beyond discrimination and non-discrimination – beyond establishment and negation)

The causal analytical wisdom that is a subjective modal apprehension differentiates "this" and "that" in its object, such as dharma and dharmata, deceptive and ultimate, samsara and nirvana, without mixing them up. It determines individual objects by conceptualizing them in terms of acceptance and abandonment, etc. The result of cultivating this is without analysis or modal apprehension, because it does not apprehend object and subject individually, or focus on any bias of appearance or emptiness whatsoever. This is the gnosis of the equality of appearance and emptiness, which does not exist with any identifying characteristic of differentiating the objects of mind or mental events.

L12: [4.2.2.2.3.3 Therefore, how gnosis arises in dependence upon consciousness [like empty cause & effect -- In dependence upon dichotomizing analytical wisdom, non-dichotomizing gnosis should be achieved. The ultimate state beyond conceptualization is induced by true wisdom, not by dropping all or faking purity]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.3.3.1 Analytical wisdom and gnosis have a relation of cause and effect]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.3.3.1
\ Therefore, the stainless analytical wisdom
\ Of equipoise in supreme certainty
\ Induced by analysis is the cause by which
\ One attains the resultant gnosis of coalescence.

¢(i.e. It should be clear that it is not by rejecting analysis (Vipashyana), nor by grasping at it, that one attain the ultimate result. The same for Shamatha. The Middle Way, not accepting them, not rejecting them. Only then is it in accord with the real non-dual nature of everything; only then is it really efficient in bringing the end to all suffering. The Middle Way: not discriminating, not non-discriminating, not conceptualizing, not non-conceptualizing. Once one sees that there is no contradiction here, that is the certainty.)

In dependence upon dichotomizing analytical wisdom, non-dichotomizing gnosis should be achieved. Therefore, by the causal analytical wisdom of meditative equipoise in the supreme certainty induced through analysis that is free of doubt, the fruitional gnosis of the coalescence of the expanse and awareness is attained. Thus, it is reasonable to persevere in the certainty that is induced by analysis.

L13: [4.2.2.2.3.3.2 Positing the contextual meaning of each of those]

L15: [4.2.2.2.3.3.2.1 All analyses in the context of differentiation in the aftermath of meditation are analytical wisdom]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.3.3.2.1
\ The ascertainment of the view
\ And the establishment of philosophical systems
\ Determined [by that view]
\ Is the stainless valid cognition of analytical wisdom
\ That differentiates and cognizes individually.

¢(i.e. The way to establish conventional truths and negations leading to certainty.)

When first entering the path, with analyses of scriptural passages and reasoning the view is ascertained; and with the subsequent cognition, the philosophical systems that one has already determined the meaning of are established by way of refutation, positioning, and abandonment. The discrimination in objects of cognition of general and particular characteristics, abiding and apparent natures, provisional and definitive meanings, and so forth, is the stainless valid cognition of analytical wisdom that cognizes phenomena individually.

L15: [4.2.2.2.3.3.2.2 The equipoise of seeing the abiding nature of things as they are is gnosis]

L16: [4.2.2.2.3.3.2.2.1 The main discussion [the main practice of the Great Vehicle must

be based on certainty based on true wisdom]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.3.3.2.2.1
\ The gnosis of sublime equipoise
\ That has reached the nature of things
\ By the certainty induced by that valid cognition
\ Is the main practice of the Great Vehicle.

¢(i.e. The state beyond all conceptualization, beyond all discrimination, beyond all dualities. A state that is not reached by merely dropping all conceptualization as Hashang suggested, but a state induced by true wisdom.)

The gnosis for which samsara and nirvana remain in equality, which is the final destination of the way all afflicted and purified dharmas exist, and which is induced by the path of certainty in that analytical wisdom explained above, is the authentic main practice of the stainless path of the Mahayana, and is the result of persevering in the analytical wisdom of specific cognition.

L16: [4.2.2.2.3.3.2.2.2 Establishing this as the Mahayana]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.3.3.2.2.2
\ If you have it, in this very life
\ The result of coalescence is bestowed;
\ So it is both a "vehicle" and "great."

If one has this gnosis, which is the main practice of that sort of path, one can be bestowed with the coalescences of practice and non-practice in this short life of the degenerate age. This is a vehicle, because it can cause one to travel to the level of fruition, and it is great, because it is a swift path that can bestow the goal of the supreme Mahamudra in this life.

The sDud pa says:

- ~ This vehicle is a great measureless mansion like space.
- ~ It is the supreme vehicle, because one actually attains pleasure, happiness, and bliss.

Moreover, if one is conveyed ('deg) "by this," it is a causal vehicle (theg pa); and if one is conveyed "in this," it is a fruitional vehicle. For example, whenever one mounts a sedan chair, whether one goes anywhere or not, one is still held up (btegs) by it. So, there are vehicles in which there is nowhere to go, and vehicles by which there is some destination.

The great glorious Rong zom said:

- ~ If one wishes to travel the gradual path, one will stray from the path that is not traveled. The path of greater and greater purity does not harmonize with the Dharma of non-action. For, if one should travel a path that is limit[-less] like space, one will never reach [the end of it].

