

Shine forth, closing all the jasmines of faulty explanations¹
 But cause to smile the white countenance of the
 marvellous meanings
 Of the great grove with hundreds of petals of the
 pure systems.

This book illuminating countless tenets upon condensing the essence
 From the books of Indian and Tibetan scholars
 Was not done through competitiveness or jealousy
 but for the sake
 Of furthering the intellect of those whose lot is similar to mine.

Through this good deed rising from hard work,
 Suppressing with its brilliance even the light of the moon,
 May all transmigrating beings be freed from the chasm of bad views
 And be restfully sustained by the pure path forever.

This brief presentation of outer and inner tenets called *A Precious Garland* was composed by the reverent Gönpok-jik-may-wang-bo during the waxing of the sixth month in the water-snake year (1773). He composed it in the face of requests by the faithful, energetic, and discriminating Gu-shri Ngak-wang-gel-sang² and the monk Ngak-wang-sang-bo.³ The scribe was Da-drin-tsay-ring.⁴

Sarvamangalam.

¹ The light of the sun is said to close jasmine.

² *ku shri ngag dbang shal bzang*. The term *ku shri* indicates that he was a Mongolian.

³ *ngag dbang bzang po*.

⁴ *ta mgrin tshé ring*. The Peking edition has a further colophon on the occasion of its publication; for it and the colophons of recent editions, see Mimaki, pp. 108-109.

The Tibetan Genre of Doxography: Structuring a Worldview

by Jeffrey Hopkins

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Overview

[page 170] In the Tibetan cultural region (which stretches from Kalmuck Mongolian areas near the Volga River in Europe where the Volga empties into the Caspian Sea, through Outer and Inner Mongolia, the Buriat Republic of Siberia, and through Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, and parts of Nepal) the genre of doxography called "presentations of tenets" (**siddhāntavyavasthāpana, grub mtha'i rnam bzhag*) mainly refers to delineations of the systematic schools of Buddhist and non-Buddhist Indian philosophy. In this context, "philosophy" is, for the most part, related to liberative concerns—the attempt to extricate oneself and others from a round of painful existence and to attain freedom. Focal topics and issues of these schools are presented in order to stimulate metaphysical inquiry—to encourage development of an inner faculty that is capable of investigating appearances so as to penetrate their reality.

The basic perspective is that the afflictive emotions—such as desire, hatred, enmity, jealousy, and belligerence—that bind beings in a round of uncontrolled birth, aging, sickness, and death are founded on misperception of the nature of persons and other phenomena. Thus, when one penetrates the reality of things and this insight is teamed with a powerful consciousness of concentrated meditation, the underpinnings of the process of cyclic existence can be destroyed, resulting in liberation. Also, when wisdom [page 171] is further empowered through the development of love, compassion, and altruism—and by their corresponding actions—the wisdom consciousness is capable of achieving an all-knowing state in which one can effectively help a vast number of beings.

Because of this basic perspective, namely that false ideation traps beings in a round of suffering, *reasoned* investigation into the nature of persons and other phenomena is central to the process of spiritual development, though it is not the only concern. Systems of tenets, therefore, are primarily studied not to refute other systems but to develop an internal force that can counteract one's own *innate* adherence to misapprehensions. These innate forms of ignorance are part and parcel of ordinary life. They are not just learned from other systems, nor do they just arise from faulty analysis. Thus, the stated aim of studying the different schools of philosophy is to gain insight into the fact that many of the perspectives basic to ordinary life are devoid of a valid foundation. This leads the adept to then replace these with well-founded perspectives. The process is achieved through (1) first engaging in *hearing* great texts on such topics and getting straight the verbal presentation, (2) then *thinking* on their meaning to the point where the topics are ascertained with valid cognition, and (3) finally *meditating* on the same to the point where these realizations become enhanced by the power of concentration so that they can counteract innate tendencies to assent to false appearances.

