

**THE MIRACULOUS KEY
TO KONGTRUL'S
TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE**

*AN INTRODUCTION TO
KONGTRUL'S MASTERFUL
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE KNOWABLE*

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS SOURCEBOOK

For internal use only
Exclusively for the Core Texts Program - Rime Shedra NYC
A program of Shambhala Meditation Center of New York
First Edition - 2009

The Miraculous Key to Kongtrul's Treasury of Knowledge

Based upon *The Miraculous Key*
By *Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche*

Ten of the Tuesdays from September 15 to December 8, 2009

Syllabus

I. Class One: Introduction and Overview

A. Topics:

1. Purpose for the course
2. Jamgon Kongtrul
3. The Rime movement
4. The Treasury of Knowledge
5. The Miraculous Key

B. In Class Reading from MK:

1. Introduction, pp. 5-7

II. Class Two: Buddhist Cosmology

A. Topics:

1. An analysis with reasoning of the variety of appearances seen
2. An analysis of the reasons this variety of appearances seen:
 - a) Causes and results generally, The six causes
 - b) The five results
 - c) The four conditions
3. The extraordinary explanation of causes and conditions:
 - a) The way the twelve dependently arisen links spin [beings through the cycle of existence]
 - b) The way the eight collections of consciousness spin [beings through the cycle of existence]
 - c) The way [beings'] three habitual tendencies confuse them

B. Readings from MK:

1. An analysis of the realms that appear in the kalpa of light, pp. 8-20

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. Root Verses from The Encompassment of All Knowledge, *Myried Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalachakra and Dzog-chen*, Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, Trs. Int'l Trs. Comm. Founded by the V.V. Kalu Rinpoche, pp. 60-67

III. Class Three: The Buddha and His Teachings

A. Topics:

1. The Buddha:
 - a) How the Buddha gave rise to the supreme awakening mind
 - b) How in the interim, the Buddha conducted himself as a bodhisattva
 - c) How the Buddha manifested his enlightenment

2. His Teachings:
 - a) Types of dharma
 - b) Types of the Buddha's speech
 - c) Types of pitakas

B. Readings from MK:

1. An analysis of how the teacher who tamed the beings in those realms appeared, pp. 21-28
2. An examination of the teachings, the genuine dharma, pp. 29-32

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. The Buddha, The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems, Longchen Rabjam, Trs. by Richard Baron, pp. 7-21
2. Perfect Conduct: Ascertaining the Three Vows, Ngari Panchen Pema Wangyi Gyalpo, Commentary by HH Dudjom Rinpoche Jigdral Yeshe Dorje, trs. Gyurme Samdrub and Sangye Khandro:
 - a) An Explanation of the Pratimoksa-vinaya, pp. 14-17
 - b) The Bodhisattva Vows, pp. 63-65
 - c) Secret Mantra, pp. 100-104

IV. Class Four: The Development of the Dharma

A. Topics:

1. How the victorious one's teachings have grown and flourished in this world
2. In particular, how the five main sutra teaching lineages came to Tibet

B. Readings from MK:

1. An examination of how the victorious one's teachings have grown and flourished in this world, pp. 33-35

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. The History of the Teaching Lineages that Came to Tibet, *The Rime Philosophy of Jamgon Kongtrul the Great*, Ringu Tulku, pp. 56-73
2. gDams ngag: Tibetan Technologies of the Self, Matthew Kapstein, in *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*, ed. Jose Cabazon and Roger Jackson, pp. 275-280

V. Class Five: Varieties of Right Conduct

A. Topics:

1. How to train in right conduct that is supreme

B. Readings from MK:

1. An analysis of how to train in right conduct that is supreme, pp. 36-38

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. *Buddhist Ethics*, by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, Trs. Int'l Trs. Comm. Founded by the V.V. Kalu Rinpoche:
 - a) The Commitments of Awakening Mind, pp. 165-171
 - b) The Training Common to Both Traditions, pp. 193-199

VI. Class Six: The Wisdom that comes from Listening – Definitions

A. Topics:

1. An examination of the common reasonings:
 - a) Fields of study
 - b) Objects, entities and time
 - c) Terms of expression
 - d) Types of cognitions
 - e) Elements of reasoning
2. An examination of the objects of knowledge that are explained in both the foundational vehicle and the great vehicle:
 - a) Aggregates (skandhas)
 - b) Elements (ayatana)
 - c) Sources (dhatus)

B. Readings from MK:

1. An explanation of how to give rise to the wisdom that comes from listening, pp. 39-49
 - a) An examination of the common reasonings, pp. 39-46
 - b) An examination of the objects of knowledge that are explained in both the foundational vehicle and the great vehicle, pp. 47-49

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. *A Commentary by the Author of the Text Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso*, pp. 26-27, 41-43, 47-52

VII. Class Seven: The Wisdom that comes from Listening - Tenets

A. Topics:

1. An examination of the various views and tenets in the causal vehicle of characteristics:
 - a) Foundational vehicle
 - b) Four Truths
 - c) Great vehicle schools
2. As an ancillary topic, a brief examination of the vajrayana

B. Readings from MK:

1. An explanation of how to give rise to the wisdom that comes from listening, pp. 50-58
 - a) An examination of the various views and tenets in the causal vehicle of characteristics, pp. 50-55
 - b) As an ancillary topic, a brief examination of the vajrayana, pp. 56-58

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. *A Commentary by the Author of the Text Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso*, pp. 1-7 and 11-13.

VIII. Class Eight: The Wisdom that comes from Reflection

A. Topics:

1. An analysis of gaining certainty about the keys to understanding
2. An analysis of gaining certainty about that which is to be understood:
 - a) The provisional and definitive meanings in the three turnings of the wheel of dharma

- b) The two truths
- c) Dependent arising

B. Readings:

1. An analysis of how to gain certainty through reflection, pp. 59-70
 - a) An analysis of gaining certainty about the keys to understanding, pp. 59-65
 - b) An analysis of gaining certainty about that which is to be understood, pp. 65-70

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. Section Two of Chapter Seven: Gaining Certainty in The Provisional and Definitive Meanings Of the Three Turnings of the Wheel of Dharma, The Two Truths, and Dependent Arising, *The Treasury of Knowledge*, by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, trs. by Ari Goldfield, four pages.

IX. Class Nine: Gaining Certainty in the View

A. Topics:

1. The view:
 - a) The four seals that epitomize the sutras
 - b) Entering the path of giving up the two extremes
 - c) The main topic, an analysis of the two types of selflessness
2. The four turnings of the mind from the tradition of pith instructions:
 - a) Attachment to this life
 - b) Attachment to the entirety of cyclic existence
 - c) Concern for one's own happiness and well-being
 - d) The perceiver and perceived

B. Readings:

1. An analysis of how to gain certainty through reflection, pp. 70-78
 - a) An examination of gaining certainty about the main thing, the view, pp. 70-75
 - b) An analysis of gaining certainty about a brief teaching on the four turnings of the mind from the tradition of pith instructions, pp. 75-78

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. Root verses, *Ascertaining Certainty about the View: Section Three of Chapter Seven from The Treasury of Knowledge by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye*, pp. 1-10

X. Class Ten: The Wisdom that comes from Meditation; the Path & the Result

A. Topics:

1. An analysis of how to verify what one has studied and reflected upon through meditation:
 - a) The way of accomplishing calm-abiding and superior insight according to the Middle Way tradition
 - b) A summary of the types of calm abiding and superior insight
 - c) Particularly the Middle Way school's explanation of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment

2. An examination of the manner of progressing along the grounds
3. An analysis of the ultimate fruition, the kayas and wisdoms

B. Readings from MK:

1. An analysis of how to verify what one has studied and reflected upon through meditation, pp. 79-82
2. An examination of the manner of progressing along the grounds, pp. 83-84
3. An analysis of the ultimate fruition, the kayas and wisdoms, pp. 85-88
4. Conclusion, pp. 89-90

C. Additional Readings from SB:

1. Vipashyana, excerpt from *The Treasury of Knowledge By Jamgon Kongtrul Chapter Eight: The Progressive Classification of the Training in Superior Samadhi, Part One: The Stages of Meditation of Shamatha and Vipashyana - The General Basis of All Samadhis*, Trs. by Kiki Ekselius and Chryssoula Zerbini Under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, one page.
2. The Path of Accumulation, *Commentary on the Presentation of Grounds, Paths and Results in the Causal Vehicle of Characteristics from the Treasury of Knowledge by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye*, Acharya Lama Tenpa Gyaltzen, Trs. Karl Brunnholzl, pp. 21-36

The Treasury of Knowledge

By Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye

General Contents

- I) Book One: Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kalacakra, and Dzog-chen**
 - A) Part 1: The Cosmology of the Universal Way [Mahayana]
 - B) Part 2: Our Universe according to the Individual and Universal Ways [Hinayana and Mahayana]
 - C) Part 3: Space and Time in the Tantra of the Wheel of Time [*Kalacakra*]
 - D) Part 4: The Causes of Cyclic Life [and the Primordial Purity of the Universe]
- II) Book Two: The Advent of the Buddha**
 - A) Part 1: Our Teacher's Path to Awakening
 - B) Part 2: The Buddha's Enlightenment
 - C) Part 3: The Buddha's Twelve Deeds
 - D) Part 4: Enlightenment's Bodies and Realms
- III) Book Three: The Buddha's Doctrine-The Sacred Teachings**
 - A) Part 1: What are the Sacred Teachings?
 - B) Part 2: Cycles of Scriptural Transmission
 - C) Part 3: Compilations of the Buddha's Word
 - D) Part 4: The Origins of the Original Translations' Ancient Tradition [Nyingma]
- IV) Book Four: Buddhism's Spread Throughout the World**
 - A) Part 1: Buddhism's Spread in India
 - B) Part 2: How Buddhist Monastic Discipline and Philosophy Came to Tibet
 - C) Part 3: Tibet's Eight Vehicles of Tantric Meditation Practice
 - D) Part 4: The Origins of Buddhist Culture
- V) Book Five: *Buddhist Ethics*: The Training in Higher Ethical Conduct**
 - A) Part 1: The Qualities of the Spiritual Teacher and Student
 - B) Part 2: The Vows of Personal Liberation
 - C) Part 3: The Commitments of Awakening Mind [Bodhicitta]
 - D) Part 4: The Vows and Pledges of Secret Mantra
- VI) Book Six: The Topics for Study**
 - A) Part 1: A Presentation of the Common Fields of Knowledge and Worldly Paths
 - B) Part 2: General Topics of Knowledge in the Hinayana and Mahayana
 - C) Part 3: *Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy: A Systematic Presentation of the Cause-Based Philosophical Vehicles*
 - D) Part 4: *Systems of Buddhist Tantra: The Indestructible Way of Secret Mantra*

VII) Book Seven: The Training in Higher Wisdom

- A) Part 1: The Keys to Understanding
- B) Part 2: Truth and Meaning
- C) Part 3: Authentic View
- D) Part 4: Foundations of Spiritual Discipline

VIII) Book Eight: The Training in Higher Meditative Absorption [Samadhi]

- A) Part 1: Shamatha (Calm Abiding) and Vipashyana (Higher Insight)
- B) Part 2: The Stages of Meditation in the Cause-Based Approaches
- C) Part 3: *The Elements of Tantric Practice: A General Exposition of Secret Mantra Meditation Systems*
- D) Part 4: *Esoteric Instructions: A Detailed Presentation of the Process of Meditation in Vajrayana*

IX) Book Nine: An Analysis of the Paths and Levels to Be Traversed

- A) Part 1: The Paths and Levels in the Cause-Based Dialectical Approach
- B) Part 2: The Levels and Paths in the Vajrayana
- C) Part 3: The Process of Enhancement
- D) Part 4: The Paths and Levels in the Three Yogas

X) Book Ten: An Analysis of the Consummate Fruition State

- A) Part 1: The Fruition in the Dialectical Approach
- B) Part 2: The More Common Attainments in the Vajrayana
- C) Part 3: The Fruition in the Vajrayana
- D) Part 4: The Fruition State in the Nyingma School

Myriad Worlds

Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma,
Kālacakra, and Dzog-chen

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé

Translated and edited by
the International Translation Committee
founded by the V.V. Kalu Rinpoché

Snow Lion Publications
Ithaca, New York

Root Verses from *The Encompassment of All Knowledge*

In Sanskrit: *Yāna-sarva-mukhebhyaḥ samucchaya-pravacanāṃ-
ratna-kośa-tri-śikṣa-sudeśika-śāstraṃ sarvajñeya-spharaṇa-nāma*

The Encompassment of All Knowledge: A treasury of precious teachings compiled from all the approaches of the systems for spiritual development, a treatise that effectively transmits the three trainings

Namaḥ śrīmān-sad-guru-pādāya

[Embodiment] of complete purity and ethics, you stand firm like the golden foundation.

Your beauty reflects your countless contemplations, like the distinct features of the mountains and continents.

Like the sun and moon, your brilliant wisdom illuminates all phenomena.

Supreme sage and achiever of all goals, I revere you.

With the heart of a great hero who protects beings for as long as they exist,

You suffused the universe with your excellent conduct.

Though father to the victorious ones, you manifest as the victorious ones' son.

Lion of Speech, grant me flawless intelligence.

You nurture the seed — the potential or nature of beings — by imparting instructions that mature and liberate them.

You cause others to purify incidental defilements through
the twofold path,
And bestow the fruition, the four dimensions of awaken-
ing distinguished by great bliss.
To you, my mentor, and to the masters of the lineages,
I bow.

Although I lack the intellectual capacity to compile
knowledge correctly,
I shall compose a short, clear, comprehensive work
In order to ensure that those with insufficient knowledge
or interest to understand the texts
Will not lose their opportunity on this isle of treasures.

* * *

This treatise [The Infinite Ocean of Knowledge] as a
whole has [ten] divisions, equal in number to the ten
perfections:

The realms that appear during the age of illumination;
Buddha, the Teacher; the doctrine, both scriptural and
experiential;

Its continuation and spread in the Land of Jambui;
Maintaining ethical conduct; learning; reflection;
meditation;

Through successively engaging in these, progression
through the paths; and realization of the ultimate
result.

* * *

There are general and specific causes and conditions that
initiate [the creation of realms]:

For as long as infinite space and sentient beings exist,
The compassion of the victorious ones and the actions of
sentient beings continue without end.

Those to be guided and enlightened guides

Manifest through inconceivable interconnections.

When the characters and dispositions of those to be
guided are activated,

[The compassion of] the guides [arises], and the configu-
rations of the realms and the dimensions of awakening
appear;

The miraculous methods of guiding others manifest
beyond all bounds.

The sphere of reality never changes into something else;
Yet blessings, vows, actions, and natural laws
Cause oceans of realms to appear.

The realm Unsurpassed is free from incidental defilement
And transcends the experience of the three realms: it is
indivisible pristine wisdom.

In this self-manifesting, spontaneously appearing [realm,]
Richly Adorned,

Dwells Illuminator, Great Glacial Lake of Wisdom;

A billion realms in his every pore.

Their locations, shapes, sizes, durations, and arrange-
ments are inconceivable.

Within the central minute particle in the palm of his hand
lies the Oceanic World-System

That itself contains many world-systems, in the center
of which

Lies the realm called Flower-Filled World.

Furthermore, [between the wind] and Unsurpassed lie
one billion four-continent world-systems,

A great third-order thousand [world-system].

Multiplying that by factors of one billion

[Yields] Infinite Links, Continuums, Oceans,
And Flower-Filled World.

Each rests on an ocean and [is encircled by] an outer rim.

This is the sphere of influence of one supreme manifest
dimension of awakening.

Inside the great outer rim, in a sea of scented water,

Four jewelled lotuses support

A tiered arrangement of twenty-five world-systems;

The thirteenth is known as Endurance.

This third-order thousand world-system

Is completely encircled by realms — Covered, Surpassing,
Stainless, Various Emerging, etc. —

Equal in number to the particles of this thirteenth world-system.

[Endurance] is spherical, has a four-vajra demarcation, And rests on a multicolored configuration of wind and a network of lotuses.

Illuminator, the teacher in this [world-system], Appears throughout the Unsurpassed realms of the pure domains.

This four-continent [world-system] called Destructible Is surrounded by ten other four-continent [world-systems].

It is taught that these [world-systems] are formed and destroyed together;

This is the experiential domain solely of the lords of the tenth stage of awakening.

* * *

In our own world-system, four [ages] occur: formation, abiding, destruction, and vacuity.

Of the two, environment and inhabitants, [a description of] the environmental world [is presented first]:

After the age of vacuity had elapsed at the end of the previous age,

Winds arose from the ten directions, creating a configuration in the shape of a cross;

Rain fell from a cloud, and amidst a mass of water,

A thousand lotuses were seen; thus the Fortunate Age was proclaimed.

The churning of water by wind produced a golden disc, Upon which rain fell; [this became] the great ocean.

The churning by wind developed the [ocean's] elements — superior, medium, and base;

These elements formed Mount Meru, the seven mountain ranges, the four continents and the outer rim.

The mountains and continents all extend eighty thousand [leagues] down into the ocean.

Mount Meru rises eighty thousand [leagues] above the ocean.

The four sides of Mount Meru are composed of crystal, blue beryl, ruby, and gold.

The sky [on each side] reflects these colors.

From sea level to half its height are four terraces.

Beyond it are seven golden mountain ranges, Yoke and the others.

The spaces between are filled with seas of enjoyment, which have eight qualities.

The four continents and the eight islands

Are semi-circular, trapezoidal, round, and square.

There are numerous unspecified little islands.

The outer rim consists of a mountain range composed of iron;

A salt-water ocean fills the area as far as this range.

North from the center of the Exalted Land, beyond nine black mountains,

Stand the Snowy Mountains, and north of these the

Fragrant [Mountains].

Between these two mountain ranges lies Cool Lake; from its four sides

Four cascades flow in four directions toward the ocean.

A jambu tree adorns the lake's shore,

And so this continent is known as the land beautified by the jambu tree.

The names of Majestic Body and the others indicate their distinguishing features.

Tail-Fan Island is inhabited by cannibal demons, and the others, by humans.

The hells and the world of the starving spirits are located below the earth.

Animals, the inhabitants of the depths, dwell in the great ocean.

Demi-gods [live] in the crevices of Mount Meru from the water's edge down.

The Four Groups of the Great Kings reside mainly on the terraces of Mount Meru.

Beings may also dwell in various unspecified secondary abodes.

Above Mount Meru is the heaven of the Thirty-three
In which is found the Victorious Residence, the city called

Lovely,

Parks, playing fields, the All-gathering tree, the fine stone
slab,

The Assembly Hall of the Excellent Law, as well as the
dwelling of the *yaksas*.

Above, Conflict Free, Joyful, Enjoying Creations, and
[Mastery Over] Others' [Creations]

Rest on riches like cloud formations in the sky.

There are sixteen heavens in the form realm, beginning
with Group of the Pure;

Above them all is Lesser Unsurpassed.

The lord bodhisattvas reside above that, according to the
Five Treatises on the Stages.

[The heavens] double in size and grow increasingly
magnificent.

One third-order thousand world-system is fathomed by
the vision of the proclaimers and solitary sages,
Who assert that it is composed of indivisible particles of
matter.

The nature of each being is unobscured and undeter-
mined.

The four absorptions of the formless realm and the other
realms arise sequentially; [the beings within them]
Diffuse from higher to lower, down to the hells.

Moreover, the four levels of absorption of the formless
realm

Are only distinctions in contemplation; they have no form
or location.

The form realm: In the fourth level of meditative concen-
tration, [there are] five pure domains and three heav-
ens of ordinary beings.

Three [heavens] are located within each of the lower three
levels of meditative concentration.

The desire realm comprises thirty-six types of beings:

Six groups of gods, [humans of the] four continents,

[Inhabitants of the] eight islands, animals and starving
spirits,

[Beings in the] eight hot hells, and the eight cold hells.
The twenty existences, ten happy and ten miserable,
May also be classified as twenty-eight.

Within the happy existences — the form realm and the
rest —

Lifespans and possessions decrease the lower the level.
In the miserable existences, suffering increases the lower
the level.

The four [levels] of absorption, the four levels of medita-
tive concentration, and the desire realm
Comprise nine levels. In terms of type, there are six
[classes of] beings.

A classification of five — human, divine, and three
miserable existences —

May be made in terms of paths and courses.

All these beings may be categorized according to the four
modes of birth,

Or into pure, corrupt, and indeterminate groups.

During the time of abiding, most beings, except for
animals,

Experience consequences that are predetermined.

In our world, humans have a wide variety of lifespans,
wealth, and physical size.

Lifespan decreases from incalculable to ten,

And then increases to eighty thousand, and so on.

During a decline, a rise, and eighteen intermediate cycles,
There are fluctuations. The three continents are places
where [consequences] are experienced;

Jambu Land, the most distinguished, is the place of
action.

Beings in this world came down from the heaven of
Clear Light.

The nourishment derived from meditative concentration
and other [pristine] qualities gradually deteriorated
due to craving.

The sun and moon provided light, and King Honored by
Multitudes appeared.

Then, such distinctions as the four eras and four classes
arose.

Wheel-monarchs, who [possess wheels of] gold, silver, copper, and iron,
 Appear in this world only when the lifespan is no less than eighty thousand years.
 Some say that they reign totally over the third-order thousand world-system.
 There are many variations in food, hunger and thirst, color of clothing, night and day, etc.
 Beings in lower [realm] do not see those in the higher.
 At the time of destruction, the miserable realms, beginning with the hell realms, empty.
 Gods and humans attain meditative concentration and are born in the form realm.
 As the realms empty of inhabitants, the [beings of] the lower realms move higher.
 The heavens of the first meditative concentration and below are destroyed by fire.
 Space alone remains, a vacuity containing nothing at all.
 Again formation occurs, and again abiding, and finally destruction by fire.
 After seven such [sequences], a deluge at the end of the eighth
 Destroys the second meditative concentration and below.
 Seven destructions by fire alternating with one by water occur seven times,
 Ending with another seven by fire.
 Finally, intense wind destroys the third meditative concentration and below.
 Because those three contemplations have imperfections [they are destroyed];
 The fourth, being free of imperfection, is not destroyed by the elements.
 Altogether, sixty-four great cycles of destruction occur.
 Each of the ages of formation, abiding, destruction, and vacuity
 Lasts for twenty intermediate ages; together, these [four] constitute one cosmic age.
 Such statements as that in a single age seven fires,

One flood, and one wind arise, destroying the third level of meditative concentration and below,
 Reflect different points of view of different systems.
 The pure realms and the Seat of Enlightenment, etc., are not destroyed,
 Since they are not the result of the origin [of suffering].

* * *

The King of Tantras of the Primordial Buddha

Refutes erroneous systems and integrates the outer, inner, And alternative [levels]. In the center of space rest spherical foundations
 Of wind, fire, water, and earth, [proportional in size to the measure between] the soles of the feet and the waist.
 Mount Meru, its neck, face, and crowning protuberance [Are proportional to the measure between] the waist and the crown of the head.
 The center is green; the east, blue; the north, white; the south, red;
 And the west, yellow. Each part is composed of a precious substance.
 From the [edge of the] vast upper surface hang five indestructible enclosures
 In a concentric arrangement; the outer ones are progressively longer.
 At the base is a ledge which forms an indestructible perimeter.
 Between the six continents — Moon, White, Most Excellent,
 Kuśa Grass, Centaur, and Crane —
 Are [six] oceans: Honey, Butter, Yogurt, Milk, Water, and Beer,
 Encircled by the mountains Blue Radiance, Mandara Blossom,
 Night, Jewel Radiance, Vessel, and Cool.
 These are lands of experience. The seventh continent, The Greater Land of Jambu, said to be the land of evolutionary action,

The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems

*A Treatise Elucidating the Meaning of the
Entire Range of Spiritual Approaches*

Longchen Rabjam

Translated by Richard Barron
(Lama Chökyi Nyima)



PADMA PUBLISHING

2007

1

The Buddha

I. THE TEACHER

A. The Hinayana Interpretation

According to the Hinayana interpretation, our Teacher gave rise to bodhicitta, or “the awakening mind,” in the presence of the buddha Mahashakyamuni three immensely long eons ago, with the following words recorded in *The Scriptural Transmission of Vinaya*:

O Sugata, whatever your form is like,
whatever your retinue, life span, and realm,
and whatever your noble and sublime marks of perfection,
may I swiftly accomplish the same!

Thereafter, during those three immensely long eons, the Bodhisattva pursued spiritual development, serving fifty-five thousand buddhas during the first eon, sixty-six thousand during the second, and seventy-seven thousand during the third.¹ *The Foundation of Scriptural Transmission* states:

From the enlightened guide Rashtrapala
to the buddha Vipashyin,
I venerated a total
of fifty-five thousand buddhas.
During that time, I was not discouraged. [5a]
From the buddha Sadhu
to the sage Indradhvaja,
I venerated a total
of sixty-six thousand buddhas.
During that time, I was not discouraged.

7

From the buddha Dipamkara

to Ratnashikini,

I venerated a total

of seventy-seven thousand buddhas.

During that time, I was not discouraged.

According to *The Treasury of Abhidharma*:

Vipashyin, Dipamkara, and Ratnashikini

came at the close of the three immensely long eons.

Preceding that succession,²

the first was Shakyamuni.³

Finally, it is maintained that he awakened to buddhahood through a process entailing twelve deeds and, having passed into nirvana with no trace of his mind-body aggregates remaining, abides in the basic space of peace.⁴

Thus, the Buddha developed the positive qualities associated with the path of accumulation for three immensely long eons. Then, at Vajrasana, with attainment of the highest level of this path of accumulation as the basis, he traversed the rest of the five paths—those of linkage, seeing, meditation, and no more learning—in a single sitting.⁵ This interpretation is consistent with the process undergone by a pratyekabuddha of keen acumen. The same source states:

The enlightenment of the Teacher and those who are like rhinoceroses

is fully attained in a single, final state of meditative stability.⁶

Moreover, the following verse attests to the fact that in his final lifetime in conditioned existence, the Bodhisattva was an ordinary being:

Service to one's parents, sick people, those who give spiritual teachings,

and bodhisattvas in their final rebirth—

even though none of these are spiritually advanced—

is said to be of inestimable value.⁷ [5b]

B. The Ordinary Mahayana and Vajrayana Interpretations

In the Mahayana tradition as well, some maintain—in keeping with the Hinayana interpretation—that the Bodhisattva first gave rise to bodhi-

chitta, then pursued spiritual development for three immensely long eons, and finally became a buddha in this human world through a process entailing twelve deeds. But they further hold that the Buddha simultaneously manifested enlightened embodiments elsewhere in the universe Difficult to Renounce, benefiting beings. The sutra *The Complete Array of Qualities* states:

From the point that I first gave rise to the intention to attain unsurpassable enlightenment, I pursued spiritual development with great diligence for three immensely long eons. When the average span of human life was one hundred years, I saw that ordinary beings were blind and without a guide; I awakened to buddhahood in this human world and completely turned the inconceivable wheel of dharma.

Certain authors in the secret mantra approach agree for the most part with this interpretation, but more specifically maintain that while the Bodhisattva was practicing asceticism, although his body was seated by the banks of a river, his mind was in Akanishtha, being empowered with great rays of light.⁸ By cultivating a profound state of nondual meditative absorption, he thus awakened to buddhahood. Immediately after this, he manifested at Vajrasana in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood. In *The Sphere of Freedom*, the venerable Buddhajñāna writes:

Although Shakyamuni pursued spiritual development for three immensely long eons, he had not realized the goal, so at Nairanjana he dwelled in the meditative absorption of "nothingness."⁹ At that time, the sugatas of the ten directions¹⁰ brought an end to his mental patterns [6a] and thoroughly revealed to him the nondual state of profound lucidity,¹¹ totally pure like the expanse of the sky. At midnight, just like other victorious ones, he meditated on thatness, and at dawn in a single instant he realized truth. To guide ordinary beings,¹² he remained at Bodhimanda and conquered the great hordes of Mara.¹³ To care for beings, he turned the wheel of dharma.¹⁴

Similarly, *Magical Display as the Guiding Principle* states:

For Siddhartha, the person practicing austerities, victorious ones of the ten directions gathered like clouds, and for his spiritual enrichment, in the evening and at dawn they bestowed the empowerment of the eclipse of sun and moon.¹⁵

With the source of this display having been shown to him, the Tathagata arrived at suchness.

The preceding are the ordinary interpretations of these approaches.

C. The Extraordinary Mahayana and Vajrayana Interpretations

According to the extraordinary Mahayana interpretation, having first aroused bodhicitta and pursued spiritual development, the Bodhisattva awakened to buddhahood in the realm of Akanishtha Ghanavyuha.¹⁶ Subsequently, he manifested in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood in an immaculate abode, and shortly thereafter he manifested in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood at Vajrasana.¹⁷ In *The Journey to Sri Lanka*, we read the following:

The Buddha did not actually awaken to buddhahood in the realm of desire or in the realm of formlessness; you, who were free of desire and attachment, became a buddha in Akanishtha in the realm of form.¹⁸

.....

In the delightful realm of Akanishtha Ghanavyuha, [6b] beyond the immaculate abodes, the completely awakened Buddha awakened to buddhahood.¹⁹

It was an emanation who awakened to buddhahood in this world.

Some authors in the secret mantra approach hold a similar view and maintain that, immediately after attaining buddhahood in Akanishtha,²⁰ the Buddha descended from the peak of Sumeru to Bodhimanda and there awakened to buddhahood at the foot of the bodhi tree. *The Summary of Suchness* states:

The transcendent and accomplished conqueror, having awakened to buddhahood, knew that he had become the embodiment of the

enlightened form, speech, and mind of all tathagatas. Soon after, he descended from the peak of Sumeru to Bodhimanda. To conform to the perceptions of ordinary people, having taken a seat of grass at the foot of the bodhi tree, ...

Others, however, explain that it was after being empowered in Akanishtha by all buddhas that the Buddha awakened to buddhahood as Vajradhara in the Akanishtha realm of our world system.²¹ He then immediately awakened to buddhahood as Shakyamuni at Vajrasana and so benefited beings. According to the tantra *The Empowerment of the Vajra Holder*:

The Bodhisattva, the great spiritual hero, the all-noble one, the holder of the vajra, was naturally empowered in the greater universe known as Basis Whose Center Is Adorned with a Flower. After that, within our universe, Difficult to Renounce, in the human worlds throughout the intermediate-sized universe of world systems that comprise four worlds each, the transcendent and accomplished conqueror, with the name Shakyamuni, having defeated Mara, awakened to a manifestly perfect state of enlightenment.²² [7a]

D. The Interpretation of the Unsurpassable Approach

The foregoing ordinary and extraordinary interpretations were given in response to certain kinds of beings to be guided. However, the quintessential and definitive meaning, which is found in the unsurpassable approach, is as follows: Our Teacher awakened to buddhahood an inconceivable number of immensely long eons ago. Through the Tathagata's immeasurable and manifold display, ordinary beings were benefited in whatever way was necessary to guide them. The Teacher guided beings solely through emanations, such as those who manifested as though first giving rise to bodhicitta (so that beginners would not feel inadequate), those who attained higher and higher spiritual levels (so that bodhisattvas could attain those levels), and those who performed the twelve deeds. This is discussed in the following passage from the sutra *The Reunion of Father and Son*:

In the past, countless eons ago, in a realm composed of as many universes as there are grains of sand in the bed of the river Ganges, a tathagata known as Indraketu awakened to buddhahood,

benefited beings, and passed into nirvana. From that point until the present eon, this buddha manifested an inconceivable number of times in the manner of one awakening to buddhahood. This buddha continues to manifest as ordinary beings who first give rise to bodhichitta and then eventually awaken to buddhahood, and will continue to do so until samsara is emptied. . . .

O great spiritual hero of skillful means,
in order to bring ordinary beings to complete spiritual
maturity,
you revealed yourself as a buddha,
a true victorious one, to billions. [7b]
Even now you, O guide,
will reveal yourself as many buddhas.

Moreover, the sutra *The White Lotus* states:

O children of spiritual heritage, many hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of eons ago, I awakened to the state of a manifestly perfect buddha.

There are teachings of the unsurpassable approach of the supreme secret that accord with this interpretation. They say that, with enlightenment taking place in the context of primordial being, there is a state of evenness in immutable basic space that eludes measurement in terms of eons. Without straying from that state of dharmakaya, countless sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya manifestations have appeared to all beings in whatever ways are necessary to guide them, and they will continue to manifest everywhere for as long as the universe exists. According to the tantra *The Array of the Precious Wish-Fulfilling Secret*:

The buddha who awakened prior to all,
the supremely secret, victorious holder of the vajra,
revealed a manifold display in an inconceivable number of realms.
Throughout a succession of immensely long eons,
benefit was ensured in myriad ways—
through countless peaceful and wrathful modes,
even in such forms as hunters and prostitutes.
Moreover, now in this fortunate eon,
a thousand enlightened guides will manifest
who similarly adopt myriad modes,
benefiting countless beings.

While not wavering from the basic space of dharmakaya, within the context of the lucid manifestation of sambhogakaya, an inconceivable miraculous display spontaneously shines forth in the environments of the six classes of beings to benefit them. [8a] The glorious tantra *The Heart Essence of Secrets: The Ascertainment of Suchness* (a synopsis of the teachings found in the cycle *The Supreme Web of Magical Display*) states:

The phrase "through supreme compassion, blessings are granted" is a reference to the six sages, spiritual beings who are emanations of awareness. They emanate from the vajras of the enlightened form, speech, and mind of the Tathagata. As they emanate, owing to the influence of beings' karma, a great sage—a transcendent and accomplished conqueror—appears in every world system in the six directions—zenith and nadir—as well as other dimensions, in every one of the vast three-thousand-fold universes throughout the boundlessness of the ten directions.²³ These sages benefit the five kinds of ordinary beings by guiding them in four ways.²⁴

The four ways of guiding are as follows: guiding through the enormous merit of enlightened form, whereby the twelve deeds are carried out; guiding through the collections of teachings—enlightened speech—which provide a variety of spiritual approaches; guiding through sublime states of perception, whereby enlightened mind entails knowledge of beings' levels of acumen; and guiding through inconceivable qualities and activities of enlightenment, manifesting various miraculous displays, emanating light rays, and so forth.

