

THREE TEXTS
ON
MADHYAMAKA

by
Shakya Chokden

Translated by
Komarovski Iaroslav

LIBRARY OF TIBETAN WORKS & ARCHIVES

Notes

1. Only Buddha has fearlessness in 1) stating that he has extinguished all his negativities, 2) stating that he has realized everything, 3) pointing out the objects of abandonment and 4) pointing out the path that is their antidote.
2. Munindra, or Buddha Śākyamuni, is likened to the sun. However, although each ordinary sun shines only in each separate universe, the sun of Śākyamuni—the manifestation of the enlightened state of dharmadhātu or the sphere of dharma—dispels the darkness of negativity of our world of a hundred million universes, each of which contains a Mount Meru in the middle, four continents and so forth.
3. I.e., the moon.
4. The sun is the lord of the twelve signs of the zodiac.
5. These two steps, paying homage and making a promise to compose the text, preclude the main body of most Buddhist treatises.
6. Śākyamuni Buddha took his birth in the royal family of the Śākya clan.
7. The realms above the earth, on the earth and under the earth.
8. “Migrators” are non-liberated individuals migrating from one state of existence to another.
9. The Seventh Karmapa Chodrak Gyamtso.
10. In general, in order for something to be defined, the following three factors are necessary: 1) a defined thing or definiendum (a vase, for example); 2) its definition (the rough definition of a vase is “a bulbous thing that can contain water”), and; 3) the basis on which the definition is given to the definiendum, (for example, golden bulbous thing).
11. Those of eternalism and nihilism.
12. “Internal” does not necessarily mean withdrawing the senses from external objects or practicing inner concentration, since these features are common to Buddhism and to non-Buddhist schools of yoga both. Rather, it means withdrawing the mind from saṃsāra and directing it towards nirvāṇa, which is a feature unique to Buddhism.
13. This refers to twelve synonyms of “individual,” such as “self,” “person,” “sentient being,” etc.
14. There are four Buddhist tenets: Vaibhāṣika (School of the Proponents of Particulars), Sautrāntika (School of the Followers of Sūtras), Cittamātra (Mind Only School) and Madhyamaka (Middle Way School). In comparison to the last, which is the highest one, the first three are lower schools.
15. See footnote 171.
16. In many of his Madhyamaka texts, Shākya Chokden mentions that the extreme of nihilism is: first to be established as something by one valid cognition and later to be refuted by another valid cognition. Since most Buddhist tenets do not accept “self of persons” at all, they do not deny

anything existent, but rather prove the absence of something non-existent.

17. Human beings have all the five skandhas, or “groups” of constituents of our being: form, feeling, recognition, compositional factors and consciousness, by virtue of existing in the desire realm, which is one of the three realms. The others are the form realm and the formless realm.
18. With these five reasonings, one tries to find “self” in terms of being one with the skandhas, different from them, having the skandhas, relying on them, or as being that on which the skandhas rely.
19. Here, as well as in many other places in the text, “Buddhists” mean “proponents of Buddhist tenets.” One very important feature of Shakyā Chokden’s views, a feature shared by such philosophers from other schools as Mipham (‘ju mi pham – 1846 – 1912), is its assertion that in order to completely realize selflessness of person and then to attain liberation from saṃsāra by accustoming one’s mind to that realization, it is enough to rely solely on the scriptures of the Vaibhāṣika school, such as Abhidharmakośa, without resorting to the views of higher schools. In his “*Great Path of Elixir of Immortality*” - *explanation of profound pacification free from conceptualization* (zab zhi spros bral gyi bshad pa stong nyid bdud rtsi’i lam po che), Shakyā Chokden states: “It is permissible to accept that Śrāvaka schools also have the two views [of selflessness.] There is no need to mention [that this applies also to] the followers of Mahāyāna; if selflessness of person is explained in full completeness even by the scriptures of Vaibhāṣikas, of course it is accepted by Sautrāntikans [as well]. Hence, due to accustoming [one’s mind] to the selflessness determined by Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika scriptures, it is possible to see this [selflessness] directly, and by further accustoming [to that direct realization] it is possible to manifest nirvāṇa characterized by abandonment of the seeds of grasping at “self of persons.” This statement has many implications and greatly distinguishes Shakyā Chokden’s approach from that of Tsongkhapa and other philosophers, whose assertion is that only Madhyamaka, and (in the case of Tsongkhapa, Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka in particular), gives a correct and complete presentation of the selflessness of person. (As for the selflessness of phenomena, all Madhyamikas of Tibet agree that only Madhyamaka scriptures present it completely.)
20. There are four main schools of Hearers or Śrāvakas—Sarvāstivāda, Mahāṃghika, Sthāvira and Saṃmitya, all of which are subdivisions of Vaibhāṣika. The last one, Saṃmitya, has three subschools: Kurukulla, Avantaka and Vatsiputriya. All Saṃmityas accept a “self” as substantially existent. While the Kurukulla and Avantaka subschools accept it as one with the skandhas, the subschool of Vatsiputriya accepts an inexpressible “self” which is neither permanent nor impermanent. Thus, it is neither one with nor different from the skandhas. To be one with the skandhas it would have to be impermanent, to be different

from the skandhas and still exist, it would have to be permanent, since everything existent is either permanent or impermanent.

21. "Śrāvaka schools" here refers to both Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika. These two schools are those of Hīnayāna, or Lower Vehicle, while Cittamātra and Madhyamaka are those of Mahāyāna, or Great Vehicle.
22. The previous explanation was related to the elimination of "self of persons" only. All grasping at "self" is divided into grasping at "self of persons" and "self of phenomena."
23. Generally characterized phenomena are mental images, or actual objects of conceptual mind. These phenomena have never existed from the beginning because conceptual mind is always mistaken, since in its mode of perception it takes conceptual images for the real things they stand for and confuses them. Generally characterized phenomena are opposed to self-characterized phenomena, such as indivisible particles and moments of consciousness. Thus, for these Hīnayāna schools, mere negation of "self" won't be ultimate truth since it is just a conceptual image arising from the refutation of "self." The wayāryas (see footnote 30) realize selflessness is by directly seeing self-characterized phenomena. So, for example, while directly perceiving selflessness of person, they will see the self-characterized phenomena of 'mind' free of the idea of a self of persons.
24. This is the explanation given by Sautrāntikans. It is a further addition to the explanation given by Vaibhāṣikans, who accept coarse matter as truthless and the indivisible particles of which it consists as truly existing.
25. They are named thus because they accept the true existence of phenomena that are considered false from a Madhyamaka point of view. These Proponents of Phenomenal Existence are opposed to the Proponents of Entitylessness, but not all Buddhist tenets can be included within these two categories. As will be seen later, the Yogācāra school lies outside these two categories.
26. Roughly speaking, within the threefold division of the path into view, meditation and action, through certain conventional types of meditation or through such conventional types of actions as generosity, one amasses the collection of merit. Meanwhile through such practices of the view, etc., as meditation on selflessness, one amasses the collection of wisdom. Both collections are necessary for the attainment of enlightenment within the Mahāyāna vehicle as well as within the Hīnayāna vehicle.
27. While most scholars of the Snow Land accept that Yogācāra (School of Yoga Practitioners) is synonymous with Cittamātra, Shākya Chokden views it as a subdivision of Madhyamaka. While others divide Cittamātra into two subschools: True Aspectarians and False Aspectarians, Shākya Chokden says that the True Aspectarians' school is identical with Cittamātra, whereas False Aspectarians' school is identical to Yogācāra. In his *Thorough Clarification of Definitive Meaning*

of the *Five Dharmas of Maitreya* (*byams chos lnga'i nges don rab tu gsal ba*), Shaky Chokden states: "There is no scriptural statement explaining the False Aspectarians school as Cittamātra, but there is this quote from *Distinguishing between Middle and Extremes* which shows it as Madhyamaka." His line of reasoning is following: It is correctly accepted that "there is no fifth intent of [Śākya]muni," that is, there is no fifth type of Buddhist tenet. Nevertheless, such Mahāyāna texts as the *Five Dharmas of Maitreya* explain the view in a way different from both Cittamātra and Proponents of Entitylessness. Since those texts themselves call their view "Madhyamaka" and since there is neither scriptural authority nor reasoning which can undermine this statement, they should be considered Madhyamaka.