Since it is no easy matter to penetrate the thick veil of false facades and misconceptions, it became popular in the more scholastic circles of India to investigate not just what the current tradition considered to be the best and final system but also the so-called lower systems. This

provided a gradual approach to subtle topics that avoided their being confused with less subtle ones. Within such an outlook, a literary genre that compared the views of the different schools of thought developed in India and became even more systematized in Tibet. That the primary concern was indeed with developing the *capacity* to appreciate the profound view of a high system of philosophy is evidenced by the amount of time actually spent by students probing the workings of the so-called lower schools. Since the philosophies of those schools were appreciated, they were studied in considerable detail.[page 172]

Because of the need to get a handle on the plethora of Buddhist systems, the genre of "presentations of tenets" assumed considerable importance in Tibet. The main Indian precursors were texts such as the *Tarkajvālā* ("Blaze of Reasoning") by Bhāvaviveka¹ (500-570 C.E.?) (Ruegg: 61) and the *Tattvasaṃgrahakārikā* ("Compendium of Principles") by the eighth-century scholar Śāntarakṣita with a commentary by his student Kamalaśīla (see Jha). Both Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla visited Tibet in the eighth century and strongly influenced the direction that Buddhism took there.

In Tibet, the genre came to be more highly systematized, the presentations assuming a more developed structure.² Some of these texts are long; for instance, a lengthy text entitled *Theg pa mtha' dag gi don gsal bar byed pa grub pa'i mtha' rin po che'i mdzod* ("Treasury of Tenets, Illuminating the Meaning of All Vehicles") (GTRD) was written by the great fourteenth-century scholar Klong chen rab 'byams³ (1308-1363) of the rNying ma school of Tibetan Buddhism. Another, the *Grub mtha' kun shes nas mtha' bral grub pa zhes bya ba'i bstan bcos rnam par bshad pa legs bshad kyi rgya mtsho* ("Explanation of 'Freedom from Extremes through Understanding All Tenets': Ocean of Good Explanations") (GTKS), was authored by the great fifteenth-century scholar sTag tshang lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen (b. 1405) of the Sa skya school. The latter criticized many of the views of the founder of the dGe lugs pa school, Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419), as being self-contradictory. sTag tshang's text in turn gave rise to the most extensive text of this genre in Tibet; the *Grub mtha'i rnam bshad rang gzhan grub mtha' kun dang zab don mchog tu gsal ba kun bzang zhing gi nyi ma lung rigs rgya mtsho skye dgu'i re ba kun skong* ("Explanation of 'Tenets,' Sun of the Land of Samantabhadra Brilliantly Illuminating All of Our Own and Others' Tenets and the Meaning of the Profound [Emptiness], Ocean of Scripture and Reasoning Fulfilling All Hopes of All Beings") (GTCM), also known as *Grub mtha' chen mo* ("Great Exposition of Tenets"),⁴ by 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje ngag dbang brtson grus (1648-1721), is written in large part as a refutation of sTag tshang lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa's text is replete with citations of Indian sources but is written, despite its length, in a laconic style (unusual for him) that can leave one wondering about the relevance of certain citations. Perhaps [page 173] this was part of the reason why the eighteenth-century Mongolian scholar lCang skya rol pa'i rdo rje (1717-1786)—whose reincarnation 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, then an old man, helped to find—composed a more issue-oriented text of the same genre entitled *Grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa gsal bar bshad pa thub bstan lhun po'i mdzes rgyan* ("Clear Exposition of the Presentations of Tenets, Beautiful Ornament for the Meru of the Subduer's Teaching") (GTDG).⁵ After 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa passed away, his reincarnation, dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po (1728-1791), became lCang skya's main pupil. In 1733, dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po wrote an abbreviated version of these texts, entitled *Grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa rin po che'i phreng ba* ("Presentation of Tenets, A Precious Garland") (GTRP) (see Sopa and Hopkins, 1990).

In this sub-genre of brief presentations of tenets are earlier texts such as the *Grub mtha'i rnam gzbag* ("Presentation of Tenets") (GTNZ) by rJe btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469-1546), the *Grub mtha' rgya mtshor 'jug pa'i gru rdzings* ("Ship for Entering the Ocean of Tenets") (GTGD) by the second Dalai Lama dGe 'dun rgya mtsho (1476-1542), the *Grub mtha'i rnam bzbag blo gsal spro ba bskyed pa'i ljon pa phas rgol brag ri 'joms pa'i tho ba* ("Presentation of Tenets, Sublime Tree Inspiring Those of Clear Mind, Hammer Destroying the Stone Mountains of Opponents") (GTTB) by Paṇ chen bSod nams grags pa (1478-1554), and the *Grub mtha' thams cad kyi snying po bsdu pa* ("Condensed Essence of All Tenets") (GTDP) by Co ne ba Grags pa bshad sgrub (1675-1748).⁶ A medium-length presentation of tenets that also treats the other schools of Tibetan Buddhism in a biased fashion was written by ICang-skya's biographer and student, who was also a student of dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, Thu'u bkvan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737-1802). His text is called *Grub mtha' thams cad kyi khungs dang 'dod tshul ston pa legs bshad shel gyi me long* ("Mirror of the Good Explanations Showing the Sources and Assertions of All Systems of Tenets") (GTSM).