The Highest Continuum describes how the twelve deeds are carried out:

It is the nature of the nirmanakaya that, in various ways,
it comes into being through manifest forms of rebirth,
while not straying from dharmakaya.
Descending from Tushita,
entering a womb, taking birth,
being trained in all the arts and martial skills,
enjoying the company of a retinue of queens,
resolving to gain release from samsara, practicing austerities,
going to Bodhimanda, [8b]
defeating the legions of Mara, awakening to perfect
enlightenment,

turning the wheel of dharma, and passing into nirvana: all those who demonstrate these deeds²⁵

do so within the total range of impure realms for as long as there is conditioned existence.²⁶

II. THE TEACHINGS

After having thus awakened to buddhahood, the Buddha turned the wheel of dharma in the following ways.

A. The Hinayana Interpretation

According to the shravaka schools, the Buddha did not teach for a period of seven weeks after his enlightenment. Then, in response to supplications by Brahma and Indra, he journeyed to Varanasi, where he taught the four truths. His audience, made up of "the five noble ones" as well as eighty thousand gods, perceived the truth.²⁷ From that point until his eightieth year, the Buddha presented his teachings in three stages. These schools maintain that he taught in response to specific situations, giving a distinct teaching in each place according to the capacities of those to be guided. *The Scriptural Transmission of Vinaya* states:

On the banks of the Varata River, he gave to the nagas a great outpouring of teachings concerning the ten kinds of positive actions. . . . The descendants of Vasishta, together with their five hundred attendants, simultaneously gained unclouded vision free of distortions through the teachings on unsurpassable enlightenment.²⁸

Regarding the Buddha's passing into nirvana at the age of eighty, *The Great Treasury of Detailed Explanations* explains:

In each of the following locations, the Sage, the sublime person, spent one year: the sacred site where he turned the wheel of dharma,²⁹ Vaishali, Makkola, the abode of the gods, Shishumara, Kaushambhi, Aravaka, Chaityargira, the bamboo grove of Venuvana, Vairata, and the city of Kapilavastu. [9a] He spent two years at the sacred site of Blazing Cave,

four in the medicinal groves of Bhaishajyavana, and five in the city of Rajagriha.

He spent six years practicing austerities, twenty-three in Shravasti, and twenty-nine at the palace.

Thus, the Victorious One was eighty when he, the holy and sublime sage, passed into nirvana.³⁰

Some shravaka authors maintain that he prolonged his life for two months, as we read in *The Commentary on "The Hundred Thousand Stanzas"*:

Having vanquished Mara, the lord of death, he prolonged his life for two months.³¹

B. The Ordinary Mahayana Interpretation

According to the well-known interpretation of the ordinary Mahayana, in the excellent place of Varanasi, on excellent occasions, the excellent teacher Shakyamuni spoke to an excellent retinue made up of the five noble ones and eighty thousand gods, teaching the excellent dharma—the first cycle of the Buddha's words, the various teachings pertaining to the four truths; this he did between the ages of thirty-six and forty-two. He began by teaching principally the training in discipline, what came to be known as the compilation of Vinaya. The ethical codes of Vinaya contain extensive overviews that classify actions according to their nature or their relation to formal precepts. The discourses of Vinaya concern the stages of meditative absorption and the celibate way of life undertaken in yogic practice. The further teachings of Vinaya give extensive, detailed explanations and analyses of these topics.

Then, at the excellent place of Vulture Peak, [9b] the excellent teacher Shakyamuni spoke to several excellent retinues. Among the four relatively ordinary retinues were about five thousand arhats, including Shariputra and Maudgalyayana,³² about five hundred nuns, including Shakyamuni's stepmother, Prajapati; and groups of laypeople, including the householder Anathapindaka and the laywoman Sagama. As well, there were enormous numbers of gods, nagas, demigods, and gandharvas. The extraordinary retinue was made up of an enormous number of bodhisattvas—including Bhadrakopa, Ratnasambhava, and Jaladatta—who had truly attained great levels of realization. On excellent occasions, he taught these reti-

nues the excellent dharma—the intermediate cycle of the Buddha's words, the various teachings pertaining to the characterization of phenomena as nonexistent; this he did between the ages of forty-three and seventy-two. He taught principally the training in mind, what came to be known as the compilation of Sutra. The ethical codes of Sutra classify the precepts of the bodhisattva vow. The discourses of Sutra discuss meditative absorption in profound and extensive ways. The further teachings of Sutra analyze related topics—spiritual levels and paths, powers of recall, and meditative absorption—in great detail.

Then, in excellent places—not any one place—such as the human world and the abodes of gods and nagas, on excellent occasions, the excellent teacher Shakyamuni spoke to an excellent retinue of innumerable monks, nuns, gods, nagas, bodhisattvas, and others, [10a] teaching the excellent dharma—the final cycle of the Buddha's words, the various teachings pertaining to definitive truth; this he did between the ages of seventy-three and eighty-two. He taught principally the training in sublime knowing, what came to be known as the compilation of Abhidharma. The ethical codes of Abhidharma have to do with taming the afflictive states in ways that are easy to implement and involve little hardship.³³ The discourses of Abhidharma discuss the vast range of techniques for engaging in the experience of suchness. The further teachings of Abhidharma analyze in great detail the mind-body aggregates, the fields of experience, the components of perception, the controlling factors, consciousness, and tathagatagarbha (the innately, totally pure "buddha nature") and discuss related topics.³⁴ As the sutra *The Seven Hundred Stanzas* states:

The Sage taught the collections of the dharma thoroughly to benefit beings.

In stages, at various places and times, the Buddha imparted his teachings in melodious tones.

C. The Extraordinary Mahayana Interpretation

According to the extraordinary interpretation, in terms of the intelligence of those to be guided, for those whose karma allowed them to comprehend the teachings gradually, it seemed that the Buddha taught in three successive cycles. For those whose intelligence enabled them to comprehend everything all at once, he seemed to teach, in its entirety and on a

single occasion, everything that needed to be taught. According to the sutra *The Majestic Array of Qualities*:

Without saying anything at all, [10b]

I manifest to beings in infinite and pervasive ways.³⁵

When there are those who sincerely wish to comprehend in a gradual way,

that is what occurs for all of them.

For those who comprehend all at once,

the varieties of spiritual teachings manifest in their entirety.

Such is the great quality of enlightened speech—

to fulfill beings' hopes just as they wish.

Some masters hold exclusively that the three cycles were taught all at once, while others maintain that they were taught in stages. Both points of view amount to nothing more than ignorance of the significance underlying the distinction between the ordinary and extraordinary interpretations, which is based on the acumen of individual beings.

Like a precious wish-fulfilling gem, then, the Teacher ensured benefit for beings exactly according to their interests. This benefit came about because, by his blessings, individual beings heard him, his speech marked by sixty melodious qualities, as if he were speaking in their respective languages. Nevertheless, these words and sounds actually had no autonomous existence. Their manifestation was similar to that of an echo and arose because of the coming together of three things: the interests of those to be guided, the Buddha's blessings, and the occasions on which these two factors coincided. *The Highest Continuum* explains:

The sound of an echo

occurs within someone's consciousness;

it is nonconceptual and unfabricated.

Similarly, the enlightened speech of the Tathagata

occurs within someone's consciousness,

but it is not located externally or internally.³⁶

Referring to the same theme, *The Amassing of the Rare and Sublime* states:

O Shantimati, from the night that I awakened to manifestly perfect buddhahood to the night that I pass into nirvana, [11a] I will not have spoken even a single syllable of spiritual teachings.

Some ignorant people say that this means he did not teach in the ultimate sense, only in the relative sense. But they seem to be confused about what is actually so—that enlightened speech, which is beyond words and letters, seems to be expressed in words and letters that conform to the perceptions of beings.

Therefore, regarding these cycles of the Buddha's words, which manifested in the perceptions of those to be guided, let us put aside the question of whether he taught in a single or in numerous locations. When those to be guided differ in three ways—in terms of bias, character, and interest—what each of them hears the Tathagata speak will be a different teaching, and all of these teachings will occur simultaneously. In *The Majestic State of Meditative Absorption*, we read the following:

Benefactor of the world, a single instance of your enlightened speech
arises as sounds that accord with different interests.
Each one thinks, "This is what the Victorious One taught me."
That is why you smile.

Moreover, the sutra *Prophetic Enlightened Intent* states:

In a single instance of vajra speech—
nonconceptual, unchanging, and delightful—
there are many different interpretations
based on the mentalities of those to be guided.

Because it seemed to some that the Buddha spoke these three cycles of teachings in succession at different times, there exists such a classification. As *The Intermediate-Length "Mother"* indicates:

How marvelous that in the human world there occurred the second turning of the wheel of dharma!

According to *The Perfection of Sublime Knowing in Seven Hundred Stanzas*:

Restating his teaching three times, [11b] he turned the wheel of dharma in twelve ways.³⁷

There are also cases in which what the single Teacher spoke on a single occasion in a single place was perceived as different teachings by the individuals to be guided. The sutra *The Array of Treasure Urns* states:

On that occasion, some bodhisattvas heard a variety of teachings about supreme compassion, while others heard a variety of teachings about the characterization of phenomena as nonexistent.

As we find in *The Definitive Commentary on Enlightened Intent*:

... for while different teachings were spoken, they were not explained in separate places on separate occasions.

You may wonder, "Doesn't the preceding citation disprove the claim that the Buddha ever spoke in stages?" However, the intended meaning of the foregoing passages is that a single theme of the teachings is subject to different analyses and that no other location or occasion is involved; but this does not imply that he did not speak on other topics in other places and at other times.

III. THE BUDDHA'S NIRVANA

Then, at age eighty-two, the Buddha saw that he could no longer ensure benefit by continuing to manifest physically, so it became his intention to demonstrate his passing into nirvana. The sutra *The Exalted Passing into Complete Nirvana* states:

At this time, when the life span is one hundred years,
it is only fitting that I pass into nirvana at eighty.
But for your sake, O brahmin,
I will endeavor to prolong my life for an additional two.³⁸

The ordinary scriptural sources state that he lived for eighty years, whereas the extraordinary sources state that he lived to be eighty-two.³⁹ [12a] Although different methods of calculation are involved, these sources are considered to be in fundamental agreement. An excellent explanation is given by the master Bhavadeva, who states that if one counts the actual years, there were eighty, whereas if one counts from the Buddha's birth (disregarding the ten months he spent in the womb) and adds up the intercalary months, one arrives at a total of eighty-two. That is, by separately counting the intercalary month that was traditionally added every three years, at the end of eighty years one obtains a total of twenty-four months (or two years) extra, thus giving the total of eighty-two; there are also the two months by which the Buddha deliberately extended his life. Alternatively, there are twenty days that can be counted as the

equivalent of two extra years; both the "year" of his birth and "year" of his passing into nirvana are counted as full years, though each is only ten days long.⁴⁰

In any event, he passed into nirvana while lying between two shala trees in the town of Kushinagara, the region in which the Malla, a clan of powerful athletes, arose. His funeral pyre spontaneously burst into flames, and his sacred remains were divided into eight portions. One of these was given to the Malla clan of Kushinagara, one to the Malla clan of the region of Papa, one to the Mahabuluga clan of the warrior class in the region of Avakalpana, one to the brahmins of Vishnudvipa, one to the Shakya clan of Kapilavastu, and one to the Licchavi clan of Vaishali. One was worshiped by the Bheda clan of the brahmin class of Magadha. The vase that held the Buddha's remains was given to the brahmins Drona and Sama.⁴¹ The ashes from his funeral pyre were taken by the Pippala clan of the brahmin class. The clans all went their separate ways with their portions, which they enshrined in great stupas.

Of his canine teeth, [12b] the fourth was taken to the naga domain by the nagas of the city of Ravana.⁴² The third was worshiped by the king of the rakshasa demons of Kalinga. The second was given to Ajatashatru, the king of Magadha, as his share; this, together with the relics that multiplied from it, was enshrined in a stupa ornamented with designs of lotus garlands. These relics were later brought with honor to Tibet and are said to reside at present in the White Stupa at Samyé. The first tooth was brought with honor by Indra to the Trayastrimsha abode.⁴³

All of this is referred to in *The Scriptural Transmission of Vinaya*:

Of the eight portions of the Seer's remains, including the canine teeth,

seven were worshiped by people in the human world.⁴⁴

Of that sublime being's four canine teeth,

one was worshiped in the Trayastrimsha abode,

a second in the lovely city of Rajagriha,

a third in the country of the king of Kalinga,

while the fourth canine tooth of this sublime being

was worshiped by the naga king in the city of Ravana.

King Ashoka, dwelling in Pataliputra,

spread the contents of the seven stupas far and wide.

By the power of this act, the earth, the foundation of our prosperity,

was clearly adorned with the tangible signs of the king's aspirations.

In this way, the Seer's remains were highly honored by gods, nagas, human sovereigns, kinnaras, and yaksha lords as they worshiped and venerated them.

Thus, the portions of the remains, including the four teeth, were kept as objects of worship in the different domains. [13a] In particular, in keeping with his aspirations in previous lives and his miraculous abilities, the Buddhist king Ashoka, the son of King Patala, took the seven portions left in our human world and, on the Indian subcontinent and in surrounding regions, erected as many stupas as there are grains in two handfuls of sand. There were said to be ten million such stupas, or chaityas. This is what *The Fortunate Eon* means by "the Buddha's remains will continue to increase."



From *The Precious Treasury of Philosophical Systems: A Treatise Elucidating the Meaning of the Entire Range of Spiritual Approaches*, this is the first chapter, a classification of the histories concerning the Teacher.

PERFECT CONDUCT

Ascertaining the Three Vows

NGARI PANCHEN, PEMA WANGYI GYALPO

Commentary by

HIS HOLINESS DUDJOM RINPOCHE,
JIGDRAL YESHE DORJE

Translated by

KHENPO GYURME SAMDRUP AND SANGYE KHANDRO



Wisdom Publications • Boston

nature and distinctions will be discussed. Then, the manner through which one may obtain the vow for the first time, including the ritual for bestowing the precepts, will be discussed. Next, the different enumerations of vows and the methods through which to guard them from deterioration will be presented. Finally, in the case of a downfall or damaged vow, the methods of restoration will be revealed.

5. A recapitulation of the first chapter:

This general explanation of the stages of the main teaching completes the recapitulation of the first chapter.

This recapitulation is simply a way of reiterating the theme of the first chapter, which serves the purpose of preparing the reader for the main subject to be covered in the remaining four chapters.

II. An extensive explanation of the nature and training of each of the three vows in three divisions, which comprise the second, third, and fourth chapters:

- A. Chapter Two: Prātimokṣa
- B. Chapter Three: Bodhisattva
- C. Chapter Four: Secret Mantra

CHAPTER TWO:
AN EXPLANATION OF THE PRĀTIMOKṢA-VINAYA

A. Chapter Two: An Explanation of the Prātimokṣa-vinaya, in three subdivisions:

1. The manner in which Lord Buddha taught the precious doctrine of the vinaya:

In Varanasi, the Buddha primarily taught the Four Noble Truths and the practice of higher morality to the Five Excellent Ones.²²

The basket of morality, the Vinaya Piṭaka, was the subject of the first turning of the Dharma wheel, which occurred within the context of the five fully endowed circumstances. These five are the fully endowed teacher, the unequaled Lord Buddha Śākyamuni; the fully endowed place, the central land of the *arhats*, Varanasi, India (Varanasi is a sacred land, where many realized saints have vanished without leaving ordinary human remains); the fully endowed time, seven weeks after the Buddha achieved perfect awakening, on the fourth day of the sixth month of the lunar calendar; the fully endowed Dharma, the training in extraordinary discipline and the first Dharma discourse on the Four Noble Truths; and the fully endowed assembly, the gathering of eighty thousand celestial beings and the Five Excellent Ones of the human race.

2. After the teachings were compiled, the way in which the teachings and accomplishments were upheld:

On the
compile
Śāriput
parinir
since all
along w
smoke
the Ny
King Aj
ing the
ering th
given o
the grea
three "t
The
Buddha
Dharma
become
ify that
(purifica
Afte
as Mah
demoni
concern
whose
accord
these w
accordi
the *saṅ*
allowed
time. E
root sc
emerge
Sthavir
Sarvasti
follow
The
tion ass

The teachings were compiled by Kāśyapa and others. The arhats composed the *Treasury of Particular Explanations* and other texts, which were propagated by Yönten Öd (Guṇaprabha) and Shakya Öd (Śākyaprabha). The precept lineage of the earlier translations was propagated by Śāntarakṣita and, later, by Śākya Śrī.

On three great occasions the spoken teachings of Lord Buddha Śākyamuni were compiled. The first council came about when the Buddha's foremost disciples, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, along with countless arhats, passed into *parinirvāṇa* along with Lord Buddha. Many celestial beings proclaimed that since all the fully ordained disciples of Lord Buddha had passed into *parinirvāṇa* along with their teacher, the Dharma was like an extinguished fire, with only smoke remaining. In order to correct this view, shortly after the *parinirvāṇa*, in the Nyagrodha cave at Rājagṛha (in central India) and under the sponsorship of King Ajātaśatru, the great Kāśyapa along with five hundred arhats convened during the summer rainy retreat known as *yarney* (*vārṣika*).²³ It was during this gathering that Ānanda recalled from memory the entire teaching Lord Buddha had given on the Sūtra Piṭaka. Upāli recalled from memory the Vinaya Piṭaka, while the great Kāśyapa immaculately recited the Abhidharma Piṭaka. Afterwards, these three "baskets" were compiled with the assistance of the gathering of arhats.

The second council occurred some one hundred and ten years after Lord Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*. In Vaiśālī seven hundred arhats, under the sponsorship of the Dharma king Aśoka, gathered in the Kusmapurī monastery to clarify what had become known as the "ten prohibitions."²⁴ The entire Tripiṭaka was recited to clarify that these ten were indeed not permitted, and afterwards the *sojong* (*uposatha*)²⁵ (purification) rite was performed to create conducive, auspicious circumstances.

After the reign of King Aśoka's grandson, King Virasena, several bhikṣus—such as Mahādeva, Bhadra, Sthavira, Nāgasena, and others—became possessed by demonic forces. Due to this there came to be five major points of discrepancy²⁶ concerning the prātimokṣa training. The discrepancy originated with the bhikṣus whose minds were possessed by demonic forces so that their actions were not in accordance with the true teachings of Lord Buddha Śākyamuni. As a result of this, these wrong views became accepted as doctrine even though they were prohibited according to the Buddha's teachings. For four generations of anarchical leadership, the *saṅgha* was thrown into turmoil and conflict. Since the Buddha had never allowed the vinaya to be put into writing, the debate persisted for a very long time. Eventually there emerged four major systems that became known as the four root schools of the śrāvakas. From these four roots eighteen minor schools emerged. The four root schools are the Sarvāstivāda, the Mahāsāṅghika, the Sthavira, and the Saṃmitīya. Seven of the eighteen minor schools follow the Sarvāstivāda school's principles, five follow the Mahāsāṅghika, and three each follow the final two root schools.

The Sarvāstivāda is the basis of all four schools. The philosophy of this tradition asserts that there are five knowable things: that appearances are the basis of

form; that the basis is the mind, accompanied by secondary mental events; the existence of nonassociated compositional factors; the existence of uncompounded factors (those that exist without cause or condition); and that all of these constitute substantial reality or existent things. This lineage originates with Rāhula, the Buddha's son, and the Sanskrit language is used during recitation of the vinaya. The patched saffron robe, indicating full ordination, must be made of more than nine sections and fewer than twenty-five, with the symbols of a Dharma wheel and lotus sewn on the top corner. The Sarvāstivāda school's followers assert the view that the phenomena of the three times are substantial reality, yet that all compounded phenomena are self-destructing in each moment. They also believe in the nonexistence of the "self." After three countless eons of time, according to this system, buddhahood is attained.

The second school, the Mahāsāṅghika, derives its name from the fact that originally the majority of the ordained saṅgha belonged to this school. The lineage originated with Mahā Kāśyapa. The robe of full ordination must have at least seven sections and no more than twenty-three. The symbols sewn on it are the endless knot and white conch shell. The language used to recite the vinaya is the Prākṛit dialect.

The founder-abbots of the Sthavira school were Kātyāyana and the arhats. While reciting the vinaya in this school the Piśācika dialect is used. The saffron robe must have at least five and no more than twenty-one partitions. The symbol sewn upon it is the white conch shell. The philosophy maintained is that during the experience of the "absorption of cessation" there is mind but no incorrect (deluded) awareness. Through this school, buddhahood is achieved in no fewer than ten and no more than thirty eons of time.

The Saṃmitīya school derives its name from the fact that its followers displayed tremendous devotion over an extended period of time. The vinaya is recited in the Apabhraṃśa dialect, and the founding abbot was Upāli. The style and manner of preparing and wearing the saffron robe is in accordance with the Sthavira tradition. The philosophy asserted is that the "self" exists but is inexpressible. All knowable things are included in that which can and cannot be expressed.

The vinaya tradition that was propagated in Tibet is that of the Sarvāstivāda school.

After four generations of kings had come and gone, the conflict began to decrease. During the reign of King Kaṇiṣka, the sponsor for the third great council, there were still many differences of opinion. Then, in the Kaśmīr Temple, Kuvana Vihāra, five hundred arhats, four hundred bhikṣus, and five hundred bodhisattvas gathered. According to the prophetic dream of King Kṛkin, quoted in the sūtras, it was agreed that all eighteen schools upheld the Buddha's utterance. All volumes that comprise the Vinaya Piṭaka were written down, and all remaining volumes of the Sūtra and Abhidharma Piṭakas were put into writing.

The authorized commentaries based on the Buddha's spoken teachings originated and were maintained as follows:

In nor
compose
Mahāvibh
great śrāv:
and his as
spiritual
Vinayamū
such as th

The s
Śrāmaṇera
Prabhāvat
spiritual r
filled the l

Then,
Detsen, th
by Abbot
the only v
nearly des
Mar, Yo, :
Riwo Den
of full ord
Sherab an
lineage of

When
Tibet, he l
sively. Thi
Tibet." Ag
eage of the
the invitat
Sakya Paṇ
Pal, and d

3. The ma
a. A gener
b. A speci

a. A gener

1. The

T
is
it
cc
in

In northern India, the arhat Upagupta, together with five hundred arhats, composed the extraordinary commentaries of the śrāvakas, such as the *Mahāvibhāṣa* (*Treasury of Particular Explanations*) and others. In addition, many great śrāvakas with qualities similar to those of the Buddha, such as Guru Kṛti and his assembly of arhats, composed additional commentaries. In particular the spiritual master Guṇaprabha, attainer of the third *bhūmi*, composed the *Vinayamūla-sūtra* (*Root Text on the Vinaya*) and further commentaries upon it, such as the *Twelve Thousand Verses*.

The spiritual master Śākyaprabha wrote the advice to the novice called *Śrāmaṇeratrīṣata-kārikā* (*Three Hundred Verses of the Novice*) and the commentary *Prabhāvatī*, further propagating the doctrine. Due to the kindness of these two spiritual masters, countless upholders of the victory banner of full ordination filled the land from the southern reaches of India to as far north as Śambhala.

Then, in accordance with the wishes of the great Dharma King Trisong Detsen, the vinaya tradition known as Sarvāstivāda was first brought into Tibet by Abbot Śāntarakṣita. This was passed down to Ba Ratna and others, becoming the only vinaya tradition to enter Tibet. Later, after the evil King Langdarma nearly destroyed the presence of the Buddhadharma in Tibet, three men called Mar, Yo, and Tsang carried the entire vinaya by mule pack to the place called Riwo Dentik. It was there that the great lama Gongpa Rabсал bestowed the vows of full ordination upon ten men from central and upper Tibet. Lume Tsultrim Sherab and others propagated this lineage, which became known as the "vinaya lineage of the lower region of Tibet." It remains undeteriorated to the present day.

When Dharmapāla, the great *paṇḍita* from eastern India, came to Ngari in Tibet, he brought with him the pure vinaya lineage, which he propagated extensively. This in turn became known as the "vinaya lineage of the upper region of Tibet." Again, at a later time, the lineage that became known as the "vinaya lineage of the central region of Tibet" was brought by Khache Panchen Śākya Śrī at the invitation of Trophu Lotsawa Champa Pal. This lineage was passed on to Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo, then to Changchub Pal and Dorje Pal, and down the line to the present day.

3. The main topic of discussion, in two subdivisions:
 - a. A general explanation of the nature and distinctions of vows
 - b. A specific explanation of the format for the vow-receiving ritual
- a. A general explanation in two additional subdivisions:

1. The nature of the vows:

The nature is to take up the thought of renunciation; the foundation is to abstain from harming others. If born from the body and speech, it is objective by belief. In addition, it is believed to be the seed of the continuum of the "abandoning mind." In our school, this is according to individual views of higher and lower traditions.

alone. The benefits of novice ordination are one hundred times greater than lay. The benefits of full ordination are one hundred times greater than novice. The first categories become common disciplines of the following categories, and so serve as steps on the path to the latter. Likewise, the prātimokṣa precepts serve as support for the bodhisattva vows. Both serve as the basis of support for secret mantra. Thus it should be clear that practitioners of secret mantra must have the foundation of having established and ascended the two preceding paths.

In the past, when the Buddha's doctrine was all-pervasive, there was time to practice pure morality and to perform all the various aspects of training. Now, at the time of the doctrine's decline, to maintain pure discipline for even one day is considered to be of even greater benefit. As is stated in the *Samādhirāja-sūtra*, "For as many grains of sand exist on the banks of the river Ganges for ten million eons of time: if you make, with a sincere heart, that many offerings of food, drink, incense, flowers, and light to the millions of buddhas who come and go, and if you compare this to the practice of pure morality during the time of the decline of the doctrine of the sugatas, the merit accumulated in one day of pure morality is far more sublime."

Having completed this subject, the conclusion of the chapter follows:

This explanation of the stages of the prātimokṣa-vinaya completes the second chapter.

Of the five chapters of this commentary, the principal subject of the second chapter—the common training of the śrāvakas, the prātimokṣa, and the categories of vinaya training for male and female practitioners—is now complete. This is taken from the Buddha's teachings of the four great scriptures of vinaya: the *Vinayavastu*, *Vinayavibhāga*, *Vinayāgama*, and *Vinayottama*.

CHAPTER THREE: THE BODHISATTVA VOWS

B. Chapter Three: The Bodhisattva Vows, in three divisions:

1. The manner in which the Buddha taught the Pāramitā Piṭaka:

Mahā Muni, the guide of sentient beings in this fortunate eon, at Vulture's Peak and elsewhere, boundlessly taught the extremely extensive piṭaka to those of the class of Mahāyāna.

Although Lord Buddha Śākyamuni achieved full awakening as a buddha many countless eons prior to his life as Śākyamuni, for the purpose of alleviating the suffering of cyclic confusion and guiding all beings to permanent peace, he reentered this world to demonstrate the twelve miraculous deeds⁴⁴ and, specifically,

to reveal the path to freedom from suffering. Through this intentional manifestation he was able to reveal the manner in which all beings may achieve the great, unsurpassed state of full awakening. In the previous chapter on the prātimokṣa, explanations were given on the manner in which the Buddha first introduced the Vinaya Piṭaka and how it was compiled, propagated, taught, and practiced. This chapter explains the bodhisattva vows and conduct, the principal subject of the second and third turnings of the Dharma wheel. The path of bodhisattvahood was revealed within the extraordinary context of the five states of perfect certainty. The "certainty of the teacher" was the fourth Buddha of this eon, Śākyamuni. The "certainty of the place" was Vulture's Peak, India, and elsewhere. The "certainty of the assembly" was the gathering of those of the class of Mahāyāna, including gods, *nāgas*, humans, demigods, spirits, and others of the common assembly. The uncommon assembly was composed of countless bodhisattvas. The "certainty of the Dharma" was the extremely extensive discourse focusing upon mental development within the context of the Sūtra Piṭaka, with emphasis on each of the three piṭakas respectively. The vinaya aspect of the sūtra teaching includes a description of the bodhisattva vows. The sūtra aspect reveals the extensive profundity of meditative absorption. The abhidharma aspect of sūtra reveals the divisions of the stages and paths, as well as the distinctions between *dhyāna* and *samādhi*, or mindfulness and meditative absorption.

During the third turning of the wheel, the meaning of ultimate truth was revealed so extensively that it was beyond ordinary conception. Here, the "certainty of the time" was experienced according to the aspiration of the recipients. Some understood instantaneously, while others comprehended gradually, according to their own level of understanding.

It is agreed by all Buddhist schools that the first turning of the wheel primarily revealed the teachings according to relative truth. Although the second and third turnings revealed both relative and ultimate explanations, there is much disagreement concerning this. In the Nyingma tradition, we assert that the second turning revealed the nature of both relative and ultimate truth, but with an emphasis on the temporary ultimate, whereas the third turning revealed the ultimate, absolute truth.

2. After it was compiled, the manner in which it was taught and practiced:

The *Gambhīradarśanaparamparā* (*Tradition of the Profound View*) was compiled by Mañjuśrī, elaborated upon by Nāgārjuna and others, and propagated by Śāntideva. The *Udāracaryāparamparā* (*Tradition of Extremely Vast Conduct*) was compiled by Maitreya, elaborated upon by Asaṅga and his brother, and propagated by Atiśa. Our tradition of Padmasambhava follows that of Nāgārjuna.

The common teachings presented during the first turning of the wheel were compiled on three separate occasions. The teachings of the second turning were

compi
uncom
on the
teachin
Vajrap
Nāgārjū

Acco
nature
accord
compos
on the
that all
posed t
ing) tha
are not
accordi
View, C
the grea
Candral
sible pri
mind, b

Acco
Extensiv
piled by
Comme
appear
his own
brated n
categor
great Di
who was

In ou
and the e
practiced
maintain

3. The p
a. A gen
b. A spec

a. A gen
two fu

1. Th

compiled through uncommon and extraordinary means. According to the uncommon tradition of Mahāyāna, in the southern direction of Rājagṛha, India, on the peak of Bimasambhava, one million bodhisattvas gathered to receive the teachings of the Tripiṭaka, which were then compiled by Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, and Vajrapāṇi. These teachings are found in the two great traditions of Ārya Nāgārjuna and Ārya Asaṅga.

According to the tradition of Nāgārjuna, the teachings on the profound nature of emptiness were compiled by Ārya Mañjuśrī. Following this, and in accordance with the Buddha's prophecy, the great spiritual master Nāgārjuna composed the six categories of explanations concerning the Middle Way, based on the second turning of the wheel, which established *svaśūnyatā*, the reality that all phenomena are empty of any inherent nature.⁴⁵ Nāgārjuna then composed the *Vigrahavyāvartanikārikā* and other texts (based upon the third turning) that serve to establish *paraśūnyatā*, the view that although all phenomena are not empty of their own nature or reality, they are asserted as being empty according to conventional reality. With this, the Tradition of the Profound View, Gambhīradarśanaparamparā, came into existence. Following Nāgārjuna, the great propagators of this tradition include such highly realized masters as Candrakīrti, Āryadeva, and others. (The great Śāntideva and Jetāri were responsible primarily for propagating the teachings on the generation of the awakened mind, bodhicitta.)

According to the tradition of Ārya Asaṅga, known as the Tradition of Great Extensive Conduct, Udāracaryāparamparā, the teachings were originally compiled by Maitreya. These teachings, which are contained in the Five Great Commentaries of Maitreya, essentially elucidate the empty nature of objective appearances.⁴⁶ Later, Ārya Asaṅga elaborated upon these works by composing his own commentaries, which were then further elaborated upon by such celebrated masters as the supreme scholar Vasubandhu, who composed the eight categories of the *Prakaraṇa*.⁴⁷ These teachings were further propagated by the great Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, Candragomin, and Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna (Atiśa), who was responsible for bringing this lineage of bodhisattva vows into Tibet.

In our Nyingma tradition, which follows the lineage of Ācārya Padmasambhava and the earlier translation school, the bodhisattva vows and rituals are received and practiced primarily according to the tradition of Nāgārjuna. The view, however, is maintained in accordance with both traditions.

3. The principal subject, in two subdivisions:
 - a. A general explanation of the nature and distinctions of the vows to be received
 - b. A specific explanation of how to receive the vows
- a. A general explanation of the nature and distinctions of the vows to be received, in two further subdivisions:
 1. The nature of the vows:

eons of time each to accomplish.

Having completed the principal subject, the chapter is complete.

This completes the third chapter, the explanation of the bodhisattva's training in the awakened mind.

In dependence upon relative methods and indications, and in order to meet the needs of all beings, the manner of developing, maintaining, guarding, and restoring both the aspirational and practical awakened mind has been taught according to the two great traditions of practice.

CHAPTER FOUR: SECRET MANTRA

C. Chapter Four: Secret Mantra, an explanation of the third root, the vajra vehicle of secret mantra, the training of all the vidyādhara, and the progressive stages of the samaya words of honor.

The vajra vehicle is taught in three divisions.

1. An explanation of how the doctrine of the vajra vehicle originated:

The sovereign teacher, the vajra-holder Samantabhadra, taught the ocean-like classes of tantra in the great Akaniṣṭha. Later, at Dhānyakāṭaka and elsewhere, the teachings were once again revealed...

Originally, the Buddha revealed the tantras through the mode of the five fully endowed circumstances. The fully endowed teacher, our own Lord Buddha Śākyamuni, has remained from beginningless time as the foundational, originally pure sphere of the primordial wisdom of intrinsic awareness. In this state of actual awakening, spontaneous presence and primordial wisdom are one. From within this, the one taste of the enlightened intentionality of all the buddhas of the three times remains as the appearance of the embodiment of complete enjoyment, the sambhogakāya.

All objective appearances are in actual nature the self-expression of primordial wisdom, the pure primordial buddha (Samantabhadra). The nonconceptual state, free from grasping and clinging, is the "vajra." The indivisibility of the sphere of truth and primordial wisdom is the "holder." The pure sovereign ruler of all maṇḍalas is the teacher. Thus, the fully endowed teacher is the vajra-holder, Samantabhadra.

The fully endowed place is self-awareness, exceedingly pure and understood as the Akaniṣṭha pure realm.⁵³ The fully endowed assembly, one's own self-projection, appears as the immeasurable maṇḍalas of peaceful and wrathful deities. The fully

endowed
dom's en
of sponta

With
taught t
only bod
this same
as the gl
maṇḍala
and in tl
of sentie
the realn
Specifica
ni, while
peak of
secret ma
miraculo
Vajrapāṇ
Apabhra

Wher
of śrāvaka
observe t
They rep
much to
appeared
precepts
the south
However,
Gautama
Then a v
pratyekas
Buddha
upon Kin

The I
spots, su
Śmaśāna
forth. In
at uncert
deity, an
After rev
Dhānyak
revealed t
other occ

endowed Dharma is the inexpressible nature of the lucid radiance of primordial wisdom's enlightened intentionality. The fully endowed time is the unchanging sphere of spontaneous, self-originating purity.