The Dharma, just as it is, is the essence of all dharmas; it is not something to be reached by the paths and bhumis. If, as in the stages of the bhumis, there were established stages of purity, of purification, and of liberation, the dharmata of dharmas would be totally non-existent; if one attained another, and then another, there would be no end to it. The quotation from the sDus pa should not be understood to imply that from here one should go

somewhere else; one should understand it to mean that one just abides in its essence.

As it is said:

- ~ One who rides without a destination in mind
- ~ Is said to go to nirvana, without reifying going.

L11: [4.2.2.2.4 The Great Perfection is the pinnacle of vehicles: [the same ending point as all vehicles, in all authentic traditions ...]]

L12: [4.2.2.2.4.1 Establishing that this is the pinnacle of vehicles by the reasoning of its essential sameness with other tantric classes]

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.1.1 Although other systems do not posit it separately as a vehicle, it is the gnosis of the fourth empowerment of the final path]

- \ ###
- \ 4.2.2.2.4.1.1
- \ According to the system of four tantric classes,
- \ This path of the word empowerment in anuttarayogatantra
- \ Is of course the ultimate gnosis,
- \ But it is not designated as a separate vehicle.

There are many different classifications of the vehicles according to the old and new schools of secret mantra. The Early Translation school posits the vehicles in nine stages: three vehicles that lead one away from the process of cyclic existence, three intellectual vehicles that employ austerities, and three methodical vehicles of transformation. The systems of the later translations are for the most part identical in positing three vehicles and four tantric classes. According to the system of maintaining four tantric classes, there are four initiations in the unexcelled yoga tantras, and the paths of each of those [tantras] have practices from the creation phase up to the completion phase without characteristics. Among those, this path of the fourth "word empowerment" is the ultimate gnosis of the completion phase, the actual luminosity. Although that gnosis is not discussed separately as a vehicle and is not designated as a vehicle, that does not mean that it is not in fact so.

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.1.2 We maintain that the tantric class that emphasizes the gnosis of equanimity is the ultimate tantra [Kalachakra Tantra]]

- \ ###
- \ 4.2.2.2.4.1.2
- \ However, in the explanation of
- \ The glorious Kalacakratantra,
- \ The body of the gnosis of equanimity
- \ Is emphasized, so it is held as the ultimate tantra.

How is that? For example, because it is a tradition of explanation that emphasizes the pure and untrammelled nature beyond the dharmata of consciousness—the vajra body of gnosis equal to space, the equanimity of bliss and emptiness—the glorious Kalacakra should be considered the ultimate tantra, because its subject is more sublime than the lower tantric classes.

As it is said:

- ~ All things are the state of equality,
- ~ And abide without becoming one thing.
- ~ They arise from changeless gnosis,

~ They are not annihilated or permanent.

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.1.3 This vehicle is similar in being the gnosis of the fourth initiation of the corpus of anuttarayogatantra [the basic intent of all tantric classes]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.4.1.3
\ Among the classes of anuttarayogatantra,
\ The gnosis of the path of the fourth empowerment
\ That is emphasized and explained here [in the Great
\ Perfection]
\ Is the basic intent of all tantric classes.

According to that example, among the mother, father, and non-dual tantras of the highest yoga tantras of the old and new traditions, the Great Perfection without characteristics, which is the path gnosis in the fourth precious word initiation, is emphasized and explained in this Nyingma tradition, and hence does not fail to be established. It is the quintessence of the intention of all the tantric classes of the old and new schools. Therefore, that extraordinary swift path is expounded as a vehicle, and in so doing there is no contradiction whatsoever.

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.1.4 thus, analyzing the vehicles progressively, there is perfect purity here [the culmination of all other vehicles]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.4.1.4
\ Just as gold smelted sixteen times
\ Is extremely pure, so too here
\ The analysis of other vehicles' philosophical systems
\ Reveals their progressive purity, which culminates here.

"Well, how is it established?" It is like gold, which, having been purified by melting, merits confidence in its perfect purity. By stainless analysis and reasoning, starting with non-Buddhists and going up through the lower Buddhist philosophical systems, the great glorious Rong zom established the progressively higher vehicles in terms of the lower ones that were already established, by means of the three "witnesses of reasoning": the witness of prophecy, the witness of persons, and the commentary of scripture. In establishing the ultimate result above and beyond the lower vehicles, from the perspective of its relative purity, through reasoning he established the path of the natural Great Perfection as the ultimate and supreme of all swift paths. The lama Manjusri wrote and taught about those teachings of Rong zom by clearly differentiating them with respect to scripture and reasoning in the essence of luminosity.

Although it is difficult to fathom the idea that all dharmas are primordially Buddha, here I will explain a little bit about how this is established in the lineage for those who think it is unreasonable. First, for non-Buddhists who have doubts about the Buddha as an authoritative person: as rare as the udumbara flower mentioned in their Vedic scriptures, the omniscient teacher appears in the world as a prince or a Brahmin. When entering the womb, his mother dreams that he enters in the form of an elephant. When he is born, he is endowed with the marks and signs of [a Buddha]. It is prophesied that if he does not renounce the world, he will be a chakravartin monarch, and if he does, he will become a Buddha. This is the scriptural establishment of the Buddha.