Most likely, authors such as dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po chose to write concise texts so that the general outlines and basic postures of the systems of tenets could be taught and memorized without the encumbrance of a great deal of elaboration. Sometimes, the brevity itself makes the issues being discussed inaccessible, but, at minimum, it provides a foundation for the student, who can memorize these short texts and use them as a locus for [page 174]further elaboration. The aim clearly is to provide an easy avenue for grasping issues that revolve around the nature of persons and phenomena according to a traditional system of education.

Format

dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po's text is exemplary of the genre. It presents the principal tenets of Indian schools, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist, treating six renowned non-Buddhist schools very briefly and then focusing on the four Buddhist schools and their main sub-schools. In the order of their presentation (the list of Buddhist schools represents an ascent in order of estimation) these are:

1) NON-BUDDHIST SCHOOLS

- a) Vaiśeṣika (Bye brag pa) and Naiyāyika (Rig pa can pa) (Particularists and Logicians)
- b) Sāṃkhya (Grangs can pa) (Enumerators)
- c) Mīmāṃsā (dPyod pa ba) (Analyzers or Ritualists)
- d) Nirgrantha (gCer bu pa) (The Unclothed, better known as Jaina [rGyal ba pa])
- e) Lokāyata (rGyang 'phan pa) (Hedonists)

2) BUDDHIST SCHOOLS

- a) Hīnayāna (Lesser Vehicle)
 - i) Vaibhāṣika (Bye brag smra ba) (Great Exposition School)
 - (1) 18 sub-schools
 - ii) Sautrāntika (mDo sde pa) (Sūtra School)
 - (1) Āgamānusārin (Lung gi rjes 'brangs) (Following Scripture)
 - (2) Nyāyānusārin (Rigs pa'i rjes 'brangs) (Following Reasoning)
- b) Mahāyanā (Great Vehicle)
 - i) Cittamātra (Sems tsam pa) (Mind Only School)

- (1) Āgamānusārin (Lung gi rjes 'brangs) (Following Scripture)
- (2) Nyāyānusārin (Rigs pa'i rjes 'brangs) (Following Reasoning)
- ii) Mādhyamika (dBu ma pa) (Middle Way School)
 - (1) Svātantrika (Rang rgyud pa) (Autonomy School)
 - (2) Prāsaṅgika (Thal 'gyur pa) (Consequence School)[[page 175](#)]

The division of Buddhist philosophy into four schools is itself largely an artificial creation. For instance, the so-called Vaibhāṣika school is, in fact, a collection of at least eighteen schools that never recognized themselves as belonging to a single, overarching school. Also, their tenets are so various (some prefiguring Great Vehicle schools) that it is extremely difficult to recognize tenets common to all eighteen; thus, rather than attempting to do so, the Tibetan doxographers set forth representative tenets as explained in the root text of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* ("Treasury of Manifest Knowledge") (see Shastri, Poussin) as if these constituted the general tenet structure of such an overarching system, even though they are merely *typical* of assertions found in these eighteen schools. This pretended amalgamation of many schools into one is a technique used to avoid unnecessary complexity that might hinder the main purpose of this genre of exegesis—the presentation of an ascent to the views of systems considered to be higher. Hence, in the Vaibhāṣika school there *is* a wide variety of opinion, a wide range of views some of which differ greatly from the kind of short general presentation that dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po gives. Strictly speaking, even the name "Vaibhāṣika school" should be limited to followers of the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, an Abhidharma text that was never translated into Tibetan.

Also, the division of the Sautrāntika school into those following scripture and those following reasoning is highly controversial. The former are said to follow Vasubandhu's own commentary on his *Abhidharmakośa*, in which he indicates disagreement with many assertions of the Vaibhāṣika school as presented in his own root text. The latter—the Proponents of Sūtra Following Reasoning—are said to be followers of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti who (despite the fact that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti do not assert external objects) assert external objects—objects that are different entities from the consciousnesses perceiving them. Again, neither of these groups saw themselves as sub-divisions of a larger school called the Sautrāntika.