Within these five endowments, the ocean-like classes of tantra were unceasingly taught through symbolic indication in the Akaniṣṭha pure realm. Accordingly, only bodhisattvas on the eighth and ninth levels were able to hear the teaching. At this same time, for the benefit of extremely unruly beings, the Buddha manifested as the glorious Heruka (in wrathful aspect) and displayed the entire supporting maṇḍala of wrathful deities in the five pure realms of manifestation, nirmāṇakāya, and in the pure and impure ordinary worldly realms in order to tame the minds of sentient beings. Similarly, Buddha Vajradhara sent many mind-emanations to the realms of gods, nāgas, *yakṣas*, and others to reveal and propagate the tantras. Specifically in our human realm, the supreme emanation Lord Buddha Śākyamuni, while meditating for six years in austerity, sent his mind-emanations to the peak of Mount Meru and beneath the ocean in order to reveal the doctrine of secret mantra. Again returning to his body, he completed his display of the twelve miraculous deeds. In general, all of the secret mantra tantras were compiled by Vajrapāṇi and transcribed primarily into the languages of Sanskrit, Prākṛit, Apabhraṃśa, Dākiṇī, those of barbarians, and others.

When the king of Oḍḍiyāna,⁵⁴ Indrabhūti, saw the Buddha and his assembly of śrāvakas flying in space, unsure of what he was seeing he called his ministers to observe the phenomenon and asked them if it was a flock of red-colored birds. They replied that it was the Buddha and his disciples. The king, wishing very much to see the Buddha, prayed to him to come down. The Buddha then appeared to him and asked him this question: "Can you firmly maintain the three precepts of total renunciation?" King Indrabhūti replied, "In this pleasure grove of the southern continent it is easy for me to take rebirth as a lowly fox if need be. However, to abandon desirable objects in order to achieve liberation—this, Lord Gautama, I cannot do." At these words, the assembly of śrāvakas disappeared. Then a voice was heard from space, saying, "What appeared to be śrāvakas and pratyekas was actually the great miraculous display of bodhisattvas." After this, the Buddha revealed the primordial wisdom maṇḍala and bestowed empowerment upon King Indrabhūti, who later accomplished the kāya of nonduality.

The Buddha manifested to reveal the Vajrayāna maṇḍalas at other power spots, such as in eastern China at Parvata Pakkhipāda, in central India at the Śmaśāna Śītavana charnel ground, and in Śrī Laṅkā at Dakpo Dradrok, and so forth. In addition, Lord Buddha taught many of the tantras in unknown places at uncertain times. At times, Lord Buddha himself manifested as the principal deity, and at other times he bestowed empowerment as the Buddha himself. After revealing all three vehicles in this world, the Buddha then manifested at Dhānyakāṭaka Caitya, where he opened the great maṇḍala of the Kālacakra and revealed the tantras to the assembly of male and female yogins and yoginīs. On other occasions, he appeared as a fully ordained monk to reveal the outer tantras,

including most of those of the *kriyā* and *upa* classes. When revealing to King Indrabhūti the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*, and to Vajragarbha the *Hevajra-tantra*, he manifested as the principal deities of those maṇḍalas surrounded by the entire assembly of deities. In this way, just as the tantras had previously been fully revealed in the great Akaniṣṭha, they were also introduced in their entirety into many other realms and world systems.

2. After the teachings were compiled, the manner in which they were practiced and upheld:

...and compiled by Vajrapāṇi and the retinue of recipients, and elaborated upon by the eight great mahāsiddhas and scholars of India and Tibet.

The manner in which the tantric teachings were compiled and propagated began in the celestial palace of Vajrapāṇi known as Alakāvatī. Vajrapāṇi convened with nine hundred and ninety-six million bodhisattvas to teach all the tantric classes and categories without exception. The disciple Candrabhadra compiled the root *Kālacakra-tantra*, and Vajragarbha compiled the *Diviparikṣā*, and so forth. Although the retinue of recipients compiled various tantras that appeared to be distinct from their teacher, Vajrapāṇi, from the ultimate point of view they were nondual.

The secret Vajrayāna vehicle was not predicted to enter the world of human beings until a later time. According to prophesy, Vajrayāna entered this world in the following way. In the original translation school of the Nyingma there are two tantric distinctions, those of tantra and accomplishment. The coming of the tantra class was clearly prophesied by Lord Buddha Śākyamuni. Twenty-eight years after he passed into parinirvāṇa, five great sages—Deva Yaśasvi Varapāla of the gods' realm, Nāgarāja Takṣaka the nāga king, Yakṣa Ulkā mukha of the yakṣas, Rakṣa Matyaupāyika of the cannibals, and Vidyādhara Vimalakīrti the Licchavi of the human realm⁵⁵—convened through their clairvoyant powers on the peak of Mount Malaya. In twenty-three verses, they made heartfelt prayers to receive the tantric transmissions. It was then that Vajrapāṇi directly appeared to them and revealed the essence of secret mantra, just as he had revealed it before in Akaniṣṭha, in Tuṣita, and in the thirty-third gods' realm. Rakṣa Matyaupāyika of the cannibals wrote the teachings down on golden parchment with lapis lazuli ink and buried them in the expanse of space.

Then, by the force of these blessings, King Ja of Sahor had seven auspicious dreams, indicating that all the scriptures of the tantric class would descend into this human world; and, in fact, shortly thereafter, all the scriptures of the tantric class of mahāyoga descended upon the roof of his palace. The *kriyā* class descended in Varanasi, the yogatantra class descended on the peak of Aknīparvata Ujjavala mountain, and the anuyoga class descended in Śrī Laṅkā in the Singali forest.

These te
Druṣa.⁵⁰

Later
of the g
where th
of Oddi
the teach
ciple Ma
it to the
to Vima
atiyogati

The
into the
revealed
presence
Dharma
maṇḍala
mentari
(Thugs-
Chos 'Ph
sGrub-P.
Lung), a

As it
were giv
Mahāka
herukas
She plac
and hid
known
through
paṇḍitas
in mediti
She ther
followin
Mahā U
of Samy
Nāgārju
turquois
Preṣaka;
Śāntigari
accordin
ual accor
taining t

These teachings then progressively spread into the countries of India, Nepal, and Druṣa.⁵⁶

Later, Nubchen Sangye Yeshe accomplished these tantras under the guidance of the great paṇḍitas of these various countries and brought them into Tibet, where they were propagated. The atiyogatantra class was received in the country of Odḍiyāna by Garab Dorje through his direct visions of Vajrasattva. Compiling the teachings into volumes of scriptures, he then passed the lineage on to his disciple Mañjuśrīmitra. Mañjuśrīmitra passed it to Śrī Simha, and Śrī Simha passed it to the second Buddha, Padmasambhava. Padmasambhava passed the teachings to Vimalamitra, who then passed them to the translator Vairocana. Thus, the atiyogatantra was extensively propagated through this line of great realized beings.

The second category of the Vajrayāna vehicle, the accomplishment class, came into the human world in a manner similar to the way in which it was originally revealed in the Akaniṣṭha pure realm. Through the wrathful manifestation of divine presence and with the speech of the natural sound of the nature of truth, Vajra Dharma, a manifestation of Vajrapāṇi, revealed his own self-nature as nine maṇḍalas. The teachings were revealed and the scriptures were compiled. Five commentaries were then written by Vajra Dharma: *Thukje Jang Thakne Kyi Lung* (*Thugs-rJe dPyangs Thag-gNas Kyi Lung*), *Dzega Chötrul Hlayi Lung* (*mDzad-Pa Chos 'Phrul Lha-Yi Lung*), *Trinley Tharchin Drubpai Lung* (*Phrin-Las mThar-Phyin sGrub-Pā'i Lung*), *Sang-Ngak Ngepa Döngyi Lung* (*gSang-sNags Nges-Pa Don-Gyi Lung*), and *Sangwa Goje Drönmai Lung* (*gSang-Ba sGo-'Byed sDron-Mā'i Lung*).

As it was not yet time to bring these teachings into the human world, they were given over to their caretaker, Ḍākiṇī Lekyi Wangmo (*las kyi dbangmo; Mahākarmendrāṇī*). The *Ḍākiṇī* then placed the five general tantras of the eight herukas as one maṇḍala in a small case made of eight precious metals and jewels. She placed the ten individual tantras in ten separate little caskets, sealed them, and hid them in the stūpa called Ukhakara Ityasyastūpa in the charnel ground known as Śmaśāna Śitavana (Cool Forest). Then, at the appropriate time, through their clairvoyant powers of awareness, the eight great mahāsiddha paṇḍitas gathered together at this stūpa. By the force of their strong invocation in meditative absorption, Ḍākiṇī Lekyi Wangmo appeared directly before them. She then brought out the individually sealed cases and distributed them in the following way: The golden case containing the cycle for the accomplishment of Mahā Uttama Heruka was given to Vimalamitra; Hūṃkara received the silver case of Samyak Heruka; Mañjuśrīmitra received the iron case of Yamāntaka; Nāgārjuna received the copper case of Hayagrīva; Padmasambhava received the turquoise case of Vajrakīla; Dhana Saṃskṛta received the golden case of Saṃskṛta Preṣaka; Rambuguhya received the multicolored gem case of Lokapūja Stotra; and Śāntigarbha received the stone case of Vajra Mantrabhīru. This distribution was according to prophecy, and each went off to practice and fully realize their individual accomplishments. The small case made of eight precious jewels and metals containing the *Sugatasamnipāta* (*Gathering of all the Sugatas*), the combined maṇḍala of

the eight herukas, along with the secret essential instructions, was not revealed but was instead resealed and prophesied to be discovered and revealed at a later date.

Later, the great vidyādhara Padmasambhava, according to his own prophetic indication, came to the land of Tibet, where he bestowed all the empowerments and essential instructions upon his own nine heart-sons and the twenty-five disciples. They in turn were prophesied to reincarnate over the centuries to reveal the empowerments and instructions to the karmic aspirants of future times. Moreover, the tantric teachings were extensively propagated throughout India and Tibet through the kindness of many realized mahāsiddhas and scholars.

3. Establishing the main subject, in two divisions:

a. Briefly revealed:

Although the original translation tradition is known for the lineages of kama and terma, and though the latter tradition has boundless systems, a general explanation of the samaya of the tantric classes will be explained here.

The earlier translation school is well known for its two traditions of kama and terma. The kama is the "distant" tradition, whereas the terma is "near." Both originate through the three extraordinary lineages of mind-to-mind transmission, symbolic indication transmission, and oral transmission. The terma tradition also has three additional lineages: prophetic indication, empowerment through aspiration, and the lineage sealed and entrusted to the *ḍākiṇīs*.

The later translation school teachings were placed into scriptures by the king of Oḍḍiyāna, Indrabhūti. By introducing these teachings to his kingdom, it came to pass that every living being within Oḍḍiyāna without exception achieved spiritual attainment and vanished in the rainbow body. Later, the country became a great lake filled with serpent beings. Vajrapāṇi traveled there, taught the doctrine, and gradually ripened the minds of the serpents. Eventually they took rebirth as human beings living around the banks of the lake and, through their efforts in practice, later achieved realization. All of them becoming *dākas* and *ḍākiṇīs*, they flew here and there throughout space so that the place became known as Oḍḍiyāna Khandro Ling, the land of space travelers. Later, when the lake evaporated, a self-originating palace of Heruka arose that was filled with the original treasury of scriptures. Later still, each of the great mahāsiddhas, such as King Bipukawa, Nāgārjuna, Ḍombi Heruka, Kukkuripā, Lalita Vajra, the mahāsiddha Tilopa, and others propagated the teachings. Other great realized beings propagated the teachings in other pure realms, such as Śambhala. In short, the eight great and eighty minor mahāsiddhas and countless other scholars

and realized beings composed commentaries and extensively propagated the doctrine. The boundless descriptions of their enlightened deeds will not be presented in detail here. However, readers may refer to the many translations of

their i
genera
be give

b. Ext

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

1.

The ob
at the c
ing thro
the skill
The wo
the initi
awarene
union is

2. 7

2.a

The div
enumer
the Śrī
kriyātan
the Ma
worldly
times, n
never fo
verance

The RI-ME PHILOSOPHY

of Jamgön Kongtrul the Great

A STUDY OF THE BUDDHIST
LINEAGES OF TIBET

Ringu Tulku

Edited by Ann Helm



SHAMBHALA
BOSTON & LONDON
2006

3

THE HISTORY OF THE TEACHING LINEAGES THAT CAME TO TIBET

THE WAY THAT THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS were brought to Tibet and transmitted can be divided into two parts: the teaching lineages and the practice lineages. In this chapter we will discuss the teaching lineages, which also have two parts: the sutra lineages and the tantra lineages. First, for the sutra lineages, I will briefly describe the teaching lineages of Vinaya, Abhidharma, and Pramāṇa, and then give a fuller description of the lineages of Prajñāparamita and Madhyamaka.

The Teaching Lineages of the Sutras

VINAYA

The Vinaya Tradition in India

The Vinaya is the textual framework upon which the monastic community is built. It includes two sections of rules that apply to individuals, and two sections of procedures and conventions that apply to the entire monastic sangha.

As background for understanding the Vinaya teaching lineages, there were four main schools of the Shravakayāna in India, which expanded into eighteen schools. Each of them had a slightly different version of the root *Sūtra on Individual Liberation*, or *Pratimokṣha Sūtra*, and the four sections of the Vinaya scriptures. The Sarvāstivāda school was the tradition that came to Tibet, and it brought the *Pratimokṣha Sūtra* as well as the four sections of the Vinaya. These four are called the *Basic Transmission of the Vinaya*, *Distinguishing the Transmissions of the Vinaya*, the *Minor Transmissions of the Vinaya*, and the *Sublime Teachings of the Vinaya*.

For all the Shrivakayana schools, the main Vinaya shastra, or commentary, is the *Great Treasury of Detailed Exposition*, or *Mahāvibhāṣa* in Sanskrit. This is a compilation of commentaries on the Vinaya and other topics written by seven great masters of the Shrivakayana. It was the main scripture studied by the Vaibhashikas, who took their name from that text. This way of naming resembles the Sautrantikas, who took their name from their focus on the sutras rather than the shastras. The Kangyur has thirteen volumes of Vinaya texts, which deal with seventeen topics concerning the ordained sangha.

Even though the *Great Treasury of Detailed Exposition* is the main commentary, it was not translated into Tibetan. The main Vinaya text studied in Tibet is a commentary called the *Vinaya Root Discourse*. It is the primary Vinaya text held by both the Shrivakayana and Mahayana schools, and it was composed by Gunaprabha, one of the four great disciples of Vasubandhu.

Vasubandhu had many great students, and four of them were considered to be better than himself; Gunaprabha was the one who was better in the Vinaya. Gunaprabha put the four sections of the Vinaya into the proper order, and condensed the seventeen topics of the Vinaya into a shorter format; this is called the *Vinaya Root Discourse*. He wrote another text called the *Discourse of One Hundred Actions*, which gives practical instructions on activities related to the Vinaya.

Other important Vinaya texts are the *Continuous Flower Garland* by the arhat Sagadeva, and the *Fifty Verses* by Gedun Zangpo of Kashmir. The *Fifty Verses* is a popular Vinaya text that is especially useful for beginners. The great Vinaya master Shakyaprabha wrote a Vinaya root text and commentary called the *Three Hundred*. Since that time, Gunaprabha and Shakyaprabha have been renowned as the two supreme holders of the Vinaya. Gunaprabha's and Shakyaprabha's students, including the teachers known as the Six Masters of the Vinaya, extensively taught and spread the Vinaya in India. It is through their lineages that the Vinaya teachings came to Tibet.

To insert some background on the designation of Gunaprabha and Shakyaprabha as the supreme holders of the Vinaya, they are among the eight Indian scholars who are especially revered in Tibet. These eight are known as the Two Excellent Ones and the Six Ornaments. There are two ways these groups are categorized. Some people consider the Two

Excellent Ones to be Nagarjuna and Asanga, and the Six Ornaments to be Aryadeva, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Gunaprabha, and Shakyaprabha. Sometimes the Two Excellent Ones refer to the two supreme holders of the Vinaya, Gunaprabha and Shakyaprabha. Then, for the Six Ornaments, the great ornaments of the profound view are Nagarjuna and Aryadeva, the great ornaments of vast bodhisattva activity are Asanga and Vasubandhu, and the great ornaments of valid cognition are Dignaga and Dharmakirti.

The Vinaya Lineages in Tibet

The Vinaya teaching lineages first came to Tibet in the eighth century, during the time of the dharma king Trisong Detsen, when Chokro Lui Gyaltsen studied in Tibet with two great Indian masters, Danashila and Jinamitra. Chokro Lui Gyaltsen transmitted the Vinaya teachings to the three scholars Mar, Yo, and Tsang. These Vinaya scholars were the three renowned monks who fled to eastern Tibet at the time of King Langdarma in the ninth century. Their full names are Mar Shakyamune of Tolung, Yo Gejung of Potongpa, and Rabсал of Tsang. Mar, Yo, and Tsang gave the Vinaya teachings to Lachen Gongpa Rabсал. Then, all four of them gave the teachings to Lu-me. Lu-me took the teachings back to central Tibet and transmitted them to Zu Dorje Gyaltsen. This became the teaching lineage called the Lower Vinaya tradition. It is called "lower" because it was established in Kham, near the Chinese border, before it came back up to Central Tibet.

Another Vinaya teaching lineage, called the Upper Vinaya tradition, came through Shakyasena, who received these teachings from both Jinamitra and Danashila. From Shakyasena the teachings went to Dharmapala, who taught them to Lup Lotsawa and Kyok Duldzin, the first Tibetans in this lineage. Lup Lotsawa and Kyok Duldzin taught it to Zu Dorje Gyaltsen, so Zu received both the Upper Vinaya and Lower Vinaya traditions, and he combined them into one lineage.

This combined Vinaya lineage went to Zu's four sons: Dzimpa Sherap Ö and Neso Dragpa Gyaltsen, who are called the Two Sons from Tsang; and Pochung Tsultrim Lama and Len Tsuljang, who are called the Two Sons from U. These four masters caused the Vinaya teachings to extend throughout Tibet. Later on, the great master Tsonawa

wrote commentaries on the Vinaya, the most famous being the *Rays of the Sun*, and he truly caused the Vinaya teachings to radiate like the sun over Tibet.

There were many more great Vinaya masters in Tibet, such as Gya Dulwa Wangchuk Tsultrim and Ja Dulwa Wangchuk Bar. Both of them composed commentaries on the *Vinaya Root Discourse*. Ja Dulwa Wangchuk Bar also started dharma colleges at Zulphu and other places, and his Vinaya text was one of the most important. The teaching lineage of Ja Dulwa Wangchuk Bar became so important that people used to say, "The Vinaya goes back to Ja." Ja's lineage went to Tsi Dulwa Dzampa and continued through others until Sonam Dragpa gave this teaching to Butön Rinchen Drup, who was an important figure in many of the Tibetan lineages.

Another Vinaya lineage came through Kache Panchen, who taught the *Vinaya Root Discourse* and the *Continuous Flower Garland* to Sakya Pandita. This lineage came down to Butön through Senge Silnön, Shanga Jorön, Tseme Che, and others. In short, all the Vinaya teaching lineages came to Butön Rinchen Drup. He wrote the *Great Vinaya Rituals* and the *Commentary on Difficult Points of the Vinaya Root Discourse*. He greatly benefited the Vinaya teachings in Tibet, and his teaching spread far and wide.

Another great Tibetan Vinaya master was Kunkhyen Rongpo, who received the Vinaya teachings from Panchen Nagyi Rinchen. Kunkhyen Rongpo compared the Tibetan translations of the Vinaya with the original Sanskrit texts, wrote several Vinaya textbooks, and established a teaching lineage that still exists.

As noted above, there are two practice lineages of the Vinaya in Tibet, the Upper Vinaya and the Lower Vinaya. However, there is only one teaching lineage. All four schools of Tibetan Buddhism maintain the unbroken teaching lineage of the *Vinaya Root Discourse*, and there are no disputes about the Vinaya among the various schools.

ABHIDHARMA

The Abhidharma Tradition in India

The Abhidharma, or "higher dharma," is called the Mother of the Holy Dharma. This collection of teachings on Buddhist philosophy and psy-

chology is said to be the basis for teaching the dharma and the gateway for entering the dharma. It has two divisions: the Upper Abhidharma of the Mahayana, and the Lower Abhidharma of the Shravakayana. For the Mahayana, the main treatise is Asanga's *Compendium of Abhidharma*. Sthiramati, Acharya Jinaputra, and many others wrote commentaries on this text.

For the Shravakayana, the main treatises are Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Abhidharma* and its autocommentary. There are many Indian commentaries on the *Treasury of Abhidharma*: one by Sanghabhadra, who was Vasubandhu's own teacher; and others by Dignaga, Sthiramati, Purnavardhana, Jinaputra, Vasubandhu, and many others who taught the Abhidharma in India.

The Abhidharma Lineages in Tibet

In Tibet, during the early spreading of the teachings in the eighth century, Pandita Jinamitra, Lotsawa Kawa Paltsak, and others translated the *Compendium of Abhidharma* and the *Treasury of Abhidharma* and their autocommentaries. They also translated much of the Abhidharma literature, including Jinaputra's commentaries, and taught these texts. Three of Kawa Paltsak's disciples were particularly connected with the Abhidharma: Nanam Da-we Dorje, Lhalung Palgyi Dorje, and We Yeshe Gyalwa. Later, We Yeshe Gyalwa went to Kham and taught the Abhidharma to Gyalwe Yeshe, and Gyalwe Yeshe brought these teachings back to the areas of U and Tsang in central Tibet.

During that period, the *Compendium of Abhidharma* was the main text studied. Later, several teachers, such as Drangti Darma Nyingpo, took this as their main Abhidharma text. Panglo Chenpo, the great translator from Pang, wrote a commentary on it called the *Explanation That Clarifies the Objects of Knowledge*, and Panchen Shakya Chogden wrote a commentary called the *Ocean Waves of the Meaning of the View*. Although a great deal of study was done of the *Compendium of Abhidharma* during the early spreading of Buddhism in Tibet, the *Treasury of Abhidharma* later became more popular, and the *Compendium of Abhidharma* was studied less.

As for the teaching lineage of the *Treasury of Abhidharma*, when Pandita Mitrijnana, who was a great student of Naropa, came to Tibet, he

went to a place in Kham called Den Longthang, where he taught the *Treasury of Abhidharma* to many scholars and monks. His student Yechenpo Sherap Drak and other masters spread this teaching in U, Tsang, and Kham. This is how Drangri Darma Nyingpo received the main teaching lineages of both the Upper and Lower Abhidharma. Drangri Darma Nyingpo's main students were Rok Chökyi Tsöndru and Gowo Yeshe Jungne. Along with Gowo's student Ben Könchok Dorje, and Ben's student called Thogar Namde, or Tho Kunga Dorje, these masters spread the Abhidharma widely.

Then, Chim Tsöndru Senge wrote a commentary called the *Running Letters*, which was the first Tibetan commentary on the *Treasury of Abhidharma*. From there the lineage went to Chim Namkha Drak, Samten Zangpo, Chomden Rigräl, Rendawa and his lineage holders, and others. All these great scholars wrote commentaries and spread the teaching of the *Treasury of Abhidharma*. In Tibet it is said that "the Vinaya goes back to Ja and the Abhidharma goes back to Chim," which refers to Chim Tsöndru Senge, the author of the first Tibetan commentary on the *Treasury of Abhidharma*.

A special teaching lineage of this text started with Sakya Pandita, who was taught the *Treasury of Abhidharma* by Khache Panchen Shakya Shri. In summary, the teaching lineages of the *Treasury of Abhidharma* continue to this day, and all the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism have commentaries on it.

PRAMANA

The Pramana Tradition in India

It is generally said that Pramana, or valid cognition, is a general subject of study and not an inner or spiritual subject. However, according to Khechok Ngawang Chödrak, the treatises of Buddhist valid cognition should be included in the spiritual teachings. Similarly, Tsongkhapa said that Buddhist valid cognition is a spiritual subject because it dispels wrong views and gives an unconfused understanding of the four noble truths.

In the Buddha's teachings, the valid cognition of direct perception is taught very clearly, and inferential valid cognition is taught indirectly

through reasoning. Vasubandhu's *Dialectics* is considered to be the first scripture on Buddhist valid cognition in India. There are two views on the true identity of the author—some scholars say it was written by the famous Abhidharma master Vasubandhu, and others say it was written by a different person with the same name.

The master Dignaga wrote 108 different texts on valid cognition, such as *Examining What Is Observed*. When he found that his 108 texts did not contain the whole body of valid cognition, he wrote the *Compendium of Valid Cognition*, also known as the *Discourse on Valid Cognition*, which has six chapters.

The master Dharmakirti wrote seven commentaries on Dignaga's *Compendium of Valid Cognition*, and they are collectively known as the *Seven Texts on Valid Cognition*. There are three main commentaries of different lengths: the detailed *Commentary on Valid Cognition*, the medium-length *Ascertaining the Meaning of Valid Cognition*, and the condensed *Drops of Reasoning*. Then, there are four branch commentaries: *Examining Relationships*, the *Drops of Logic*, the *Treatise on Debate*, and *Establishing the Reality of Other Minds*. Through these seven commentaries Dharmakirti opened the great path of the study of Buddhist valid cognition.

Dharmakirti asked his main student, Devindramati, to write commentaries on his seven books. Dharmakirti had already written an auto-commentary on the first chapter of his *Commentary on Valid Cognition*, so Devindramati used Dharmakirti's autocommentary as the first chapter of his own commentary, which is called the *Twelve Thousand Stanzas on Valid Cognition*. Then, Devindramati's student, Shakyamati, wrote a commentary on the *Twelve Thousand Stanzas*. Acharya Vinītadeva, another great scholar of that time, wrote a commentary on all seven of Dharmakirti's commentaries. Gyen Khenpo Sherap Jungne, who is usually just called Gyen Khenpo, wrote a commentary on the *Commentary on Valid Cognition*, which he called the *Eighteen Thousand Stanzas on Valid Cognition*. He explained the intended meaning of valid cognition as being Madhyamaka philosophy. The masters Acharya Jina, Ravigupta, and Jamari of Kashmir, who is known also as Tarkika Yamari, followed Gyen Khenpo in explaining Dharmakirti's writings from the point of view of Madhyamaka.

Acharya Dharmottara, who is known as Gyal Nga Sumpa in Tibetan,

wrote several commentaries on the books of Dharmakīrti. His commentary on the medium-length *Ascertaining the Meaning of Valid Cognition* is called the *Great Exposition of Reasoning*, and his commentary on the *Drops of Reasoning* is called *Beneficial for Students*. Then, the great khenpo Shantarakṣita took the meanings of the earlier texts on valid cognition and wrote a text called the *Summary of Suchness*. Kamalashīla wrote a commentary on that text, which he called the *Great Exposition of Valid Cognition*. This book still exists in the Sanskrit language, and contemporary Sanskrit scholars in Varanasi regard it as being even greater than the writings of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. A great number of small commentaries on valid cognition were also written in India by Chandragomin, Sangharakṣita, Jetari, Ratnakarashantipa, Prajñakaraṅgupta, Jnanamitra, and others. Many of these texts were translated into Tibetan.

The Pramāṇa Lineages in Tibet

The study of valid cognition began in Tibet during the Early Translation period in the eighth century, when Kawa Paltsok, Drenpa Namkha, and others translated some of the smaller commentaries by Dharmakīrti. During the later spreading of the teaching, which began in the tenth century, Sharma Sengyal translated Dignāga's *Compendium of Valid Cognition*. Ma Ge-we Lodrö translated Dharmakīrti's *Commentary on Valid Cognition* and Devindramati's *Twelve Thousand Stanzas on Valid Cognition*. Khyungpo Drakse and others spread this teaching lineage a little bit, and it was called the Nyingma Tsema, or Old Lineage of Valid Cognition.

After that, in the eleventh century, Ngok Lotsawa Loden Sherap made some changes in these translations, and retranslated Dharmakīrti's *Ascertaining the Meaning of Valid Cognition* and *Drops of Reasoning*. Ngok Lotsawa also started to formally teach valid cognition, mainly according to the system of Gyen Khenpo and Dharmottara. His teaching lineage is called the Sarma Tsema, or the New Lineage of Valid Cognition. The main holder of the Sarma Tsema lineage was Chapa Chökyi Senge, who lived in the twelfth century. He wrote *Eliminating the Darkness of the Mind*, a book that condenses the teachings on valid cognition. Chapa

started a school for studying valid cognition, and his text became the first debate manual.

Although many scholars translated the literature of valid cognition, the main teaching lineages were the Sarma Tsema lineage begun by Ngok Lotsawa, and the lineage stemming from Sakya Pandita. Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen and Khache Panchen Shakya Shri translated and edited a new version of Dharmakīrti's *Commentary on Valid Cognition*. Sakya Pandita wrote an important root text and autocommentary called the *Treasury of Logic on Valid Cognition*, which condenses all seven of Dharmakīrti's books on valid cognition. Sakya Pandita had a large number of students in India, Tibet, and other countries. The main holders of his pith instructions were Tsok, Drup, and Öñ. The holders of his pith instructions were Lo, Mar, and others. The main holders of his teaching on valid cognition were Shar, Nup, and Gung. These short names refer to Sharpa Sherap Jungne and his brother Dorje Özer, Nupa Uyugpa Rigpe Senge, and Gungpa Kyotön Tri-me. They and others spread Sakya Pandita's teaching on Pramāṇa very widely.

Uyugpa's nephew, Nyithogpa Sangye Kunmön, also had many students, and among them are those called the Four Great Pillars: Khangtön Özer Gyaltsen, Nyen Darma Senge, Shang Do-de Pal, and Zur Khangpa Kar Shakya Dragpa. Their students spread this teaching even further.

Another of Sakya Pandita's main students, Lhopa Rinchen Pal, wrote several textbooks on valid cognition. His lineage and that of Uyugpa remained strong for a long time. Over time, these lineages produced many great masters, such as Jamyang Kyapo, Lochenpo, Chöje Lama Dampa, and Nya Öñ Kunga Pal. Nya Öñ was particularly good at valid cognition, so there is a saying in Tibet that "Pramāṇa goes back to Nya."

Many great masters came from Nya's lineage, including his student, Yak Mipham Chökyi Lama, and then Rongtön Sheja Kunzik, Jamchen Rabjampa Sangye Phel, Gorampa Sönam Senge, and others. From Rongtön's student, Je Dönyö Palwa, came other great scholars such as Panchen Shakya Chogden. Chöje Lama Dampa's main student of valid cognition was Lochen Jetse, and his main student was Lochen Dragpa. From that tradition came Bodong Kunkhyen, a great scholar who wrote

the *Light of Reasoning on Valid Cognition* and established another new teaching system.

Then, from Shang Do-de Pal the teaching went to Khepa Norzang Pal, from there to Nyak Ön, then to Rendawa Shönu Lodrö, and from there to Je Tsongkhapa. From Tsongkhapa it went to Gyaltsap Darma Rinchen and Khedrup Gelek Palzang. Their lineage of valid cognition has not diminished; it continues to resound like a lion's roar.

After that, in the fifteenth century, the seventh Karmapa, Chödrak Gyatso, wrote a book called the *Ocean of Texts on Valid Cognition*, which covers the meaning of all of Dharmakirti's seven books of valid cognition. The seventh Karmapa's teaching lineage also still exists.

In relation to the philosophical views expressed in the literature on valid cognition, Jamgön Kongtrul says there are three ways that valid cognition is categorized in Tibet. The Sakyapas describe it as Yogachara Madhyamaka, Ngok Lotsawa describes it as the Madhyamaka that expresses essencelessness, and most others describe it as the Madhyamaka that accords with the way ordinary people see things.

There are also three ways that the literature of valid cognition is taught. Gorampa says:

*In the region of the snow mountains there are three ways of teaching
The scriptures of the two crown ornaments of valid cognition:
One is to consolidate Dharmakirti's seven books into one,
Another is to extract the great points of various Indian commentaries,
And the third is to teach from one's own analysis.*

The first of these was the teaching style of Sakya Pandita, who taught by consolidating the main points scattered throughout the *Commentary of Valid Cognition*, the seven books by Dharmakirti, and Dharmakirti's autocommentary on the first chapter of the *Commentary on Valid Cognition*. Most Tibetan scholars have taught the second way, condensing the best points of the Indian commentators such as Devindramati, Shakyamati, Gyen Khenpo, and Dharmottara. The third way is exemplified by Gyaltsap Je and Khedrup Je, who based their teaching on their own reasoning and analysis. These three ways of teaching the literature of Buddhist valid cognition continue to this day.

PRAJNAPARAMITA

The Commentaries and Teaching Lineages in India on the Ornament of Clear Realization

There are two ways of conveying the meaning of the *Prajnaparamita Sutra*, or the Perfection of Wisdom teachings, the second turning of the wheel of dharma by the Buddha. The experiential understanding, or the secret meaning, is explained by the Regent Maitreya in his text, the *Ornament of Clear Realization*, and the direct, literal meaning of the *Prajnaparamita* comes from the Madhyamaka teachings of Nagarjuna.

The *Ornament of Clear Realization*, or *Abhisamayalankara* in Sanskrit, is the main commentary on the *Prajnaparamita*. The way this teaching spread in India was that Arya Asanga understood this text to have the same meaning as the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* in *Twenty Thousand Stanzas*, and he wrote a commentary explaining this view, which is called *Ascertaining the Meaning of Suchness*. Asanga's brother Vasubandhu explained the *Ornament of Clear Realization* according to the Chittamatra school, and his commentary is called the *Three Mothers Who Overcome Harm*.

Vasubandhu's student, Arya Vimuktisena, is particularly noteworthy in this tradition. From among Vasubandhu's four students who were considered to be better than himself, Vimuktisena was the one more learned in the *Ornament of Clear Realization*. He and Acharya Haribhadra wrote famous commentaries on the *Ornament of Clear Realization*, which were so good that most of the later masters of this tradition followed them, and their teaching styles became very popular.

Arya Vimuktisena's commentary, the *Light of the Twenty Thousand*, combined the *Ornament of Clear Realization* and the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* in *Twenty Thousand Stanzas*. In it he described these texts according to the Madhyamaka that expresses essencelessness. From that time on, many commentaries were written that combined the *Ornament of Clear Realization* and the shorter and longer versions of the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* in various ways. One of the most famous was by Vairochanabhadra, and there were many others.