As for reasoning: The path taught by that Buddha establishes the selflessness of persons, etc., with potent reasoning. Since that is established as the path of liberation, the Buddha is the authoritative teacher for those who desire liberation, and the path that he teaches is established as authentic. It is established according to the teaching by the proof of valid cognition, etc.

Although they accept the Buddha, for the sravakas who do not accept the Mahayana teaching of emptiness, the scriptural reference is found in the sutras of the Hinayana: "Form is like the prominence of a bubble," and so on. As for reasoning: If the five skandhas are not seen as unreal in terms of not being [one or] many and in terms of momentariness, then not even the selflessness of persons can be established. The way of attaining liberation by relying upon emptiness is established according to the teaching of the Ratnavali.

For those on the sutric path who do not accept the profound view and activity of secret mantra: The scriptural reference is the statement in the gDams ngag 'bog pa'i rgyal po sutra that mantra would appear later.

The sDong po bkod pa'i mdo says:

- ~ For those for whom the Buddhas
- ~ And sentient beings are naturally equal,
- ~ Without abiding or accepting,
- ~ They will become tathagatas.
- ~ Form, feeling, perception,
- ~ And consciousness—these thoughts
- ~ Are countless tathagatas.
- ~ Those will become the great Muni.

Thus, here the five aggregates are taught to have the nature of the tathagatas.

The Vimalakirtisutra says:

- ~ Mental afflictions are the bloodline of the tathagatas.

And:

- ~ The teaching of liberation through desirelessness and so forth is taught for the excessively proud. Those without "I" are naturally liberated from desire, and so forth...

Also, the 'Jam dpa' rnam par rol pa sutra and so forth teach that "emotional afflictions are the four vajras of enlightenment," and so forth, teaching that emotional afflictions are gnoses. The 'Jam dpal rnam par 'phrul pa and so forth teach that one does not meditate on nirvana by eliminating samsara, but teach that samsara is enlightenment by saying, "The reifications of samsara are nirvana."

The Avatamsakasutra says:

- ~ The many realms of the world
- ~ Are inconceivable, but to put them into words,
- ~ The sky is indestructible,
- ~ And self-arisen gnosis is like that.

This is the teaching of self-arisen gnosis. In the sutras one also finds the teaching that all sentient beings have the nature of self-arisen gnosis, and there are countless statements of Buddha Sakyamuni to the effect that "this world is extremely pure, but you do not see it."

As for the body of a woman giving pleasure to the Buddha, a sutra says:

~ A bodhisattva, in order to please the tathagatas, should emanate his body as a woman's body, and should always remain in the presence of the tathagatas.

And, there are statements that one should compassionately destroy those who harm the Dharma. These are statements from scripture.

As for reasoning: Since, according to the perception of those on the pure spiritual levels, all dharmas are naturally pure and all dharmas are equality, samsara and nirvana, good and bad, are not established as things to accept and abandon. According to this kind of teaching, secret mantra is supremely established. Beginning with the acceptance of emptiness, purity is also definitely established in stages.

Some people who have just glanced at the explanations of most mantra [systems] think that [what is explained in mantra] is not reasonable for the actionless Great Perfection. To them we say: The teaching in the tantric corpus of anuttarayogatantra that sentient beings have the nature of Buddhas, that the aggregates and elements are practiced as divine purity, and how in the ultimate meaning one does not need to rely upon mandalas and gtor mas, are established by the scriptural passages that introduce gnosis in the context of the fourth initiation. The fact that awareness is established as primordial pure equality does not need to be established anew by the path; for those who have the confidence of understanding this, the fetters of activity and effort are well established as obstacles on the path. Therefore, relying upon the yoga of the natural flow of meditative equipoise, the ways of mastering the appearances of gnosis that are the effulgence of [awareness] are accomplished quickly and easily.

Thus, one should not take this to mean that as the lower [views] are not established, the higher ones are not established either; for the Buddhas teach the different vehicles gradually, like stairs on a staircase, to purify the lineage and faculties of sentient beings as though they were gems.

The Nirvanasutra says:

- ~ Just like the stages of a staircase,
- ~ My profound teaching also
- ~ Should be gradually learnt and practiced diligently,
- ~ Not all at once, but gradually.

The great glorious Rong zom also taught how gradual progress is established, according to the example of earlier steps being gradually left behind by later ones.

Thus, if one explains profound subjects to persons of meager intelligence who have not gained certainty in the earlier practices, they will be afraid and either abandon their practice, or the teachings will become the occasion for misconceptions, so it is advised that they be kept extremely secret.

If one teaches the profound intention of the view of unsurpassable mantra to those who have gained certainty in the great equality of the sutric system, they will accomplish it completely. That kind of person will be skilled in all the levels of the vehicles, and should be known as capable of accomplishing the philosophical system of the ultimate vajra pinnacle. This is established by the statement, "If those [persons] analyze only from the perspective of reasoning, they are limitless."