Similarly, the two sub-divisions of the Cittamātra school are those following scripture, who depend on the writings primarily of Asaṅga and his half-brother Vasubandhu (after the latter converted to Asaṅga's system), and those following reasoning, who depend on what is accepted to be the main system of Dignāga's and Dharmakīrti's writings. Again, it is unlikely that these two [[page 176](#)] groups perceived themselves as being sub-schools of a larger school. Rather, the groupings are the results of later schematizations that are based on similarities between their systems but are committed to the accepted dictum that there are only four schools of tenets.

Also, the names of the two sub-divisions of the Mādhyamika school—the Autonomy school and the Consequence school—were, as is clearly admitted by Tsong kha pa and his followers, never used in India. Rather, these names were coined in Tibet in accordance with terms used by Candrakīrti in his writings. Thus, the very format of the four schools and their sub-divisions does not represent a historical account of self-asserted identities but is the result of centuries of classification of systems in India and Tibet. Its purpose is to give the scholar a handle on the vast scope of positions found in Indian Buddhism.

Given this situation, the format of four schools can be seen as a horizon that opens a way to appreciate the plethora of opinions, not as one that closes and rigidifies investigation. In Tibet, students are taught this fourfold classification first, without mention of the diversity of opinion that it conceals. Then, over decades of study, students gradually recognize the structure of such presentations of schools of thought as a technique for gaining access to a vast store of opinion, as a way to focus on topics crucial to authors within Indian Buddhism. The task of then distinguishing between what is clearly said in the Indian texts and what is interpretation and interpolation over centuries of commentary becomes a fascinating enterprise for the more hardy among Tibetan scholars. The devotion to debate as the primary mode of education provides an ever-present avenue for students to challenge home-grown interpretations, and affords a richness of critical commentary within the tradition that a short presentation of tenets does not convey.

Topics

In dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po's text, each Buddhist school is treated under four major topics, the last having numerous subdivisions:

- 1) Definition
- 2) Subschoools
- 3) Etymology[[page 177](#)]
- 4) Assertions of tenets
 - a) Assertions on the basis
 - i) Objects: the two truths, etc.
 - ii) Object-possessors (i.e., subjects)
 - (1) Persons
 - (2) Consciousnesses
 - (3) Terms
 - b) Assertions on the paths
 - i) Objects of observation of the paths
 - ii) Objects abandoned by the paths
 - iii) Nature of the paths
 - c) Assertions on the fruits of the paths

First, for general orientation, a reader is given a definition of the school, its sub-schools, and an etymology of its name. Then the tenets of the school are introduced. The topics considered under the heading of "assertions of tenets" reveal the soteriological orientation of the inquiry. The assertions are divided into three categories—presentations of the basis, the paths, and the fruits of the path. The presentation of the basis refers to assertions on classes of phenomena, which provide the *basis* for practicing the spiritual *paths*, which, in turn, produce attainments, the *fruits of the path*. It is clear from this order that the reason for philosophical learning about phenomena is to enable practice of a path that can transform the mind from being mired in a condition of suffering to being enlightened in a state of freedom.

The general structure of basis, paths, and fruits probably takes its lead from the emphasis in texts of the Mādhyamika School on three coordinated sets of twos:

- the two truths—conventional and ultimate—which are the basis
- the two practices—method and wisdom—which are the paths
- the two Buddha Bodies—Form Bodies and Truth Body— which are the final fruits of the path.

According to the Great Vehicle as described in these texts, taking as one's *basis* conventional truths, one practices the *paths* of method—love, compassion, and the altruistic intention to become enlightened as well the compassionate deeds that these induce—in dependence upon which one achieves the *fruit* of the Form Bodies [page 178] of a buddha. Also, taking as one's *basis* ultimate truths, one practices the *paths* of wisdom—especially the realization of the final status of persons and phenomena, their emptiness of inherent existence—in dependence upon which one achieves the *fruit* of a Truth Body of a buddha. This threefold format of basis, path, and fruit that finds its main expression in the Great Vehicle seems to have supplied the structure for the genre of presentations of tenets for both the Lesser Vehicle² and the Great Vehicle.