28. The *Five Dharmas of Maitreya* (*Pañca Maitreyagrantha*) are: *Ornament of Clear Realizations* (*Abhisamayālaṅkāra*), *Ornament of Sūtras* (*Sūtrālaṅkāra*), *Distinction between Middle and Extremes* (*Madhyāntavibhaṅga*), *Distinction between Phenomena and Reality* (*Dharmadharmatavibhaṅga*) and *Sublime Continuum* (*Uttaratantra*). Although in his *Thorough Clarification of Definitive Meaning of the Five Dharmas of Maitreya*, Shaky Chokden refutes this order of their counting, positing instead his own order, nevertheless in this text he uses above given order for the sake of convenience. This order will become important for understanding later discussions in the text.
29. In the fifth chapter of *Maitreya's Distinguishing Between Phenomena and Their Reality* it is said: "Thus, there are no phenomena except dharmadhātu."

In his *Enjoyment Ocean of the Speech of Seven Treatises* (*sde bdun ngag gi rol mtsho*), Shaky Chokden states: "In brief, the acceptance of the consciousness which has external appearances arisen from firm potentials as non-mistaken is the way of thinking of deluded worldly [minds]. Acceptance of it as mistaken is the tradition of Cittamātra. Since this [consciousness] is mistaken, it is not suitable for it to be direct cognition. At the same time, [since it is not inferential either, it] cannot be valid cognition [at all]. Thus, Cittamātra's own tradition accepts only two direct cognitions: self-awareness and direct yogic perception. [This is true for Yogācāra as well]. According to True Aspectarians, externally oriented consciousnesses also are non-mistaken with regard to [their] own apprehended aspect. Thus, [these consciousnesses are] the direct perception of self-awareness. Then, the difference between True Aspectarians and Sautrāntika comes from the acceptance of external phenomena as engaged object [by the latter] and non-acceptance [of that by the former. ("Apprehended aspect" is the "form" of an object which consciousness takes when it apprehends external (for Sautrāntika) or externally appearing (for Cittamātra and Yogācāra) phenomena. This is contrasted to "apprehending aspect" – subjective "form" of consciousness itself taken by it in the act of perception. "Engaged object" is the object actually reached in the act of perception.)]

According to False Aspectarians, such [externally oriented consciousnesses], similarly to the distorted sense-perception [which sees, for example,] falling hair, are mistaken and thus cannot be direct perception. Because of that, self-awareness is only non-dual primordial mind."

Since for Sautrāntika, the external world is real, there exists externally oriented consciousness which is non-mistaken. Since for Cittamātra and Yogācāra, the external world is unreal, externally oriented consciousness is only mistaken. Nevertheless, the "apprehended aspect" of that consciousness, for example appearance of water for eye consciousness, is real for True Aspectarians, (this is why they are called so). That is, while eye consciousness itself is mistaken with respect to external objects, its aspect of self-awareness (self-awareness being the innate quality of self-cognizing of every mind) is non-mistaken with respect to both that consciousness appearing in the "form" of an object, i.e. "apprehended aspect," and that very consciousness appearing in the "form" of the subject, i.e. "apprehending aspect." For False Aspectarians, that "apprehended aspect" is unreal, like the appearance of the two moons, etc. to the distorted eye consciousness, (this is why they are called False Aspectarians). Thus a self-awareness of "apprehended aspect" cannot be admitted to, since self-awareness can be only non-mistaken direct perception. Only self-awareness of the "subjective aspect" of consciousness is admitted by them. This is what is called the "(primordial mind of) dharmadhātu", etc.

30. Āryas or "noble beings" are those who directly realize selflessness beginning with the Path of Seeing. (The Path of Seeing is the third of five stages along the path to enlightenment, each of which is referred to as a Path. The five are, in order, the Path of Accumulation, the Path of Preparation, the Path of Seeing, the Path of Meditation and the Path of No Learning.) Here, Shaky Chokden is not suggesting that false phenomena are not destroyed by the act of non-seeing of these phenomena by āryas, say on the path of meditation, absorbed in direct realization of the ultimate truth. Rather, he means that there is nothing to destroy here, since no false phenomena have ever existed.
31. The presentation of the four extremes of existence, non-existence, both and neither is a more detailed explication of the two extremes of existence and non-existence, which are also called the extremes of eternalism and nihilism.
32. As for the meaning of "the middle" in this tradition, Shaky Chokden says in his *Thorough Clarification of Definitive Meaning of the Five Dharmas of Maitreya*: "As a remainder of the negation of all extremes of conceptual elaborations, there is left no thing at all called "the middle." The term "the middle" is a mere label placed on [that nothing], because there can exist no object of knowledge not empty by its own nature."

33. In his *Thorough Clarification of Definitive Meaning of the Five Dharmas of Maitreya*, Shakya Chokden explains that Lesser Madhyamikas are those who eliminate the two extremes from the point of view of selflessness of person only, while Middle and Great Madhyamikas are those who eliminate the two extremes from the point of view of selflessness of phenomena as well. Middle Madhyamikas are those who accept three final vehicles (or paths to enlightenment), while Great Madhyamikas are those who accept only one final vehicle. (As for Hinayāna, there are two types, vehicle of Śrāvakas, or Hearers, and vehicle of Pratyekabuddhas, or Solitary Realizers. Mahāyāna is known as the Vehicle of Bodhisattvas. By admitting that after the achievement of enlightenment of a low vehicle, such as the Vehicle of Śrāvakas, one doesn't and cannot enter a higher vehicle, such as the Vehicle of Bodhisattvas, one accepts three final vehicles, and vice versa. Madhyamikas admit only one final vehicle.)

In the auto-commentary on the *Profound Dragon's Roar*, Shakya Chokden gives the following presentation: While it is widely known that Lesser Madhyamikas are those who hold the view of Śrāvaka schools, there are two ways of identifying the Great and Middle Madhyamikas: When Yogācārins identify themselves as Great Madhyamikas, Niḥsvabhāvacāryas (see footnote 38) become [for them] Middle Madhyamikas. When Niḥsvabhāvacāryas identify themselves as Great Madhyamikas, Yogācārins become Middle Madhyamikas. Nevertheless, according to Shakya Chokden both Yogācāra and Niḥsvabhāvacārya traditions have to be identified as Great Madhyamikas, since their claims to be Great Madhyamikas are equally powerful.

34. Here, as well as in many of Shakya Chokden's other texts, this term usually refers to Tsongkhapa and his followers.
35. I.e. of Buddha, Nāgārjuna, etc.
36. This was pointed out by many of Tsongkhapa's critics: Ju Mipham, Gorampa Sonam Senge, etc.: According to Tsongkhapa, the extreme of being both means being both conventionally non-existent and truly existent. Therefore, not being both will be the negation of these two and this negation entails the affirmation of conventional existence and the lack of true existence. This Tsongkhapa cannot reject. Trying to address this problem, some Gelukpa scholars say that the extreme of not being both means the truly existent negation of being both, whose refutation they accept. But then scholars like Gorampa (see his *Distinguishing the Views – lta ba'i shan 'byed*) point out yet another problem, namely that it won't be possible to eliminate all the four extremes on the basis of one and the same phenomenon. That is, although a given phenomenon can be shown to be free from the first three extremes, nevertheless it will be not this very phenomenon but the third extreme itself which is free from the fourth extreme. To get rid

of this new problem, others say that the meaning of the fourth extreme is “not being both truly non-existent and conventionally existent,” but then the fourth extreme will be just the same third extreme explained in negative terms.

37. There are two types of negation: non-affirming negative and affirming negative. For example, if one thinks, ‘there is no vase on the table,’ one is negating the existence of a vase without positing anything in its place. In this statement, the non-existence of a vase on a table doesn’t affirm the existence of that table. This is what is referred to by a non-affirming negative. However, if one says, ‘the table is not a vase,’ it will be an affirming negative. The table being a vase is negated, but the table itself is left in remainder of this negation.