Acharya Haribhadra was the other especially great master of these teachings. His commentary that combines the *Ornament of Clear Real-*

ization with the medium-length *Prajnaparamita Sutra* is called the *Essential Meaning of the Eight Chapters*. His commentary that combines it with the *Prajnaparamita Sutra in Eight Thousand Stanzas* is called the *Great Commentary on the Eight Thousand*. His commentary joining it to the abridged *Prajnaparamita Sutra* is called the *Commentary Which Is Easy to Understand on the Abridged Prajnaparamita Sutra*. Finally, his commentary joining it to all three main lengths of the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* is called the *Commentary with a Clear Meaning*, and it is the most popular and important of Haribhadra's commentaries.

To give an idea of the three main lengths of the sutra, the extensive *Prajnaparamita* is a hundred thousand stanzas, the medium length refers to the version in twenty thousand stanzas, and the abridged sutra is about forty-five pages long. The even more concise *Heart Sutra* and *Diamond Sutra* are located somewhere within these, but they are also considered to be separate texts.

Translations and Teaching Lineages of the Prajnaparamita Literature in Tibet

In terms of the literature on the second-turning teachings, all the main texts that were available in India were brought to Tibet. During the Early Translation period, Lang Khampa Gocha went to India. He memorized the entire *Prajnaparamita Sutra in a Hundred Thousand Stanzas* and translated it into Tibetan. King Trisong Detsen, because of his great reverence for the Mahayana dharma, had the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* written down using his own blood mixed with white goat's milk. This text is called the *Red Draft* or the *Short Translation of the Lama*. It was said to have been placed in a large stone stupa above Lhasa. Then, the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* was brought to Tibet from India and translated by We Manjushri and Nyang Indraparo. This translation was written down using King Trisong Detsen's hair ground up in white goat's milk. This four-volume text is called the *Blue Draft*.

These two texts, the *Red Draft* and the *Blue Draft*, were not detailed; many repetitions were omitted. So, Pagor Vairochana edited these translations to make them more elaborate and readable. Vairochana then wrote these texts in his own handwriting, and they were put into bags made of deerskin and kept at Chimphu. This set of texts was called the *Elabora-*

tion on the *Hundred Thousand Stanzas* or the *Medium Translation of the Lama*. During the time of King Ralpachen, Pandita Surendrabodhi and others, together with the two translators Kawa Paltsak and Chokro Lui Gyaltsen, reread the sixteen-volume version, and it is called the *Great Translation of the Lama*. Around this time the *Ornament of Clear Realization*, Dushtasena's commentary on the *Prajnaparamita in a Hundred Thousand Stanzas*, and many other books on this topic were also translated, and these teachings spread widely.

During the second spreading of the dharma in Tibet, Lochen Rinchen Zangpo went to India. He studied the *Ornament of Clear Realization* and its commentaries with Pandita Gunamitra, and later established a new way of teaching it. Atisha Dipankara also taught this text to his students Khuchenpo Lhadingspa and Dromtön Gyalwe Jungne. Atisha and Rinchen Zangpo together translated a commentary on the *Ornament of Clear Realization* called *Illuminating the Difficult Points to Teach and Understand*. They also corrected many of the earlier translations, such as the *Prajnaparamita Sutra in Eight Thousand Stanzas*, the *Light of the Twenty Thousand*, and the *Great Commentary on the Eight Thousand Stanzas*. The teaching lineage started by Atisha's student Dromtönpa was passed to Drom Tongtsen, who is also called Go Lama. After Atisha where it got the name of the Kham Luk, or the Khampa teaching lineage of the *Prajnaparamita*.

In particular, Ngoklo Chenpo Loden Sherap received all the teachings on the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* from Pandita Sthirapala, who is also known as Bumtrak Sumpa in Tibetan. Ngok based his work on the *Prajnaparamita Sutra in a Hundred Thousand Stanzas* found in Pamthing Monastery in Nepal, which he edited and filled in. Along with the Indian khenpo, Shri Amaragomin, he corrected some of the translations of the *Ornament of Clear Realization* and its commentaries. Ngok also did many new translations and started a new teaching lineage of the *Prajnaparamita*.

All of these teaching lineages connected with the *Ornament of Clear Realization* spread to Kham. In particular, the lineages of Atisha, Rinchen Zangpo, and Ngoklo Chenpo came down to Dre Sherap Bar, one of the four main students of Ngoklo Chenpo, and he started a new teaching lineage that combined all three traditions.

This teaching lineage was passed down to Butön Rinchen Drup through one of Dre Sherap Bar's students, Ar Jangchup Senge. Butön Rinpoche wrote several commentaries on the *Ornament of Clear Realization*, including the one called *Hearing the Scripture*. His student, Lotsawa Rinchen Namgyal, taught the *Prajnaparamita* to Yaktön Sangye Pal, who was very important in the teaching tradition of the *Ornament of Clear Realization*. Yaktön Sangye Pal wrote three commentaries on it—short, medium, and long—and he taught it extensively. So, the saying arose that “the teaching on the *Ornament of Clear Realization* goes back to Yak.”

Yaktön's student, Rongtön Sheja Kunzik, wrote at least forty-three different texts on the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* and especially on the *Ornament of Clear Realization*. In particular, he wrote a commentary on the *Ornament of Clear Realization* called the *Great Essential Explanation by Rong*, and he started a new way of teaching this topic. The teaching lineage of Yak and Rongtön spread all over Tibet, and it still exists today. Another student of Ngok Lotsawa, Tolungpa Lodrö Jungne, had a way of teaching that was later used by Geshe Chapa to establish another teaching lineage.

There are twenty-one large, renowned Indian commentaries on the *Ornament of Clear Realization*; twelve that combine it with the *Prajnaparamita Sutra* and nine that do not. At the time of Khedrup Je, there were about 147 Tibetan commentaries on the *Ornament of Clear Realization*, which shows how widely this text has been taught. This is noted in Khedrup Je's book, the *Ornament of the Essence of the Teachings*, which was recently published in Varanasi. Khedrup Je lived from 1385 to 1438, so by now there must be many more than 147 Tibetan commentaries.

MADHYAMAKA

All four schools of Tibetan Buddhism agree that Madhyamaka is the highest philosophy. However, the various schools differ in the way they understand the relative and ultimate truths. Their views will be discussed in detail in chapter 6. In this chapter, we are simply looking at the lineages of teachers and texts to see how the Madhyamaka teachings were transmitted.

The Main Teachers and Texts in India

Madhyamaka is the direct, literal meaning of the *Prajnaparamita Sutra*, and it unerringly shows the way of emptiness. This tradition stems from the great master Arya Nagarjuna in his text, *Wisdom, a Root Text on the Middle Way*.

In India, eight commentaries on this text were particularly renowned, but only four of them were translated into Tibetan. These are called *Nothing to Fear from Anyone*, the *Buddhahpalita* by the master Buddhahpalita, Bhavaviveka's the *Lamp of Wisdom*, and Chandrakirti's *Clear Words*.

Some of the earlier lists of texts, and some later masters such as Jonang Kunkhyen Dölpopa, say the text *Nothing to Fear from Anyone* was Nagarjuna's own autocommentary on *Wisdom, a Root Text on the Middle Way*. However, Khedrup Je says it could not have been by Nagarjuna because it was not quoted by any of Nagarjuna's students. Another reason is that in the twenty-seventh chapter of this commentary there is a quotation from Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas*, so it must have been written later.

The two schools of Madhyamaka—Prasangika and Svatantrika—came from the writings of two important commentators on *Wisdom, a Root Text on the Middle Way*, Buddhahpalita and Bhavaviveka. First, Buddhahpalita wrote his commentary called the *Buddhahpalita*, and then Bhavaviveka criticized that view and wrote his commentary, the *Lamp of Wisdom*. Bhavaviveka's commentary marked the beginning of Svatantrika Madhyamaka philosophy. When Chandrakirti read Bhavaviveka's commentary, he refuted it and supported the view of Buddhahpalita. That marked the beginning of the Prasangika Madhyamaka school. According to Jamgön Kongtrul, the difference between the two schools is in the way a person goes about realizing the ultimate truth; there is no difference in their understanding of what the ultimate truth is.

The main upholders of the Prasangika philosophy are Chandrakirti and Shantideva, and there are others as well. The main Prasangika texts are Chandrakirti's *Entrance to the Middle Way* and Shantideva's *Way of the Bodhisattva*. The writings by the followers of Chandrakirti's two students named the Elder and Younger Rigpe Khuchuk, and Atisha Dipankara's root text and autocommentary called the *Entrance to the Two Truths*, are also principal Prasangika commentaries.

The main upholders of the Svatantrika Madhyamaka philosophy are Jnanagarbha, Shantarakshita, and Kamalashila. These three are called the Three Rising Suns of Svatantrika. The main texts of the Svatantrika school include Avalokitavrata's eighty-volume commentary on Bhavaviveka's *Lamp of Wisdom*, called the *Great Commentary on the Lamp of Wisdom*. It is said that there is no text in Tibetan more detailed than this in explaining the non-Buddhist views. Other particularly important treatises are Jnanagarbha's root text and autocommentary called *Distinguishing the Two Truths*, Shantarakshita's *Ornament of the Middle Way* and its autocommentary, and Kamashila's *Illuminating the Middle Way* and the *Stages of Meditation: The First Treatise, Intermediate Treatise, and Final Treatise*. There are many other Svatantrika treatises as well.

The Teaching Lineages of Svatantrika Madhyamaka in Tibet

These traditions first came to Tibet during the earlier spreading of Buddhism in the eighth century, when Pandita Jnanagarbha and Chokro Lui Gyaltsen translated *Wisdom, a Root Text on the Middle Way* and the *Lamp of Wisdom*, and Shantarakshita established a teaching lineage of the Svatantrika system. During the later spread of the teachings in Tibet, Ngok Lotsawa Loden Sherap studied and taught the *Lamp of Wisdom* and other Madhyamaka texts, and the Svatantrika Madhyamaka spread widely. This teaching lineage was especially upheld at Sangphu Monastery, especially by the fifth lineage holder of Sangphu, Chapa Chökyi Senge, and his students known as the Eight Lions, the Three Noble Sons, and the Three Wisdoms.

The Svatantrika school was very popular during this time. Later on, the great master Rongrön Chöje remembered his previous life as Kamalashila and he had deep confidence in this view. The Svatantrika system was upheld in the institutes established by these great masters and in some Nyingma institutes. In the nineteenth century, Mipham Jamyang Gyatso wrote a great commentary on the *Ornament of the Middle Way*, which continues to be studied widely by the Nyingmapas. However, outside the Nyingma lineage, as time went on, the Prasangika way of teaching Madhyamaka became so prevalent that the study of Svatantrika Madhyamaka declined.

The Teaching Lineages of Prasangika Madhyamaka in Tibet

The view of Prasangika Madhyamaka is the main view of all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism. It was firmly established in Tibet through the teaching of Patsap Lotsawa Nyima Dragpa, who lived in the eleventh century. Patsap went to Kashmir and studied with the two sons of Sajjana for twenty-three years. While there, he translated *Wisdom, a Root Text on the Middle Way*, the *Entrance to the Middle Way*, the *Four Hundred Stanzas*, Chandrakirti's commentaries, and other Prasangika texts into Tibetan.

Patsap had four main students: Gangpa Sheu, who was learned in the words; Tsangpa Dregur, who was learned in the meaning; Maja Jangtsön, who was learned in both the words and the meaning; and Shangthang Saga Yeshe Jungne, who was not learned in either. They and their students opened the great way of teaching, debating, and writing based on the texts of Chandrakirti and other masters of Prasangika philosophy. It is important to recognize that all the study of Prasangika Madhyamaka in Tibet started with Patsap and his students.

The students of Shangthang Saga were very great masters who upheld the main seat of this teaching lineage. From them it went to the Sakya masters and their followers, to Butön Rinpoche, to Rendawa, and from Rendawa to Tsongkhapa and his lineage. In the Karma Kagyu lineage, the main scholar of Prasangika Madhyamaka was Karmapa Mikyö Dorje; and among the Drugpa Kagyu, the foremost scholars were Padma Karpo and his students. Most of the greatest scholars of Tibet have kept the Prasangika Madhyamaka as the center of their philosophy.

The application of the Prasangika view in meditation came from Atisha Dipankara and his students, and through them it became prevalent in the Kadampa lineage. From the Kadampa it went to all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism, especially the followers of the Geluk lineage, who take the Prasangika Madhyamaka as their central philosophy.

The Literature of Shentong Madhyamaka in India

The third-turning teachings, those on buddha nature, are found in the twenty "essence suras" of the Buddha, and their inner meaning is

explained by the regent Maitreya and Arya Nagarjuna. This understanding, which is classified as Shentong Madhyamaka, is found in four of Maitreya's treatises—the *Ornament of the Mahayana Sutras*, *Distinguishing Phenomena and the True Nature*, *Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes*, and the *Sublime Continuum*—and also in Nagarjuna's *Collection of Praises*.

To give a little background on Nagarjuna's writing, he has three sections of teachings: the *Collection of General Teachings*, the *Collection of Reasoning*, and the *Collection of Praises*. The *Collection of General Teachings* mainly focuses on Buddha's first-turning teachings; and the *Collection of Reasoning* contains five or six texts, such as *Wisdom*, a *Root Text on the Middle Way*, which focus on the second-turning teachings. Nagarjuna's *Collection of Praises* is based on the third cycle of teachings and includes the praise of conditioned things and their nature in the context of the ground, the praise of skillful means and wisdom in the context of the path, and praises of each of the three kayas and the quintessence of the view in the context of fruition.

These books were commented on and widely taught by Asanga, Vasubandhu, Chandragomin, and their followers. Later, Shantipa, who was a great master during the time that Buddhism had almost disappeared in India, also taught and wrote about these works. These masters and others taught and spread these teachings very widely in India. Although the term "Shentong" was not used in India, these texts form the basis of the Shentong Mahyamaka view.

The Teaching Lineages of Shentong Madhyamaka in Tibet

This tradition came to Tibet during both the earlier and the later spreading of Buddhism, when many of the third-turning sutras and Indian commentaries were translated. During the later dissemination of Buddhism, Ngok Lotsawa studied the four later books of Maitreya with the Kashmiri master Sajjana, and then established the teaching of these texts and their commentaries in Tibet. In particular, he taught the *Sublime Continuum* and other texts to Drapa Ngönshé's student Tsen Khawoche, who then taught it to Changrawa and many others. That teaching lineage flourished for a long time.

The *Sublime Continuum* was passed down in two ways. Earlier, the tradition of Ngok Lotsawa was transmitted as a teaching lineage, and later, the tradition of Tsen Khawoche was transmitted as a practice lineage. Some people say that these two traditions were explained according to both the Chittamatra system and the Madhyamaka system. They say this mainly because Tsen Khawoche's approach asserts nondual consciousness to be truly existent, self-illuminating, self-aware, and the real essence of a buddha.

The Shentong teaching lineages were passed down through various masters, such as Khepa Tsang Nagpa; Karmapa Rangjung Dorje; Jonangpa Kunkhyen, who is also known as Dölpopa, and his lineage; Longchen Rabjam; Jangpa Rigdzin Padma Thrinle; Minling Terchen Gyurme Dorje and his brother, Lochen Dharma Shri; Situ Tenpe Nyingshe Chökyi Jungne and his followers, and many others. Their way of teaching was the great lion's roar of nonreturning, which went beyond the Chittamatra school and established the Shentong system of Great Madhyamaka, which they considered to be the ultimate, definitive truth.

In India, the great master Palden Chökyong wrote a commentary called the *White Manifestation*, in which he explained Nagarjuna's *Collection of Reasoning*, especially *Wisdom*, a *Root Text on the Middle Way*, according to the third-turning teachings. This shows that Nagarjuna's writings on Madhyamaka reasoning, as well as his *Collection of Praises*, were taught according to the Shentong understanding.

The main source of the Shentong Madhyamaka system is the *Sublime Continuum* by Maitreya, which states:

*In brief, the body of this entire teaching
Has seven vajra points:
The Buddha, dharma, sangha, buddha nature, enlightenment,
Enlightened qualities, and enlightened activities.*

The *Sublime Continuum* contains these seven vajra points of the ultimate truth, which are taught in four chapters and established in accordance with the relative truth and the ultimate truth.

TIBETAN LITERATURE Studies in Genre

Edited by
José Ignacio Cabezón
and
Roger R. Jackson

*Essays in Honor of
Geshe Lhundup Sopa*

Snow Lion
Ithaca, New York

Chapter 16 *gDams ngag*: Tibetan Technologies of the Self

Matthew Kapstein

The Tibetan terms *gdams ngag* (Skt. *upadēśa*) and *man ngag* (Skt. *āmnāya*, but sometimes also *upadēśa*) refer broadly to speech and writing that offer directives for practice, whether in the general conduct of life or in some specialized field such as medicine, astronomy, politics, yoga or meditation. In any of these areas, they may refer to “esoteric” instructions, i.e., advice not usually found in theoretical textbooks but derived from the hands-on experience of skilled practitioners, and thus intended primarily for those who are actually engaged in the practice of the discipline concerned. *Man ngag* seems often to connote a higher degree of esotericism than does *gdams ngag*, particularly where both terms are employed together contrastively, and despite their essential synonymy.¹

In this short essay I shall focus on the category of *gdams ngag*, “instruction,” as understood in connection with meditational and yogic practice. In this context, *gdams ngag* refers essentially to the immediate, heartfelt instructions and admonitions of master to disciple concerning directly liberative insight and practice. *gDams ngag* in this sense is, in the final analysis, a product solely of the interrelationship between master and disciple; it is the non-repeatable discourse event in which the core of the Buddhist enlightenment comes to be manifestly disclosed. It is in this sense, for instance, that we find the term used in narrating a signal event in the life of the famed rNying ma pa master Mi pham Rin po che (1846-1912):

One time, Mipham went into Khyentse Rinpoche's presence. "How did you apply yourself to experiential cultivation when you stayed in retreat?" he was asked.

"While pursuing my studies," Mipham answered, "I made conclusive investigations, and while performing the ritual service of the meditational deity in retreat I have taken care to see that I have reached the limits of the stage of creation."

"Those are difficult. The great all-knowing Longchenpa said, 'Not doing anything, you must come to rest right where you are.' I have done just that. By so resting I have not seen anything with white flesh and a ruddy complexion that can be called the 'face of mind.' None the less, if I were to die now it would be all right. I do not even have a grain of trepidation." So saying, Khyentse Rinpoche laughed aloud. Mipham [later] said that he understood that to be the guru's instruction (*gdams ngag*).

(Dudjom Rinpoche, 1991: 876-877)

gDams ngag, then, is the articulation of the dynamic interaction between master and disciple; it expresses the essentially hermetical movement in which the disciple is reoriented in the depth of his or her being to the goal of the teaching. Insofar as the Buddha's entire doctrine is held to be directed to that goal, the achievement of perfect enlightenment on behalf of oneself and all creatures, all expressions of Buddhadharmā may be in a certain sense termed *gdams ngag* (cf. Jam ngon, *DNgDz*, vol. 12: 626-630). Nevertheless, the term has been thematized in Tibetan Buddhist discourse to refer above all to those meditational and yogic instructions that most frequently form the basis for systematic salvific practice. One must include here also the innumerable writings on *blo sbyong*, "spiritual training/purification," and the entire genre of *khrid yig*, "guidebooks," i.e., practical manuals explicating particular systems of meditation, yoga and ritual. It is in this context that *gdams ngag* has come to form the basis for an important set of distinctions among Tibetan Buddhist traditions, corresponding in general to distinctions of lineage, while crosscutting distinctions of sect.² These systematic approaches to liberation through meditation and yoga, which will be our concern here, may be thought to be the quintessential Tibetan "technologies of the self."³

There is no single classification of the many traditions of *gdams ngag* that is universally employed by Tibetan Buddhist doxographical writers. From about the thirteenth century onwards, however, the preeminence of certain particular traditions gave rise

to a characteristic scheme that we encounter repeatedly, with small variations, throughout Tibetan historical, doctrinal and bibliographical literature.⁴ According to this, there are eight major *gdams ngag* traditions, which are referred to as the "eight great conveyances that are lineages of attainment" (*sgrub brygyud shing rta chen po brygyad*). The paradigmatic formulation of this classificatory scheme is generally attributed to 'Phreng bo gTer ston Shes rab 'od zer (Prajñāraśmi, 1517-1584), whose verses on this topic are widely cited by Tibetan authors ('Jam ngon, *DNgDz*, vol. 12: 645-646). The "eight great conveyances" as he enumerates them may be briefly explained as follows:⁵

(1) The *sNga* 'gyur mying ma, or "Ancient Translation Tradition," derives its special *gdams ngag* primarily from the teachings of Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra, eighth-century Indian Buddhist masters who visited Tibet, and from the great Tibetan translators who were their contemporaries, especially Pa gor Bai ro tsa na. Of the tremendous body of special *gdams ngag* belonging to the rNying ma tradition, most widely renowned are those concerned with the meditational teachings of rDzogs chen, the Great Perfection.⁶

(2) The bKa' gdams, or "Tradition of [the Buddha's] Transmitted Precepts (*bka'*) and Instructions (*gdams*)," is traced to the activity of the Bengali master Atiśa (982-1054) and his leading Tibetan disciples, notably 'Brom ston rGyal ba'i 'byung gnas (1104-1163). It is owing to its special role in maintaining the vitality of teachings derived from the bKa' gdams tradition that the dGa' ldan or dGe lugs order, founded by rJe Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419), is often referred to as the New bKa' gdams school (bKa' gdams gsar ma). The bKa' gdams tradition specialized in *gdams ngag* relating to the cultivation of the enlightened attitude (*bodhicitta*, *byang chub kyi sems*), the union of compassion and insight that is characteristic of the Mahāyāna.⁷

(3) Lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa, the "Tradition of the Path with its Fruit," is derived ultimately from the teachings of the Indian *mahāsiddha* Virūpa, and was introduced into Tibet by 'Brog mi lo tsā ba Śākya Ye shes (992-1072). This tradition of esoteric practice, emphasizing the *Hevajra Tantra*, became from early on a special concern of the Sa skya pa school, and so has been primarily associated with Sa skya and the several Sa skya pa suborders, such as the Ngor pa and Tshar pa.⁸

(4) The Mar pa bKa' brgyud, or "Succession of the Transmitted Precepts of Marpa," has as its particular domain the teachings of the Indian masters Tilopa, Nāropa and Maitripa as transmitted to Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros (1012-1097), the translator of IHo brag. His tradition of *gdams ngag* stresses the Six Doctrines (*chos drug*) of yogic practice—inner heat, the apparitional body, lucid dreaming, inner radiance, the transference of consciousness at death, and the teachings of the intermediate state (*bar do*)—as well as the culminating meditations of the Great Seal (*mahāmudrā*, *phyag rgya chen po*).

The proliferation of lineages adhering to the teachings of Mar pa, those of his foremost disciple, Mi la ras pa (1040-1123), and those of the latter's main students Ras chung rDo rje grags (1083-1161) and sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (a.k.a. Dwags po Lha rje, 1079-1153) was very widespread, and the many teaching lineages that arose among their followers almost all created their own distinctive formulations of the bKa' brgyud *gdams ngag*. The four "great" bKa' brgyud orders (bKa brgyud che bzhi) were founded by sGam po pa's immediate disciples, among whom Phag mo gru pa rDo rje rgyal po's (1110-1170) leading disciples founded eight "lesser" orders (*chung brgyad*). (The terms "great" and "lesser" refer solely to their relative proximity to sGam po pa, and imply neither quantitative nor qualitative judgment.) The first Karma pa hierarchy, Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110-1193), is numbered among the four "greats," while 'Bri gung skyob pa 'jig rten gsum mgon (1143-1217) was prominent among the founders of the eight "lesser" orders. Among the eight is also counted Gling rje ras pa Padma rdo rje (1128-1188), whose disciple gTsang pa rGya ras (1161-1211) founded the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud order, which in turn gave rise to several major suborders. (The 'Brug pa later established itself as the state religion in Bhutan, a position it retains at the present time.) Mar pa bKa' brgyud teachings have been widely transmitted among non-bKa' brgyud pa orders, for instance among the dGe lugs pa, a considerable portion of whose esoteric *gdams ngag* originated in the Mar pa bKa' brgyud tradition.⁹

(5) The Shangs pa bKa' brgyud, the "Succession of the Transmitted Precepts of Shangs Valley," is traced back to Khyung po rnal 'byor Tshul khriims mgon po of Shangs (d. ca. 1135), a master whose foremost teacher was the *dākinī* Niguma, said to have been the sister or wife of Nāropa. The special teachings of the Shangs

pa tradition, which are similar to those of the Mar pa bKa' brgyud tradition, differing primarily in points of emphasis, were widely influential. Despite the almost complete absence of distinctive Shangs pa institutions, they were transmitted within the Mar pa bKa' brgyud, dGe lugs, Jo nang and rNying ma orders. The Shangs pa teachings have aroused considerable interest among Buddhists in the West owing to the widespread activity of their leading contemporary proponent, the late Kalu Rinpoche Rang byung kun khyab (1905-1989).¹⁰

(6) The closely related teachings of Zhi byed, "Pacification," and gCod yul, "Object of Cutting," originated respectively with the enigmatic Indian yogi Pha Dam pa Sangs rgyas (d. 1117) and his remarkable Tibetan disciple, the yogini Ma cig Lab kyi sgron ma (ca. 1055-1143). Though schools specializing in Pacification were very widespread from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, the teaching all but disappeared in later times. The Object of Cutting, however, permeated the entire Tibetan Buddhist tradition and is today preserved by all orders. Both of these systems of *gdams ngag* seek to bring about the realization of liberating insight as it is understood in the "Perfection of Wisdom" (*Prajñāpāramitā*) *sūtras* by means inspired by esoteric Buddhist practice. This takes particularly dramatic form in the traditions of the Object of Cutting, whose exquisite liturgies involve the adept's symbolic offering of his or her own body as food for all beings throughout the universe.¹¹

(7) rDo rje'i rnal 'byor, the "Yoga of Indestructible Reality," refers to the system of yoga associated with the *Kālacakra Tantra*, as transmitted in Tibet initially by Gyi jo lo tsā ba Zla ba'i 'od zer during the early eleventh century. Later traditions that were particularly influential include those of Zhwa lu and Jo nang. The former came to be favored in the dGe lugs pa school, and continues to be transmitted in that order today, above all by H. H. the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. The latter fell into decline in the wake of the suppression of the Jo nang pa sect during the seventeenth century, but was later revived in eastern Tibet, particularly by the proponents of the so-called Eclectic Movement (*Ris med*), during the nineteenth century.¹²

(8) rDo rje gsum gyi bsnyen sgrub, the "Service and Attainment of the Three Indestructible Realities," represents an extremely rare tradition, closely allied with the *Kālacakra Tantra*, and stemming

from the teaching of the divine Vajrayogini, as gathered by the Tibetan *siddha* O rgyan pa Rin chen dpal (1230-1309) during his travels in the northwestern quarters of the Indian subcontinent. The teaching was popularized by O rgyan pa's successors during the fourteenth century, when several commentaries on it were composed, but subsequently seems to have lapsed into obscurity. O rgyan pa also figures prominently as a transmitter of several of the major bKa' brgyud lineages, notably the 'Brug pa and Karma pa traditions.¹³

During the nineteenth century this scheme of the "eight great conveyances" provided the basis for the great Tibetan anthology of *gdams ngag*, the *gDams ngag mdzod* ("The Store of Instructions"), compiled by 'Jam ngon kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899), one of the leaders of the Eclectic Movement.¹⁴ "The Store of Instructions" provides encyclopedic and balanced treatment of all of the major Tibetan Buddhist *gdams ngag* traditions and several of the more important minor ones, and preserves scores of instructional texts by some of the most famous Tibetan authors as well as by many who are less well-known. It includes in its compass entire previous collections of *gdams ngag* materials, such as the *Blo shbyong brgya rtsa* ("The Hundred [Teachings on] Spiritual Training and Purification"), representing the essential *gdams ngag* of the bKa' gdams traditions ('Jam ngon, *DNgDz*, vols. 2-3), and the *Jo nang khrid brgya dang brgyad* ("The Hundred and Eight Guidebooks of the Jo nang pas"), an eclectic compilation by Jo nang rje btsun Kun dga' grol mchog (1507-1566) that is in certain respects a precursor to "The Store of Instructions" itself (*DNgDz*, vol. 12).

Because all of the traditions mentioned above have generated abundant literature devoted to their own distinctive *gdams ngag*, including both texts immediately concerned with the details of practical instruction and systematic treatises that attempt to formulate the distinctive perspective of a particular *gdams ngag* tradition in its relation to Buddhist doctrine broadly speaking, it will not be possible to attempt to survey here the extraordinary volume of materials that are illustrative of these many differing traditions. Indeed, one may well wonder at this remarkable proliferation of the Tibetan technologies of the self: if, after all, the goal is in any case the achievement of buddhahood here and now, then why complicate matters by providing those who wish to follow the path with such a dizzying array of road maps? The traditional

view is that, like a well-equipped pharmacy, the Buddha's teaching provides appropriate remedies for the many different afflictions of living beings; the myriad *gdams ngag* of Tibetan Buddhism may thus be seen to constitute a spiritual pharmacopeia. The medical analogy, however, by suggesting that, to a certain degree at least, eclecticism and pluralism are to be welcomed for the therapeutic enrichment they provide, points to a complicated cluster of problems: briefly, how is one to form a comprehensive vision of the totality of possible approaches to the path, that remains sufficiently critical to exclude false paths, without at the same time undermining the positive values of pluralism? Kong sprul's eclectic and even unitarian approach to the difficulties that arise here finds its complement in the attempt to elaborate and defend favored systems of *gdams ngag* through doctrinal apologetics, whether these be relatively catholic in outlook, or narrowly sectarian. *gDams ngag*, essentially the pithy expressions of contemplative experience, thus become the basis for renewed dogmatic system-building. This occurred very prominently in certain of the schools of Tibetan Buddhism—consider in this regard the massive philosophical elaboration of the Great Perfection (rDzogs chen) teachings of the rNying ma school,¹⁵ or of the Great Seal (Mahāmudrā, Phyang chen) precepts of the several bKa' brgyud orders,¹⁶ or of the originally bKa' gdams pa Path Sequence (Lam rim) instructions among rJe Tsong kha pa and his successors.¹⁷ The products of these and other similar doctrinal syntheses certainly represent some of the most creative developments in the field of Tibetan Buddhist thought. The exploration of the many ramifications of such system-building, however, lies beyond the scope of this small contribution.

In order to provide the reader with a concrete example of the teaching of a particular tradition of *gdams ngag*, I give below, in the manner of an appendix, some short translated excerpts from "The Hundred and Eight Guidebooks of the Jo nang pas," concerning the history and the actual teaching of the practical dimension of the approach to Madhyamaka thought known as *dBu ma chen po* ("The Great Middle Way"). It is important to recall that *gdams ngag* traditions are not thought of ahistorically in Tibet: each such tradition has its unique origin, history of transmission, and relevance to a special historical setting. Thus, even a very terse historical note, such as the one given here, helps to situate a given *gdams ngag* for the Tibetan reader or auditor. The equally terse

presentation of the teaching itself reflects what is in fact a series of rubrics, intended to guide an expanded course of oral explanation. The strictly maintained correlation between history and doctrine reinforces the role played by these instructions as the practical technologies of the self, for in a tradition's history we find the concrete exemplifications of the human ideals that are to be realized by one's submission to the course of training imposed by that same tradition's *gdams ngag*.¹⁸

I have chosen this particular extract to honor Geshe Lhundrup Sopa, to whom the present volume is dedicated, for Geshe-la has been a preeminent exponent of Madhyamaka thought throughout the nearly three decades that he has graced Buddhist Studies in the special setting of our own time and place. Those who have had the good fortune to study with him will no doubt supplement the topics briefly enumerated here with their own recollections of Geshe-la's learned expositions of related subject matter.

From the "History of the Hundred and Eight Guidebooks":

Concerning the *dBu ma chen po'i khrid* ["The Guidance on the Great Middle Way"]¹⁹: it was received by the bodhisattva Zla ba rgyal mtshan from the Newar Pe nya pa, one who belonged to the lineage of Nāgārjuna, father and son [i.e., Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva]. He taught it to rDzi lung pa 'Od zer grags pa, and he to Gro ston, who propounded it widely. There are some who hold that this was the lineage of the *dBu ma lta khrid* ["The Guidance on the View of the Middle Way"] that came to the venerable Re mda' ba from mNga' ris, in West Tibet, but that is uncertain. This is [also] called the *gZhung phyi mo'i dbu ma* ["The Middle Way according to the Original Texts," i.e., of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva], and so is the ancient tradition, not yet divided into Prāsaṅgika and Svātantrika. That which is distinguished as the special doctrine of Red mda' ba, however, is the unblemished adherence to the Prāsaṅgika tradition, that follows the texts of the glorious Candrakīrti.¹⁹

From the "Text of the Hundred and Eight Guidebooks":

dBu ma chen po'i khrid yig ["The Guidebook of the Great Middle Way"]²⁰: Concerning "The Guidance on the Great Middle Way": One begins by going for refuge and cultivating the enlightened attitude [*bodhicitta*]. Then, investigating the abiding nature of appearance and emptiness, appearance is [determined to be] just this unimpeded and ever-varied arising. As for the understanding of emptiness, however, it is neither the emptiness that

follows after a pot has been shattered, nor is it the emptiness that is like the pot's emptiness of being a blanket, nor is it the emptiness of sheer nothingness, like that of a hare's horn. It is, rather, self-presenting awareness's emptiness with respect to substantial essence at the very moment of appearance. And that, because it is empty of veridicality in terms of the relative, is apparition-like, and, because it is absolutely empty of essence, is sky-like. In brief, whatever the manner of appearance, there is not even so much as the tip of a hair that is veridically established. This is not the emptiness of [appearance's] cessation, nor the emptiness of the fabricated. It is precisely the emptiness that has reference to appearance itself.

When cultivating this experientially, you adopt the bodily disposition of the meditational posture. First you consciously strive somewhat [to recall and to concentrate upon the understanding of appearance and emptiness taught above]. In the end you relax [that deliberate striving]. Beginners should practice frequently in short sessions.