Objects. Within the section on the basis, the emphasis on the two truths in all four schools derives from the fact that the two truths are a prime subject in the tenets of what is considered to be the highest school, the Mādhyamika. As Gung thang dKon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me (1762-1823),⁸ who was the chief student of dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, says, the prime way that the Vaibhāṣika school and the Sautrāntika school delineate the meaning of the scriptures is by way of the Four Noble Truths, whereas the Cittamātra school accomplishes this through the doctrine of the three natures and the Mādhyamika school through the doctrine of the two truths (see DN: 80, 235). Thus, the emphasis given in this presentation of tenets to the four schools' delineations of the two truths derives from the system that the author and his tradition have determined to be the highest, the Mādhyamika school. This is not to say that the two truths are not important topics in all four schools, for they are; rather, the two truths are not *the* central topic in the other schools in the way that they are in the Mādhyamika school.

Object-Possessors. Having presented a school's assertions on objects, the text considers object-possessors, or subjects. Object-possessors are treated as being of three types—persons (since they possess objects), consciousnesses (since they are aware of objects), and terms (since they refer to objects).

One might wonder why there is a section on persons if Buddhist schools advocate a view of selflessness. In this Tibetan delineation of Indian schools of Buddhism, the term "self" in "selflessness" refers not to persons but to an over-reified status of phenomena, be these persons or other phenomena. Consequently, even though it is said that *in general* "self" (*ātman*, *bdag*), "person" (*pudgala*, *gang zag*), and "I" (*aham*, *nga*) are coextensive, in the particular context of the selflessness of persons "self" and "person" are not at all coextensive and do not at all have the same meaning.[page 179] In the term "selflessness of persons," "self" refers to a falsely imagined status that needs to be refuted, and "persons" refers to existent beings who are the basis with respect to which that refutation is made. All of these schools, therefore, believe that persons exist. They do not claim that persons are mere creations of ignorance.

A question between the schools concerns the nature of the person. According to dKon mchog

'jigs med dbang po and his dGe lugs pa predecessors, all schools except the Mādhyamika Prāsaṅgika posit something from within the bases of designation of a person as being the person. In contrast, the Prāsaṅgika school holds that even though a person is designated in dependence upon mind and body, the person *is* neither mind nor body, being just the I that is designated in dependence upon mind and body. Following the lead of Candrakīrti, recognized by most as the founder of the Prāsaṅgika school, dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po identifies how in the other schools some factor among the five aggregates (forms, feelings, discriminations, compositional factors, and consciousnesses) is considered to be the person when sought analytically. The Vaibhāṣikas, in general, are said to hold that the mere *collection* of the mental and physical aggregates is the person, whereas some of the five Saṃmitīya subschools are said to maintain that all five aggregates are the person—dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po's suggestion being that, for them, *each* of the five aggregates is the person (although the absurdity of one person being five persons would seem difficult not to notice). Another subschool, the Avantaka, is said to assert that the mind alone is the person.

Similarly, in the Sautrāntika school, the Followers of Scripture are said to assert that the continuum of the aggregates is the person, whereas the Followers of Reasoning are said to maintain that the mental consciousness is the person. In the Cittamātra school, the Followers of Scripture hold that the mind-basis-of-all (*ālayavijñāna*, *kun gzhi rnam par shes pa*) is the person, whereas the Followers of Reasoning assert that the mental consciousness is. Again, in the Autonomy school, both Yogic Autonomists and Sūtra Autonomists are said to assert that a subtle, neutral mental consciousness is what is found to be the person when it is searched for among its bases of designation.

For the most part, dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po's delineation of what these schools assert to be the person is a matter of conjecture and not a reporting of forthright statements of these [page 180] schools' own texts. Though it is clear that most of these schools (if not all) accept that persons exist, it is by no means clear in their own literature that they assert that something from within the bases of designation of a person is the person. Rather, it would seem that, as presented in Vasubandhu's commentary on the ninth chapter of his *Abhidharmakośa*,⁹ persons are merely asserted to be non-associated compositional factors (*viprayuktasaṃskāra*, *ldan min 'du byed*) and thus an instance of the fourth aggregate, compositional factors, without a specific identification of any of the five aggregates that are a person's bases of designation as the person. For instance, one could quite safely say that there is not a single line in the whole of Indian Cittamātra literature that explicitly asserts that the mind-basis-of-all is the person. Rather, such an assertion is deduced from the fact that Cittamātrins Following Scripture (that is to say, the followers of Asaṅga) assert that the mind-basis-of-all travels from lifetime to lifetime carrying with it the karmic predispositions established by earlier actions. Bhāvaviveka, on the other hand, seems openly to assert that the mental consciousness is the person, when, in response to a challenge, he says that if the opponent is attempting to establish for him that consciousness is the person, he is proving what is already established for him (see Hopkins, 1983: 695-696). In any case, the emphasis of the dGe lugs pa treatises on identifying, for each of these schools, what, from among the five aggregates, the person is comes from their acceptance of Candrakīrti's claim to a *unique* assertion that nothing from among them is the person.