Although these schools as well refute extremes through non-affirming negation, they also describe the ultimate truth and the path through affirming negation. The remainder of that negation will be indivisible particles and moments of consciousness for the two Śrāvaka tenets, subjective mind for Cittamātra, and non-dual self-awareness for Yogācāra.

38. While most Tibetan scholars divide Madhyamaka into Prāsaṅgika and Svātāntrika subschools, Shakya Chokden does not accept this division as authentic or based on solid reason. In the *Thorough Clarification of Definitive Meaning of the Five Dharmas of Maitreya*, he states: “In brief, the division of Cittamātra into True Aspectarian and False Aspectarian and the division of Madhyamaka into Prāsaṅgika and Svātāntrika didn’t exist in the classifications of tenets in the Land of Āryas [- India]. It is not seen in scriptural statements and it is also [shown as] defective by reasoning: While divisions of tenets are made from the point of view of *the view*, there is no difference seen between the views of Prāsaṅgika and Svātāntrika Madhyamakas.” Thus, Shakya Chokden’s discussions of the difference between Prāsaṅgika and Svātāntrika schools are ultimately conducted on the basis of the assertions of other scholars, for the sake of convenience. Of course, he accepts the distinction between Prāsaṅgika and Svātāntrika (these two terms being created by Tibetan scholars), but he does not believe there to be a difference between the final views of these two subschools. Rather, he conceives of it as a difference among provisional assertions of the followers of one and the same school. Explaining his own view on the sub-divisions of Madhyamaka, he continues: “Nevertheless, the division of Madhyamaka into the two traditions of the methods of “Emptiness of Oneself” and “Emptiness of Other” is perfectly clarified in the treatises of the Two Great Charioteers [Nāgārjuna and Maitreya].” For Shakya Chokden, the School of Emptiness of Oneself is a synonym for the School of Proponents of Entitylessness (Niḥsvabhāva-vāda), while the School of Emptiness of Other is a synonym for the School of Yoga Practitioners (Yogācāra).

39. I.e., the Madhyamaka of the Tantric vehicle.
40. Here, the term 'superimpositions' refers to all misconceptions.
41. This is the Yogācāra approach as well. For Shakya Chokden, Gorampa and others, this is a key point that starkly distinguishes their views from those of Tsongkhapa and his followers. For the latter, ultimate truth is a non-affirming negative. This very negative is first realized conceptually on the Paths of Accumulation and of Preparation, through listening, thinking and conceptual meditation. Later, when enough clarity is acquired, it is realized directly on the Paths of Seeing and so forth. For Shakya Chokden, this is impossible. First of all, only the objects of conceptual minds can be non-affirming negatives. Since they are generally characterized phenomena, such negatives cannot be perceived by direct perception, including yogic direct perception. In his *General Presentation of Valid Cognition: Key of Magic Vajra Mechanism, Opening the Doors of Great Treasury of the Seven Treatises [on Valid Cognition]* (tshad ma spyi'i nram bzahag sde bdun bang mdzod chen po'i sgo 'byed 'khrul 'khor gyi lde mig), Shakya Chokden says: "Even for as much as the tip of a hair, I don't accept direct perception measuring generally characterized phenomena. Otherwise it would follow that this direct perception is conceptual mind." He states that all Madhyamaka reasoning is aimed at ceasing any and all conceptions. It is true that on the conceptual level, one reaches a point of perceiving non-affirming negation of all the four extremes. But this is just 'nominal ultimate truth,' which, from the point of view of a yogi who has directly realized ultimate truth, is nothing more than conventional truth. 'Real ultimate truth' is realized by yogic direct perception only. Exactly the same idea is expressed by Gorampa in his *Distinguishing the Views and General Presentation of Madhyamaka: Thorough Clarification of Definitive Meaning* (dbu ma'i spyi don nges don rab gsal).

Here arises another problem, which Shakya Chokden addresses in the auto-commentary on his *Profound Dragon's Roar from the Ocean-like Clouds of Definitive Meaning* (nges don rgya mtsho sprin gyi 'brug sgra zab mo). "Then, won't it turn out that one thing has been established by the view and then something different is practiced in meditation? No. The reason is this. After ceasing by the view all masses of conceptual elaborations, when one proceeds to meditation, it is not correct [to accept that] what is experienced by familiarizing mind can be anything else than primordial mind of dharmadhātu itself." Although in direct perception of dharmadhātu one no longer meditates on non-affirming negation of the four extremes, nevertheless one meditates on primordial mind of dharmadhātu, the wisdom of self-awareness, which is by nature free from extremes. Thus, the 'object' (if it can be called such) of this sort of meditation is 'qualified' by that which has been established by the view. For example, when eye consciousness sees the sun free from clouds, it does not see non-affirming negation of clouds. Nevertheless it sees the sun 'qualified' by the absence of clouds.

42. Ultimate bodhicitta is the 'mind of enlightenment' directly realizing ultimate truth.
43. Sugata is a synonym of Buddha.
44. The division of Buddha's teachings into Three Dharmacakras or Three Turnings of the Wheel of Dharma is given in various sūtras, the most famous of which is the *Sūtra Definitely Explaining the Intent* (- *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*).
45. When one looks at *Prajñāpāramitā* (- *Perfection of Wisdom*) Sūtras, one finds lengthy discussions of the emptiness of all phenomena "from form to omniscience," as it is said. These are the explicit teachings on emptiness. But implicitly, these sūtras show the stages of the path, Buddha nature and so forth. For example, saying that the formula $2 \times 2 = 4$ is empty by nature, implicitly one shows that $2 \times 2 = 4$. These are the teachings of the "hidden meaning."
46. I.e., the approaches explained above in section 3.1.1. The first approach explains ultimate truth as primordial mind endowed with Buddha's qualities, etc. The second approach explains it as freedom from any conceptualization.
47. This refers to emptiness endowed with the most supreme of all aspects, primordial mind of dharmadhātu.
48. Everything existent (as well as non-existent) is either false truth or ultimate truth. For an elaboration of this point, see Shakya Chokden's *Drop of Nectar of Definitive Meaning*.
49. In the sixth chapter of his *Engaging in the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakāvatara*), Candrakīrti states: "Ignorance is false since it obscures the nature. That which is artificial and appears as true due to this [ignorance] is false truth, as Muni said..."
50. There are five texts in this collection composed by Nāgārjuna: *Root Wisdom* (*Prajñāmūla*), *Sixty Verses on Reasoning* (*Yuktiśāstra*), *Rebuttal of Objections* (*Vigrahyāvartanī*), *Seventy Verses on Emptiness* (*Śūnyatāsaptatī*) and *Subtle Grinding* (*Vaidalyasūtra*).
51. The threefold division of all phenomena into entirely imputed, other-powered and thoroughly established is given in the *Sūtra Definitely Explaining the Intent*, as well as in the *Five Dharmas of Maitreya* and elsewhere. Roughly speaking, entirely imputed phenomena are external matter and such non-existent things as "self", rabbit horns, etc., other-powered phenomena are conventional minds and thoroughly established phenomena are ultimate truth. Their presentation varies from tenet to tenet among Mahāyāna tenets.
52. Hevajra and Cakrasaṃvara are names of particular Tantras, as well as terms describing ultimate truth.
53. This is a prophecy from the *Root Tantra of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrīmūlatantra*). The full quote is: "Four hundred years after my nirvāṇa, there will appear a bhikṣu named Nāga trying to benefit this Doctrine. He will accomplish the reasoning called 'peacock'. He will compose many

treatises on the meaning of element and will know the suchness of the meaning of phenomenal non-existence. He will live for six hundred years. Having left the body he will go to Sukhavati [paradise]. Immediately after that he will definitely accomplish buddhahood."