When you have thus cultivated the meditation, the three spiritual experiences of clarity, bliss and nonconceptuality arise. It will come about that mind will not grow excited about that at all, but will remain at ease, like the hand resting just where you place it. Your awareness becomes absorbed in simplicity, in the simple disposition of reality. (1) The inception of one-pointedness that remains unexcited with respect to [both] untarnished clarity of mind and circumstantial objects is called "tranquility" (*sāmatha*, *zhi gnas*) while (2) its nonconceptual nature, like the circle of the sky that is free from apprehended referent, is called "insight" (*vipaśyanā*, *lhag mthong*). (3) Complete absorption is untouched by the intellect that apprehends objectives, and (4) your course of conduct involves the awareness of the qualities of dream and apparition in the aftermath [of meditative absorption]. You experientially cultivate [this teaching] in these four ways. When hairline discriminations of being and nonbeing forcefully arise, you gradually develop your skill, and it is said that in this way you will come to meet the face of that abiding nature that is unpolluted by the taints of the conceptual elaborations of the eight limitations.²⁰

The heart of all [*kun*] doctrines is the Great Middle Way:

To delight [*lga'*] the wise, it is completely free [*gro*]

From the range of unreflective and foolish meditations;

It is the great path of supreme [*mnchog*] freedom from limitations.²¹

This was compiled from the guide[book] of the bodhisattva Zla [ba] rgyal [mtshan].²²

Notes

1. In Zhang (1985), vol. 2: 1343, *gdams ngag* is defined as *man ngag gam phan pa'i ngag*, "man ngag, or beneficial speech," while on p. 2056 *man ngag* is defined as *thabs kyi snying po'am thabs zab mo*, "the essence of a method, or a profound method." For examples of the use of *man ngag* to indicate a particularly esoteric instruction, in contrast to *gdams ngag*, note the special conventions of the rNying ma and bKa' gdams traditions, the first of which refers to its most esoteric teachings as forming the *man ngag gi sde*, "the class of esoteric precepts," while the latter distinguishes between *gdams ngag pa*, "the instructional tradition," and *man ngag pa*, "the esoteric precept tradition."
2. On the distinction between "sect" and "lineage," I have attempted to provide some clarification in Kapstein, 1980: 139. "By sect, I mean a religious order that is distinguished from others by virtue of its institutional independence; that is, its unique character is embodied outwardly in the form of an independent hierarchy and administration, independent properties and a recognizable membership of some sort. A lineage on the other hand is a continuous succession of spiritual teachers who have transmitted a given body of knowledge over a period of generations but who need not be affiliated with a common sect."
3. This phrase is, of course, borrowed from Foucault. Though this is not the place to explore the rich possibilities for comparative interpretation that are opened up by Foucault's analysis of the technologies for the care of the self in the West, readers of the present volume who are interested in such comparisons may wish to consult Martin, et al., 1988. While East-West comparisons are not examined in this work, the broad range of Western spiritual disciplines that are discussed will be found to be highly suggestive.
4. Consider, for instance, the arrangement of the major sections of Roerich, 1976, in comparison with Kong sprul's approach. For different but overlapping approaches to the lineages and sects of Tibetan Buddhism, compare also: Jo nang rje btsun Kun dga' grol mchog, et al., *Jo nang khrid brgya'i skor*, in 'jam mgon, *DNgDz*, vol. 12; and Thu'u bkwan, 1984.
5. It should be noted that a great many representative *gdams ngag* texts have been translated into English in recent years, and have often been published privately or by small presses in popular editions for the use of English-speaking Buddhists. I have made no attempt in the notes that follow to treat this literature comprehensively. Interested readers are advised to consult the catalogues of the publishers that have been most active in this area: Dharmapublications (Emeryville, California), The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (Dharamsala), Rangjung Yeshe Publications (Hong Kong/Kathmandu), Shambhala (Boston), Snow Lion (Ithaca), Station Hill Press (Barrytown, New York), and Wisdom Publications (Boston). Those seeking a single, useful anthology of *gdams ngag* in English may wish to consult Stephen Batchelor, 1987. A somewhat dated but still interesting collection is Evans-Wentz, 1950. Brief surveys of some of the major traditions will be found in Tucci, 1980.
6. See also Roerich, 1976, Book II; *DNgDz*, vol. 1; *ShK*, vol. 1: 508-516; vol. 3: 276-296. Dudjom Rinpoche, 1991, provides, in vol. 1, thorough accounts of

- rNying ma history and doctrine from a traditional perspective; and the bibliographies in vol. 2 document much of the Western language work on the rNying ma tradition, and also editions of original rNying ma texts.
7. See also Roerich, 1976, Book V; *DNgDz*, vols. 2-3; *ShK*, vol. 1: 516-520; vol. 3: 296-305; Chattopadhyaya, 1981; Eimer, 1982; Sherburne, 1983.
8. See also Roerich, 1976, Book IV; *DNgDz*, vol. 4; *ShK*, vol. 1: 520-526; vol. 3: 305-332; Davidson, 1981; Inaba, 1963.
9. Refer to Roerich, 1976, Book VIII; *DNgDz*, vols. 5-7; *ShK*, vol. 1: 526-533; vol. 3: 321-394. Among many works on the Mar pa bKa' bryud traditions now available in English, see also: Chang, 1962, 1982; Douglas and White, 1976; Evans-Wentz, 1928, 1950; Guenther, 1963, 1971, 1973; Hanson, 1977; Kapstein, 1985; Karma Thinlay, 1978; Khenpo Rinpoche Konchog Gyaltsen, 1986; Lhalungpa, 1977, 1985; Nalandā Translation Committee, 1980, 1982; Stein, 1972.
10. See Roerich, 1976, Book IX; *DNgDz*, vol. 9; *ShK*, vol. 1: 533-538; vol. 3: 394-407; Kapstein, 1980, 1991; Mullin, 1985.
11. Roerich, 1976, Book IX; *DNgDz*, vol. 9; *ShK*, vol. 1: 538-548; vol. 3: 407-429. See also: Aziz, 1979, 1980; Gyatso, 1985; Allione, 1984, ch. 2, provides a popular introduction to the *gCod* tradition and its founder, Ma cig.
12. Roerich, 1976, Book X; *DNgDz*, vol. 10; *ShK*, vol. 1: 548-552; vol. 3: 429-457. Useful introductions to the Kālacakra traditions include: Sopa, et al., 1985; and The Dalai Lama and Hopkins, 1988. On the Zhwa lu and Jo nang pa traditions, see especially Ruegg, 1963, 1966.
13. Roerich, 1976: 696-702; *DNgDz*, vol. 10; *ShK*, vol. 1: 552-554; vol. 3: 457-461. On the life and travels of the *siddha* O rgyan pa, see also Tucci, 1940.
14. The finest introduction to the Eclectic Movement and its leaders remains Smith, 1970.
15. This is best exemplified in the work of Kun mkhyen Klong chen rab 'byams pa Dri med 'od zer (1308-1363), on whom see especially Dudjom Rinpoche, 1991: 575-596; Guenther, 1975-76; Thondup Rinpoche, 1989.
16. Scholastic systematization within the bKa' bryud schools is well-exemplified by sGam po pa, translated in Guenther, 1971; and Dwags po bKa' shis nam rgyal, translated in Lhalungpa, 1985. Note that the general framework for the first mentioned is in fact derived from the *lam rim* traditions of the bKa' gdams tradition, in which sGam po pa was ordained. The syncretic tendencies of bKa' bryud scholasticism are further discussed in Kapstein, 1985.
17. Refer to D. Jackson's article on *bsTan rim* literature in the present volume.
18. Cf. Dorje and Kapstein, Translators' Introduction to Dudjom Rinpoche, 1991, vol. 1, book 2.
19. Jo nang rje btsun Kun dga' grol mchog, *Khrid brgya'i bryud pa'i lo rgyus*, plates 320-321, in *DNgDz*, vol. 12. Zla ba rgyal mtshan, from whose teachings this tradition is derived, is best known among Tibetans for his contributions to the development of the traditions pertaining to the worship and meditation of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. Red mda' ba (1349-1412) was a noted

scholar of the Sa skya pa sect, who was among the foremost teachers of rje Tsong kha pa, and whose insistence on the authority of the Prasangika school of Madhyamaka interpretation was sometimes regarded as standing in complete opposition to those traditions that claimed adherence to the Great Middle Way.

20. Being, nonbeing, permanence, annihilation, arising, cessation, self and nonself.

21. The syllables given in Tibetan together form the author's name, which he has encoded in the closing verses of each of the 108 instructional texts of the *jo nang khrid brya* in this fashion.

22. Jo nang rje btsun Kun dga' grol mchog, *Zab khrid brya dang brgyad kyi yi*, ge, plates 389-390, in DNgDz, vol. 12.

References

- Allione, Tsultrim
1984 *Women of Wisdom*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Aris, Michael, and Aung San Suu Kyi, eds.
1980 *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*. Warminster: Aris and Phillips.
- Aziz, Barbara Nimri
1979 "Indian Philosopher as Tibetan Folk Hero." *Central Asiatic Journal* 23/ 1-2: 19-37.
1980 "The Work of Pha-dam-pa Sangs-rgyas as revealed in Ding-ri Folklore." In Aris and Aung, 1980: 21-29.
- Aziz, Barbara Nimri, and Matthew Kapstein, eds.
1985 *Soundings in Tibetan Civilization*. New Delhi: Manohar.
- Batchelor, Stephen, ed.
1987 *The Jewel in the Lotus*. Boston/London: Wisdom.
- Chang, Garma Chen Chi
1962 *The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*. 2 vols. New Hyde Park, New York: University Books.
1982 *Esoteric Teachings of the Tibetan Tantra*. York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser.
- Chattopadhyaya, Ālaka
1981 *Atiśa and Tibet*. Second ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Dalai Lama [XIV] and Jeffrey Hopkins
1988 *Kalachakra Tantra: Rite of Initiation*. London: Wisdom.
- Davidson, Ronald M.
1981 "The Nor-pa Tradition." *Wind Horse* 1: 79-98. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press.

- Douglas, Nik and Meryl White
1976 *Karmapa: The Black Hat Lama of Tibet*. London: Luzac.
- Dudjom Rinpoche, Jigdrel Yeshe Dorje
1991 *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History*. Trans. by Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein. Boston: Wisdom.
- Eimer, Helmut
1982 "The Development of the Biographical Tradition Concerning Atiśa." *The Journal of the Tibet Society* 2: 41-51.
- Evans-Wentz, W.Y., ed.
1928 *Milarepa*. Trans. by Kazi Dawa-Sandup. London: Oxford University Press.
1950 *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Guenther, Herbert V.
1963 *The Life and Teaching of Nāropa*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
1971 *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*. Berkeley: Shambhala.
1973 *The Royal Song of Saraha*. Berkeley: Shambhala.
1975-76 *Kindly Bent to Ease Us*. 3 vols. Emeryville, CA: Dharma Publishing.
- Gyatso, Janet
1985 "A Preliminary Study of the Gcod Tradition." In Aziz and Kapstein, 1985: 320-341.
- Hanson, Judith, trans.
1977 *The Torch of Certainty*. Boulder: Shambhala.
- Inaba, Shoji
1963 "The Lineage of the Sa skya pa, A Chapter of the Red Annals." In *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko* 22: 106-123.
- 'Jam mgon kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas
DNgDz *Gdams nag mdzod: A Treasury of Instructions and Techniques for Spiritual Realization*. 12 vols. Delhi: N. Lungtok and N. Gyaltsan, 1971.
- Kapstein, Matthew
1980 "The Shangs-pa bKa'-bgyud: An Unknown Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism." In Aris and Aung, 1980: 138-144.
1985 "Religious Syncretism in 13th Century Tibet: The Limitless Ocean Cycle." In Aziz and Kapstein, 1985: 358-371.
1991 "The Illusion of Spiritual Progress." In *Paths to Liberation*. Ed. by Robert Buswell and Robert Gimello. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

- Karma Thinlay [Karma phrin las]
1978 *The History of the Sixteen Karmapas of Tibet*. Boulder: Shambhala.
- Khenpo Rinpoche Konchog Gyaltsen with Katherine Rogers
1986 *The Garland of Mahāmudrā Practices*. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- Kong sprul Yon tan rgya mtsho [Jam mgon kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas]
ShK *Shes bya kun khyab*. 3 vols. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.
- Lhalungpa, Lobsang, trans.
1977 *The Life of Milarepa*. New York: E. P. Dutton.
- 1985 *Mahāmudrā: The Quintessence of Mind and Meditation*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Martin, Luther H., Huck Gutman, and Patrick Hutton, eds.
1988 *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press.
- Mullin, Glenn H.
1985 *The Tantric Yogas of Sister Niguma: Selected Works of the Second Dalai Lama*. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- Nalandā Translation Committee
1980 *The Rain of Wisdom*. Boulder: Shambhala.
- 1982 *The Life of Marpa the Translator*. Boulder: Prajña Press.
- Roerich, George, trans.
1976 *The Blue Annals*. Second ed. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Ruegg, David Seyfort
1963 "The Jo nan pas: A School of Buddhist Ontologists according to the Grub mtha' sel gyi me lon." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 83: 73-91.
- 1966 *The Life of Bu ston Rin po che*. Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.
- Sopa, Geshe Lhundub, Roger Jackson and John Newman
1985 *The Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra in Context*. Madison, WI: Deer Park.
- Sherburne, Richard, S. J., trans.
1983 *A Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983.
- Smith, E. Gene
1970 Introduction to *Kongtrul's Encyclopedia of Indo-Tibetan Culture*. New Delhi: Sarasvati Vihar.

- Stein, Rolf A.
1972 *Vie et chants de 'Brug-pa Kun-legs le yogin*. Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve.
- Tatz, Mark
1987 "The Life of the Siddha-Philosopher Maitrigupta." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 107/4: 695-711.
- Thondup Rinpoche, Tulku
1989 *Buddha Mind: An Anthology of Longchen Rabjam's Writings on Dzogpa Chenpo*. Ed. by Harold Talbott. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma
1984 *Thu'u-bkwan grub-mtha'*. Lanzhou, Gansu: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.
- Tucci, Giuseppe
1940 *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley*. Calcutta.
- 1980 *The Religions of Tibet*. Trans. by Geoffrey Samuel. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Zhang Yisun, ed.
1985 *Bod-rgya tshig-mdzod chen-mo*. 3 vols. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

BUDDHIST ETHICS

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé

Translated and edited by the
International Translation Committee
founded by the V.V. Kalu Rinpoché

Snow Lion Publications
Ithaca, New York

The Commitments of Awakening Mind

The ethical system of the bodhisattva is treated in seven parts: (1) the causes of awakening mind; (2) the essence of its commitments; (3) distinctions; (4) the two traditions for the development of awakening mind; (5) training common to both traditions; (6) formation of ultimate awakening mind; and (7) the consequences of damaging the commitments and benefits of safeguarding them. [A synopsis of the phases of the path in the Universal Way forms the conclusion.]

THE CAUSES OF AWAKENING MIND [I]

The causes of awakening mind are discussed in three parts: (1) causes in general, (2) specific factors that contribute to its formation, and (3) the particular [cause according to a] quintessential instruction.

Causes in General [A]

The ethics of awakening mind in the Universal Way
Arise from awakened affinity, faith, love, and courage.

To enter the path to enlightenment, the Universal Way, one must first generate an altruistic resolve to awaken and assume its commitments. The formation of this "awakening mind" depends on the following causes: signs of an awakened affinity for the Universal Way, faith in the unfailing sources of refuge [the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha], loving concern for others, and the courage to endure great hardships [for their sake]. The *Stages of the Bodhisattva* states:

What are the four causes [of the mind of awakening]? The most perfect affinity² is the first cause of the spirit of a bodhisattva. The support of the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and spiritual guides is the second cause of the spirit of a bodhisattva. Compassion for others is the third cause of the spirit of a bodhisattva. Fearlessness in facing the lengthy, diverse, intense, and constant misery of existence and the hardships [endured for the sake of others] is the fourth cause of the spirit of a bodhisattva.

Specific Factors that Contribute to its Formation [B]

Awakening mind is formed through the strengths of a friend, cause, effect, path, and familiarization

The specific factors that contribute to the formation of the relative awakening mind in its two aspects³ are stated in [Maitreya's] *Scripture Ornament*⁴:

Awakening mind is generated through the [five] strengths
Of the friend, cause, root [of virtue], learning, and familiarization with the wholesome.

It is said to be unstable when revealed by others (the strength of the friend)

And stable when born from the latter [four] strengths.

In other words, an awakening mind is formed in dependence upon [one or more of] these five factors: the strength of [i.e., indication by] a spiritual guide (the friend)⁵; the strength of awakened affinity (the cause)⁶; the strength of a nurtured root of virtue (the result)⁷; the strength of study of the scriptures of the Universal Way (the path)⁸; and [the strength of] increased familiarization with what one has learned.⁹ An awakening mind formed as a result of the first factor is unstable because it relies upon a friend. One formed as a result of [one of] the latter four factors is stable since it will not be easily damaged in adverse circumstances. The relative awakening mind is formed principally due to [the first factor], the strength of others' [indications].¹⁰

The Particular Cause according to a Quintessential Instruction [C]

It arises from compassion, which springs from love.

Awakening mind, the intention to attain enlightenment, arises from compassion, the wish that all beings be free of suffering and its root. Compassion arises from the cultivation of love, the essence of which

is the wish to give help and happiness to others. Therefore, the cause of all noble qualities is love. This teaching is found in the *Advice to the King Scripture*.

THE ESSENCE OF THE COMMITMENTS [II]

The essence of the commitments consists in the ethical conduct that forsakes unwholesome deeds of body, speech, and mind, Motivated by the intention to attain complete awakening for the sake of others.

The essence of the commitments of awakening mind is defined as the ethics of renunciation endowed with an exceptional scope: the motivation to attain awakening for the sake of others, and the resolve (and its concomitant mental factors) to engage in concordant conduct and to forsake unwholesome thoughts, words, and deeds that are incompatible with one's goal. [Maitreya's] *Ornament of Realizations* states¹¹:

Awakening mind is the intention to achieve

Complete and authentic awakening for others' sake.

DISTINCTIONS OF AWAKENING MIND [III]

Different aspects of awakening mind are distinguished according to (1) its characteristics, (2) the ways it is formed, (3) differentiation of its stages, (4) similes for awakening mind, (5) its focuses, and (6) its ceremonies.

Characteristics [A]

The aspiring mind is characterized by wish; the venturing mind, by endeavor.

Two aspects of awakening mind are distinguished on the basis of its principal characteristics: (1) the commitments of the aspiration to awaken, and (2) the commitments of venturing [on the path to awakening].

The first is defined as the ethics of a bodhisattva on the training [stage] of the Universal Way, accompanied by the wish to attain complete awakening for the sake of others. The second is defined as the ethics of a bodhisattva on the training [stage] of the Universal Way, accompanied by the intention to engage in a vast range of virtuous activity that leads to the goal of awakening. Aspiring mind is exemplified by

the awakening mind in the continuum of a bodhisattva on [the path of] accumulation or preparation. Venturing mind is exemplified by the awakening mind that exists as the nature of the post-equipoise state of an exalted bodhisattva.¹²

In drawing distinctions between the aspiring and venturing aspects of awakening mind, Damstrasena¹³ and other masters explain that the former pertains to the worldly paths,¹⁴ and the latter to the supramundane paths. Abhayakara,¹⁵ Smritijñana,¹⁶ and other scholars maintain that aspiration [corresponds to the awakening minds illustrated by] the first three similes listed below¹⁷ and venturing [corresponds to those indicated by] the other nineteen [similes].

Moreover, Sagaramegha¹⁸ and other masters believe that a mind of awakening formed without relying on a ceremony is an aspiring mind, and one formed during a ceremony is a venturing mind. Lord Atisha¹⁹ and other masters of the magnificent deeds lineage explain that aspiration is the promise to attain the goal of awakening, and venturing is the promise to [create] the causes [leading to this goal]. In addition, some scholars believe that until it has become irreversible, an awakening mind is one of aspiration; once it is irreversible,²⁰ it is venturing mind.

Shantideva and the masters of the profound view lineage assert that an aspiring awakening mind is simply the formation of the wish to awaken born out of compassion for sentient beings and other positive factors. This may or may not be formalized in a ceremony. The wish to awaken is likened to the desire to set out on a journey. A venturing awakening mind begins with the full acceptance of the mind of aspiration and its commitments and is likened to the actual journey. Simply put, aspiration is the resolve to awaken, and venturing is the acceptance of the commitments of such a resolve. The noble Sakya patriarchs²¹ assert that the aspiring and venturing minds are characterized by three aspects each:

Aspiration, forming the aspiration, and safeguarding the aspiration from degeneration; venturing, forming the venturing [mind], and safeguarding the venturing mind from degeneration.²²

These masters maintain that aspiration and venturing minds in themselves do not constitute commitments. Commitments are assumed

only when these minds are permeated with an indispensable element: the intention to give up what is directly or indirectly incompatible [with their training].

The Ways It Is Formed [B]

Awakening mind is approximate or subtle, depending on the way it is formed.

Two kinds of awakening mind are distinguished according to the ways it is formed: approximate and subtle. An approximate awakening mind arises from an indication [by a spiritual guide], and a subtle one is attained through [the realization of] the fundamental nature of things. Accordingly, Shantipa's *Four Hundred and Fifty Lines Commentary* states²³:

A mind of awakening is conceived through indications as long as one has [only] an intellectual understanding of emptiness, but has not yet realized it directly. However, once [emptiness] has been realized, the mind of awakening should be understood to be ultimate [awakening mind].²⁴

Differentiation of Stages [C]

Its stages are differentiated by appreciation, intention, full maturation, and freedom from all impediments.

There are four aspects to the formation of awakening mind according to differentiations of the stages of the path. These are set forth in [Maitreya's] *Scripture Ornament*²⁵:

The awakening mind formed on each respective stage
Is said to be a mind of appreciation,
Extraordinary intention, maturation,
And likewise, freedom from all impediments.

During the paths of accumulation and preparation, the awakening mind is formed by appreciation²⁶; on the seven impure stages, by an extraordinarily [pure] intention²⁷; and on the three pure stages, by maturation.²⁸ At the stage of a buddha, the awakening mind is one of freedom from all impediments [emotional and those preventing omniscience].²⁹

Similes [D]

Twenty-two similes, earth, gold, moon, etc., are used to distinguish awakening mind with respect to individuals.

Twenty-two aspects of awakening mind are distinguished with respect to [the levels of realization of] the individual or the stages of the path. These are illustrated by the similes of earth, gold, moon, etc. Each simile represents an awakening mind accompanied by a particular quality. [Maitreya's] *Ornament of Realizations* states³⁰:

Earth, gold, moon, fire,
Treasure, jewel mine, ocean,
Diamond, mountain, medicine, spiritual friend,
Wish-fulfilling gem, sun, song,³¹
King, storehouse, highway,
Conveyance, spring,
Echo, river, and cloud:

These are the twenty-two similes [for awakening mind].

The qualities that accompany the twenty-two aspects of awakening mind³² are the following: earnest desire, intention, determination, application, generosity, ethics, patience, effort, meditation, wisdom, skillful means, strength, aspiration, pristine awareness,³³ clairvoyance, merit and pristine awareness, factors conducive to awakening,³⁴ mental quiescence and insight, memory and eloquence, feast of the teachings, sole path, and the awakened dimension of reality.³⁵

[As for their correlation with] the stages of the path, the first three aspects of awakening mind, earnest desire, etc., are found on the three levels of the path of accumulation.³⁶ The awakening mind accompanied by application is present on the path of preparation. The ten aspects accompanied by the ten perfections, from generosity to pristine awareness,³⁷ are found on the ten bodhisattva stages³⁸ included in the paths of meditation and seeing. The next five, from the awakening mind accompanied by clairvoyance to the one accompanied by memory and eloquence, are found on the superior path that encompasses the three pure stages.³⁹ The last three, beginning with the one accompanied by the feast of the teachings, are present, respectively, during the initial, actual, and final parts of the tenth stage, known as complete enlightenment, the stage of a saint of the Universal Way.⁴⁰

Earnest desire, which constitutes the foundation for all positive qualities, is likened to earth. To use a syllogism whose pattern is applicable to the other awakening minds, the subject, awakening mind accompanied by the earnest desire to work toward awakening, is comparable to earth in that it forms a foundation for the development of all good qualities.⁴¹

Focuses [E]

Relative and ultimate awakening minds differ in their focuses.

Two aspects of awakening mind are distinguished in terms of its focus: relative and ultimate. The first [which has the relative focus of sentient beings] consists of the aspiration [to awaken] and the actual venturing [toward that goal]. The second [which has the ultimate focus of emptiness] is the actual ultimate mind of awakening, i.e., the non-conceptual pristine awareness of an exalted being. A facsimile of the ultimate awakening mind may also be found at the beginner's level.⁴²

Ceremonies [F]

Awakening mind may be formed in three ceremonies.

The commitments of awakening mind are distinguished according to the ceremonies followed to assume them: (1) awakening mind commitments assumed during the same ceremony for receiving personal liberation vows. This refers to the ceremony for taking personal liberation vows in the system of the Universal Way, as described in the previous chapter which discusses the proclaimers' vows; (2) awakening mind commitments assumed during a ceremony exclusive [to the Universal Way], such as the commitments of aspiring and venturing minds accepted during their respective ceremonies in either the Centrists' or the Idealists' system; and (3) awakening mind commitments assumed in the same ceremony used to receive a tantric empowerment, such as the commitments of awakening mind made during the preparatory part of a tantric initiation and the Secret Mantra pledges made during the main part of an initiation.⁴³

Restoration of the Commitments [c]

If a root downfall is committed with great emotional involvement or if the aspiration for awakening has deteriorated, The commitments are lost and must be reassumed.
Downfalls committed with medium or slight involvement are confessed before three vow holders or one;
Emotional minor infractions, before one; and non-emotional minor infractions, with one's mind as witness.

The *Stages of the Bodhisattva* states that the two causes¹⁴⁸ of loss [of the commitments] are to incur a root downfall with great emotional involvement or to allow one's aspiration for enlightenment to deteriorate. In these cases, a complete breach of the commitments is incurred. [To restore it], one must first acknowledge one's failing and promise not to repeat it and then reassume the commitments in a ceremony. However, the venerable Longchenpa said that this may not be done more than three times.

Downfalls incurred with either moderate or slight emotional involvement [do not constitute loss of the commitments and] are not [actually] defeats but are similar to them.¹⁴⁹ In the case of moderate involvement, one must acknowledge the downfall with a promise to refrain [from it in the future] made in the presence of three or more vow holders¹⁵⁰; in the case of slight involvement, in the presence of a single vow holder.

Any of the forty-two minor infractions incurred with emotional involvement should be acknowledged in the presence of a vow holder if circumstances allow. Non-emotional minor infractions are purified by acknowledgment [of the failing] in the imagined presence of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, with one's own mind as witness.¹⁵¹

The general causes of loss of the commitments have been elucidated above and should be well understood. Although the returning of vows is permitted in the personal liberation system, to return the commitments of the awakening mind would have extremely serious consequences and is therefore absolutely prohibited.

Dying, being reborn, forgetting [one's previous existence], and so on, do not damage one's commitments. The *Stages of the Bodhisattva* states¹⁵²:

In going from one life to another, a bodhisattva may forget his commitments. He may assume them again many times in the presence of spiritual guides, as a result of which he may recollect his [former] commitments. However, this would not be a case of taking them anew.

Additional Points on the Training [d]

In this tradition, one must observe all points of training to their full extent and until awakening.

Unlike the tradition of the profound view, in this tradition, once one has assumed the commitments of awakening mind, one must observe the full range of training in the aspiring and venturing minds. Furthermore, unlike the previous tradition in which one [promises to] train in the prescribed practice only for as long as one wants, here one must observe the training from the time the commitments are assumed until the attainment of awakening. The two systems should not be confused on these two points.

THE TRAINING COMMON TO BOTH TRADITIONS [V]

The explanation of the training common to both traditions has three parts: (1) the training in aspiring mind, (2) the training in venturing mind, and (3) advice on safeguarding the trainings in the aspiring and venturing minds.

Training in the Aspiring Mind [A]

This section has three parts: (1) the five precepts, (2) the three noble aspirations, and (3) eliminating the causes of deterioration of the aspiring mind.

Five Precepts [1]

Common to both traditions are five precepts for the aspiring awakening mind:

Not to reject any being; to ponder benefits; to acquire merits; to refine the awakening mind;

And to shun the four black deeds of deceiving one's master or a venerable person, feeling regret for what is not to be regretted,

Being angry at a bodhisattva, and being cunning and deceitful, And to undertake the four white deeds in their place.

For the training common to both traditions, first is the training in the awakening mind of aspiration which consists in the observance of five precepts:

- (1) Not to reject or consider insignificant any being, be it an enemy or a mere insect (the basic precept);

- (2) To ponder the benefits of awakening mind by recalling and reciting passages from the scriptures and their commentaries, as did the great Lord Atisha, who was renowned for his sudden exclamations such as "[Awakening mind] saves us from miserable existences!" (the precept of the favorable condition for preserving aspiring mind);
- (3) To strive at the cultivation of merit in conjunction with pristine awareness by engaging in the ten virtuous activities,¹⁵³ the six perfections, etc. (the precept of the cause that strengthens the awakening mind);
- (4) To refine awakening mind by reaffirming one's commitments daily in each of the six [three-hour] periods, cultivating love and compassion, and practicing an oral instruction to develop awakening mind using a technique that is the basis of mind training—exchanging one's own happiness for others' suffering (the precept of the skillful means to develop awakening mind); and
- (5) To shun the four black deeds and undertake the four white ones (as the means to give up what weakens the awakening mind or causes one to forget it; and to engage in the opposite).

These four black deeds are explained in the *Questions of Kashiyaapa Scripture*¹⁵⁴:

- (1) To deceive one's master or other persons worthy of veneration by lying or in other ways;
- (2) To feel regret for what is not regrettable (regrettable actions are those that constitute downfalls or unwholesome deeds);
- (3) To speak offensive words in anger to someone who has formed an awakening mind; and
- (4) To be cunning and deceitful toward someone, whether in substantial or minor ways.

Regardless of whether the offended person is aware or not, or is displeased or not, these four deeds constitute downfalls and are therefore called black. If [one fails to amend any of these acts] before three hours have elapsed, the commitments are lost. Therefore, one must acknowledge one's wrongdoing, and reaffirm the commitments immediately.

As antidotes to the four black deeds, these four white actions should be undertaken:

- (1) Not to consciously tell a lie, even to save one's life;
- (2) To encourage others to engage in virtuous pursuits and, in particular, to follow the Universal Way;
- (3) To see every bodhisattva as the Buddha, and to proclaim his or her virtues; and
- (4) To maintain a noble [and altruistic] attitude toward others.

Three Noble Aspirations [2]

One should have the three noble aspirations of goal, skillful means, and marvelous activity

The three aspirations of a noble person are these:

- (1) "I shall attain enlightenment for the benefit of all beings" (the aspiration to achieve the goal);
- (2) "In order to attain enlightenment, I shall enter the path of awakening" (the aspiration to apply skillful means); and
- (3) "I shall fulfill the hopes of all beings" (the aspiration to engage in marvelous activity).

The bodhisattva-in-training should always have the [same] aspirations.

Eliminating the Causes of Deterioration [3]

And eliminate despair, apprehension, and other emotions that cause aspiration to deteriorate.

A practitioner should eliminate the following emotions since they are antagonistic to an awakening mind and cause it to deteriorate:

- (1) Despair when thinking of the hardships involved in giving up for altruistic reasons one's children or spouse, or even one's head and limbs; or when thinking of the hardships involved in observing [the bodhisattva's] ethics, making endeavors [for the sake of others], and engaging in the rest of the six perfections;
- (2) Faint-heartedness when thinking that having to cultivate all aspects of merit and to enhance pristine awareness over thirty uncountable eons is far too long to bear; and

- (3) Apprehension [from knowing that] wherever one is born in cyclic existence, one will not find any vestige of happiness; and, as a result, longing to make a solitary escape from cyclic existence.

Training in the Venturing Mind [B]

The training in the venturing mind is explained in two parts: (1) a concise statement, and (2) an extensive explanation.

Concise Statement [1]

The points of training in venturing mind prescribe both what to avoid and what to practice.

All these points are included in the threefold ethics of restraint, acquiring good qualities, and working for the benefit of others.

The points of training in the venturing mind prescribe both what to avoid and what to practice. These two aspects of training constitute a vast subject that encompasses most disciplines of the Universal and Individual ways. All points of training, however, are included in the three types of ethics: the ethics of restraint from acting in unwholesome ways, ethics aimed at acquiring good qualities, and the ethics of working for the benefit of others.¹⁵⁵ The *Stages of the Bodhisattva's* treatment of the three ethics is summarized by Lord Dāo Shōnnu (Gampopa) in the following words¹⁵⁶:

The first makes our minds calm, the second ripens our minds' qualities, and the third brings all sentient beings to full spiritual maturity.¹⁵⁷

The Extensive Explanation [2]

This section has two parts: (1) the prescription for what to avoid, and (2) the prescription for practice.

Prescription for What to Avoid [a]

This is presented in two parts: (1) the essence of the prescription, and (2) the points of training in detail.

Its Essence [i]

The prescription for what to avoid corresponds to the commitments set out in the two traditions mentioned above.

The prescription for what to avoid is essentially the ethics of restraining from what is unwholesome. Included in this prescription are the ordinary vows one has taken [as part of] the eight classes of personal liberation, as well as the commitments exclusive to the Universal Way to avoid the root downfalls and secondary infractions explained above in the context of the two traditions of the pioneers [Nagarjuna and Asanga]. Also included is the advice to shun what is incompatible with the commitments of awakening mind as set out in the scriptures of the Universal Way and referred to as "demonic":

- (1) The ten unvirtuous deeds;
- (2) The eight worldly concerns¹⁵⁸;
- (3) The eight opposites of the eightfold noble path¹⁵⁹ (wrong view, wrong thought, etc.);
- (4) The five forms of wrong livelihood (flattery, hinting, seeking reward for favor, pretentious behavior, and hypocrisy);
- (5) The five unsuitable environments (of butchers, liquor sellers, prostitutes, politicians, and those of evil occupations¹⁶⁰);
- (6) The four causes that undermine virtue (not dedicating merits, inappropriate dedication, regretting one's good deeds, and anger); and
- (7) The mixing of contradictory views, cherishing bad friends, professing unwholesome views, and so forth.

The Points of Training in Detail [ii]

One should renounce what is naturally unwholesome or unwholesome by prescription except in cases of special necessity,

Impediments to the spiritual maturity of oneself and others, Pleasures of this life that create suffering in the next, or what causes misery in both,

Deeds that qualify as downfalls, and downfalls-in-disguise

A practitioner should renounce the following unless there is a special necessity for not doing so:

- (1) All deeds that are naturally unvirtuous or unvirtuous by Buddha's prohibition;
- (2) Impediments to the spiritual maturity of oneself or others (for example, a monk adopting the lifestyle and apparel of a layperson);
- (3) Superficial pleasures of this life that will result in painful experiences in future lives (for example, enjoying food and wealth acquired illicitly);
- (4) What leads to misery now and in future lives (for example, making war preparations);
- (5) All the downfalls mentioned above; and downfalls-in-disguise.