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.1.5 Eliminating doubts with the reasoning of the three valid cognitions

[it is the way things really are]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.4.1.5
\ Thus the way this is established
\ Through the valid cognition of stainless wisdom
\ Is found in all the interpretive commentaries and tantras
\ And in the analysis of Dharmabhadra.
\ If you think about it, it is beyond the realm of Mara,
\ And causes inalienable wisdom to mature.

For those reasons, this wisdom that analyzes the nature of dharmas is without stains of partiality. As for establishing this supreme secret of the Great Perfection, which is to be established by way of the three genuine valid cognitions, it is said:

- ~ By the roar of the three genuine valid cognitions,
- ~ The deer of degraded views are terrified.
- ~ The lion's roar of the supreme vehicle pervades the three worlds.

Accordingly, we have the authoritative speech of the Victor in the great tantric corpuses, the authoritative instructions of masters in all the intentional treatises, and especially the authoritative instructions of the omniscient Rong zom Chos bzang.

As it is said:

- ~ Scripture, meaning, reasoning, and logical reasons.
- ~ Appearance, conformity, reasonableness, and sealing.

Here, we have "appearing in the scriptures [of the Buddha]"; conforming to the meaning [of scripture]; reasonableness discovered through reasoning; and sealing by syllogisms. In these ways, doubts about the authentic meaning of the probandum are eliminated.

Therefore, according to the meaning of those statements, one does not rely upon consciousness, but upon gnosis. To prove that the vision of the nature of that unique gnosis—which is the Buddha's gnosis of the self-arisen and unfabricated, the great equal taste of the inseparable purity and equality that is the nature of all dharmas, whatever and however they exist—is a perfectly pure vision, the Varttika says:

- ~ Valid cognition is non-deceptive cognition...
- ~ The one who has it is the Buddha, the embodiment of valid cognition.
- ~ [Valid cognition] realizes its own essence by itself.
- ~ Valid cognition is [known] from conventions.
- ~ Treatises reverse delusion.

According to this statement, if one properly considers analysis with authentic reasoning according to perfectly pure vision, it is beyond all disputes and demons of discordant wrong views, and hence it cannot be revoked by others. Because the object of the profound abiding nature of things is ripened by wisdom, one has no doubt about accomplishing the view; one does not need to concern oneself with others' opinions, and one is happy.

L12: [4.2.2.2.4.2 How this vehicle's view and meditation are more exalted than those of other systems:]

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.2.1 Dispelling the erroneous [reified] concepts that arise from not understanding the meaning of this [reifying one aspect or another]]

L14: [4.2.2.2.4.2.1.1 Were the meaning of this an object of mind, it would contradict the

skillful intention of the teacher]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.4.2.1.1
\ However, to teach the main practice of the view
\ As an object of mind and mentation, such as
\ Adhering one-sidedly to appearance or emptiness,
\ Is to make the inexpressible into an object of expression;
\ So it contradicts the intention of the learned.

This may well be the pinnacle of all the tantric classes. But some people who are not able to investigate this properly claim that the main practice of the view of the Great Perfection conforms to a biased, exclusive appearance that is not empty; or they apprehend it as conforming to a biased, exclusive emptiness; or they claim that the "awareness" of the Great Perfection is a subtle aspect of mind. Thus, they teach [that the nature of awareness] is the object of mind and mental events. They say that what is beyond mind is mind, what is beyond mental analysis is a subtle aspect of mind, and try to express what is in fact beyond expression. This system contradicts the intention of the lord of scholars dGa' rab rDo rje and others.

The Samdhinirmocanasutra says:

- ~ The immeasurable object of individual awareness
- ~ Is inexpressible and bereft of conventionality;
- ~ Free of debate, it is the ultimate dharma.
- ~ Its defining characteristic is that it is beyond all intellectualization.

L14: [4.2.2.2.4.2.1.2 Explaining that the reason for this is that this meaning is beyond [conceptual] mind]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.4.2.1.2
\ Since Atiyoga is the inconceivable gnosis
\ Of form and emptiness inseparable,
\ It is simply beyond impure mind.

You might wonder why this intention contradicts those who are biased in favor of [either appearance or emptiness]. The Atiyoga that is the pinnacle of vehicles and the Buddhas' intent, insofar as it is the intention of the vast expanse free of extremes, the inconceivable self-arisen gnosis of the great equality of appearance and emptiness, is simply beyond impure mind and mental events.

The Mulamadhyamakakarika says:

- ~ Expressibility is eliminated
- ~ Because the mind's object is eliminated;
- ~ Not born and not ceased,
- ~ Reality (chos nyid, dharmata) is like nirvana.

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.2.2 Explaining the harmonious aspect, which is the authentic view]

L14: [4.2.2.2.4.2.2.1 The actual exposition of the manner of practicing the view and meditation]

L15: [4.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.1 The formless view of trekcho]

\ ###

\ 4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.1
\ Here (A) the view of cutting through—which ascertains
\ The emptiness aspect of primal purity—and

☿(i.e. A: the Ultimate Truth, emptiness of inherent existence)

Here in the Great Perfection we have both trekcho and togal.