54. Saraha actually was Nāgārjuna's guru and the person from whom he received monastic ordination. When we say that Nāgārjuna pioneered the Madhyamaka tradition, we usually mean pioneering Madhyamaka of Sūtras. But Saraha can be said to have pioneered the Madhyamakas of both Sūtras and Tantras. (Of course, Buddha Śākyamuni was the first to teach the Madhyamaka view. "Pioneering" means here giving an interpretation of Buddha's intent and making that a system of thought by later teachers.)
55. *Doha for the Subjects* from Saraha's *Treasury of Dohas*. (Dohas are the songs of spiritual realization and experience.)
56. In his commentary on Maitreya's *Sublime Continuum*.
57. The "basis of all" (ālaya) is distinguished from the "consciousness – basis of all" (ālayavijñāna). While the latter is the basis of various conventional states of mind and their imprints, the former is the foundation of the whole existence, ultimate as well as conventional.
58. "Clear light" and "luminous" are two translations of one and the same Tibetan word here.
59. Or the natural body of reality (of Buddha).
60. This may refer to those shown by the following verse from the first chapter of *Sublime Continuum*: "Because the body of perfect Buddha emanates, because suchness is inseparable and because the lineage exists, all those with bodies always have Buddha essence."
61. There are two texts in this collection: *Precious Garland* (*Ratnavali*) and *Letter to a Friend* (*Suhṛllekha*).
62. The third collection called *Collection of Praises* (bstod tshogs) consists of *Praise to Mind Vajra*, *Praise to Dharmadhātu*, *Praise Pleasing Sentient Beings*, *Praise to Mother Prajñāpāramitā*, *Praise to Three Bodies*, *Praise as Ultimate*, *Praise as Having no Examples*, *Praise as Unthinkable*, *Praise as Transwordly*, *Praise as the One Beyond Praises* and *Supreme Praise*. Sometimes two *Praises of Great Stupas* and two *Praises of Mañjuśrī* are added. Lengthy discussions of the number, meaning, etc., of the three collections can be found in Gorampa's *Thorough Clarification of Definitive Meaning*. (Not all the texts of Nāgārjuna are included in the three collections.)
63. For example, in his *Four Hundred* (*Chatuṣṣatakaśāstrikakārikā*), he discusses both conventional practices and the view of emptiness at equal length.
64. Āryadeva was a direct disciple of Nāgārjuna.
65. According to Shakya Chokden, Mere Knowing (*Vijñānamātra*) view is a synonym for Yogācāra view. Thus it is different from the Mind Only (*Cittamātra*) view. In "*Abbreviated Madhyamaka Essence*" – explanation of

[Nāgārjuna's] "*Commentary on Ultimate Bodhicitta*" (*don dam byang chub sems 'grel gyi bshad pa dbu ma'i snying po bsdus pa*)—Shakya Chokden makes the following distinction: "False Aspectarian Yogācāra is not to be called "Cittamātra" [i.e. "Mind Only"], since [it] doesn't accept appearances as mind. [Nevertheless, it has] to be called "Vijñāna[mātra, i.e. "Mere Knowing"] because [it] accepts the entity [i.e. nature] of thoroughly established [phenomena] as knowing, and there is no other thing [which can serve as the nature] of other-powered phenomena."

We should mention, however, that the Yogācāra view which Candrakīrti refutes (see just below) is not identified by Candrakīrti himself as separate from Cittamātra. In the auto-commentary on *Profound Dragon's Roar*, Shakya Chokden states: "When Proponents of Entitylessness give explanations within the framework of Pāramitayāna exclusively, they explain that the Yogācāra's view of temporarily severing superimpositions and {Yogācāra's} way of positing [its] ultimate tenets don't transcend Cittamātra's approach among the four [types of approaches of] the Proponents of [Buddhist] Tenets."

66. Immediately preceding this quote (taken from *Root Wisdom*), Candrakīrti in his *Engaging in the Middle Way* says: "Neither emptiness nor non-emptiness exist even a little. These [terms] are mere explanations on a false level, like that of 'form', etc., which are given because of [the needs of] disciples."
67. The full quote of this verse from Nāgārjuna's *Root Wisdom* is: "Neither from self, nor from other, not from both, not without causes – any phenomenon in any circumstance is never produced."
68. Sāṃkhya is one of the Indian non-Buddhist schools that accepts the manifestation of phenomena already existent in potential form in the state of Universal Principle (prākṛti). Thus, it accepts production from self.
69. "Autonomous reason" or "autonomous syllogism" is the reason that produces an inferential understanding not only in the mind of an opponent, but also in the mind of the person who posits the reason. While positing this syllogism, something that the opponent already knows is used as an example. Otherwise, it is impossible for him to realize the pervasion of the proof by the predicate of the probandum, and subsequently, therefore generate an inferential understanding of the combination of the subject and predicate of the probandum. The subject, predicate of the probandum and proof are all indispensable parts of autonomous syllogisms.

On the other hand, in the type of consequence that aims to show contradictions in an opponent's statements, or merely to bring him to a particular conclusion, the example does not have to be stated. But if consequence is conceived to be the same as autonomous syllogism, it will need an example. Since this example is not stated, the closest thing to use as an example will be the proof itself. But if the proof and example

are identical, this is a fault in syllogism, because pervasion of the predicate by the proof cannot be based on one part of the same pervasion. Instead, it must be based on a phenomenon other than these two, a phenomenon previously known to the opponent. Since the example is missing, correct reason, which has to be based on it, is also missing.

70. According to Svatāntrika, only consequence by itself cannot produce inferential understanding in an opponent's mind. Thus, after showing contradictions in the opponent's statements by the means of consequence, an autonomous syllogism has to be posited. This autonomous syllogism will have the reverse meaning of the consequence, that is, the reversed predicate of statement of the consequence will become the proof of the autonomous syllogism, while the reversed reason of the consequence will become the predicate of the probandum of the autonomous syllogism. For example, if an opponent accepts that sound is permanent but produced, the consequence showing this contradiction will be: "It follows that the subject, sound, is not produced, because it is permanent." An autonomous syllogism, based on this consequence, will be: "The subject, sound, is impermanent, because of being produced. It is like, for example, a sprout." Since the opponent doesn't accept the pervasion of "impermanent" by "being produced," autonomous syllogism won't work for him right away. The consequence prepares him, and when he is ready to accept the pervasion, an autonomous syllogism is used.

In this case, the consequence, posited by Buddhapālita, would sound like: "It follows that, for the subject—any phenomenon in any circumstance—production is meaningless and limitless, because it is produced from itself." When this is turned into an autonomous syllogism, it becomes: "The subject—any phenomenon in any circumstance—is not produced from itself, because production is not meaningless and not limitless." Since production is thereby accepted in this syllogism, it becomes a phenomenon accepted in the frame of ultimate reasoning. Furthermore, since it is not a production from self, both or neither, but nevertheless is still production, it turns into production from other, which also cannot be accepted at the time of pondering the ultimate.

71. For details see *Great Ship of Discrimination* below.
 72. Also known as 'Two Truths' (bden gnyis) or 'Distinguishing the Two Truths' (bden gnyis rnam 'byed).
 73. The translator Nok Lekpe Sherap (rngog legs pa'i shes rab) was both the uncle and teacher of the Great Translator Nok Loden Sherap. The latter spent seventeen years studying Dharma in Kashmir.
 74. Indian logician Dharmakīrti. The first famous Buddhist logician was Dignāga, the author of *Compendium of Valid Cognition* (*Pramāṇa samuccaya*), and other works. Dharmakīrti later eliminated misconceptions regarding Dignāga's approach, and clarified and

developed it. The *Commentary on Valid Cognition* is the most famous of his logical works known as the *Seven Pramāṇa Texts* (*saptapramāṇaśāstra*), or the *Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition*. They include: the *Commentary on Valid Cognition* (*Pramāṇavartika*), *Discernment of Valid Cognition* (*Pramāṇaviniścaya*), *Drop of Reasoning on Valid Cognition* (*Nyāyabindu*), *Drop of Logical Reasoning* (*Hetibindu*), *Analysis of Relationship* (*Sambandhaparikṣā*), *Establishing Another Continuum* (*Samāntantarasiddhi*) and *Science of Debate* (*Vadanyāya*).