And undertake what brings happiness in the next life though is painful in the present, what brings happiness in both,

Deeds that do not constitute downfalls, and those that might seem to be downfalls but are not.

A practitioner should engage in what brings great happiness in future lives though it may entail suffering in the present one, for example, withstanding difficulties in seeking the Buddha's teaching and making large offerings to worthy objects; what brings both immediate and permanent happiness, such as observing pure morality; and deeds that do not constitute downfalls, as well as deeds that seem to be downfalls but in fact are not.

Four distinctions apply to deeds categorized as downfalls: In observing the ethics of restraint, to kill someone motivated by hatred [for example] would constitute a downfall (Tib. *ltung ba*); to kill with an altruistic purpose might seem to be a downfall but actually is not (*ltung ba'i gzugs brnyan*); to refrain from killing out of compassion for the object does not constitute a downfall (*ltung med*); and not to kill although it would help another might seem not to be a downfall but actually is (*ltung med gzugs brnyan*).

In observing the ethics aimed at acquiring good qualities, not to give because of miserliness [for example] would be a downfall; to refrain from giving because one has an altruistic purpose in not giving

resembles a downfall but is not one; to give with pure intention does not constitute a downfall; and to give in order to harm others might seem not to be a downfall but in fact is.

In observing the ethics of working for the benefit of all beings, not to nurse the sick [for example] would be a downfall; not to nurse the sick in order to accomplish a higher goal resembles a downfall but in fact is not; to lovingly nurse the sick does not constitute a downfall; to renounce a higher goal such as one's own meditation or study to nurse a sick person when there already is a nurse attending to his needs might seem not to be a downfall but actually is one.

All actions done with compassionate concern are without fault.

Twenty Verses on the Bodhisattva's Commitments states¹⁶¹:

When one's action springs from compassionate concern, love,
Or a virtuous intention, no fault is incurred.

When a person acts from three motives—compassionate concern, love, or virtuous intention—and without any self-interest but solely to help another, no downfall is incurred in doing any of the actions in [the above scheme of] four distinctions unless it entails losing the commitments of awakening mind. In fact, acting in these ways is said to be part of one's training [in awakening mind].¹⁶²

Prescription for Practice [b]

This is presented in two parts: (1) a concise statement, and (2) the practice in detail.

Concise Statement [i]

The prescribed practice corresponds to the ethics aimed at acquiring good qualities, which is the practice of the six perfections.

The prescribed practice for the venturing mind is the ethics aimed at acquiring good qualities. The incomparable Campopa states¹⁶³:

The ethics aimed at acquiring good qualities includes, in addition to all the precepts of the bodhisattva's ethics of restraint, everything that serves to cultivate wholesomeness of body and speech in order to attain great enlightenment.

PRAJNA EDITIONS

Ascertaining Certainty About the View

Chapter Seven, Section Three

from

The Treasury of Knowledge

by

Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye

commentary by

Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche

translated & edited

by

Michele Martin



Ascertaining Certainty about the View
Section Three of Chapter Seven

from

The Treasury of Knowledge

by

Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye

1. The reasons why a completely pure view is necessary

What one strives for is nirvana, a place without death.

This will not arise without prajna, the remedy for eliminating ignorance,

The root of obscuration. Through prajna, pure view is attained. Through skilful means, pure conduct is attained.

Through uniting completely pure view and conduct, liberation is swiftly attained.

In particular, since all the teachings of the Victorious One Flow towards and enter into the dharmadhatu,

In the beginning the view should be ascertained.

The faults of wrong views should be abandoned after the mind has recognized their ways.

Having searched for the definitive meaning, the authentic view, one should adopt it.

2. How to give rise to the prajna that realizes no-self

With ignorance acting as the cause, the views of the transitory collections [arise].

One should give rise to the prajna that realizes no-self, The remedy for clinging to the self, the root of the four mistaken views.

3. The preliminaries: an explanation of the four seals, which epitomize the sutras

All compounded phenomena are impermanent [because] momentary. All defiled phenomena have the nature of the three sufferings.

[Whether] totally afflicted or completely pure, [all phenomena] are empty and without a self.

Nirvana alone is liberation and peace.

These four seals [are] marks of the doctrine in general.

Having contemplated these thoroughly, from the very beginning one should give rise to certainty.

4. Entering into the path of giving up the two extremes

4.1. The way of giving up the two extremes in general

After [practicing to purify the mind], one enters the path of giving up the two extremes. Prajna, the subject which knows the ultimate, Cuts through mental elaborations about objects to be known. Since this is the view of our [Buddhist] tradition,

Even those [among us], who assert the existence of things,

Within their own system, give up permanence and extinction;

However, they [still] fall into the extremes of superimposition and denial.

For this reason, their [views] are [somewhat] true and mostly false.

Since the madhyamaka tradition realizes that the true nature is free of

mental elaboration

[And that its] mode of appearing is dependent arising, it is completely true.

4.2 In particular, to explain the tradition of the madhyamaka

4.2.1. In general, the identification of emptiness

The object of its view is emptiness

[The yogacara madhyamaka] explains it as the [ultimate] 'thing' [which results from] having negated the two selves;

[The rangtong explain it] from the perspective of a non-affirming negation.

4.2.2. In particular, the explanation of the rangtong system

The basis of emptiness is all phenomena. What is to be negated is the very basis of negation.

Its mode of emptiness is non-existence in the sense of having no essence.

This is the [view of] the Rangtong system.

There are sixteen division: outer, inner, both, emptiness, and so forth.

These are summarized as four: emptiness of things, non-things, nature, and other ['thing'].

4.2.3. The madhyamaka shentong system

The basis of negation is the perfectly existent nature; the object of negation is the imputed and dependent natures;

[The perfectly existent] is empty of these [two], so state the yogacara [madhyamikas].

They assert fourteen [divisions], which are summarized into two.

5. The main topic: an analysis of the two types of no-self
- 5.1. The necessity for teaching no-self

The ten distracting thoughts create obstacles that prevent the [direct] seeing [of emptiness].

The two types of no-self are the remedy which clears them away.

- 5.2. The actual analysis of no-self
- 5.2.1. The no-self of phenomena
- 5.2.1.1. The key point to be ascertained at the outset

Since the coarse no-self of phenomena is common to both Buddhists and non-Buddhists, It should be ascertained at the outset.

- 5.2.1.2. The essential nature of the self to be negated

Like taking a rope to be a snake, its essential nature is clinging to [what appears to] an ordinary mind as truly existent [in terms of its] specific characteristics.

- 5.2.1.3. The reason why it is necessary to refute this [self of phenomena]

[True existence of the object] is refuted because [clinging to it] is the cause of grasping onto a self, the root of the two obscurations.

- 5.2.1.4. How specific philosophical systems realize [the no-self of phenomena]

Although the vaibhashikas and saurantikās do not completely perfect it,

They ascertain [the no-self of phenomena] with respect to particular [categories of] phenomena.

The reason for this is that through analysis, nothing is found;

They take this [not finding] to mean "not truly existent." [This] is the general system of these [two schools].

Within their own system, the cittamatrins assert the realization of the two [types of] no-self.

If [these] are evaluated by madhyamaka [reasoning], there remains an aspect of the self of phenomena.

Because [the cittamatrins] assert that consciousness empty of dualism is an ultimate.

- 5.2.1.5. The way of ascertaining [the no-self of phenomena] through the reasoning of the Madhyamaka

Although there are numerous madhyamaka reasonings, the five of Nagarjuna's system

Lead to certainty about the union of emptiness and dependent arising.

Chandrakīrti stated two [ways of ascertaining]: once the perceived object is refuted, by reason of its non-existence,

The perceiving subject is refuted; and once a single relative [phenomena]

Is [ascertained] to be empty, it follows that all phenomena are empty.

- 5.2.2. Analysis of the no-self of the individual
- 5.2.2.1. Ascertaining the key point

What distinguishes the views of non-Buddhists from [those of] Buddhists is [the assertion of] a self in the individual.

- 5.2.2.2. [Identifying] its essential nature

Its essential nature is innate grasping onto "I" and "mine".

5.2.2.3. Why it is necessary to negate it

[The self of the individual] should be negated because on the basis [of it] "other" is perceived [and thereby] all [afflicted] views arise.

5.2.2.4. The difference in the realization of the specific philosophical systems

Although [they have] different ways of realizing [emptiness], all four philosophical systems realize [the mere lack of a self in the individual].

5.2.2.5. The way of ascertaining it through madhyamaka reasonings

The five skandhas are not the self; the self does not possess them, [And the two] do not [act as a support] for each other. [The self of the individual] is refuted by reasonings such as "the chariot," which prove these twenty points.

In the *Madhyantavibhanga*, ten ways of conceiving of a self in the individual

Are remedied by ten ways of being expert. There are also many other such reasonings.

5.2.3. An explanation of the various classifications involving both [types] of no-self

5.2.3.1. To examine whether [they] are the same or different

Since all phenomena are without a self, in their essential nature [the two types of no-self are inseparable.

They are posited as one or the other from the perspective of the reverses of

The two [things] to be negated-true existence and "I" or "self".

5.2.3.2. The necessity of explaining [no self] in two [aspects]

[Two aspects] are necessary in order to provide for the two [types of] beings with [differing] potentials.

5.2.3.3. An analysis of what is to be negated in relation to the two [types of no-self]

Although the actual objects to be negated could not [exist] as objects to be known,
They refer to what is grasped as one or the other by a confused [mind which is the] subject.

5.2.3.4. Valid cognizers giving rise to certainty

An inferential cognizer based on reasoning, which is a particular [consciousness] arisen from reflection, [appears] first [before direct valid cognition].

It is a valid cognizer giving rise to certainty about ultimate reality. It relies on reasons of [many] types, which are all cases of negation; These are either the absence of related phenomena or the presence of contradictory phenomena.

5.2.3.5. An explanation of correct reasonings which analyze for the ultimate

The key point of all reasonings which analyze for the ultimate Is to take up a particular [phenomenon acting as a] basis and analyze, investigating correctly

Its essence and the contradictions with respect to its attributes.

Therefore, the reasoning "beyond one and many," which refutes an essence,

And the reasoning "refuting arising from the four extremes," which refutes particular attributes,

Are the two main reasonings; the others are just branches [of these].
The root of them all [is found in] the homage of *The Treatise on the Madhyamaka*.

5.2.4. Clarifying the ultimate [view resulting from] analysis according to the specific madhyamaka schools

5.2.4.1. The rangtong school

For the svatantrika school, all things are established as not truly existent.

The concept that clings to this [non-existence] is [also] given up [and the resulting] emptiness is asserted.

In the prasangika [school], mental elaborations are refuted [but] this absence of mental elaborations is not asserted.

5.2.4.2. The shentong school

The particular and uncommon yogacara [madhyamaka] system

[Is to] realize that there is nothing other than mind, that even [this] mind does not exist,

[And] that both [perceived and perceiver] do not exist; [one then rests in] the dharmadhatu, which is [described through] seven vajra points.

[The tathagatagarbha is] the heart essence of all sentient beings and [fully manifest in] Buddhas.

[It is] not similar to the self of the individual, [because it is] free of mental elaboration.

[In its essential nature] samsara and nirvana are inseparable; it is free of a mere lack of self [in the individual].

[Free of being] with and without appearance, [it is the ultimate that] even transcends dependent arising.

[The tathagatagarbha] is empty of temporary faults [and] not empty

of unexcelled qualities.

There is nothing to add or subtract; it is realized by self-arisen awareness.

It is taught that ordinary beings, shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, and immature bodhisattvas

Do not master the view of the tathagatagarbha.

It is not an object of inferential cognition because it transcends words and concepts.

Since for those other than aryas, its mode of being is difficult to comprehend,

It has become an object of debate. Here it is not discussed in detail.

5.2.5. The instruction which profoundly comprehends as one the thought of the two chariots

Having understood the system of each of the founders, the two chariots,

[If one] profoundly comprehends their thought as the same, one will be liberated from the faults of superimposition and denial

[And] obtain flawless vision of the [ultimate] view of the sutras and tantras.

6. To classify the special features of the views of the mantrayana

6.1. In general, the assertions of the madhyamaka masters

In the mantrayana, there is the superiority of the skilful means of bliss, [which is] the subject,

[And] there is no difference [between the mantra and paramitanas] in terms of the object, [emptiness,] free of elaboration: this is the rangtong system.

In the shentong system, the object, [emptiness] is not the mere freedom from mental elaborations;

It is asserted to be endowed with the supreme of all aspects, like [the images appearing in] mirror divination.

Some say that [the two yantras are similar] only [in terms of the essential nature, which is] free of mental elaboration, but [that the mantrayana is superior in its mode of realization] due to its skilful means;

This is like an ordinary fire [compared to] a fire of sandalwood.

6.2. In particular, to present the assertions of Gar Gyi Wangpo

The madhyamaka of the mantrayana is bliss and emptiness, luminous and profound.

Its particular attributes are four: the activity of the avadhuti, skilful means [for giving rise to] emptiness,

Functioning in relation to the basis, [and] accomplishing the kaya of union.

This is the assertion of the vajra of speech, holder of the symbol of light.

7. The view of the unborn union in brief

If [buddha nature were] not present in the basic nature, it could not [possibly] come about as a result of looking [through analysis based on reasoning and scripture, or through conceptual meditation].

When emptiness is [directly] realized, primordial wisdom, which is not deluded about] cause and effect, is spontaneously present.

Everything arises dependently as unceasing [radiance]:

This is the unborn, the union [of skillful means and wisdom] - the mahamudra.



How to Analyze with Prajna

Before listening to the teachings, please give rise to the thought of *bodhichitta*. Which is the thought that you will attain the level of *buddhahood* that abides in neither extreme of *samsaric* existence or *nirvanic* peace for the benefit of all *sentient beings* as vast in number as the sky is limitless in its extent. In order to attain this perfect level of buddhahood, you make the commitment to practice with enthusiasm, listening, reflecting and meditating on the teachings.

Usually, within Buddhist teachings it is taught that all produced phenomena are impermanent, but if you take a string of these instants of produced or composite phenomena and tie them together, there is a stream of moments which seem to be permanent. This is the way we usually think about things.

We are very fortunate individuals, because first of all, we have acquired a precious human body and we have faith, prajna (or superior knowledge), and diligence. In addition to that, we have met with the *dharma* and are practicing listening, reflecting and meditating on the teachings which show that the life we lead has the character of impermanence: instant by instant the moments are passing away and so we should not cling to this life as somehow truly existent, but come to see it as being dream-like because it will vanish sooner or later. Therefore, it is very important to practice *dharma* because it benefits us not only in this specific life that we have but in future lives to come. And not only can we benefit ourselves, we are also able to benefit other beings. So

**THE MIRACULOUS KEY,
WHICH CONDENSES THE REASONING PRESENTED IN
THE OCEAN OF REASONING
AND
WHICH OPENS THE DOOR TO
THE TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE**

**shes.bya.kun.khyab.mdzod.kyi.sgo.'byed.rigs.gzhung.rgya.mtsoi.rig.
bsdus.'phrul.gyi.lde.mig.zhes.bya.wa.bzhugs.so**

**A commentary by the author of the text,
Khenpo Tsultrim Gyatso**

- 72.5 In this next definition if you look at the first line on page 73 where it says 'zhugs.pa.rnams', you might put instead 'zhug.pa.na' as in 'when'. The definition of **an object of engagement**, "jug.yul", is those non-deceptive things which are entered into for the purpose of taking up or abandoning. This refers specifically to virtue and non-virtue [dge.wa and mi.dge.wa.]. The two doors of pervasion: those which when entered into for the sake of taking up and abandoning are non-deceptive are necessarily objects of engagement; objects of engagement are necessarily those which when entered into for the sake of taking up and abandoning are non-deceptive. So from among the four yul—snang.yul, gzung.yul, zhen.yul, and 'jug.yul what would you say about las.rgyu.'bras—actions, cause, and effect?
 "All of them!"
 What about the excellent dharma—dam.pai.chos?
 "It is 'jug.yul."
 Correct.
- 73.1 The definition of a **specifically-characterized phenomenon** is that which is ultimately able to perform a function. 'Able to perform a function' means able to generate an effect. 'Ultimately' here really means 'yang.dag.par'—is really that way, is truly that way—even when you get down to the gnas.lugs of the thing it is 'don.byed.nus.pa', able to perform a function. However this doesn't mean that something has to be able to function even in the face of wisdom—dag.med.tog.pai.shes.rab. The two doors of pervasion: whatever is ultimately able to perform a function is necessarily a specifically-characterized phenomenon, and whatever is a specifically-characterized phenomenon is necessarily that which is able to perform a function. In the system of the Sautrantika school, 'thing', 'dngos.po', 'ultimate truth', 'don.dam.bden.pa', and 'specifically-characterized phenomenon', rang.mtshan, are synonyms.
- 73.2 The definition of a **generally-characterized phenomenon** is a phenomena which ultimately is not able to perform functions. 'Not able to perform functions ultimately' means 'not actually able to do it, not really able to do it'. So what about flowers; are they impermanent? When a flower appears to your mind then it's a generally-characterized phenomenon. So even though flowers themselves are able to perform functions we are asking now about a flower which appears to your mind, and that flower is not ultimately able to perform functions and therefore it is a generally-characterized phenomenon. But all these flowers outside which actually appear directly to your mind—the actual place of affixing the name flower—those things are specifically-characterized phenomena. In the Sautrantika system permanent phenomena, generally-characterized phenomena, and deceptive truth [kun.rdzob.bden.pa.] all are synonyms.
- 73.2 When we talk about objects of comprehension, zhal.bya, there are two types of them—manifest [mgnon.gyur.] and hidden [lkog.gyur.]. What does it mean to talk about a **manifest object of comprehension**, gzhal.bya.mngon.gyur? It

is that which is realized by way of a directly-perceiving valid cognizer, mngon.sum.tshad.ma. The two doors of pervasion: whatever is realized by a directly-perceiving valid cognizer is necessarily a manifest object of comprehension; a manifest object of comprehension is necessarily that which is realized by a directly-perceiving valid cognizer. What about the sound of the wind right now; is that gzhal.bya.mngon.gyur or gzhal.bya.lkog.gyur? It is a manifest object of comprehension, but the wind itself is a hidden object of comprehension.

73.3 That which is realized by an inferential valid-cognizer is the definition of a **hidden object of comprehension**, gzhal.bya.lkog.gyur. The two doors of pervasion: whatever is realized by an inferential valid-cognizer is necessarily a hidden object of comprehension; a hidden object of comprehension is necessarily that which is realized by an inferential valid-cognizer. So what about former and later lifetimes; are they hidden or manifest objects of comprehension? Why? What about sugatagarbha? Why? What about oneself for oneself—are you manifest or hidden?

73.3 The definition of **very hidden object of comprehension**, gzhal.bya.-shin.tu.lkog.gyur is that which is realized in dependence upon a scripture of the three analyses. Manifest objects of comprehension are established and realized by direct perceivers; slightly hidden phenomena are realized and established by inferential cognizers; very hidden objects of comprehension have to realized in dependence upon scriptures of the three analyses. For an example of a very hidden phenomenon: the fact that in dependence on a practice of giving there arise various kinds of resources for oneself in a later lifetime, and the fact that in dependence upon maintaining discipline in a later lifetime one takes rebirth in a high migration such as a god, those have to be understood and realized in dependence upon correct scripture. Those are things which have to be understood in dependence upon the inference of confidence or belief—yid.ches.ki.rjes.dpag. The three analyses mean that you look to see (1) whether something is contradicted by direct perception, (2) by inference, and (3) by scripture that is known to be valid, and if it is not contradicted by any of those three then it is called rjes.dpag.gsum.gi.lung. There is a scripture which says:

"From giving come resources,
From ethics comes happiness of high rebirth."

That this is the case is not something which can be ascertained by inference in general; it has to be ascertained by the inference of confidence, yid.ches.ki.rjes.dpag, in dependence upon this type of scripture—one which is known to have been purified by way of the three analyses. It is called yid.ches.ki.rjes.dpag because it is inference which works in dependence upon one's own confidence in a particular scripture of the Buddha. The two doors of pervasion: that which is realized in dependence upon a scripture which has been purified by way of the three analyses is necessarily a very hidden object of comprehension, and a very hidden object of comprehension is necessarily that which is realized in

those which have the same nature, an instance of which would be, "a product is impermanent". that is a case where the two things are of one nature [bdag.nyid.gcig.]. Then there is another way of positing relationship, which is the relationship between a cause and an effect; "If one thing has arisen from something else, then those two are related." In the non-buddhist systems there are all kinds of divisions and classifications of relationship that are possible. However, Dīgnāga and Dharmakīrti criticized those and said that they all could be brought down to just these two. So, to put it quite briefly, you would say that 'that which harms or refutes some phenomenon' is contradictory, and that 'that which does not abandon some phenomenon' is the meaning of relationship.

When you are studying madhyamaka and valid cognition, then the topic of **negation and establishment** is the most important topic that you study. Why is that? Because what you need to accomplish is to get rid of that which is not concordant with reasoning. Therefore if you understand the topics of negation and establishment well then they will help you to be able to do that.

78.2 The definition of **negation (or negative phenomenon)** [dgag.pa.] is that the appearance of the generic image of some phenomenon depends upon the appearance of the generic image of its object of negation. Briefly, it is that which is realized by way of negating the object of negation. For example, in order to realize selflessness except for realizing them by way of negating the object of negation there is no way to realize them. So that makes it a little bit easier. The two doors of pervasion: that which is realized by negating the object of negation is necessarily a negative phenomenon, and that which is a negative phenomenon is necessarily that which is realized by negating the object of negation.

78.3 The definition of **establishment (or positive phenomenon)** [bsgrub.pa.] is that the appearance of its generic image does not depend upon the appearance of the generic image of its object of negation. In brief that which appears to the mind without depending on refuting the object negation is a definition of positive phenomenon. For example, this table is a positive phenomenon because it appears to the mind without depending upon refuting some object of negation. However, this table's emptiness appears to the mind only through refuting an object of negation, its true existence.

That topic of negative and positive phenomena is very important, and the next most important topic is **generality, or universality, and particularity, or specific instance**.

78.4 That which is concordant with many is the definition of **generality (or universal)** [spyi.]. Here, 'many' refers to the specific instances [bye.brag.], and the generality or universal pervades its specific instances. Sakya Paṇḍita gives 'pervader' [khyab.byed.] as the definition of universal, and

'that which is pervaded' [khyab.bya.] as the definition of specific instance. For example, there are many different kinds of wood—sandalwood, juniper wood, and so on—but 'wood' pervades all of those. So 'wood' is the universal, and sandalwood is one specific instance, juniper wood is another specific instance, and so on.

- 78.4 The definition of **specific instance (or particularity)** is that (1) it is that phenomenon (the universal), (2) it (the specific instance) is related as one nature with that phenomenon (the universal), and (3) there are many things that are not it (the specific instance), but which are the phenomenon (the universal). Many of the textbooks of the Gelukpa monastic colleges have a fivefold definition of specific instance, but here, following the system of the *Treasury of Knowledge*, we have a threefold definition of specific instance. If we put it briefly, Sakya Paṇḍita says that it is just 'that which is pervaded', and that the universal is 'the pervader'.

Now we come to the definitions of **unity or identity**, and of **difference or distinction**.

- 78.5 When you give the definition of **unity** you take some phenomenon and posit that as your basis [chos.gang.zhig.]. You say that which does not appear as distinct from, or different to, conceptuality is the definition of unity [gcig.]. For instance, a pot or vase. There are two corners to this definition. The first is 'some phenomenon' which is put in to eliminate that you are talking about a non-thing because non-things do not appear to the mind as different; if you didn't include this condition non-things could seem to satisfy this definition. For instance, a sky-flower and the horns of a rabbit are eliminated by that particular provision—sky-flowers and the horns of a rabbit do not appear to the mind as different, but you can't posit them as part of this.
- 79.1 In the definition of **different or distinct** [tha.dad.] the first part says 'established or existent base' and tells you that you are talking about some existent phenomenon, the definition says that existent phenomena and its name are to be understood as distinct. For example, a pillar and a pot are tha.dad; the explicit or actual names of those things appear to the mind differently, thus they are taken to be different. So why does this definition have to have an established or existent base? It is to eliminate the possibility that sky-flowers and the horns of a rabbit could qualify as different, since they do appear to the mind to be different from each other. But they do not satisfy this definition because they are not existent phenomena.

Now we come to another topic of great importance in the tradition of valid cognition, the topic of **eliminative and collective engagers**.

- 79.2 The definition of an **eliminative engager** [sel.'jug.] is that which engages objects through distinguishing parts. For example, if you talk about a sound, it has all sorts of different qualities and features: there is its aspect of being that which is heard by an ear consciousness; there is its quality of being a product; there is its impermanence; there is its selflessness; there are all those different things. But when it is taken to by a mind that is an eliminative engager then, without getting at all those different things, it just picks out one portion and takes that to mind. Thus it is called an eliminative engager.

For example, when you are thinking about sound and you conclude from the sign of the sound's being a product that it is impermanent, then at that point from among all the different qualities, features, portions, and parts of sound, you have separated out its quality of being a product and you take that to mind. Because you take just that to mind, the mind at that point is called an eliminative engager. You just leave aside all the other qualities of that particular object.

When, through the reason of sound being neither one nor many, you come to understand sound's emptiness, at that time your mind is focussed on the emptiness of the sound and you have put aside sound's quality of being impermanent. Similarly, when you think about sound's being a product, you have set aside its impermanence and its nature of emptiness and have simply discriminated it as being a product. The conceptual mind is not very powerful because the conceptual mind has to get at objects in just this way. It can't get at all the different qualities of an object at one time; it can only cover one portion at a time. For example, when it gets at sound's nature of being a product it has to set aside sound's selflessness, emptiness, impermanence, and so on. Thus it is not a powerful mind. The nature of conceptual mind is like when you go around a building and look out the windows—through each window you can see a portion of something but you can't see broadly. That is the nature of a conceptual consciousness. There is no great capacity to it.

- 79.2 The definition of a **collective engager** [sgrub.'jug] is that which engages objects without discriminating (or separating out) parts. Our sense consciousnesses would be examples of collective engagers. For example, when our ear consciousness hears an object, without going through the process of separating out different parts it takes that object to mind, hears that object, apprehends that object, and gets at it in a very clear way, nakedly. When you hear sound, the sound's product-ness, impermanence, selflessness, etc.,—all the different features of the sound—are not different in terms of the entity (ngo.wo), they are all just one entity. The ear consciousness just takes all of those in together without having to separate out one portion and leave the others aside. At the same time, that particular ear consciousness is not able to ascertain those qualities of its being a product, impermanent, etc. Sound itself is a product, impermanent, selfless, empty. Those things are not different entities (ngo.wo); they are undifferentiable, inseparable.

Answer: There really is a difference here because you are one particular thing, not something in general. You are not a generally characterized phenomenon but, rather, a specifically characterized phenomenon. If I look at you and then close my eyes and think about you, what appears to my mind at that point is called the generic or mental image [don.spyi.] as opposed to something about just flower or even red flower, which is really just a generally characterized phenomenon. When you think about that what appears to your mind is called the isolate. So there is a difference of clarity here; the generic image appears more clearly to the mind than the isolate, which is rather cloudy.

For example when you are dreaming there are flowers, are these flowers an isolate? When you talk about a flower that appears in a dream, you have to make the distinction between a flower that is seen by the eye and a flower that appears to a conceptual consciousness. This thing that appears to a conceptual consciousness is dngos.med, a non-thing. It doesn't have that factor of clarity [gsal.cha.]. In the texts on valid cognition this kind of thing is gone into in tremendous detail and refinement; here we are just setting it out very briefly.

- 80.2 The definition of isolate quality is that, first, it is not a dngos.po, an impermanent thing, and second, it is a phenomenon that appears to a conceptual consciousness as the many qualities of a substance [rdzas.]. For example, a microphone which appears to a conceptual consciousness is an isolate, and the microphone's impermanence as it appears to a conceptual consciousness is an isolate quality, a quality of that isolate—just as we had substance and substantial quality before. It is important to make the distinction between substance and substantial quality on the one hand and between isolate and isolate quality on the other. The reason for the importance is that if you can distinguish them clearly then you can understand very easily how it is that the object that appears to a conceptual consciousness is not truly existent. You will know the very pure reason of how it is that conceptual consciousness is confused.
- 80.2 The definition of correct sign [rtags.yang.dag.] is that in which the three modes are complete. The three modes are the presence of the reason in the subject [phyogs.chos.], the forward pervasion [rjes.khyab.], and the reverse pervasion [ldog.khyab.]. The non-buddhist logicians set out all sorts of different numbers of modes which had to be present for the sign to be correct ranging from one up to six. However, Dīgnāga and Dharmakīrti refuted all of them and established that a correct sign must have three and only three modes. For that reason anything in which the three modes are complete is necessarily a correct sign.
- 80.3 The definition of the presence of the reason in the subject [phyogs.chos.] is that which is ascertained with valid cognition in accordance with the mode of statement as being with the subject about which one wants to know something [shes.'dod.chos.can.] in the proof of that sign. Briefly speaking,

the subject about which one wants to know something [shes.'dod.chos.can.] is the *rtsod.gzhi*, the basis of debate. For example, in the proof of the impermanence of sound by way of the sign of being a product, the sound is the *shes.'dod.chos.can* as the *rtsod.gzhi*, the basis of debate, and the sound's being a product is the presence of the reason in the subject. However, if you were to say, "The subject, sound, is impermanent because of being a non-product," there would be no presence of the reason in the subject because non-product is not established as a quality of sound. Why is this first mode called the presence of the reason in the subject? Because *phyogs* refers to the *shes.'dod.chos.can* and *chos* refers to the *gtan.tshig*, the reason, and because the *chos* is seen as existing with the *phyogs*—and that is what you're seeking to understand.

- 80.4 The definition of **pervasion or forward pervasion or the applicability of the reason to the thesis** is the mode that is ascertained as existing in only the concordant class in accordance with the mode of proof in the proof of that sign. In the proof of the impermanence of sound by way of the sign of product, in other words in the syllogism, "Sound is impermanent because of being a product," product, the third term, pervades impermanence, the second term. Whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent. For that reason that is how it is named, that is how you apply it to a particular syllogism. For example, if we take the sound of a dragon, that is to say thunder, and we want to show that it is impermanent by way of being a sound-product, the first mode that needs to be established is that product is a quality of thunder. Then the next thing that needs to be established is that product pervades impermanence. Whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent.

- 80.5 The definition of **counter pervasion** [*ldog.khyab*.] is that mode that is ascertained as only non-existent in the discordant class in accordance with the mode of proof in the proof of that sign. Whatever is permanent is necessarily not a product. Then the discordant class from permanent is impermanent. Because permanent is not pervaded by product, in that way you are able to establish the *ldog.khyab*, the counter pervasion. For example, sound is impermanent, and that which is to be established is the impermanence of sound. The discordant class from impermanent is permanent, and that which is just turned around from this concordant class of impermanent, its opposite, is permanent. So by seeing that the product has no relationship with permanent, you are able to understand the reverse pervasion. Through the factor of being reversed from permanent you come up with the counter pervasion.

There is sound, there is product, there is impermanent, and there is that which is just the opposite of impermanent, permanent. The presence of product in sound is the first mode, the presence of the reason in the subject. The fact that product pervades impermanence is the forward pervasion. The fact of being reversed from, opposite from the discordant class, permanent, is what establishes the counter pervasion; it is like

saying, "Whatever is not impermanent is a not a product." That whatever is permanent is necessarily not a product is the counter pervasion. That whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent is the forward pervasion².

What follows is the heart or root of it; if you get the heart or root of it then all the words will come clearly:
 sgra.la.byas.pas.khyab/ byas.na.mi.rtag.pas.khyab/ rtag.na.ma.byas.pas.khyab/
 Product pervades sound. Whatever is a product is impermanent. Whatever is permanent is not a product.

- 81.1 The definition of a **facsimile of a sign** [rtags.ltar.snang.] is a sign in which the three modes are not complete. For example, if among the three signs the second one were not true. For instance, if you were to say, "The subject, sound, is permanent because of being a product," then there is phyogs.chos because byas.pa is established as a quality of sgra, but there is no forward or counter pervasion. Therefore the three modes are not complete and you have a facsimile of a sign, not a correct sign.
- 81.1 The definition of a **concordant correct example** [mthun.dpe.yang.dag.] is that which serves as a basis for ascertaining the forward pervasion prior to ascertaining that which is to be established [sgrub.bya.]. (Note that in the text the sngon.du at the very end of the line is a mistake and should be removed.) For example, in the proof of sound's impermanence by way of the sign of product (in other words in the syllogism, "The subject, sound, is impermanent, because of being a product,") to enable you to understand that whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent you state a correct concordant example. You could say, "like the sound of a conch," which would help this as it is easy for you to understand that the sound of a conch is a product and that it is impermanent. Here it would not be very helpful to give 'diamond' as the correct concordant example because it is not very easy for us to realize that a diamond is a product and impermanent. Why is that? Because as far as realizing the impermanence of something it is easier to realize the impermanence of a sound than that of a diamond.
- 81.2 The definition of a **facsimile of an example** [dpe.ltar.snang.] is that which (1) is held to be the basis of ascertaining the pervasion prior to ascertaining that which is to be established, but which (2) cannot be ascertained. For example, if you were to say, "composite phenomena are

² Translator's comment: At the University of Virginia we had a little formula. You've got the three things: sgra, mi.rtag.pa, and byas.pa. Now 1=3, sgra=mi.rtag.pa, that is the phyogs.chos. Whatever is 3 is 2; that is the rjes.khyab. Whatever is not 2 is not 3; that is the ldog.khyab.

impermanent, like a diamond," because it is very difficult to ascertain the impermanence of a diamond, then that would be an example of a facsimile of an example.