A tantra says:

- ~ With the samadhi of the breakthrough of equipoise,
- ~ The delusions of subject and object are exhausted.
- ~ By cultivating the effulgence of spontaneously present awareness,
- ~ The kayas and wisdoms are expanded in togal.

First, one ascertains that all subjective and objective dharmas are the aspect of the non-elaborated emptiness of primordial purity. Having been introduced to the naked awareness that is the unfabricated self-awareness of emptiness and clarity, the elaborations and modal apprehension of all inner and outer appearances are cut off immediately. To maintain equipoise in that state is the view of breakthrough. The Great Omniscient one said, "Because of pacifying all elaborations, it is called trekcho."

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2 The formal view of togal]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.2
\ (B) The view of the luminous all-surpassing realization—
\ Which determines the nature
\ Of spontaneously present Buddha bodies and gnosis
\ In the inner luminosity of the youthful vase body—

☿(i.e. B: the conventional truths, dependent origination, causality space and time, appearances, ...)

In determining that the aspect of natural clarity [of awareness] has the nature of the kayas and wisdoms, which are the self-radiance that abides primordially as spontaneous presence, one induces certainty in the unfabricated inner expanse free of the vicissitudes of birth and death as being the youthful vase body. From within the state of primordial purity, with the crucial points of posture and gaze, and from the crucial point of wind and awareness with respect to external objects, in order to directly meet with the auto-luminance of luminosity, there is the formal meditation of togal.

L15: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.3 The inseparability of those two in self-arisen gnosis]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.1.3
\ (A+B) Are inseparable;
\ They are just the coalescence of
\ Primal purity and spontaneous presence.

☿(i.e. A+B: The inseparability of the Two Truths, the Union of the Two Truths, the coalescence, inseparability of appearances & emptiness, of bliss & emptiness, of compassion & emptiness, of dependent origination & emptiness. Inseparability of the three kayas: body, speech and mind. Inseparability of method and wisdom – the two accumulations. Etc. etc. There is just one taste.)

Both of these, formal and formless, involve the inseparability of awareness and emptiness. They are just the great self-arisen gnosis that is the coalescence of primordial purity and spontaneous presence. With respect to greater and lesser importance, one might posit the aspect of emptiness and the aspect of appearance [in relation to these two], respectively; but in fact there is no bias toward either one.

The Great Omniscient One said:

- ~ The cessation aspect of mind is trekcho,
- ~ And the inner clarity of gnosis is togal.
- ~ As the integrated gnosis,
- ~ They are explained on the secret path of the innermost essence.

L14: [4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2 How this Dharma terminology is just a synonym for the "indestructible drop" of other tantric systems]

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\   ###
\   4.2.2.2.2.4.2.2.2
\   Here in the Great Perfection the so-called "indestructible
\   Tilaka of gnosis" of other tantric systems
\   Is very clearly taught as a synonym for this.
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In this tantra of the Great Perfection, it is not unreasonable to posit the "vase body of inner clarity"; indeed, the meaning of other tantric systems is clearly taught by this. The reason is that in the other tantric systems, the so-called "indestructible life-drop" or "tilaka" that is the "essence of gnosis" are just synonyms along with "youthful vase body." There is no reason why they should be dissimilar because one is a "drop" and the other a "body"; one cannot negate the other. If formally apprehended as a mental object, neither makes sense. Neither is actually the object of narrow-minded perception (tshur mthong, arvagdarsana). The Buddhas, who are authoritative persons capable of perceiving extremely esoteric objects, have spoken of both of them. Thus, since the indestructible drop that is naturally unfabricated is established as the kayas and gnosés, in this tantric system of the Great Perfection the way in which the basis of the ultimate result—the Buddha nature of indestructible luminosity— appears without impediment as the auto-luminance that arises naturally as the kayas and gnosés, is very clearly taught.

L12: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3 [How the individual pith instructions of other philosophical systems have the distinction of the mental class:]]

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.3.1 How Mahamudra and so forth actually have the distinction of the mental class [All traditions, all the same]]