75. For details see *Great Ship of Discrimination*.
76. The view of “the emptiness of oneself” accepts that all phenomena are empty of any nature whatsoever, false as well as true. The view of “the emptiness of other” accepts that ultimate phenomena are empty of false nature, while holding that they are not empty of ultimate nature.
77. See *Great Ship of Discrimination*.
78. If the subject, proof and so forth appear to the mind pondering the ultimate, being illusory appearances, they will turn to be illusion established through ultimate reasoning. To avoid this fault, Candrakīrti chose the way of consequence, while later Svātāntrika s explained that all opposites are negated by the ultimate reasoning. When one of a pair of opposites is negated, the other one, being dependent on it, is also automatically negated. Thus later Svātāntrikas finally arrived at the same position as Candrakīrti.
79. Tsongkhapa’s interpretation can be found in his *Thorough Clarification of Madhyānīka Intent* (*dbu ma dgogis pa rab gsal*) commentary on *Engaging in the Middle Way* (*Madhyamakāvātāra*), in the last chapter of his *Great Stages of the Path* (*lam rim chen mo*) and other texts.
80. In the *Root Tantra of Mañjuśrī* (*Mañjuśrīmūlatantra*).
81. “Treatise” in this case means the word of Buddha himself.
82. Samadhi (concentration) of the Stream of Dharma can be attained beginning with the Path of Accumulation of the Mahāyāna vehicle. In this samadhi, the practitioner actually meets Buddha in one of his manifestations and directly receives Dharma (Buddhist Doctrine) teachings from him.
83. Tuṣitā, or the Heaven of Joy, is one of the six abodes of the gods of the desire realm. The Future Buddha, bodhisattva Maitreya, is presently abiding there.
84. These *Eight Divisions*, or *Eight Prakaranas*, are: *Explanation of the Ornament of Sūtras* (*Sūtrālamkārabhāṣya*), *Commentary on Distinction between Middle and Extremes* (*Madhyāntavibhaṅgatika*), *Commentary on Distinction between Phenomena and Reality* (*Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅgavṛtti*), *Thirty Verses* (*Triṅśikārikā*), *Twenty Verses* (*Vinīśikārikā*), *Division of the Five Skandhas* (*Pañcaskandhaprakāra*), *Science of Explanation* (*Vyākhyayukti*) and *Division of Confirmation of Karma* (*Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa*).
85. This is the view of Gelukpa, parts of Sakya (Gorampa, etc.) and later Nyingma tradition (Mipham, etc). Gelukpa school considers the view

of the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* to be that of Svātāntrika and the view of *Sublime Continuum* to be that of Prāsaṅgika . For other scholars (Mipham, Gorampa, etc.,) the view of the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* is that of Madhyamaka in general, since they (unlike Gelukpas) accept no difference in either the final view or in the presentation of the stages of the path by Svātāntrika and Prāsaṅgika .

86. That is, Madhyamaka of Yogācāra.

87. The eight clear realizations are: omniscient mind, knowledge of the paths, knowledge of the bases, complete training in all aspects, peak training, serial training, momentary training and Wisdom Truth Body. A separate chapter is devoted to each of these clear realizations. Each clear realization is illustrated by certain number of topics. For example, omniscient mind is illustrated by ten topics: enlightened motivation of bodhicitta, Mahāyāna instructions, etc. Knowledge of the paths is illustrated by eleven topics, knowledge of the bases by nine topics, etc.

88. The first chapter of the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* explains that the four levels (Heat, Peak, Forbearance and Supreme Dharma) of the Path of Preparation have respectively the four types of conceptions: nine conceptions of afflicted grasped phenomena, nine conceptions of purified grasped phenomena, nine conceptions of substantial grasping phenomena and nine conceptions of imputed grasping phenomena. The conceptions related to each level are not manifest, whereas the conceptions related to subsequent levels are manifest. In his commentary on the Ornament of Clear Realizations called *Garland of Waves of the Ocean of Approaches* (bzched tshul rgya nitsho'i rlabs kyi phreng ba) Shakya Chokden explains: "In brief, those four levels of the Path of Preparation gradually undermine four [respective] conceptions. Thus, [the first three of] the four levels of the Path of Preparation have [respectively] three, two and one manifest conceptions which are the objects of abandonment of the path of seeing. The last [level] doesn't have even one [of the four manifest conceptions]. All [of the four levels of the Path of Preparation] indistinguishably have all [the four conceptions] in the sense that they take power [over the conceptions] and [in the sense that they have the] seeds [of those conceptions]." (The four levels take power over these conceptions because they have clear understanding of the emptiness of their nature. They have the seeds or potentials of these conceptions because these conceptions are completely abandoned only by the Path of Seeing, while the Path of Preparation just suppresses them, thus leaving their seeds ungerminated). Further, Shakya Chokden asserts that the explanations of the line, "...has and [thus] relies on the four conceptions," in the famous commentaries of Vimuktasena and Haribhadra have this interpretation as their single intent.

89. In his *Clear Meaning* (Sphuṭārthā) commentary on the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* Haribhadra comments on these lines from the fourth chapter

which explain Mahāyāna application: “Non-abiding in form, etc., since [they] have no essence, and non-application related to them, are application.” (“Application” is the second topic illustrating complete training in all aspects.)

90. “Aspects” is the first topic illustrating complete training in all aspects. Haribhadra’s *Clear Meaning* says: “Particulars of primordial mind observing impermanence and other [factors] of the nature of reality, which are the antidotes to discordant factors grasping at permanence, etc., are presented as aspects. This is the definition.”
91. This is the description of the fourth of the four topics illustrating momentary training, “non-dual momentary training,” to which the seventh chapter of the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* is devoted. Momentary training is done at the end of the continuity of mind on the Path of a Learning, just the moment before a person becomes a Buddha.
92. The point which Shākya Chokden makes in this discussion is as follows: the objects of practical experience, as well as the objects of abandonment, are described in the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* as mind from the point of view of “the emptiness of other.” Without contradicting that description, all phenomena are explained as empty from the point of view of “the emptiness of oneself.”
93. Ten Grounds of Mahāyāna are further subdivisions of the Path of Seeing and the Path of Meditation.
94. The Sūtras of Perfect Differentiation are those sūtras of the Third Turning of the Wheel of Dharma which differentiate “the three entities” or three types of phenomena, and use this differentiation to explain other sūtras from the point of view of Yogācāra.
95. Many other scholars accept that Yogācāra Madhyamaka is a subdivision of Svātāntrika, the full name of which is Yogācāra Svātāntrika Madhyamaka. In this view, ultimate truth is presented from the point of view of Svātāntrika, while conventional truth is presented from the point of view of Cittamātra. (As we saw, Shākya Chokden does not accept it. For him Yogācāra Madhyamaka and Yogācāra are synonyms. Svātāntrika is subdivision of Proponents of Entitylessness). Gelukpas also share the former approach. According to Tsongkhapa, one of the uncommon features of Prāsaṅgika is the non-acceptance of apperception even on conventional level. It is generally accepted that Svātāntrika, Cittamātra and Sautrāntika accept apperception, whereas the assertion that Prāsaṅgika as the only true Proponent of Entitylessness is a distinguishing assertion of Tsongkhapa’s Gelukpa School. Thus, the Buddhist schools that accept apperception (and also the Vaibhāṣika School which does not accept apperception) are Proponents of Phenomenal Existence. (As was mentioned in footnote 29, apperception or self-knowing is the aspect of every mind’s self-cognizing. For example, while one part of an eye consciousness sees form, another perceives eye-consciousness itself.)