This question of correct examples and facsimiles of examples is very important for establishing and refuting various positions. Thus it is very important in *tshad.ma* and *Madhyamaka*. In *Madhyamaka*, when you are showing the way in which phenomena have the nature of emptiness, you would use a dream as an example since it is a concordant example that enables you easily to realize the meaning of emptiness. For example, if you say, "The subject, *samsāra*, is not truly existent because of being neither one nor many, like a dream," then in that syllogism dream is the correct concordant example which makes the proof easier to realize. If, in that same syllogism, you had given 'rock mountain' as the concordant example then that would be difficult to understand. Why? Because, even though it is the case that the rock mountain is not truly existent, it is very difficult for us to understand that since it is quite hard and solid—if you kick a rock or bang your head against it, it feels quite hard and you hurt yourself. Whereas the examples of an illusion and a dream are much better in this case since they are easy to understand in terms of what you're trying to prove as true.

There are two areas of study; one is called 'minds and awarenesses' [*blo.rig.*], the other is called 'signs and reasonings' [*rtags.rigs.*], and all of these come under the heading of *rtags.rigs*. Here, all we are doing is looking at some definitions; we are not looking at the broad area of study. For example, there is a definition of mind [*blo.*] and there are all sorts of other definitions that come up under the category of mind. All of that kind of study and the many kinds of divisions of it are known as *blo.rig*. Similarly we've given a definition of correct sign [*rtags.yang.dag.*] and so forth, but then there are all kinds of divisions and subdivisions of *rtags*, and each one having its own definition and illustrations. We are not going into that now, but that is what you study in the area of *rtags.rigs*. If one would study this subject extensively, all of this is explained expansively in the *Ocean of Texts on Reason and Valid Cognition* [*tshad.ma.rigs.gzhung.rgya.mtsho.*] by the seventh Karmapa, Chödrak Gyatso. For people involved in the work of translation it is necessary to understand this whole question of definition; if you want to look at how to translate a particular term then you need to be able to understand the definition of it—you need to be able to do that kind of analysis and bring it into the translation.

- 81.4 The definition of a facsimile of a proof statement [*sgrub.ngag.ltar.snang.*] is that it (1) is a proof statement and that (2) it is contradictory to the three modes, that is, it possesses some fault either with regard to the mind, the object, or the term. For example, if you said, "Whatever is a product is impermanent, for example a sky-flower, then space also is a product." What is wrong with that? For one, space is not a product, thus there is

no phyogs.chos, and secondly, the example of sky-flower is not a product, so you haven't done anything that would help to establish your basic thesis.

- 81.5 The definition of **that which is to be established in relation to this correct sign** [rtags.yang.dag.gi.bsgrub.byā.] is that which is to be understood starting with depending on a correct sign. It would be fine to leave out "starting with" and just say, "that which is to be understood in dependence upon a correct sign. In the syllogism, "Sound is impermanent because of being a product," what is it that is to be understood? It is that 'sound is impermanent'. That is the sgrub.byā, the rtags.yang.dag.gi.bsgrub.byā, and it is to be done in dependence upon the correct sign, which, in this case, is 'product'. When you establish that sound is impermanent, impermanence is the bsgrubs.byāi.chos, the quality or predicate that is to be established, and sound is the subject, the chos.can, the basis of debate. So the sgrub.byā [sgra.mi.rtag.pa.] is the collection, the bringing together of those two, the subject [sgra.] and the quality [mi.rtag.pa.] that is to be established as a quality of that subject.

- 82.1 The definition of **a clarifier or clarification** [bsal.wa.] is that (1) it is a facsimile of a thesis and that (2) the meaning that is its opposite class is established by valid cognition. (The ma before grub.pa on 82.2 should be deleted.) This also is very important in the field of tshad.ma.

There are four types of clarifiers. The first one is called a **clarifier that is a reason** [gtan.tshigs.kyi.bsāl.wa.]. For example, were you to say that sound is permanent then that particular position would be harmed or refuted by the reasoning which says that whatever is a product is impermanent. So that is why you talk about a clarifier that is a sign [rtags.] or a reason. The second is a **clarifier that is a direct perceiver** [mngon.sum.gyi.bsāl.wa.]. Were you to believe that sound was not an object that is heard by an ear consciousness, then that would be harmed by direct experience, thus you talk about the clarifier that is a direct perception. The third class is a **clarifier that is renowned in the world** ['jigs.rten.grags.pai.bsāl.wa.]. The example here is that it is well-known that the luminous, white thing that appears in the sky at night is a rabbit-bearer, but some people call it the moon. It is quite suitable to call it the moon even though of course it really is a rabbit-bearer, but if someone were to think that it would not be suitable to call it the moon, then they would be a mistake due to the reasoning of what is renowned in the world. Were you to look at a man and say that that is a woman, then that would be a mistake due to the conventions known by the world. The fourth type is a **clarifier that is an assertion** [khas.blāng.gi.bsāl.wa.]. For example, were a buddhist to say that generosity does not lead to prosperity and that discipline does not lead to a happy migration, then they would be wrong, and the way in which they would be wrong would be in terms of the clarifier that is an assertion. By your asserting that generosity does not produce prosperity you would be contradicting the scriptures that you

yourself hold to be true. You yourself assert that those scriptures are valid.

- 82.2 The definition of **correct criticism** [sun.'byin.yang.dag.] is speech that enables you to understand that something is faulty through expressing faults with respect to the faulty. This is not just a matter of pointing out the faults in the way that people express things; this is particularly in the context of philosophical assertions or positions [khas.len.] that people take. What we are talking about here is something that is able to cause someone to understand the faults of a particular philosophical position.
- 82.3 The definition of **facsimile of a criticism** [sun.'byin.ltar.snang.] is speech that does not enable you to understand that something is faulty through expressing faults with respect to the faulty. What this means is that, although there are faults with someone's position, what you are saying is not sufficient to make those faults be clearly understood. For example, if someone were to say that there is no connection between actions done at one time and effects experienced at a later time, then there is indeed something faulty about that position and one should express those faults. If what you say is sufficient to cause the person holding that position to understand what is wrong with it, then that is a correct criticism. On the other hand, if what you say is not sufficient to cause that person to understand the faults in their position then what you have said is the facsimile of a criticism.
- 82.3 The definition of **a correct consequence** [thal.'gyur.yang.dag.] is a statement of a consequence that cannot be overcome by an answer. An example of this would be if someone thinks that sound is permanent and you say to them, "It follows that sound, the subject, is not a product, because of being permanent"—"sgra.chos.can.byas.pa.ma.yin.pa.thal.rtag.pa.-yin.pai.phyir". Just like that there are all kinds of consequences. For example, were you to argue about production with a Sāṅkhya, a person who asserts that phenomena exist beginninglessly at the time of their own causes and are merely manifestations of what was already existent, then you would say in reply, "It follows that production is meaningless and endless, because whatever is produced already existed at the time of the cause." In the Madhyamaka system there are all kinds of consequences like that; in the Madhyamaka-prāsaṅgika school especially they debate with their opponents by setting forth the consequences of the opponent's view. If the person cannot come up with an answer to the consequence that you stated for them and are thus defeated, then what you have stated is a correct consequence.
- 82.4 The definition of **a facsimile of a consequence** [thal.'gyur.ltar.snang.] is a statement of a consequence that can be overcome by an answer. If the person is able to overcome the consequence with the answer that they give

COMMENTARY

Rinpoche will start to explain the *Summary of the Treasury of Knowledge*, briefly called *The Miraculous Key to the Path of Knowledge*. In general it is a summary of the *Treasury of Knowledge* [shes.byā.mdzod.] written by Jamgon Kongtrül the first. In particular it has one part which explains the teachings on valid cognition, and Rinpoche has related that part to the *Ocean of Reasoning* written by the 7th Karmapa, Chödrak Gyatso. Rinpoche made this summary in order to facilitate the studies and practice of valid cognition for beginners; he wrote the text for the sake of the students at Nālānda Institute at Rumtek.

In Jamgon Kongtrül Rinpoche's *Treasury of Knowledge* there are ten different topics, or chapters we might say. The section of the *Miraculous Key* which corresponds to the sixth of those ten chapters appears in the root text from 70.2 to 112.2. At the beginning of that section (at 70.2) the text says, "In order to explain the way to generate the wisdom of hearing there are four chapters which lead one to be able to do that. The first analyzes the topics of common knowledge, or common science, or common reasoning; the second analyzes the topics of the general objects of knowledge, or general knowledge of the greater and lesser vehicles; the third analyzes for the sake of establishing a view of the causal definition vehicle; and the fourth briefly analyzes the vajra vehicle." So those are the four subjects within the sixth chapter of Jamgon Kongtrül Lödro Thaya's *Treasury of Knowledge*, and here in the root text they are set out in a brief way. In this commentary we will deal first with the third part and later with the first part.

- 1.1 At beginning of the text, the *Miraculous Key*, there is an expression of worship: first there are four stanzas expressing worship to the Buddha then there are four stanzas expressing worship to Mañjuśrī, and then there are four verses expressing worship to his Holiness the Sixteenth Karmapa.
- 94.1 The third part of the section which summarizes the sixth chapter of the *Treasury of Knowledge*, the explanation of the views and tenets of the path of characteristics, is in three parts. The first is a presentation of the definitions of the various buddhist schools.
- 94.1 First there is a definition of the word **vehicle** or **yāna** [theg.pa.]. That word, 'vehicle' or 'yāna', is defined in two ways: it can be said to be that which carries one there i.e. to the goal, or that by which one is carried. Either of these definitions is suitable. The first definition is mainly related to the path of fruition and the second definition to the causal path.

94.2 The defining characteristics, or definition [mtshan.nyid.], of the **Hīnayāna** in general is: the means that accomplish one-sided peace being the ultimate goal or the ultimate object to be attained. That is the goal. One then practises fully motivated by an attitude of renunciation. So in terms of path, in this vehicle renunciation is emphasized. The fruition is the attainment of one-sided peace; it is not the attainment of non-abiding nirvāṇa. One who attains non-abiding nirvāṇa doesn't abide in either the extreme of peace or the extreme of conditioned existence. So here the ultimate goal is one-sided so to speak—it only involves peace.

94.2 Then comes a definition of the **Śrāvakayāna** which belongs to the Hīnayāna. This is as follows: the view is one of individual selflessness; one in this path mainly meditates on the Four Noble Truths and their sixteen attributes; and conduct or action involves striving for personal peace through abiding by any of the seven categories of the vows of individual liberation. Thus one practises the sacred means that accomplish the fruition which is arhathood without remainder. There is two-fold selflessness: individual selflessness and the absence of a self-entity in phenomena. In the Śrāvaka approach the view is then mainly related to individual selflessness. Then, amongst Tibetan scholars there has been a lot of debate as to whether or not arhats have realized the absence of a self-essence of phenomena. Points that have been debated are termed 'Points difficult to comprehend [dka.wa.gnad.]'.

The main object of meditation in the Śrāvaka approach is the Four Noble Truths and their sixteen attributes. Rinpoche will explain the Four Noble Truths and their sixteen attributes later on, basing his explanation on the *Treasury of Knowledge*. Then there is the conduct or action of those following this Śrāvaka approach. They strive for personal peace, that is they do not practice with the aim of attaining enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings—they strive for personal peace only.

Then are the seven categories of the vows of individual liberation. The first two categories are male and female lay practitioners [dge.bsnyen.pa./ma.]. Then there are five categories in relation to those who have left home, who are ordained. There are those who are not fully ordained, male and female [dge.tshul.pa./ma.], there are fully ordained monks and nuns [dge.slongs.pa./ma.], and then there is a category of women who aspire to full ordination [dge.slob.ma.]. First the vows of a dge.tshul are taken and then the practitioner takes the vows of the dge.slob.ma for three years which is a preparation for the vows of a fully-ordained nun. In Tibet women only had access to taking the vows of a dge.tshul.ma since the other vows' lineages didn't exist in Tibet. So the conduct or action of the Śrāvaka approach involves abiding by the vows of any of these seven categories and thus striving for the attainment of personal peace. One doesn't have to abide by all of them—just one [set] of them is enough!!

I only mentioned with respect to fruition arhats without remainder. Arhats with remainder [lhag.bcas.] have not yet left the skandhas behind; arhats

without remainder have left the skandhas behind and have passed into the expanse of peace or nirvāṇa. In arhathood without remainder there is not even a trace left of the 5 skandhas, there is no manifestation any more of the skandhas, the continuity of the five skandhas, including the mind, has been severed and nothing is left behind. Therefore such an arhat does not take rebirth any more. This state is illustrated by water that has dried up, or by fire that has died out. There is nothing to do once arhathood without remainder has been attained.

- 94.5 Then comes the definition of the **Pratyekabuddhayāna**. In addition to the Śrāvakayāna the practitioner in this yāna mainly practises the profound meditation on dependent-arising. That is the profound means that accomplishes the fruition which is peace that is nirvāṇa. In addition to the practices of the Śrāvakayāna the practitioners of the Pratyekabuddhayāna mainly meditate on the twelve links of dependent arising in their order of production and in the reversed order. The practitioners of this path are said to be extremely skilled with respect to the meditation on dependent-arising.

This section [of the commentary] mainly focusses on enabling practitioners to develop an intellectual understanding, so it emphasises intellectual understanding in relation to the path of reasoning. Thus, in terms of the Pratyekabuddhayāna, one would use the term above for fruition—‘one-sided peace’ [bzhi.ba.phyogs.gcig.]—which has a specific purpose in terms of reasoning rather than just using ‘peace’ [bzhi.wa] or ‘nirvāṇa’. [Khenpo was pointing out that in the debate courtyard one would need to use ‘one-sided peace’ rather than the other terms because of logical requirements.]

- 95.1 Then comes a definition of the **Mahāyāna**. The Mahāyāna is outstanding or literally, particularly elevated or noble [‘phags.pa.], in comparison with the Hīnayāna. There are seven greatneses which one speaks of in this tradition. These are realization of the view, the objects of intention, application, and training, how to abandon what is to be abandoned, that which is to be attained—the fruition. The realization of view which is particular to this tradition, the Mahāyāna, involves realization of twofold selflessness. So in addition to the realization of individual selflessness there is realization of the absence of self-essence in phenomena. If twofold selflessness is not realized completely then buddhahood will not be attained. That which is to be trained in involves conduct or action and that involves intention and application. The intention or motivation is one of love and compassion, and motivated by love and compassion one applies oneself to the practice of the pāramitās. That practice is thus done for the sake, for the welfare of beings. So the conduct or action of the Mahāyāna or Great Vehicle is to apply oneself to the practice of the pāramitās whilst being fully aroused by the awakening mind. So, whatever activity one is engaged in, the focus is the welfare of beings. So the welfare of beings is emphasized in this tradition. In the Śrāvaka approach it is sufficient to abandon or give up the obscuration of the afflictions

[myon.grib.]; by that one attains the goal or fruition of that tradition. Whereas in the Mahāyāna that is not sufficient; in addition to having abandoned the obscuration of affliction the obscuration of objects of knowledge [shes.grib.] has to be abandoned as well. So, in the Śrāvaka approach as we saw, the goal or the object of attainment is arhathood. However that is not the goal in the Mahāyāna on the other hand; here one focusses on the attainment of non-abiding nirvāṇa which is buddhahood.

In another part of the *Treasury of Knowledge* there is a quote from the *Sūtralāṅkāra* in which the seven greatnesses are enumerated. There they are enumerated as follows: great focus, great wisdom, great exertion or joyous effort, great skill in means, great practice, and great buddha activity. Then there is a quotation in the same part of the text of Karmapa VIII, Mikyo Dorje who says that there are differences when one compares the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna with respect to the realization of the view, intention, application, what is to be abandoned, what is to be attained (the fruition)—in short the difference between these two traditions is the seven greatnesses. So the enumeration given in the *Sūtralāṅkāra* is then sufficient—by that one can establish the differences when comparing the Hīna- and Mahāyāna. The fourfold pervasion of the definition of the Mahāyāna: Whatever possesses the sevenfold, superior ['phags.pa.], great distinctions is the Mahāyāna; whatever is the Mahāyāna possesses the sevenfold, superior ['phags.pa.], great distinctions; whatever does not possess the sevenfold, superior ['phags.pa.], great distinctions is not the Mahāyāna; whatever is not the Mahāyāna does not possess the sevenfold, superior ['phags.pa.], great distinctions.

- 95.3 Then comes the definition of the **buddhist tenet, the Vaibhāṣika**. That tenet is defined as follows. They assert the relative, or deceptive, truth as coarse or solid things and the coarse aspect of consciousness or the conscious continuum. The ultimate truth in this tradition is described in terms of perceiver and object, and that is asserted to be the ultimate in terms of object which is said to be indivisible atoms, and in terms of perceiver, indivisible moments of consciousness. So in the Vaibhāṣika tradition indivisible atoms and indivisible moments of consciousness are said to be ultimately existent, whereas coarse things or phenomena—solid things—and consciousness are said to be relative. So in the text there is the definition of the *buddhist* tenet of the Vaibhāṣika. It is emphasised that this is a buddhist tenet since there may be non-buddhist traditions that also assert indivisible atoms and indivisible moments of consciousness as the ultimate. In order to distinguish the Vaibhāṣikas from non-buddhist traditions holding the same view it is mentioned that this is a buddhist tenet. That excludes non-buddhist traditions. That excludes scientists who might hold such a view. So in terms of debate it is very important to give a very detailed definition like this—there is great purpose to it. The twofold pervasion [khyab.pa.sgo.gnyis.] of the definition of a Vaibhāṣika: those who are Vaibhāṣikas necessarily assert directionally partless particles and temporally partless moments of consciousness as ultimate truths; those who assert directionally partless particles and temporally partless moments

of consciousness as ultimate truths are necessarily Vaibhāṣikas. In terms of debate two doors, four doors, and eight doors of pervasion may be used. In a long debate one would use the eight pervasions, in a short one the two pervasions, and in a medium one, the four pervasions.

- 95.5 Then comes the definition of the **buddhist tenet, the Sautrantika**. The definition of that tenet is as follows: ultimate truths are that which ultimately can produce an effect or perform a function; the relative truth is the absence of that capacity or ability ultimately to perform a function. In this tradition the ultimate is asserted as that which ultimately performs a function or produces an effect, and the relative as that which does not ultimately perform a function or produce an effect. The two doors of pervasion: those who assert that which is ultimately able to perform a function is an ultimate truth and that which is unable to perform a function is an relative truth are necessarily Sautrantikas; Sautrantikas are necessarily those who assert that which is ultimately able to perform a function is an ultimate truth and that which is unable to perform a function is an relative truth. The Sautrantikas assert the ultimate to be a thing [dngos.po.]. A thing [dngos.po.], a self-character [rang.bzhin.], and the ultimate truth are synonyms in this tradition. Then we have mental imputation [brtags.pa.], general character [spyi.mtshan.], and relative truth as synonyms in this tradition. Anything mentally imputed is then a relative truth, and that which is not conceptualized or mentally imputed is an ultimate truth. So in this tradition, specific [rang.mtshan.] and general character [spyi.mtshan.] are distinguished.
- 96.1 Then there is the definition of the **buddhist tenet, the Cittamātra**. That tradition asserts the relative or deceptive truth to be the manifestation of object and perceiver as two separate things; the ultimate truth is consciousness free from the duality of percept and perceiver as two separate things. Since freedom from the duality of percept and perceiver as two separate things is ultimate in this tradition, anything involving such duality is therefore a deceptive truth. So that which exists ultimately according to this tradition is self-cognition free from the duality of percept and perceiver as two things. The two doors of pervasion are: those who assert that objects and perceivers [yul.dang.yul.can.] within which there is an appearance of perceived and perceiver [gzung.'dzin] as two are conventional truths, and the mere consciousness for which perceived and perceiver are not two are ultimate truths necessarily are Cittamātrins; and Cittamātrins necessarily are those who assert that objects and subjects within which there is an appearance of perceived and perceiver as two are conventional truths, and the mere consciousness for which perceived and perceiver are not two are ultimate truths.
- 96.2 The definition of the **buddhist tenet, the Svatantra** is next. All appearances are like illusory horses and elephants—these are relative or deceptive truths whereas the ultimate is asserted as nothing whatsoever,

just like space. So according to this tradition phenomena have real relative or conventional existence and ultimately they are nothing in themselves—they can't be established as anything. So illusory horses and elephants are mere appearance and have only relative or conventional existence. Then the ultimate is said to be like space, nothing whatsoever. So a Svatantrika, having refuted the object to be negated—true existence—then proceeds to establish the ultimate as nothing whatever. So one has to define a tradition like the Svatantra tradition in terms of the two truths; other definitions wouldn't be valid. One should apply the doors of pervasion—two, four or eight—again and again and thereby one will come to have a firm memory of the definitions. In a debate one is not allowed to look at a text; the definitions have to be memorized.

- 96.4 Then comes the definition of the **buddhist tenet, the Prāsaṅgika**. In this tradition designations in relation to speech, thought, and utterances as used by mind, that is the conceptual mind, are relative or conventional truths. The true mode of being or the true nature is beyond expression, is beyond speech and thought, beyond mental fabrications. So according to this tradition all designations in relation to speech and thought used by the conceptual mind are relative or conventional truths. All mental imputations are relative or conventional truths. So all conceptual objects [rnam.rtog.] are then relative or conventional truths. Then there is the ultimate truth or true nature [gnas.lugs.] which is beyond thought and speech, beyond mental fabrications. Having refuted with an absolute negation [med.'gags.] the object which is to be negated then in this tradition one doesn't go on to establish the absence of true existence, so the ultimate in this tradition is beyond establishing it as anything, as an absolute negation, as the absence of true existence. On the other hand in the Svatantra tradition having refuted elaborations or mental fabrications one then proceeds to establish the absence of mental fabrications, or the absence of elaborations as the ultimate. In brief, having negated or refuted true existence the absence of true existence is established as the viewpoint. Jamgon Kongtrül has then said that in the Prāsaṅga tradition having refuted mental fabrications and elaborations one does not then proceed to establish the absence of elaborations; there is no need according to this tradition to establish that as the viewpoint. So in brief one can say that in the Svatantra tradition, having refuted true existence, the absence of true existence is established as the point of view and in the Prāsaṅga tradition, having refuted mental fabrications or elaborations one does not proceed to establish the absence of elaborations as the viewpoint. According to the Prāsaṅgika if true existence is not possible then true non-existence is not possible either, therefore the point is to negate or refute all conceptual fabrications, not to establish the absence of conceptual fabrications as the viewpoint.
- 96.5 Then comes the definition of the **buddhist tenet, the Shentong Madhyamaka**. The proponents of this tenet assert the imaginary and dependent [kun.brtags, gzhan.dbang.] to be the relative truth, and the ultimate to be

the third nature, the completely perfected [yongs.grub.], wisdom free from mental fabrications. According to this tradition the imaginary and dependent natures are the relative or conventional truths. So we have the imaginary nature which belongs to mental imputation and we have the dependent nature which belongs to things, phenomena; according to the Shentong tradition these are relative or deceptive truths, and the way in which they are empty accords with the emptiness presented in the Rangtong tradition. Relative truths or deceptive truths are objects of the conceptual mind which in the Rangtong system are analyzed by means of reasoning and established to be empty. The Rangtong and Shentong traditions accord with each other in the way in which relative phenomena are empty and that by meditative equipoise mental fabrications are to be eliminated. The ultimate truth as an object of conceptual mind is in fact a relative or deceptive truth; when the ultimate truth has been conceptualized it turns into a relative phenomenon, a relative truth.

There is a presentation of the sixteen emptinesses. One of them is the 'emptiness of emptiness' [stong.pa.nyid.stong.pa.nyid.]. The emptiness which is empty here is conceptual emptiness; conceptual emptiness is empty of true existence, so conceptual emptiness at that point is then the basis for establishing emptiness—the given phenomena or subject which is empty of true existence. Then there is the emptiness of nature [rang.bzhin.stong.pa.nyid.] which is given in order to counteract the misconception of emptiness as a nature that one mistakenly conceived of emptiness as. Emptiness grasped as a thing in itself is counteracted by the emptiness of emptiness. Then to grasp emptiness as the nature is counteracted by emptiness of the nature. Then if one considers the buddha-nature, the buddha-nature which appears to the conceptual mind is empty of true existence so buddha-nature when conceptualized is empty of true existence. The ultimate buddha-nature is beyond the conceptual mind and one can therefore not acquire certainty of it by means of concepts. It is important to distinguish between the buddha-nature as an object of conceptual mind—a mental imputation—which is then empty of true existence and the ultimate buddha-nature which is beyond the conceptual mind. The two doors of pervasion: those who assert that imaginary and dependent phenomena are relative, and that the ultimate is completely perfected wisdom, free from mental fabrications are necessarily Madhyamika-Shentong.pas, and Madhyamika-Shentong.pas are necessarily those who assert that imaginary and dependent phenomena are relative, and that the ultimate is completely perfected wisdom, free from mental fabrications.

Those were the definitions of tenets from Vaibhāṣika up to Shentong Madhyamaka. It is good to memorize those definitions. Next come the definitions of the sub-schools of the Cittamātra.

- 97.2 The first is the definition of the Cittamātrin true-aspectarians [rnam.bden.pa.]. In the text is the term 'rnam.rig.pa'. 'Rnam.rig' is the same as 'rnam.shes' and 'pa.' means follower of that. So it means a

So we have gone through the first part related to developing intellectual understanding through analyzing the path of characteristics. Now we will go through the second part which then presents refutations and reasons by means of which one establishes a viewpoint.

- 98.4 This section enumerates these refutations and reasons in order to facilitate the practice of reasoning; it is the practice for those that emphasize reasoning. The reasons are enumerated one after the other without presenting definitions and so forth in between the various reasons.
- 98.5 The Cittamātrins assert appearance as mind. Some might say or state that the Cittamātrins have no reasons that establish appearance as mind, saying that there are no perfect reasons apart from those of the Madhyamaka tradition that presents five main reasons. If someone says such a thing and one is a Cittamātrin then one must come up with an answer.
- 99.1 So someone who asserts the Cittamātra position must come up with reasons by which he or she can establish or refute what was just stated. He or she could perhaps state the following reasons. "The Cittamātrin tradition has reasons that establish appearance as mind since the two, mind and appearance, the inner and outer, are of one essence, mere luminosity. That establishes appearance as mind." That's the first reason. Note that gang.zhig is always put after the first reason indicating that another reason follows.
- 99.2 The second reason which establishes that appearance is mind is as follows: "mind and appearance are simultaneous". In the Cittamātra tradition it is said that subject and object come into existence simultaneously, that one doesn't arise before the other. Then if the opponent says, "I don't accept...", it follows that both appearance and mind are mere luminosity or mere clarity since the essence of the subject is mere luminosity and since the essence of the object is mere luminosity. So the basis is then that the essence of the subject is mere luminosity.
- 99.4 Here in the text the opponent says that he doesn't accept the second reason which shows that he has accepted the first namely that the essence of the subject is mere luminosity. He has not accepted that the essence of the object is also mere luminosity so that has to be established. Thus one has to present a reason which establishes the validity of that reason; one has to convince the opponent. The opponent may say that the five sense objects are mere matter, they are not mere luminosity. Then the Cittamātrin would say that it follows that the essence of the object also is mere luminosity or clarity since any object appears clearly or vividly to mind. Any object appears clearly to the non-conceptual mind as well as to the conceptual mind. So when the eye consciousness perceives for example the colour yellow it appears vividly or clearly to the consciousness. The sense consciousnesses are non-conceptual. If now when we are sitting here in this tent we bring the image of the trees outside to mind then the image

of the blue or green trees appears clearly or vividly even to the conceptual mind. So objects appear clearly or vividly whether to the conceptual or non-conceptual mind—sounds, smell, visual objects, and so forth. Then the opponent says, "I do not accept that reason" and one again has to come up with another reason that establishes one's viewpoint.

- 99.5 The Cittamātrin says, "that follows because if mere luminosity did not appear or manifest [snang.wa.] there would be 'no mode of appearance' [snang.tshul.], indicating that there would be no manifestation of appearance and its mode of appearance as with for example appearances in a dream. So if the appearing objects didn't appear or manifest vividly or clearly—referred to as mere luminosity or mere clarity—then the consciousness could not perceive the object. When one dreams of a place then if that appearing object doesn't appear vividly or clearly there would be no possibility of perceiving the mode of appearance. Since in the dream both the place, the appearing object, and the perceiver, consciousness, are mere luminosity, for that reason consciousness can grasp or perceive an appearing object.

Question: I have two questions. What it is that is being negated when you negate the existence of external objects according to this system, because there is a division into snang.yul which means appearing objects and 'jug.yul which means object of engagement or something like that?

Answer: This whole thing of division into snang.yul and 'jug.yul will come up in the section on tshad.ma which he will talk about later in detail. However in brief he said that he thinks it is probably both.

Question: The second question was about this discussion which is going on about establishing objects as being merely mind because of their manner of appearing clearly, and he is saying that if they didn't appear clearly they wouldn't have any way of appearing at all, therefore there has got to be that manner of clear appearance. And what I was saying was: "Well, does there being this manner of clear appearance prove that means that they are just mind? Couldn't you say, just for arguments sake, there is a manner of clear appearance but that doesn't prove that they are mind, which is what a Madhyamaka would respond?" He said you'll have to go at this by stages to see how that is going to prove it, but he feels that if you could establish that objects were only this manner of clear appearance then gradually, going step by step, it would force you to accept that they were just of the essence, entity, or nature of the mind.

So the Cittamātrins assert appearance to be mind which is refuted by the Madhyamikas, but it is a point which is difficult to understand. There have been long debates regarding this point between these two traditions.

- 99.5 So then if the opponent doesn't accept the second root reason which was that mind and appearance manifest simultaneously then one again has to

refute that or present a reason that establishes one's viewpoint. So the answer would be that it follows that mind and appearance are simultaneous since an object does not come into existence first and the subject later, or vice versa, as for example with the appearances in a dream. So one has here to consider moments of consciousness and moments of the object; one should not consider the continua. So a moment of the object, for example sound, and a moment of the perceiving ear consciousness, for example, arise simultaneously. If the perceiving consciousness came into being after its object then it wouldn't perceive anything because at that point the object has already ceased to exist.

Question: This mode of the object already being established earlier and then after it has already ceased the consciousness somehow apprehending it is the way in the Geluk yig.cha that the Sautrantika system is presented. Rinpoche said again that this is something about which he is going to go into detail later, but that is not the way Karmapa Chödrak Gyatso, who is the Kagyüpa authority on tshad.ma, presents the matter.

So then similarly the perceiving subject couldn't come into being or arise before the object because at that point there is no object to be perceived or apprehended. It follows that the object and the subject must arise simultaneously when considering moments of consciousness and moments of objects. So the fact the object and subject arise simultaneously indicates that they both are mind. If one dreams that one hears a sound then the sound, the object, and the perceiving consciousness arise simultaneously, so within one moment there is the arising of both subject and object. So it is easy to understand that whatever is dreamt of is mind since, within the dream, object and subject arise simultaneously. One can then deduce that whatever is experienced within the dream is mind. If one considers the yoga of luminosity presented in the Vajrayāna it seems that in dependence upon that practice one will experience that appearance is mind.

100.2 Then, on a new topic, someone may say that the Madhyamikas have no reasons that establish the emptiness of all phenomena. That would be someone who does not accept emptiness. The answer would be as follows. "Given the Madhyamaka tradition it follows that it presents reasons that establish the emptiness of all phenomena since:

- [1] when analyzing the essence of phenomena, the reason 'beyond one and many' establishes the absence of an essence that is in phenomena;
- [2] and since the sign called 'the Vajra Slivers' establishes non-production when analyzing the causes of phenomena through reasoning;
- [3] and since the reason which negates production from an already existing effect and production from the absence of an effect establishes non-production when analyzing the effects by means of reasoning;

The Treasury of Knowledge

Section Two of Chapter Seven

Gaining Certainty in The Provisional and Definitive Meanings Of the Three Turnings of the Wheel of Dharma, The Two Truths, and Dependent Arising

*By Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye
Translated by Ari Goldfield*

2.1. AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROVISIONAL AND DEFINITIVE MEANINGS OF THE THREE TURNINGS OF THE WHEEL OF DHARMA

2.1.1. A GENERAL PRESENTATION

The main things to be understood are the three turnings of the wheel of genuine Dharma.

2.1.2. THE POSITIONS OF THE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS AND TRADITIONS

2.1.2.1. THE COMMONLY HELD ASSERTIONS.

All agree that the first [turning] is the provisional meaning.

2.1.2.2. THE [POSITION OF] THE TRADITION THAT ASSERTS ESSENCELESSNESS.¹⁸

“The middle [turning] is the definitive meaning and the final [turning] is mainly the provisional meaning,” state those who assert essencelessness. There is no scriptural source for their position; they take it based on logic.

2.1.2.3. THE [POSITION OF] THE YOGIC CONDUCT TRADITION.¹⁹

“The middle [turning] cuts through elaborations and is the definitive meaning of the temporary state. The final [turning] describes genuine actuality and is the ultimate definitive meaning.” This is the presentation made by the Yogic Conduct tradition. It is the classification made by the Victorious One himself in the scriptures, and it is the tradition of the prophesied demarcator [Asaṅ ga], the Noble one on the third ground. It is [also] proven through reasoning, by reference to parables like “the cleansing of the gem”. Rangjung Dorje, Dölpopa, Drimé Özer and their followers principally hold this latter [view]. Others hold the former [view].

2.1.2.4. CONNECTING THESE WITH THE [POSITION OF] THE NOBLE [NĀGĀRJUNA].

Especially, [the position of Nāgārjuna is that the functions of the] first, middle and final [turnings] are to counteract Non-virtue, the idea of “self”, and all bases of views, respectively. [Tibetan teachers] assign [these functions to the] three turnings of the wheel of Dharma [in different ways].

2.1.2.5. COUNTERACTING WRONG VIEWS CONCERNING THE PROVISIONAL MEANING AND PROVING THAT [ALL THE BUDDHA’S TEACHINGS] HAVE THE SAME INTENTION.

Some may think that the provisional meaning is false and untrue. This is wrong, because the Buddha never said anything false. All the [turnings of the wheel] of Dharma [show how to] cut through the elaborations of the way things appear, and directly teach about the true way of being. Therefore, all Dharma [is spoken with] the same intention, the great charioteer [Nāgārjuna] and others assert.

2.2. THE PRESENTATION OF THE TWO TRUTHS IN TWO SECTIONS:

2.2.1. A TRANSITION STATEMENT THAT IDENTIFIES THE TOPIC TO BE EXPLAINED.

The teachings of the genuine Dharma are based on the two truths.

2.2.2. THE ACTUAL EXPLANATION OF THE TWO TRUTHS IN FIVE SECTIONS:

2.2.2.1. THE TWO TRUTHS’ ESSENTIAL NATURE.

Generally, the essential nature of the [two truths is that one is] fabricated [and the other is] unfabricated. One is imagined by ordinary minds, and the other is the actuality [engaged in by the] meditative equipoise of the Noble ones.