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\   ###
\   4.2.2.2.2.4.3.1
\   Each of the pith instructions of the mental class of the Great
\   Perfection
\   Is found in the practice of learned and accomplished
\   masters.
\   The Mahamudra, Path and Result, Pacification,
\   Great Madhyamaka of Coalescence, and so on,
\   Are known as its synonyms;
```

In the tantric system of the Great Perfection, there are the mental, space, and esoteric instruction class divisions. Some portions of the instructions of the mental class were

practiced by learned and accomplished masters of India, and in Tibet as well they have been practiced by holders of the philosophical systems of the new schools. The Mahamudra of the Kagyu, etc., the Path-Result of the Sakyapa, as well as the Pacification of Pha dam pa Sangs rgyas, and the Great Madhyamaka of Coalescence, and so forth, are known by different names, but in fact they do not go beyond the mental class.

In the bSam vtan ngal gso it says:

- ~ The Prajnaparamita, the Madhyamaka,
- ~ The Pacification of Elaborations and Suffering, Mahamudra,
- ~ The Great Perfection of the Essential Dharmata,
- ~ Are the primordial place of cessation, the abiding reality of things,
- ~ Luminosity, mind-as-such (sems nyid), self-arisen gnosis.

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.3.2 How the intention of all of those is identical]

L14: [4.2.2.2.4.3.2.1 The actual explanation]

- \ ###
- \ 4.2.2.2.4.3.2.1
- \ Because in fact they are all the gnosis,
- \ Beyond mind, they are all the same.
- \ The Buddhas' and siddhas' intention is the same—
- \ The learned affirm this univocally.

Even though the names are different, because the meaning taught by all of these systems is the gnosis beyond mind, Madhyamaka, Mahamudra, and the Great Perfection, etc., are equal without any good or bad, higher or lower. For example, all scholars have said that the intention of the Buddha and the siddhas is the same.

L14: [4.2.2.2.4.3.2.2 Eliminating doubts]

- \ ###
- \ 4.2.2.2.4.3.2.2
- \ Some people say, "Our system of the Great Perfection
- \ Is better than other systems like Mahamudra."
- \ They have no realization and
- \ No understanding of the conventions of the path.
- \ If they understood, they would see that this unique intention
- \ Cannot be divided through reasoning.

Some say that the Great Perfection tradition of our own Early Translation school is superior to Mahamudra, and so forth. If one does not realize self-arisen gnosis, there is no convention of the path; if that is realized correctly, then everyone has the same understanding of the abiding nature that is free of elaboration. There is no reasonable distinction that can be made through reasoning that establishes superiority.

The Great Omniscient One said:

- ~ If understood, everything [that] exists, everything is the display of dharmata.
- ~ Primordially the case, the natural flow, it is self-arisen gnosis.
- ~ If this is not understood, even if there is space-like emptiness without elaboration,
- ~ It is a conceptual determination, and a fabrication of one's mind.

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.3.3 Moreover, how the gnosis of the fourth initiation of unexcelled yoga tantra is included in this]

\ ###
 \ 4.2.2.2.4.3.3
 \ Likewise, all the gnoses of the fourth empowerment
 \ In the anuttarayogatantras
 \ Are indivisible in the Great Perfection.

Not only are Madhyamaka, Mahamudra, Path-Result, etc., included in the mental class, the gnosis of the fourth initiation in the tantric classes of the old and new schools, which is actual luminosity, is entirely included without distinction in the natural Great Perfection.

As it is said:

- ~ In the great king of self-awareness who realizes the meaning of equality,
- ~ Just as all rivers flow into the great ocean,
- ~ In these great methods whose meaning is taught by the master
- ~ All the inconceivable vehicles of liberation are included.

L12: [4.2.2.2.4.4 The extraordinary teaching [Dzogchen]:]

¢(i.e. To understand this section one needs a good introduction to Dzogchen. See Longchenpa, *La Liberté Naturelle de l'Esprit* ...)

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.4.1 There are many instructions, not known to other systems, that take direct [perception] as the path]

\ ###
 \ 4.2.2.2.4.4.1
 \ However, the source of all of those
 \ Is the gnosis of the Great Perfection, whose tantric classes
 \ Are divided into "mental," "space," and "instructional,"
 \ According to their profound, extensive, extraordinary
 \ meanings.
 \ There are many instructions here that are not known
 \ In other systems, which use just a fragment of them,
 \ So it goes without saying that this is an "extraordinary
 \ teaching."

¢(i.e. Seems to be some special techniques of Atiyoga not found in other traditions.)

However, that gnosis of the Great Perfection that is the source of all those other tantras and vehicles is the general form (spyi gzugs) of all gnoses.

The 'Jam dpal zhal lung says:

- ~ The Great Perfection is the general form of gnosis.
- ~ The perfectly pure kaya is the great Vajradhara.

To differentiate these tantric systems of the teacher: the external is the mental class, the inner is the space class, and the secret is the instructional class. The profound and vast meaning differentiated by these classes is an excellent, amazing, wonderful, and superior secret meaning, which is not known to other philosophical systems that only practice a fragment of the instructions that are passed from mouth to ear. Since there are many extremely secret teachings not known to those other systems, it hardly needs to be said that this is an extraordinary Dharma. In the old days, there were many people who were able to pass unobstructed through the ground with the rainbow body achieved in the body of this life, because the guide on the path—the authentic view—was this extraordinary Dharma.

Atiyoga (= Dzogchen): : Atiyoga is a means to liberate the meaning of primordial Buddhahood into its own state, and it is the nature of freedom from abandonments and acceptances and expectations and fears. The six million four hundred verses of Atiyoga scriptures are divided into three divisions by Jampal Shenyen. These divisions are:

4. The Series of the Nature of the Mind (Semde): for people who are (incline to) mind. (for the intellectuals)
5. The Series of Primordial Space (Longde): for those who are (incline to) space. (for the non-intellectuals)
6. The Series of Oral Instructions (Mengagde): for those who are free from gradual efforts. (the most popular one; direct presentation of rigpa)

The first two of these were introduced into Tibet by Vairochana; the third by Vimalamitra. Those teachings that were originally transmitted by Padmasambhava and then hidden in various places in Tibet are also part of the Series of Secret Instructions. This kind of text, known as "terma" (gter ma) or "treasures," began to be rediscovered from the 13th century onwards. Those texts which, on the other hand, were transmitted orally from the time of Garab Dorje onwards, are known as the "oral tradition" (bka' ma).

There are two major categories of training in Mengagde:

- (a). Thregchod (Cutting Through): there are four stages of realizations through meditation: dwelling, unmoving, equalness, and spontaneity.
- (b). Thodgal (the Direct Approach): there six crucial means of training, the four visions arise gradually. The four visions are: the direct realization of Ultimate Nature, development of Experiences, perfection of Intrinsic Awareness, and Dissolution of phenomena into the Ultimate Nature.

Thodgal is for breaking out of the cycle of existences (samsara) by directly experience of "naked," or "ordinary," mind, which is the basis of all activities of consciousness. In addition to approaches of this kind that are oriented toward emptiness and intended to be applied without goal-oriented effort, Thregchod places the emphasis on the clear light aspect of primordial knowledge. Their goal is realization of the "rainbow body," i.e., the dissolution of the physical body that is, of the four elements that constitute the body into light.

L13: [4.2.2.2.2.4.4.2 Although that is the ultimate gnosis, on the path it is done gradually [this Great Perfection has many techniques and stages]]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.2.4.4.2
\ There, the ultimate Great Perfection
\ Is profound, peaceful, luminous, and unfabricated—
\ The gnosis of the Buddhas.
\ But here in the context of the paths,
\ One practices the exemplary and actual coalescences,
\ Which are like a drawing of the moon,
\ The moon in water and the moon in the sky,
\ Homologous to that gnosis.

The Dharma that is to be practiced by those who have that kind of extraordinary Dharma is the ultimate gnosis of self-arisen awareness, the Great Perfection. It is not touched by

conventions and objects of cognition, it is not taken up by intellect and cogitation, and it is pacified of elaborations of existence, non-existence, etc. Because its natural radiance is unobstructed, it is luminous; because it does not change in the three times, it is, of course, the unfabricated gnosis of the Buddhas. Likewise, in the context of practicing the path, on the paths of accumulation and preparation it is homologous to that gnosis.

As for the stages of exemplary luminosity, actual luminosity, and the luminosity of coalescence on the paths of learning and non-learning: the first two stages of the path of preparation are like a drawing of the moon, and the latter two stages are like the moon reflected in water. On the path of vision, the actual luminosity is like the moon in the sky. Also, on the path of accumulation, there is the understood generality of luminosity; on the path of preparation, there is the experienced exemplary luminosity; and on the path of vision, there is the actual luminosity of realization, and so forth. By practicing in this way, one is liberated.

L13: [4.2.2.2.4.4.3 Explaining its reasonableness through examples]

\ ###
\ 4.2.2.2.4.4.3
\ Each one gradually leads to the next,
\ As one cultivates the self-arisen stainless gnosis
\ According to one's own capacity.
\ Therefore it is like meditating homologously
\ In order to reach sublime gnosis.

If those earlier and later [levels of realization] are induced continuously, one after another, the self-arisen, undefiled gnosis that is [induced] in that way accords with the power of one's own mind, because it has been practiced. For example, in order to achieve the gnosis of the sublime paths, one meditates in a way that conforms to that [pristine cognition]. This is also found on the sutric paths, and so forth.

L6: [[0.2.2.1.1.3.] 4.3 A summary: [We need both Shamatha and Vipashyana depending on the situation]]

L7: [[0.2.2.1.1.3.1] 4.3.1 Differentiating and summarizing the contexts in which one needs and doesn't need analysis and modal apprehension]

\ ###
\ 4.3.1
\ If one directly ascertains
\ The great gnosis of the coalescence of dharmata,
\ All views that are apprehensions of mental analysis
\ Will definitely subside, and one will see non-elaboration.

Thus, to summarize the meaning of whether or not one needs modal apprehension, analysis, and trance:

As long as the great gnosis of self-awareness of the coalescence of appearance and emptiness that is the equanimity of dharmata has not become manifest, it is mostly said that one needs both subtle and coarse analysis and modal apprehension.

If one ascertains the individually cognized gnosis directly, intellectual analyses and views that have modal apprehension definitely subside, and one comes to see the meaning of non-elaborated coalescence directly.

L7: [[0.2.2.1.1.3.2] 4.3.2 Demonstrating that biased apprehension has both advantages and faults]

\ ###
\ 4.3.2
\ Therefore, without citing the context,
\ Saying one-sidedly that modal apprehension
\ Should be used or not has both faults and good points,
\ Like the waxing and waning of the moon.
\ This is established through reasoning,
\ According to scriptures of definitive meaning.