96. Madhyamaka of Sūtras.
97. Looking at this quote, one might expect that the Hevajra Tantra shows the view of emptiness of self as higher than the view of emptiness of other. Also, it may look that based upon the reasoning related to the first view, it is possible to negate true existence and any nature of primordial mind as well, thus destroying the view of Proponents of Emptiness of Other. Shakya Chokden provides an excellent answer to this in his *Enjoyment Ocean of the Speech of Seven Treatises*: “Reasoning given by Nāgārjuna negates non-dual primordial mind as existent in the framework of that reasoning. But in general, the existence [of that primordial mind] is not negated because it is beyond being an object of sounds and concepts, and because it is experienced by primordial mind of self-awareness only.” Then, answering the question as to why the Madhyamaka of Proponents of Entitylessness was placed in the interval between Yogācāra and Tantra, Shakya Chokden continues: “[It is done] in order to stop conceptions grasping at extremes of existence, non-existence, etc. regarding that holy meaning[i.e. non-dual primordial mind]. As master Chandrakīrti stated: “The repulsion of concepts is accepted by scholars to be the result of analysis”.”
98. The meaning of this quote from Vajragarbha’s commentary on the *Condensation of the Hevajra Tantra (Hevajrainḍārthaṭīkā)* is as follows: There are just three buddhahoods – those of Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas and Buddhas. There are only four tenets – those of Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Cittamātra and Madhyamaka. Thus, Vajragarbha’s assertion would be contradicted if Madhyamaka, as identified by Asaṅga, was the fifth tenet.
99. Thus, what is expressed by the word “middle” in the title of *Distinction between Middle and Extremes* and in such passages in the text itself as “...that is the Middle Way,” etc., would not refer to Madhyamaka tenets. But such an assertion is wrong from Shakya Chokden’s point of view: Maitreya didn’t teach a view higher than the one expressed in *Distinction between Middle and Extremes*. Moreover, he designated it by the name ‘Madhyamaka’ and not ‘Cittamātra’ or any other name. This view is not undermined either by reasoning or scriptural authority. Why then, Shakya Chokden would say, can it not be the case that the view of *Maitreya’s Five Dharmas* is a real Madhyamaka view and nothing else?
100. In his auto-commentary on *Engaging in the Middle Way*, Candrakīrti says: “If one asks whether the Sthavira Vasubandhu, Dignāga, Dharmapāla and other authors of treatises of the past also completely abandoned these non-mistaken teachings on the meaning of dependent origination, having been frightened by the mere sound [of Madhyamaka being taught], I will say, ‘Yes’.” (Sthavira is a title bestowed on the elder in monastic community.)
101. Thus, Shakya Chokden points out that Asaṅga and Vasubandhu on the one hand and Candrakīrti on the other call themselves

Madhyamikas. Furthermore, each faction refuted the views held by the other. Additionally, there is no either valid reasoning or scriptural authority which can refute their statements. Thus, despite the fact that these two views differ, they are equally qualified to be called Madhyamaka views. (Discussed here are the views of their tenets, not the views of meditative equipoise which, according to Shakya Chokden, rather complement each other.)

102. There are two stages of practice of Anūttarayogatantra or Highest Yoga Tantra (the highest of the four classes of Tantra): Generation Stage which emphasizes such conventional practices as visualization of divine mandalas, etc., and Completion Stage which emphasizes contemplation on the ultimate reality as it is explained in Tantra only. (The four classes of Tantra are: Kriya (Action), Chārya (Performance), Yoga and Anūttarayoga Tantras).
103. According to Tsongkhapa, there is no difference between sūtric and tantric explanations of the object, emptiness. But there is a difference with respect to the subject. In Anūttarayogatantra, the uncommon subject realizing that emptiness is great bliss; this sort of awareness is not discussed in sūtras. Tsongkhapa doesn't identify this subject as the ultimate truth since, according to him, it is mind, while the ultimate truth is always a non-affirming negative.
104. The Bodhisattvas' commentaries are three commentaries written by ārya bodhisattvas. They are: the commentary on the *Kālacakra Tantra* by Puṇḍarika called *Stainless Light (Vimalaprabhā)*, the commentary on the *Cakrasaṃvara Tantra* by Candrabhadra usually called *Vajrapāṇi's Upper Commentary* (because in it Candrabhadra, a manifestation of Vajrapāṇi, commented on the upper, or beginning, part of the *Cakrasaṃvara*), and the commentary on the *Hevajra Tantra* by Vajragarbha usually called *Vajragarbha's Commentary*.
105. Depending on context, "empowerment" can refer to the basis of the path, the path and its result. Here it refers to the four empowerments (and especially the fourth) which are the necessary prerequisites for entering the path of Anūttarayogatantra. The fourth empowerment called Precious Word Empowerment is the most important, because it shows the unique view of Anūttarayogatantra. The first three – Vase, Secret and Wisdom- jñāna Empowerments – prepare a disciple for the fourth. Of course, this is not their only function: Vase Empowerment prepares a disciple for the practice of the Generation Stage, while the last three prepare a disciple for the practice of the Completion Stage.
106. Vehicle of Sūtras, sūtric teachings.
107. This is the last moment of the continuum of mind on the Path of Learning [i.e., the first four Paths], the moment before one becomes a Buddha, thus attaining the Path of no Learning.
108. Sakya Pandita, interlinear auto-commentary on *Thorough Distinction of the Three Types of Vows (sdom pa gsum rab tu dbye ba)*. The complete passage

from which Shakya Chokden quotes is as follows: “ If there were a view superior to the Pāramita[yāna’s view of] freedom from extremes, that view (of the pinnacle of the Nine Vehicles) would be conceptualized. If [this tantric view] is [also the view of] freedom from conceptual elaborations, there is no difference [between sūtric and tantric views]. So, the view of (wisdom produced from) listening, understood through explanation, is the same. Nevertheless Secret Mantra is superior in the method of (direct realization) of freedom from conceptual elaborations.” The words of the commentary are enclosed in round brackets.

109. The full quote is: “Although the meaning is the same, there is no delusion, there are many methods and no hardships [in the practice of Tantra, compared to Sūtra. Also, Tantra is taught] for the sake of individuals with sharp capacities. Thus, Mantrayāna is superior.”
110. This terminology arises in connection with discussions of the two stages of meditative equipoise of the Path of Meditation, for example. The first of these, the “uninterrupted path,” is the direct antidote of respective objects of abandonment. It is qualified by the process of their abandonment. The second, the “path of liberation,” is qualified by freedom from those objects when they have been abandoned. The last moment of the path at the end of the continuum belongs to the first category.

It appears that Shakya Chokden thinks that practitioners of an exclusively sūtric path can attain a buddhahood equal to the tantric buddhahood, while still asserting that the tantric means and the emptiness (or ultimate truth) which is realized through that, are superior to those of the sūtric path. Therefore, similarly to the tantric path, on the level of sūtras also there are no obscurations which cannot be uprooted by the uninterrupted path at the end of the continuum. In the auto-commentary on his *Profound Dragon’s Roar from the Ocean-like Clouds of Definitive Meaning* Shakya Chokden objects those opponents who state that Sakya tradition holds that without relying on tantric skillful means, it is not possible to realize emptiness on the path of exclusively Sūtric Vehicle. He says: “It contradicts [the fact that] those Noble Lords [i.e. Sakya Supreme Masters] accept [that it is possible to] fully complete the ten stages by [following] the path of Pāramiayāna alone.” (Implicit, but not stated, Shakya Chokden agrees with this view of Supreme Sakya Masters.)

111. Perfect limit is the ultimate truth, natural nirvāṇa. Its complete manifestation means attainment of Buddhahood. According to the sūtra teachings, this is possible only after completion of a very long (taking thousands of lifetimes) process of accumulation of positive qualities, bringing disciples to ripening and preparing Buddhafiels for future enlightenment (called respectively “accomplishment, maturing and training”). Attainment of nirvāṇa qualified by mere freedom from cyclic existence (which does not require initial “accomplishment,” etc.,) is

manifesting perfect limit at the wrong time from the point of view of sūtric Mahāyāna. The practice of Tantrayana can take just one lifetime to attain Buddhahood (or the manifestation of perfect limit). Since, according to sūtras, only nihilistic nirvāṇa (like that of the Hinayāna) can be attained in such short time, such attainment would indicate the fault that pure limit had been manifest at the wrong time.