Thus, it can be seen that the very structure (basis, paths, and fruits) and the choice of topics

(such as the two truths and assertions on the person) do not altogether arise from prime concerns within each school but are brought over from focal issues in other schools, particularly those considered to be higher. That topics of prime concern in the "higher" schools dominate to some extent the presentation of the tenets of all four schools is natural, given that the main aim is to draw readers into realizing the impact of the views of the "higher" systems. This genre never seeks to give isolated presentations of these schools' views or a predominantly historical account.

Consciousnesses. The main focus of the tenets concerning consciousness is to identify the different types of minds in terms of misapprehension and correct apprehension. The purpose is to provide a psychological structure for the therapeutic paths that cause [\[page 181\]](#) a person to proceed gradually from misconceived notions about the nature of persons and other phenomena to states of mind that can counteract innate misconceptions. The liberative directionality of the overall enterprise informs the course of the discussion, the main interest being to separate correctly perceiving from improperly perceiving consciousnesses and to identify the difference between conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses. The latter, when they realize selflessness, are considered to be more powerful for overcoming obstructions to liberation and to full enlightenment.

The topics of consciousness are presented in their richest detail in the chapter on the Sautrāntika school, specifically the Sautrāntika Following Reasoning; correspondingly, the topic of terms is discussed most fully in the chapter on the Vaibhāṣika school. Thus, in many respects such books are to be read cumulatively, bringing over to another system those assertions that, although they come from a different system, are concordant with its outlook. The book does not always make clear what is to be carried over and what is not; such information is, however, supplied by the oral tradition, i.e., by a competent teacher.

Paths. Having presented a general outline of phenomena, the basis, *dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po* presents the various schools' tenets on the spiritual paths which are founded on their respective assertions about the basis. The paths are described in terms of (1) the main objects of meditation, (2) the main misconceptions that are abandoned through such meditation, and (3) the layout of the paths.

In all four schools, paths are presented for hearers (*śrāvaka*, *nyan thos*), solitary realizers (*pratyekabuddha*, *rang rgyal*), and bodhisattvas. It might seem, at first reading, to be surprising that even the Lesser Vehicle schools—the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika schools—should have paths for bodhisattvas, since bodhisattvas are associated primarily with the Great Vehicle. However, a distinction is made between philosophical schools, which are divided into Lesser Vehicle and Great Vehicle, and practitioners of paths, which also are divided into Lesser Vehicle and Great Vehicle. The philosophical schools are divided in this way according to whether they present a selflessness of phenomena (Great Vehicle) or whether they do not (Lesser Vehicle). Since the Great Vehicle tenet systems—the Cittamātra and Mādhyamika schools—present a selflessness of phenomena in addition to a selflessness of persons, [\[page 182\]](#) they also speak of "obstructions to omniscience" (*jñeyāvaraṇa*, *shes sgrib*), these being what prevent simultaneous and direct cognition of all phenomena as well as their final nature. The Lesser Vehicle schools, on the other hand, make no such claims even though they present buddhahood as having an omniscience which can *serially* know anything, but not

simultaneously.¹⁰

Even though the Lesser Vehicle schools—the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika schools—do not present a path leading to simultaneous and direct knowledge of all phenomena, they do speak of the path of a bodhisattva proceeding to buddhahood when they relate how Śākyamuni Buddha, for instance, became enlightened. Similarly, the Great Vehicle schools—Cittamātra and Mādhyamika—speak, not just about how bodhisattvas proceed on the path but also about how hearers and solitary realizers, who are Lesser Vehicle practitioners, proceed on the path. In the latter case, the Great Vehicle schools are not reporting how the Lesser Vehicle schools present the path, but how the Great Vehicle schools themselves present the path for those beings—hearers and solitary realizers—whose prime motivation, unlike that of bodhisattvas, is, for the time being, not the welfare of others but their own liberation from cyclic existence. Therefore, it is said to be possible for someone who is, for instance, a Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika doctrinally to be a Lesser Vehicle practitioner by motivation, in that the person has decided for the time being to pursue his or her own liberation first before becoming primarily dedicated to the welfare of others. Also, it is possible for someone who is, for instance, a Vaibhāṣika to be a Great Vehicle practitioner in terms of motivation, having become dedicated to achieving the enlightenment of a buddha in order to be of service to all beings.