2.2.2.2. THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE TWO TRUTHS.

Their etymology: the composite are true only as the relative. The other one is true as the genuine actuality.

2.2.2.3. THE TWO TRUTHS’ CHARACTERISTICS AND SYNONYMS.

Their characteristics are: the object of non-analytical, confused consciousness, or the object of the unconfused [awareness] of the Noble ones; and [the object that is] either deceiving or undeceiving, and the subject whose mode of perception is either confused or unconfused. They are taught to have many synonyms.

2.2.2.4. THOROUGHLY DISTINGUISHING THE TWO TRUTHS.

2.2.2.4.1.1. THE GENERAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO TRUTHS.

When there is no analysis, merely “that which is known” is the basis of distinction for the two truths. The way of appearance and the true way of being are distinguished as the relative truth and the actual genuine truth, respectively.

2.2.2.4.1.2. THE PARTICULARS OF A DETAILED DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO TRUTHS.

Within the way of appearance, there are: the confused, which appear to the minds of ordinary beings and the unconfused [appearances] of the path and the fruition. This delineation is posited mainly by [the Autonomy school]. The relative is [also divided] into the relative truth for ordinary beings and that for Noble beings, and into worldly and yogic relative truth. The nature of actual genuine truth cannot be differentiated. [When differentiated merely through expression], there are the three characteristics, And when further distinguished in terms of the bearers of the quality [of emptiness], there are the sixteen emptinesses, and so forth.

2.2.2.4.2. THE REASON FOR DIFFERENTIATING THE TWO TRUTHS.

There is a difference between the apprehension of Noble beings and of immature beings. [The two truths] exist in dependence upon each other, [but not in actuality].

2.2.2.4.3. THE CERTAINTY THAT THERE ARE TWO TRUTHS.

There are definitely two truths.

2.2.4.4. ARE THE TWO TRUTHS THE SAME OR DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER?

Conventionally, one nature and different reverses. In genuine actuality, inexpressible as “same” or “different”.

2.2.4.5. HOW THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS ASSERT THE TWO TRUTHS.

When destroyed or analyzed, apprehension as “that” is discarded or not discarded. Coarse entities and continua of consciousness are the relative; the partless are the genuine. This is the Particularist system.

Phenomena actually and genuinely able or not able to perform a function, And either having their own or [only] general characteristics— [these traits distinguish the actual and genuine from the relative] in the Sūtra school’s system.

The Mind-only school posits [relative truth] to be the dualistic appearances of perceiver and perceived, subject and object, and [actual genuine truth] to be consciousness empty of duality. Appearances exist relatively—they are like illusions. In genuine actuality, nothing exists—it is like space. This is the position of the Autonomy school.

In the Consequence school's tradition, that which is imagined by mind is the relative truth; it is expressed following worldly customs. Actual genuine truth is free from conceptual elaboration—it is beyond thought and expression.

The imaginary and the other-dependent [natures] are the relative [truth]; actual genuine [truth] is the perfectly existent [nature], self-aware primordial awareness. This is the position of the Empty-of-Other school.

In Mantra, [the two truths] are adorned with superior features. Especially, [according to Rangjung Dorje], the relative are the appearances of perceiver and perceived. [These appearances] are said to be like the moon in the water— while not real, they appear. The essence of genuine actuality is the eighteen emptinesses. Its truth is non-dual primordial awareness.

2.2.2.5. THE PURPOSE OF KNOWING THE TWO TRUTHS.

Knowing [the two truths, one will] not be ignorant about the teachings of the Mighty One. [One will know] the method of what to adopt and what to reject, [and will therefore] practice well. [Then one will see] the actual meaning that arises from the method, and will go beyond saṃsāra.

2.3. THIRD, THE ANALYSIS OF DEPENDENT ARISING.

2.3.1. THE DEPENDENT ARISING OF THE FUNDAMENTAL MODE.

The true nature of [saṃsāra and nirvāṇa] is completely pure. The dependent arising of the fundamental mode of being is free from extremes.

2.3.2. THE DEPENDENT ARISING OF CYCLIC EXISTENCE.

Outer and inner, occurring dependently, is the dependent arising of saṃsāra.

2.3.3. THE DEPENDENT ARISING OF NIRVĀṆA.

Those who see [dependent arising in its] reverse progression, the dependent arising of nirvāṇa, touch the heart of the Buddha's teachings. Therefore, put great effort into thinking about and then realizing the meaning [of these topics].

The Treasury of Knowledge

By Jamgon Kongtrul

Chapter Eight: The Progressive Classification of the Training in Superior Samadhi

Part One: The Stages of Meditation of Shamatha and Vipashyana -

The General Basis of All Samadhis

*Translated by Kiki Ekselius and Chryssoula Zerbini
Under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche*

Vipashyana

The classification according to the essential nature.

The classification is into the “four types of vipashyana investigating the essences”: discriminating, fully discriminating, examining, and analysing;

Firstly, according to the Sutra Unravelling the Thought, there is a classification known as the four types of vipashyana investigating the essence. These are discriminating and fully discriminating, each of which is divided into thoroughly examining and analysing. Discriminating involves focusing on the varieties of phenomena, distinguishing them into categories such as the aggregates, the elements and the entrances, and proceeding to a detailed subdivision of each. Fully discriminating involves focusing on their mode of being and realising the absence of a self of persons and of phenomena. Examining and analysing refer to the coarse and subtle aspects of discrimination respectively.

The way to meditate

The way to meditate is to analyse selflessness by means of superior knowledge, and then to rest in a state free from mental fabrications. Non-analytical images are the basis for analysis; having identified the particular object, one cuts through misconceptions regarding its qualities.

If one has no understanding of the view of selflessness, whichever type of meditation one may do will be mistaken with respect to suchness; therefore, it is necessary to establish the view. On the other hand, even though one may have an intellectual understanding of the view, if one does not rest within that understanding, suchness will not have been meditated upon. Therefore, one first analyses selflessness by means of superior knowledge and then rests within the sphere of complete freedom from mental fabrications.

The method explained here, namely to analyse the object of meditation by means of discriminating knowledge and finally to rest in a state free of mental fabrications, is common to all systems of tenets.

The actual meditation on vipashyana

When meditating on shamatha, due to the concentration of mind, many images appear which may or may not be similar to what is found in the external world. These are known as non-analytical images. In the practice of vipashyana as well, such images arise due to the force of shamatha, and are then taken as the basis for individual analysis; thus the analysis is not actually directed towards the outside, since the mind is solely turned inwards. When analysing these images arising out of samadhi, it is necessary to begin by focusing on each object individually with discriminating knowledge, since without identifying a particular object, it is not possible to cut through misconceptions regarding its qualities. Therefore, one begins by clearly bringing to mind the object regarding which one wishes to eliminate misconceptions, and proceeds to examine it through perfect discriminating knowledge, thus ascertaining its lack of inherent existence. Then, grasping the object of samadhi (i.e. the non-analytical image) undistractedly, one should realise its being mere appearance, empty of inherent existence.

Thus, samadhi and superior knowledge are unified, being focused on the same object. As said in the Compendium of Knowledge: “Samadhi and superior knowledge have the same object of observation”

Commentary on
THE PRESENTATION OF
GROUNDS, PATHS, & RESULTS

in the Causal Vehicle of Characteristics
from the *Treasury of Knowledge*
by Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Taye

Āchārya Lama Tenpa Gyaltzen

Root Text Translation by Karl Brunnhölzl

Oral Translation by Karl Brunnhölzl

The text continues:

1.5.1. The path of accumulation

This has eight parts:

- (1) Setting up its definition
- (2) Identifying its illustration
- (3) The extensive classification
- (4) Determining its nature
- (5) The features of relinquishment and realization
- (6) Stating its qualities
- (7) Its function
- (8) Teaching its semantic explanation

ATG: The first path is the path of accumulation, and it is treated in eight points.

THE DEFINITION OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues:

1.5.1.1. Setting up its definition

The path of accumulation consists of the positive actions that partially concord with liberation.

The entity or definition¹¹ of **the path of accumulation**: That which is a basis for progressing towards nirvāṇa [467] and consists of the positive actions that partially concord with liberation.

ATG: The definition of the path of accumulation accords with the general definition of the path, which is “that which is a basis for progressing towards nirvāṇa,” and the specific feature of the path of accumulation is that it is in partial concordance with liberation. Thus, the path of accumulation is that which makes you proceed toward nirvāṇa and is in partial concordance with liberation. Or, as it says here, it is positive or virtuous actions that partially concord with liberation. This means that the path of accumulation itself is not liberation as such, but it is something that is in accord with liberation. The first part of the definition, “a basis for progressing toward nirvāṇa,” is general and applies to all five paths. The specific part of the definition of the path of accumulation is that it “consists of the positive actions that partially concord with liberation.” This pattern of establishing the definition will be the same for all five paths.

THE ILLUSTRATION OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues

1.5.1.2. Identifying its illustration

It is illustrated by the efforts in listening, meditating and so on.

This path is **illustrated** by the remedies that mature the continuum, i.e., **the efforts in listening**, reflecting, and **meditating** from the time of having generated the mind of enlightenment until the arising of the wisdom of heat.¹²

ATG: The second point is the illustration by example. It is illustrated by the remedies that mature one’s mindstream from the time of generating the mind of enlightenment until the arising of the primordial awareness of heat. This is the first part of the path of junction, the next step on the path. Before that starts, everything that comes from generating the mind of enlightenment, all the efforts of listening, reflecting, and meditating, are the path of accumulation.

¹¹ The original mistakenly says “illustration” (mtshan gzhi).

¹² i.e., the starting point of the path of junction.

Other illustrations of the limits of the path, or where it starts and ends, are the efforts of listening, reflecting, and meditating from the time of taking refuge up to the moment when primordial awareness heat arises, or from the time when you have developed renunciation for saṃsāra, or from the time when you have developed inspiration of yogic interests for the three jewels.

THE EXTENSIVE CLASSIFICATION OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues:

1.5.1.3. The extensive classification

The meditations of intense application of mindfulness, perfect relinquishment,
And the limbs of miraculous powers are its lesser, medium, and great [phases].
Or, it is classified as fourfold, such as the level of beginners.

ATG: The path of accumulation can be classified into three phases of lesser, medium, and great, or it can be classified into a fourfold classification: the level of beginners, the level of confidence, partial concordance with liberation, and armorlike practice.

The Threefold Classification of Lesser, Medium, and Greater

The text continues:

There is a threefold [classification] as the lesser, medium, and great [paths of accumulation]:

- 1) **The meditations of the four intense applications of mindfulness** are the **lesser** path of accumulation during which it is not certain that one enters the path of junction.
- 2) The meditations of the four **perfect relinquishments** are the **medium** path of accumulation during which the time of entering the path of junction is certain.
- 3) The meditations of the four **limbs of miraculous powers** are the **great** path of accumulation during which it is certain that the heat of the path of junction arises.

ATG: Again, the lesser, medium, and greater paths of accumulation refer to the increasing refinement of the prajñā that realizes the nonexistence of self. The lesser path of accumulation specifically refers to the practice of the four intense applications of mindfulness. The medium path of accumulations specifically refers to the four types of perfect relinquishments, and the greater path of accumulation specifically refers to the four limbs of miraculous powers.

The Four Intense Applications of Mindfulness

The four intense applications of mindfulness are the lesser path of accumulation. They are the application of intense mindfulness on the body, the application of intense mindfulness on feelings, the application of intense mindfulness on mind, and the application of intense mindfulness on phenomena. They are the objects of meditation and objects of the prajñā that realizes the nonexistence of self. Your prajñā focuses on the four intense applications of mindfulness, and you learn the lesser path of accumulation.

The specific focus of the four intense applications of mindfulness is presented differently in the prajñāpāramitā teachings of the greater vehicle and in general Buddhism. The way it is presented in the *Treasury of Knowledge* is the general presentation. Here, the intense application of mindfulness on the body is to see that the body is impermanent, the intense application of mindfulness on feelings is to see that feelings are suffering, the intense application of mindfulness on the mind is to see that the mind is without a self, and the intense application of mindfulness on phenomena is to realize that all phenomena are empty.

The reason one starts out by meditating on the four intense applications of mindfulness on the lesser path of accumulation is because these four misconceptions—seeing our bodies as permanent, our feelings as pleasure, and so on—are the root of saṃsāra, and they have to be remedied to uproot the root of saṃsāra. On the lesser path of accumulation, when we meditate on the fourfold intense applications of mindfulness, we start at the root of cyclic existence, and in that way, working with the fourfold misconceptions, we remedy it.

The Four Perfect Relinquishments

On the medium path of accumulation, one tries to relinquish all adverse or unfavorable conditions and tries to increase favorable conditions that enable one to uproot the four misconceptions. Adverse conditions are the committal of negative actions. On one hand, we try to relinquish the negative actions that we have already committed and prevent further negative actions from arising or occurring. On the other hand, we try to increase and

accumulate actions that are more positive. This is called “the fourfold relinquishment,” but it actually refers to the two aspects that are relinquished and the two aspects that are accomplished.

The Four Limbs of Miraculous Powers

On the greater path of accumulation, one engages in the four limbs of miraculous powers. These are the means to enhance one’s skill and dexterity in samādhi, or meditative concentration. Here, one trains in different kinds of samādhi and increases the ability to engage in samādhi. This training is called “the four limbs of miraculous powers.” The first limb is striving, the second limb is joyous effort or vigor, the third limb is examination or reflection, and the fourth limb is analysis. The main obstacles or hindrances to developing a workable mind that can easily rest in samādhi are things such as laziness and a lack of proper analysis of what is going on in the mind. To overcome such obstacles, one meditates on these four remedies. In this case, striving and vigor are the remedies for laziness, and examination and analysis are remedies for the lack of proper examination.

Two Reasons for the Threefold Classification

The path of accumulation is divided into the three stages of lesser, medium, and great for two reasons. The first reason is that during the phase of the lesser path of accumulation, the four applications of intense mindfulness, it is not certain that the following paths will arise in one’s mindstream or that one will develop them. However, during the medium path of accumulation, the four kinds of perfect relinquishment, it is certain that the path of junction and the following paths will eventually arise in one’s mindstream. The time is not certain, but they will arise at some point. During the first stage of the greater path of accumulation, the four limbs of miraculous powers, it is certain that the first phase of the path of junction, the phase of heat, will arise in one’s mindstream, which means it will happen very soon. Thus, the threefold division of the path of accumulation depends on whether the time is certain that the following paths will arise in one’s mindstream. The second reason is that this refers to the three degrees of intensity of practices being relinquished and to the remedies increasing in strength.

Student: What distinction happens, for example, when one enters from the lesser to the medium path?

ATG: It is hard to give an exact borderline. It is not a distinction in terms of entity, like saying, “It’s up to here, and the next one goes up to there.” Rather, it is a progression. With a

progression or continuum, it is hard to identify an exact point. It is not like you have one job in the beginning, and when you finish it, you get another job, and then do that. For example, the four applications of mindfulness go all the way to the end of the seventh bhūmi. It is a matter of increasing refinement. At each stage, you add something, and then that becomes refined up to a certain point. It is the same as trying to learn a language. You have different levels of language classes, and, for example, when you finish the book for the first class, then the first class is finished, and when you finish the book for the second class, then the second class is finished, but in terms of knowing the language, it is impossible to say when the first class finishes and the second class begins.

Simply put, the beginning of the small path of accumulation is when you start the four intense applications of mindfulness. The medium path of accumulation is when you start the four perfect relinquishments, and the greater path of accumulation is when you start the four limbs of miraculous powers. The exact details of when each phase starts and ends depend specifically on when the practices to be relinquished are relinquished. Once they are relinquished, you can clearly say that the phase is over. But that is not what we are talking about here. That comes later. The *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* gives the detailed presentation of what is relinquished.

The Alternative Fourfold Classification

The text continues:

Or, it can be classified as fourfold:

- 1) the level of beginners,
- 2) the level of confidence
- 3) partial concordance with liberation
- 4) armorlike practice.

ATG: The level of confidence corresponds to the medium path of accumulation, and the levels of partial concordance with liberation and armorlike practice correspond to the greater path of accumulation. Partial concordance with liberation is the plain or ordinary attainment of the greater path of accumulation, and armorlike practice is the special greater path of accumulation.

This presentation of the path of accumulation is also explained in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* in the first chapter on the knowledge of all aspects. The *Treasury of Knowledge* presentation is a

condensed version, and the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* is a detailed version. Both presentations support each other.

THE NATURE OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues:

1.5.1.4 Determining its nature

It has three features: arising, relying, and what it focuses on.

This path has three features:

- 1) the [psychophysical] supports in which it **arises**
- 2) the grounds on which it **relies**
- 3) the objects on which it focuses

ATG: The fourth point, determining its nature, is explained through three features of the path of accumulation: the supports in which it arises, the grounds on which it relies, and the objects on which it focuses.

The Psychophysical Supports in Which It Arises

The text continues:

- 1) It is asserted that the path of accumulation [can] arise only in men and women of the three continents,¹³ but not in other beings, neuters, and hermaphrodites.

ATG: The first feature discusses in whom the path of accumulation can be developed and in whom it cannot. The path of accumulation can only arise in three of the four continents. It is said that the people in the northern continent of Uttarakuru cannot give rise to the path of accumulation because they are without shame or embarrassment in terms of committing negative actions and they have very strong afflictions. Because of these factors, they cannot give rise to the path of accumulation. For human beings in general, it is said that beings who are neuters or hermaphrodites cannot give rise to the path of accumulation. The reason why

¹³ From among the four continents of our world according to classical Indian cosmology, these are the continents of Jambudvīpa in the South, Videha in the East, and Godānīya in the West, but not the Northern continent Uttarakuru, which is inhabited by hermaphrodites.

they cannot give rise to the path of accumulation is the same. Hermaphrodites supposedly have no embarrassment or shame and have strong afflictions.

The Grounds on Which It Relies

The text continues:

2) When one makes efforts in yoga from time to time, one relies on the six grounds of meditative stability,¹⁴ or, on one-pointed reflection [within the mental frame] of the desire realm. The other positive actions that serve as causes [for progressing], i.e., the ethics of ordinary sentient beings, rely on the grounds of the desire [realm].

ATG: However, just being a human as the support for the arising of the path of accumulation is not enough. You also have to rely on the proper grounds, or internal supports, which are called “the six grounds of meditative stability.” Based on the six grounds of meditative stability, you develop the one-pointed reflection of the desire realm. This is the accomplishment of shamatha meditation. The six grounds of meditative stability are listed in the footnotes.

The Objects on Which It Focuses

The text continues:

3) One focuses on the ethics of ordinary sentient beings, i.e., [proper] engaging and avoiding with regard to physical and verbal [actions]. Through making efforts in yoga from time to time, repulsiveness and such are the focuses of purifying one’s conduct. The focuses of the intense applications of mindfulness are to focus on one’s body and

¹⁴ Skr. *ṣaḍḍhyānabhūmi*, Tib. *bsam gran sa drug*. These refer to the meditative stabilities of the form realm, which are temporarily also cultivated on Buddhist paths. They are used as supports of mere calm abiding, based on which the liberating insights into identitylessness are developed. In detail, these six are 1) the effective preparatory stage of the first meditative stability of the form realm, 2) the ordinary main part of the first meditative stability, 3) the special main part of the first meditative stability, 4-6) the main parts of the second through fourth meditative stability. Bodhisattvas mainly use the fourth meditative stability, since it is the clearest one (for more details see below).

As for the distinction between ordinary and special first meditative stability: In general, the first meditative stability entails five branches or accompanying mental factors which are divided into three groups. The remedial branches are examination and analysis, the branches of benefit are joy and bliss, and the branch that is the basis is meditative concentration. Among these five branches, investigation is coarser than the other four. When the first meditative stability is free from this factor, it is called special. There is, however, no such distinction for the remaining three meditative stabilities.

so on. [468] Other positive actions that serve as causes are to focus on the words and meanings of enlightened speech.

ATG: The third feature is the object on which it focuses, or what the person on the path of accumulation focuses on. Primarily, one focuses on the ethics of ordinary sentient beings, that is, the proper engagement and avoidance of physical and verbal actions. That is one's main focus. One also engages in yoga, which means meditation. This is done to purify one's conduct. One meditates, for example, on repulsiveness. Other focuses are the intense applications of mindfulness and the words and meanings of enlightened speech.

THE FEATURES OF RELINQUISHMENT & REALIZATION OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues:

1.5.1.5. The features of relinquishment and realization

Coarse factors are relinquished and identitylessness is realized as an object generality.

The very **coarse factors** to be relinquished that produce suffering in cyclic existence **are relinquished** through the invalidating remedy.¹⁵ Through the three knowledges [of hearing, reflecting, and meditating], the two **identitylessnesses are realized** in the form of **object generalities**.

¹⁵ In the general context of a) being in the process of eradicating the respectively corresponding factors to be relinquished on a given path, or, b) having already eradicated them, the four remedies are presented:

The invalidating remedy (Skr. vidūṣhaṇapratipakṣha, Tib. rnam par sun 'byin pa'i gnyen po) refers to the path of training that focuses on the first two of the four realities of noble ones—the realities of suffering and its origin—and invalidates the obscurations in the context of the four aspects (impermanence and so on) that each of these two realities has.

The second is the relinquishing remedy (Skr. prahānapratipakṣha, Tib. spong ba'i gnyen po), which is the uninterrupted path that is the actual process of eliminating the afflictions, i.e., the dharma endurance of suffering and so on.

The third is the retaining remedy (Skr. ādhānapratipakṣha, Tib. gzhi'i gnyen po), which sustains the attained freedom of the factors that were relinquished through the uninterrupted path. This is the path of complete release—i.e., the dharma cognition of suffering and so on—that follows the uninterrupted path.

The fourth is the distancing remedy (Skr. dūribhāvapratipakṣha, Tib. thag sring ba'i gnyen po), which is the special path that enhances the realization which is attained through the preceding path of complete release.

In this way, the first two remedies belong to phase a) and the last two to phase b).

For further details on dharma endurance and dharma cognition and their relation to the four realities of noble ones see 1.5.3.4.2.4. [The issue] from how many moments it arises.

ATG: The fifth point is the features of relinquishment and realization. What is relinquished are the coarse factors to be relinquished that produce suffering in cyclic existence, and what is realized are the two identitylessnesses in the form of object generalities.

There are different levels of factors to be relinquished. Coarse factors to be relinquished, in general, are afflicted obscurations. Within afflicted obscurations, there are innate ones and imputed ones. Imputed afflicted obscurations are coarser, and again, within coarse imputed afflicted obscurations, there are coarse and subtle ones. On the path of accumulation, the coarsest imputed afflicted obscurations are relinquished and the two types of identitylessnesses are realized. They are not realized in a direct way, but conceptually, through inferential recognition. This means they are realized in the form of object generalities, or mental images, by way of the three types *prajñā* that result from hearing, reflecting, and meditating.

The coarser notion of personal identitylessness, or lack of personal self, is that some god or entity creates the world. When one relinquishes that notion, one gains the insight that the world is not created by such a being but by the karma of all beings who live in the world. One does not gain irreversible certainty about this insight. One is still in the process of fully understanding it. One starts thinking about it but still has doubts whether, in terms of karma, it is really true or not. One thinks, "Well, probably it is like that. Probably the world is made up by karma only. So probably there is no such thing as a creator." This is called "doubt that tends in the right direction." It is not yet a full-fledged certainty. It is important to keep in mind that this does not mean that one rejects the notion of a creator god out of hatred or aversion for that god, and out of anger, dumps that god somewhere.

What does "relinquishment" mean in a Buddhist context? The word "relinquish" or the idea of getting rid of something may entertain the notion of aversion. You might want to get rid of something because you do not like it, because it is bad, or because you consider it to be rubbish. That is not what is meant here. What "relinquishment" means here is that we do not hold on to certain things. It has more to do with letting go of the mental grasping. Some people say that they accept karma and do not accept a creator god, but at the same time, they say there is no need to expel that creator god. They say it is simply a matter of personally accepting that notion or not. This kind of talk confuses me because it does not really make any sense. They do not accept a creator god, but they do not have to relinquish this creator god. However, after thinking about it, I see how not clinging to something and not getting rid of something at the same time makes sense. Certainly in Tibetan, if you say it the other way, it does not make sense at all.

Student: I have trouble teaching my twenty-year-old American students about karma because they say there has to be a god that judges what kind of good karma you get and what kind of bad karma you get. As much as I try to teach them about karma, that notion stays in their minds. Do you have any suggestions about how to teach karma, so that they do not feel there has to be a god that makes karma work?

ATG: Actually, many Buddhists also think this way. They do not accept the notion of a creator god, but they still think that there must be somebody who keeps track of good and bad karma. There is the notion of Yama, the god of death. He is the one who keeps track. He has all the records of the good and bad deeds, and when you die you are doomed. This is not in the Buddhist scriptures. It is folk tradition. It is something you tell little children to educate them (laughter). I will think more about your question, and we will talk later.

THE QUALITIES OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues:

1.5.1.6. Stating its qualities

On the basis of disposition, mind, and conduct, one possesses five attributes.
One attains the visions, supernatural knowledges, and the meditative concentration that is a stream of dharma.

One may wonder, "What kind of featuring qualities do bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation possess?" Their **disposition** of the great vehicle is awakened, they generate the twofold **mind** of enlightenment, **and** they train in the six perfections as their **conduct**. **On the basis of** these, they moreover **possess five attributes**:

- 1) they rely on the ethics of ordinary sentient beings
- 2) they control the gates of their senses
- 3) they are aware of the amount of food [that they eat]
- 4) they do not sleep during the first and the last third of the night and rather make efforts in yoga
- 5) they truly delight to remain in alertness

1) The first of these [attributes] does in no way mean that one is without the ethics or vows of meditative stability, but that one mainly relies on one of the seven sets of [vows for] individual liberation.¹⁶

2) The general presentation of this is that one controls the gates of one's senses through the powerful mindfulness of devoted training and constant training.¹⁷ Moreover, mainly emphasizing profundity and knowledge means to experience all objects of the five sense faculties in such a way that this is embraced by knowledge. Mainly emphasizing vastness and means refers to experiencing everything for the sake of others and utilizing the experiential objects of bodhisattvas for completely purified aspiration prayers.

3) By being aware of what is allowed and forbidden with regard to food and other such things that are offered out of devotion, one knows the [proper] quantities. Therefore, one eats food and so on with the intention that it is in order to nurture the countless kinds of organisms that live within one's body, and [469] in order that one's [psychophysical] support for practicing the dharma remains for a long time.

4) Since one is endowed with mindfulness during the first and the last third [of the night], one relinquishes attachment to hustle and bustle. Thus, one makes efforts in yogas which completely purify the obscurations, such as meditating on repulsiveness and the immeasurables.

5) In all that one engages in or avoids, such as what is to be adopted and rejected in terms of one's three doors, one should never be free from the guard of alertness. One truly delights in remaining in alertness with regard to performing what is suitable and relinquishing what is not suitable.

Furthermore, people on the path of accumulation attain the qualities of this stage, i.e., **the [five] visions**¹⁸ and **the five supernatural knowledges**.¹⁹ Its final special result

¹⁶ Skr. pratimokṣha, Tib. so thar

¹⁷ Devoted training and constant training are the second and third of the three types of the perfection of vigor, the first being armorlike vigor.

¹⁸ Skr. pañchachakṣhu, Tib. spyan lnga. These are the fleshly vision (the wisdom that ascertains all things within a range from 800 kilometers distance up through a trichiliocosm), the divine vision (seeing all worldly forms until the end of space), the vision of knowledge (the wisdom that does not conceptualize conditioned and unconditioned phenomena as anything whatsoever), the dharma vision (the wisdom that realizes dependent

is to attain **the meditative concentration of the stream of dharma**.²⁰ This means that, while one does not move from this meditative concentration, one enters the ocean of Buddha fields of the ten directions and comes to hear the genuine dharma from the mouths of this ocean of Buddhas. As *The Ornament of Sūtras* says:

At that time, from the stream of dharma,
One gains extensive instructions from the Buddhas
In order to attain
Vast calm abiding and wisdom.²¹

ATG: The sixth point states the qualities. There are five ordinary or common qualities, five visions, and five supernatural knowledges or supercognitions. This section is not difficult, so you can read it on your own.

THE FUNCTION OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues:

1.5.1.7. Its function

During [its] lesser, medium and great [phases], one mentally engages in the
four or two realities
And turns away from the four mistakennesses or reification.
One relinquishes discordant factors, and generates and increases positive
dharma.
The eight conceptions are relinquished and one-pointed meditative
concentration is performed.

When explained according to their order, the functions **during the lesser, medium and great** [phases of this path] are as follows:

origination), the Buddha vision (the wisdom that fully and completely realizes the suchness and the extent of all phenomena).

¹⁹ Skr. pañcābhijñā, Tib. mngon shes lnga. (For a detailed list, see 2.3.3.3.2.1.2.2. The twenty-one uncontaminated groups [of qualities] in terms of the intention of *The Ornament of Clear Realization*.)

²⁰ In his commentary on *The Ornament of Clear Realization*, called *The Noble One's Resting at Ease* (abr. JNS), the Eighth Karmapa Mikyö Dorje gives a definition of this meditative concentration of the stream of dharma: It is one-pointed abiding of the mind on words and meanings through the ability to retain very profound and vast dharmas without forgetting them. He says it is a stream, because it lasts uninterruptedly from the path of accumulation up through Buddhahood. (JNS, p. 113)

²¹ Skr. Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra, Tib. theg pa chen po mdo sde rgyan, XV.3

On the small path of accumulation, the function of the four intense applications of mindfulness is that the hearers **mentally engage in the four realities**²² of the noble ones and **turn their minds away from the four mistakennesses**.²³ The followers of the great vehicle mentally engage in the **two realities** and turn their minds away from all **reification**.

On the medium path of accumulation, the function of the four perfect relinquishments is as follows: The first two perfect relinquishments **relinquish discordant factors**, and the latter two perfect relinquishments **generate and increase positive dharmas**. [470]

On the great path of accumulation, the function of the four limbs of miraculous powers is to **relinquish the eight mistaken worldly conceptions**, such as the conception of desire, and to **perform one's mastery over meditative concentration** in which the mind is **one-pointed**.

ATG: The seventh point is the function of the path of accumulation. This is again presented in terms of lesser, medium, and greater stages of the path.

On the lesser path of accumulation, the function of the four intense applications of mindfulness is that the hearers mentally engage in the four realities of the noble ones and turn their minds away from the four mistakennesses. The four mistakennesses are the four misconceptions. This is the function of focusing on the four realities of the noble ones.

Here, the followers of the great vehicle engage in the two realities and turn their minds away from all types of reification, or really existing things. In general, there are many different types of reification, but what is specifically referred to at this stage is clinging to the permanence of things. Again, when I say that one turns one's mind away from clinging to permanence, it

²² Skr. satya, Tib. bden pa. Mostly translated as 'truth.' In Buddhism, satya (bden pa) as a technical term usually refers to a reality that can be experienced in some way by someone, rather than to just some theoretic, conceptual, or formal truth (such as "one and one is two"). In this sense, the two realities are not understood as just some truth (of course they are also formally true), but as the very realities that are experienced by either the mistaken minds of sentient beings or by the unmistaken wisdom of the noble ones. In the same vein, the four realities of the noble ones refer to the way in which suffering, its origin, cessation, and the path are experienced by the noble ones and not to ordinary beings' limited understanding of them being true, since they do not at all experience the full scope of these realities. Also in terms of the path, mere 'truths' have no liberating power per se, but only experiences and realizations that have been fully integrated in one's mind as living realities.

²³ Skr. chaturviparyāsa, Tib. phyin ci log pa bzhi: to regard suffering as happiness, what is impermanent as permanent, what is impure as pure, and what has no self as a having a self.

does not mean that one has given up all clinging to permanence; otherwise, none of us would be on the path of accumulation. At this point, we start engaging in letting go of clinging to permanence and really existing things. We start with relinquishing our reifications and our hanging on to permanence. We hold the hope of being able to relinquish it, so we make some effort to get to that point.

On the medium path of accumulation, the function of four perfect relinquishments is the same as before. We try to relinquish the negative actions we have already committed, and we try not to commit further negative actions by relinquishing discordant or adverse conditions, and by generating and increasing positive actions, we further favorable or conducive conditions.

On the greater path of accumulation, one relinquishes the eight mistaken worldly conceptions and gains mastery of one-pointed mind. The eight mistaken worldly conceptions are the eight worldly dharmas: praise and blame, gain and loss, pleasure and pain, fame and infamy. This means that one is not attached to minor expressions or words that one hears and does not get angry or aroused depending on them. The eight mistaken worldly conceptions refer to even tiny events or words that we make a big deal about and to our faults.

THE SEMANTIC EXPLANATION OF THE PATH OF ACCUMULATION

The text continues:

1.5.1.8. Teaching its semantic explanation

The semantic explanation: It is the path that gathers the positive accumulation to be a suitable vessel,
Partially concords with liberation, and [represents] confidence and invalidation.

The semantic explanation or meaning of the term is as follows: **It is the path that gathers a vast positive accumulation** in order to make one a suitable vessel for the arising of the realization of heat [on the path of junction]. Therefore, it is called “the path of accumulation.” It also has the following names: Since one mentally engages in it in a way that **partially concords with liberation**, i.e., nirvāṇa, it is “the positive roots that partially concord with liberation.” Since one’s conviction about the three

jewels and emptiness is powerful, it is the level of **confidence**. It is [also] “the **invalidating** remedy,” since the hearers regard the perpetuating aggregates as a defect, just like a disease or an abscess and so on, and the followers of the great vehicle regard them to be without nature.

ATG: The eighth and last point teaches the semantic explanation. This point explains the different names of the path of accumulation.

First, it is called “the path that gathers vast positive accumulations to make one a suitable vessel for the arising of realization of heat on the path of junction.” In other words, the means to make you into a suitable vessel for the next path is to gather vast accumulations of positive actions.

Second, it is called “the path that partially concords with liberation.” It is called this because one engages in this path in a way that partially concords with liberation. Liberation is *nirvāṇa*, and the positive actions accumulated on that path are in partial concordance with *nirvāṇa*.

Third, it is called “the level of confidence” because one’s conviction or devoted interests in the three jewels and emptiness is powerful.

Fourth, it is called “the invalidating remedy” or “the level of invalidation,” since in terms of the hearers, one regards the five skandhas as a defect, or something to be invalidated, “just like a disease or an abscess and so on.” In terms of the great vehicle, one regards the five skandhas to be without nature.