112. "Methods of accomplishment" are manuals of tantric practice.
113. Pāramitas or "perfections" are such fully developed positive qualities as generosity, morality, etc. Pāramitayāna or the Vehicle of Pāramitas is synonymous with the Vehicle of Sūtras or the Vehicle of Reasoning, sūtric teachings.
114. "Spiritual friend" means "spiritual teacher," not a friend of a particular person.
115. Frequently, while translating personal names I don't split the name into the actual original name of a person and the name of the land, clan, etc., from which he came. In many cases, the last part of the name becomes an indispensable part of the original name. For example: Dromtonpa, Sakya Pandita, Shan Junne Yeshe, etc.
116. According to Buddhist logic, a correct syllogism must have three modes: property of the subject, forward pervasion and counter pervasion. For example, in the syllogism 'the subject, a pen, is existent, because of being matter', the property of the subject is 'matter'; the forward pervasion is 'whatever is matter it has to be existent'; and counter pervasion is 'whatever is not existent it is not matter'.
117. Shambhala's Dharma language is the teachings of the *Kālacakra Tantra*. Soon after these teachings appeared in India, they were taken to and disseminated in the Northern Land of Shambhala. Together with its commentaries, written by Shambhala kings, the *Kālacakra Tantra* was later translated into Tibetan.
118. This is the name of an Indian scholar as it is known in Tibet.
119. Dre Sherap Bar was born in the second half of the eleventh century.
120. The Translator Nok went to India when he was eighteen and stayed there for seventeen years. He came back to Tibet in 1092.
121. Abhidharma (Supreme Knowledge) teachings come from the *Abhidharmasūtra* and other sūtras. The most famous Abhidharma commentaries are the *Compendium of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmasamuccaya*) by Asaṅga and the *Treasury of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmakośa*) by Vasubandhu. They are called respectively the *Higher and Lower Abhidharmas*.
122. The Kadam tradition originated from Atīśa and his disciples, Dromtonpa, etc. Subsequently, Gelukpas accepted various features of this approach and called their tradition New Kadam. The original Kadam tradition was eventually subsumed by the other traditions. At present, there are only four main traditions of Tibetan Buddhism: Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu and Geluk.

123. Ar Janchup Yeshe was born at the end of the eleventh century.
124. "Kashipa" (bka' bzhi pa) literally means "The One Learned in Four Words." In earlier times, this degree used to be given to scholars learned in Madhyamaka, Abhidharma, Prajñāpāramita and Vinaya.
125. The teachings for those who practice Mahāyāna Path are grouped within Bodhisattvapitaka (literally the Basket [Containing the Teachings] for Bodhisattvas).
126. According to the *Golden Rosary of Kagyu* (bka' brgyud gser 'phreng), written by the Second Shamarpa Khacho Wanpo (zhwa dmar pa mkha spyod dbang po – 1350 – 1405), Dusum Khyenpa was ordained at the age of sixteen by Choggi Lama and was given the name Chokyi Drakpa (chos kyi grags pa).
127. Composed in 1346 by Tsalpa Kunga Dorje (tshal pa kun dga rdo rje), *Hulen Annals* (hu len deb gter) is also known as the *Red Annals* (deb ther dmar po).
128. Mahāmudrā or Great Seal is the synonym of the absolute reality.
129. The definition of space is mere 'negation of obstructions.' This is also a non-affirming negative. Thus, emptiness, which is a mere negation of extremes, is similar to space because it is also a non-affirming negative.
130. This quote, which can be found in the fifth chapter of the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* and the first chapter of the *Sublime Continuum*, is actually a citation from a sūtra.
131. There are two types of thoroughly established phenomena: unchangeable and incontrovertible. Since the first of these is "objective" ultimate truth, it is treated in different ways depending on the approach to the ultimate truth in general. The second type (incontrovertible, thoroughly established phenomena) is the wisdom realizing the first (unchangeable thoroughly established phenomena).
132. According to the Nyingma tradition, Kriya, Cārya and Yoga Tantras are classified as Outer Tantras, while the three subdivisions of Anūttarayogatantra – Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga – are classified as Inner Tantras.
133. Padmasambhava, as well as Śāntarakṣita, were invited to Tibet by the Dharma king Trison Deutsen.
134. There are two types of siddhis, or accomplishments: ordinary (like flying in the sky) and extraordinary (like attainment of Buddhahood).
135. The Nyingma tradition classifies all of Buddha's teachings into the Nine Vehicles. The first three (Śrāvakayāna, Pratyekabuddhayāna and Bodhisattvayāna) belong to sūtric teachings. The last six (three outer and three inner classes of Tantras) belong to tantric teachings. The view of Atiyoga surpasses all the other views of sūtric and tantric Madhyamaka.
136. These instructions, given by Māhasiddha Virūpa, are based on the teachings of the Hevajra Tantra.

137. These instructions are based on the teachings of the *Guhyasamāja* Tantra. Nāgārjuna wrote a treatise on them called the *Five Stages* (*Pañcakrama*).
138. In this context the Six Dharmas refers to the Six Dharmas of Naropa (Tib.: *nā ro chos drug*). They are instructions based on the teachings of the *Chakrasamvara*, *Hevajra* and *Guhyasamāja* Tantras.
139. The fifth chapter of the *Sublime Continuum* says: "There is nobody in the world more knowledgeable than the Victor [Buddha]: Only the Omniscient One and nobody else knows correctly the supreme suchness of everything. So, don't create confusion regarding sūtras given by the Sage [Buddha] himself. Otherwise you will destroy the method of [Śākya]muni, and the holy Dharma also will be harmed."
140. So, have a look at it!
141. Azadirachta Indica.
142. Brahmadrūpa, Indian mulberry tree.
143. Interpretations of "the three entities" differ depending not only on the class of tenets (Cittamātra, Madhyamaka and its subdivisions) explaining them, but also depending on the school (Gelug, Sakya etc.), commenting on those interpretations. For example, throughout all his *Essence of Perfect Explanation of Interpretive and Definitive* (*drang nges legs bshad snying po*) Tsongkhapa argues that the ultimate truth is a non-affirming negative from the point of view of all Mahāyāna tenets. Thus, according to him, real thoroughly established phenomena can only be non-affirming negations of substantial difference between objects and subjects according to Cittamātra tenets. For him, the sūtras of the Third Dharmacakra only teach the Cittamātra view. According to Shakya Chokden, they teach the Yogācāra view which is to be contrasted with the view of Cittamātra. Thoroughly established phenomena are only naturally pure non-dual primordial mind. The other two of "the three entities" are also interpreted differently.
144. The quote is from the end of the concluding chapter of *Engaging in the Middle Way*. In his auto-commentary, Chandra comments on these lines: "Let scholars be certain of the following: In the same way as this Dharma, called "emptiness," is not expressed correctly in treatises other than [the Root] *Madhyamaka* treatise [of Nāgārjuna], so, that which originates from this tradition, which we explained here with the answers to objections, does not exist in other treatises, just like the Dharma of emptiness."
145. According to Tsongkhapa, the object of negation of Madhyamaka reasoning has to be a non-existent thing, such as "true existence." According to him, valid cognition based on correct reasoning cannot negate some existent phenomenon. Otherwise either the cognition would be wrong or the phenomenon would be non-existent. (The two types of phenomena are established by the two types of valid cognition; ultimate phenomena are established by ultimate valid cognition, while conventional phenomena are established by conventional valid

cognition. These two cognitions cannot contradict each other; they have different objects.) Tsongkhapa states that the basis of emptiness upon which this negation is made has to be an existent phenomenon, since no innate mind grasping at true existence will grasp at true existence of something non-existent, like the son of a barren women, and innate grasping at true existence is the main thing to abandon in order to attain liberation.

In contrast, as can be seen in his *Drop of Nectar of Definitive Meaning* and other texts, Shakya Chokden approaches the two truths, existence and non-existence, valid and non-valid cognitions, etc., in dependance upon the relative perspectives. For example, a vase is an ultimate truth for the worldly mind and false truth for āryas who have directly realized ultimate truth. Also, when the reasoning refuting the imputations of worldly mind is emphasized, a vase would be non-existent and its emptiness of true existence would be existent and ultimate. But when the reasoning refuting the imputations of a yogi's mind is emphasized, this type of ultimate truth would be conventional truth. Thus, according to Shakya Chokden, the basis of emptiness does not necessarily have to be existent, and the object of negation of Madhyamaka reasoning does not necessarily have to be non-existent. Both of them can be existent from a certain conventional perspective, and both of them can be non-existent from the point of view of the ultimate reality.

Furthermore, according to Tsongkhapa, everything that exists has to exist conventionally (i.e., falsely) since nothing exists truly. For Shakya Chokden it is the opposite: if something exists falsely, it has to be non-existent. Only ultimate truth exists because it exists truly. (Of course, when temporarily the visions of wordly minds are accepted as valid, conventional phenomena are accepted as existent).