Fruits of the Paths. The three types of paths—hearer, solitary realizer, and bodhisattva—have different results or fruits. The first two lead to liberation from cyclic existence, whereas the last leads to buddhahood, a state free from both the obstructions to liberation from cyclic existence and from the obstructions to the omniscience of a buddha, as described in the respective systems.

Conclusion

Though one of the purposes of such presentations of tenets undoubtedly is to create a hierarchical structure that puts one's own system at the top, this genre of literature functions primarily to [page 183] provide a comprehensive worldview. Its presentations, ranging from the phenomena of the world through to the types of enlightenment, give students a framework for study and practice as well as a perspective for relating with other beings. The worldview that emerges is of individuals bound by misconception in a round of suffering and mired in afflictive emotions counterproductive to their own welfare, but also poised on a threshold of transformation. The uncontrolled course of cyclic existence is viewed as lacking a solid underpinning; it is ready to be transformed into a patterned advance toward liberation. The starkness of the harrowing appraisal of the current situation of multilayered pain stands in marked contrast to the optimistic view of the development that is possible. Such optimism stems from a perception that the afflictive emotions and obstructions that are the cause of misery are not endemic to the mind, but are peripheral to its nature and thus subject to antidotal influences that can remove them. The hierarchical presentation, fortified with reasoned explanation, itself inculcates the basic posture that the power of reason can penetrate the false veils of appearance and lead to a liberative reality. Presentations of tenets are founded on confidence in the mind's ability to overcome tremendous obstacles to the point where love, compassion, and altruism can be expressed in effective, continuous activity, and, therefore, they do more than just structure Indian Buddhist systems; they structure practitioners' perception of their place in a dynamic worldview.

Notes

[1] This is Bhāvaviveka's commentary on his *Madhyamakahrdaya* ("Heart of the Middle"). For a partial English translation of the latter (ch. III.1-136), see Iida. For an excellent history of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, see Snellgrove.

[2] For more discussion on this genre of Tibetan literature, see Mimaki (1-12) and Ruegg's foreword to Nyima.

[3] Also known as Klong chen dri med 'od zer.

[4] For an English translation of the beginning of the chapter on the Consequence School, see Hopkins, 1983.

[5] For a translation of the Sautrāntika chapter, see Klein, 1991; for commentary on this, see Klein, 1986. For a translation of the Svātantrika chapter, see Lopez. For a translation of part of the Prāsaṅgika chapter, see Hopkins, 1987.[page 184]

[6] For a list of other such brief texts, see the Bibliography (xlvi, etc.) and Introduction (5-12) in Mimaki, 1982.

[7] The term "Lesser Vehicle" (*hīnayāna*, *theg dman*) has its origin in the writings of Great Vehicle (*mahāyāna*, *theg chen*) authors and was, of course, not used by those to whom it was ascribed. Substitutes such as "non-Mahāyāna," "Nikāya Buddhism," and "Theravādayāna" have been suggested in order to avoid the pejorative sense of "Lesser." However, "Lesser Vehicle" is a convenient term in this particular context for a type of tenet system or practice that is seen, in the tradition about which I am writing, to be surpassed—but not negated—by a higher system. The "Lesser Vehicle" is not despised, most of it being incorporated into the "Great Vehicle." The monks' and nuns' vows are part of the Lesser Vehicle, as is much of the course of study; years of study are dedicated to Epistemology (*pramāṇa*, *tshad ma*), Manifest Knowledge (*abhidharma*, *chos mngon pa*), and Discipline (*vinaya*, *'dul ba*), which are mostly Lesser Vehicle in perspective.

[8] He wrote two biographies of dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po.

[9] See Poussin: 254 for the person as imputedly existent (*btags yod*) and Poussin: 259 for the person as compounded.

[10] As is reported in GTCM \((kha, 7b)\), one of the eighteen subschools of the Great Exposition school, the One Convention school (*Ekavyavahārika*, *ṭha snyad gcig pa*), uses the convention of one instant of a buddha's wisdom realizing all phenomena. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa says that they employ this convention for a buddha's one mind realizing all phenomena; he thereby suggests that this school did not actually hold that a buddha has such simultaneous knowledge. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa may be explaining away a discrepancy in a system that emerged for the sake of easy classification.