Therefore, for that reason, if one does not differentiate the various contexts in which one needs or does not need modal apprehension, or in which it is appropriate to engage in analytical or transic meditation, maintaining one-sidedly that there is or is not a modal apprehension, or likewise maintaining analysis and trance separately, has both advantages and faults. For example, it is like the moon, which grows larger as it waxes and smaller as it wanes. Our way of practicing here, which does not fall into any of those extremes, is established through reasoning in accordance with the scriptural sources of sutra and tantra that express the definitive meaning. Therefore, having abandoned partiality, it is appropriate to engage whatever scripture and reasoning we have at our disposal, because we are not just looking for bones to put in our bowl, but are striving for liberation.

I say:

- ~ The vagaries of analysis are like juice without a container;
- ~ The stability of trance is like a container without juice.
- ~ The balance of insight and calm abiding free of bias
- ~ Is like a pure land replete with animate and inanimate luxury.

L1: [9.5. Topic 5 [Basing the Tantric practices on adapted skillful means and views, based on a gradually induced certainty of the inseparability of conventional & Ultimate Truths]]

¢(i.e. Résumé of Topic 5: In all vehicles, the essence always come down to ultimately realizing the great equanimity, the non-duality, the inseparability of the Two Truths, etc. The adapted skillful means and temporary views used in the different vehicles may be different, but the essence is unique. Ultimately the Dharma has only one flavor. And that is described as equanimity, non-duality, the inseparability of the Two Truths, the Union of the Two Truths, inseparability of bliss and emptiness, inseparability of compassion and emptiness, the coalescence, etc. etc. The name change with the vehicle, the depth of understanding becomes more and more subtle, but the source, Buddha, and the essence, Dharma, are the same. Why is that? Because this is the way things really are. And without first having a correct conceptual understanding of these Two truths, and without generating a minimal level of certainty though correct reasonings and virtuous methods, one is never sure to be on the authentic path, or simply going toward one extreme or another. Meditating while faking, while going to one extreme or another, or while having doubts has no result.)

[see the other file for this chapter]

L1: [9.6. Topic 6 [Using the mantrayana technique called “pure vision / deity yoga” in order to realize this coalescence beyond conceptualization]]

[i.e. “Topic 6 concerns the common object of disparate perceptions; also serves as the occasion for differentiating the various levels of view in the Vajrayana—in particular those of Mahayoga and the Great Perfection—and for demonstrating the necessity of Mipham's fourfold classification of valid cognition.”]

(Résumé of Topic 6: This topic is about the validity of assuming a dharmin, something really existing out there, independently of the mind, and that is the basis of direct objective / impartial perception. It would be the “thing” or “phenomena” that everybody is perceiving the same; a commonly accepted phenomenon, a commonly understood subject; the basis for further discussion and inference.

In this section it is shown that all perceptions are conditioned by accumulated karma, that there is no real object existing out there independently of the mind, that there is no real objective / impartial perception by the senses organs. But the emptiness of inherent existence of the appearances doesn't mean that everything is completely non-existent, useless, from the mind-only. The Middle Way is between the two extremes of existence (appearances) and non-existence (emptiness). Everything is inseparable appearances and emptiness.

That means that all of our discriminations in terms of good vs. bad, pure vs. impure, objects of attachment or fears, are like illusions. That there is not an authentic perception based on the way things really are.

To perceive everything more in accord with their very ultimate nature, would be to perceive everything with Great Equanimity. In short, it is like as if samsara was caused by an erroneous perception of reality, while Nirvana was caused by a correct perception of reality, in accord with the principle of the inseparability of appearances and emptiness. Using this model, the progression on the path correspond to a purification of our perceptions. By analyzing this and getting to the essence of the problem of perception, one gain certainty in the validity of “pure vision” as practiced in Tantrayana. This technique cannot be faked, it is efficient only if based on certainty induced by analyzing the problem of perception through correct reasonings. If “pure vision” is practice without this certainty, that is with doubts, then it will be useless. That why Tantrayana must be practiced only after studying and mastering the Mahayana sutras and techniques.)

[see the other file for this chapter]

L1: [9.7. Topic 7 [No absolute, only adapted skillful means – no absolute position, but a conventional position about a view (the inseparability of the Two Truths), a path and the result // the Great Perfection's meditation]]

(Résumé of Topic 7: This topic is about the validity of assuming a dharmata, an absolute

real nature of everything: either by calling it emptiness, or the Two Truths, ... Or by assuming that we should have no position at all.

Some might say, like the Consequentialists, that one doesn't need to adopt any conventional position of their own, but only adopt the opponent's position in order to show its absurdity from the inside. But with the Great Perfection, one adapt a conventional position consisting of a view, a path and a result.

The conclusion, is that we need adapted skillful means and views, but that we should not take any of them as the absolute truth which is beyond all conceptualization.

So we need to use the Two Truths, then realize their emptiness, then transcend this duality. On the path we need both together all the time; one alone is never enough. And without them together we fall into one extreme or another.)

[see the other file for this chapter]

L1: [9.8. Conclusion]

[see the other file for this chapter]

[End]