Thus, we can say that Shakya Chokden's approach concerns "levels" or "points of view" from which the respective observers perceive things. For Tsongkhapa, phenomena are either conventional or ultimate truths irrespective of whether they are perceived by an ārya or an ordinary person. The two truths depend on each other, but ultimate mind does not undermine the conventional and isn't concerned with its objects. For example, an eye consciousness isn't concerned with sound which is the object of an ear consciousness.

146. Various parts of *Engaging in the Middle Way*, in which from the point of view of Shakya Chokden (as well as Gorampa, etc.) Candra refutes Mere Knowing (Vijñānamātra) tenets, are interpreted by Tsongkhapa as refutation of Bhāvaviveka.
147. According to Shakya Chokden, in realization of the emptiness of emptiness the concept of emptiness itself has to be refuted, while for Tsongkhapa only grasping at the true existence of emptiness has to be refuted. This approach is wrong from Shakya Chokden's point of view.
148. In the self-commentary on *Engaging in the Middle Way* Candra states that although emptiness is taught in Hīnayāna scriptures, it is not taught

there fully, completely and extensively. According to Shākya Chokden, because of these and other reasons Hīnayāna followers cannot have complete realization of selflessness of phenomena. Nevertheless, according to Tsongkhapa there is no difference between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna āryas' realization of emptiness.

149. Also see *Drop of Nectar of Definitive Meaning*.
150. *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and *Abhidharmakośa* respectively.
151. I.e. non-Buddhists and Buddhists respectively.
152. Nevertheless Tsongkhapa interprets 'private syllogism' as 'syllogism established by its own characteristics' which, according to him, Bhāvya accepts but Candrakīrti doesn't accept since for the latter it is the synonym with 'truly existent syllogism' (and any type of true existence is negated by Proponents of Entitylessness).
153. At the end of his *Clear Words* Candrakīrti gives the list of Nāgārjuna's and other texts which he used in the composition, and continues: "... [I also] saw the commentary composed by Buddhapālita, [learned] that which was well explained by Bhāvaniviveka – [all these teachings] coming one after another, and [used] that which I got through my own discrimination [as well]. Having put them together I presented [the teachings] correctly in order to please individuals of great intelligence."
154. There are two types of cognition – direct and conceptual. The first one is 'affirmative engager' because it simply reflects its objects as they appear to it [if it is valid]. The second one is 'eliminative engager' because it perceives its objects through elimination of other objects. A direct object of this second type of perception is a so called 'isolate' or 'elimination of other' because while conceiving its object, say, a conceptual image of a pot, it mentally isolates it from all the other objects, say, cars and pens, and mentally eliminates them. Direct perception cannot do it, thus the isolate cannot become its direct object. Also see footnote 41.
155. In presentation of sixteen types of emptiness in the sixth chapter of *Engaging in the Middle Way*.
156. There are two types of otherpowered phenomena: pure and impure. An example of the first is those otherpowered phenomena which can serve as the path to liberation. An example of the second is those otherpowered phenomena which cannot do it. There are also two types of entirely imputed phenomena: entirely imputed phenomena lacking identity (which even temporarily are not accepted as existent, like, say, rabbit horns and Tibetan computers) and nominal entirely imputed phenomena (like, for example, external matter).
157. 24th chapter of *Root Wisdom* begins with the objections: "If all of them were empty, there would be no origination, no disintegration, and it would follow that for you there are no the four noble truths," etc.
158. In the 24th chapter the answer to that objection begins with: "Explanation of Dharma by Buddhhas is based on two truths: the false truth of saṃsāra and the truth of holy meaning..." etc.

159. On the level of conventional presentation, when false truth is emphasized, it is not correct to use ultimate reasoning. Shakya Chokden mentions this debate in order to show that the idea behind it is not to prove conventional existence (like Tsongkhapa does) but to explain that there are two levels of presentation and it is not correct to refute one when another is emphasized.
160. There are various ways of counting the Five Bodies. One of them is: the Wisdom Body of Reality, the Natural Body, the Unchangeable Vajra Body, the Body of Perfect Utility and the Emanation Body.
161. Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi are Buddhas in the forms of Bodhisattvas representing respectively enlightened wisdom, compassion and power.
162. The crown is the place where the Chakra of Great Bliss is located.
163. As it is mentioned by the author at the beginning, the composition of this text was requested by [Karmapa,] the lord of enlightened activities of the Supreme Victor [Buddha]. He is the Seventh Karmapa, Chodrak Gyamtso..
164. An epithet of the god Vishnu whose ten manifestations are known as fish, tortoise, boar, etc.
165. Inner oceans are located between the mount Meru and the four continents which surround it.
166. Rāhu is the demon who has only a huge head, not a body. He once swallowed the sun. In mythology it is said that he keeps swallowing the sun during solar eclipses.
167. According to legends the sun is carried on a chariot in the sky.
168. A water lily which opens at the appearance of the moon.
169. 'Candra' is the name of both the moon and Candrakīrti.
170. See footnote 49.
171. As inhabitants of the desire realm, we have six types of consciousness: five sensual and one mental. The first five are eye, ear, nose, tongue and body consciousnesses. These can never be conceptual. Mental consciousness is of two types: conceptual and non-conceptual. Both conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses can be either valid or wrong consciousnesses. Non-mistaken non-conceptual consciousness is direct perception. The respective objects of the five sense consciousnesses are: forms, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects. Direct objects of conceptual mental consciousness are various conceptual images. While direct perception simply reflects its objects like a mirror, conceptual mind apprehends its objects in various ways, called 'modes of apprehension,' which are either concordant or discordant with what is accepted to be reality. For example, if someone conceptually apprehends a text of Shakya Chokden as a text of Shakya Chokden, his mode of apprehension will be correct. But if he or she apprehends it as a tale of Mickey Mouse, his or her mode of apprehension will be wrong. What an object is apprehended to be through the mode of apprehension

is called 'an object of the mode of apprehension.' In the case of direct perception, it is like a "reflection" of its grasped object, but in the case of conceptual mind it differs depending on the mode of apprehension. Everybody agrees that in such superimpositions as Creator God, etc., made by wrong tenets (which are called 'immediate causes of mistake'), the mode of apprehension is wrong and its objects are called 'wrong false truth'. But what is unique to Shākya Chokden's approach is that for him the mode of apprehension by innate types of self-grasping is correct from the point of view of the world, and thus all its objects (such as 'mere I,' 'truly established I,' etc.,) are correct false truth. Likewise, innate self-grasping won't be a wrong mind from the point of view of the world, according to his view. Innate types of mind are those to which individuals have been accustomed during beginningless lifetimes, as opposed to the minds deceived by immediate causes.

172. I.e. direct cognition of ultimate truth.

173. These two are actually synonyms, the idea behind it being that what is accepted by worldly mind is accepted by it as true and ultimate. That which is not accepted by worldly mind as true is not accepted at all. Shākya Chokden discusses this question here in order to avoid an assumption that something can be accepted as truth but not ultimate truth by worldly mind (as well as by āryas, since the latter accept false truth for the sake of beneficial communication with the world, not from their own point of view).

174. This is the view of Tsongkhapa.

175. There are two types of ultimate truth: real and concordant (with real ultimate truth). Concordant ultimate truth is conceptual images created through partial negation of concepts. Real ultimate truth is free from any concepts.

176. Here refers to Madhyamaka reasoning.

177. That is they can be conceptually conceived and expressed by words. Real ultimate truth is unthinkable and non-expressible. The fact that the term 'ultimate truth' is used does not mean that ultimate truth is expressed. What is expressed is just a conceptual idea, but this idea does not have a corresponding object which can be reached either through conceptual thinking or through direct perception by worldly mind.

178. The goddess of wisdom and learning.

179. Six ornaments beautifying Jambudvīpa (the Southern Continent, one of the four continents surrounding Meru, where we live, according to Buddhist cosmology) are the Indian Buddhist masters: Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. Here the four charioteers of Madhyamaka [of Proponents of Entitylessness] are Śāntideva, Buddhapaṇita, Bhāvaviveka and Candrakīrti.

180. Method of the Proponents of Entitylessness.

181. Nāgārjuna's *Root Wisdom*.