

The Object of Negation

All of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, appearing and well known to [the mind]—the varieties [of phenomena] and their mode [emptiness], are regarded by the inborn non-analytical intellect [as existing] according to the conventions of the world. Therefore, “existing objectively [without just being an imputation] there by thought,” “substantially existing,” “existing by way of its own nature,” “existing from its own [i.e., the object’s] side,” “truly existing,” “existing in its own right,” etc., are what is negated. [225]

All of that which is included by the modes and the varieties that appear and are renowned [in the world], the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, are regarded as existing in the face of that which is renowned in worldly conventions, that is to say, to the innate valid cognition that does not analyze [to try to find] the object imputed.¹ Therefore:

- establishment here along with the object that is the basis of designation without being merely put there [from the subject’s side] by a non-defective conceptual consciousness
- substantial establishment
- establishment by way of its own character
- establishment from its own side
- true establishment
- establishment by way of its own entityness
- establishment by way of its own power

are [hypothetically]² synonymous in being the object of negation by a sign, that is, that which is to be refuted. [226]

The Mādhyamikas, those free from extremes, present all actions and agents in this [system] of no “existence from its own [the objects’] side” and of “imputation by name and thought there [to the object].” Anything coarser or finer than this is an extreme of permanence or annihilation.

If you know how to identify all doings and doers, such as actions and their effects, here in this context of not existing from their own side and merely being

¹In other words, Prāsaṅgikas accept what worldly valid cognition can establish.

²Technically, only existents may be equivalents. The members of this list are not actual equivalents because none of these imagined ways of existing actually occurs. The conception that they exist occurs, and that conception is a mind.

Buddhist Philosophy

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Jamyang Shayba’s *Root Text on Tenets*

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imputed there by names and conceptual consciousnesses, then you are a Mādhyamika who is free from all extremes. [227] If what you do is coarser or more subtle than that, you fall to an extreme of permanence or annihilation.¹

There are the two selves of persons and [other] phenomena. The non-existence of these two there is asserted as the two selflessnesses.

These Prāsaṅgikas assert that the [imagined] existence of the aforementioned object of negation in terms of the person is the [conception of] a self of persons, and that the [imagined] existence [of that object of negation] in terms of [other] phenomena—the aggregates, etc.—is the [conception of] a self of phenomena.² Therefore, the two non-existences of the two selves that are the object of negation in those bases are asserted as the two selflessnesses.

A self of [other] phenomena is refuted by the four: the diamond slivers, etc. A self of persons is refuted by the fivefold and sevenfold [reasonings]. Both also [are refuted] by [the sign of] dependent-arising.

Hence, the self of phenomena is refuted³ by the four [reasonings] such as the diamond slivers, etc.,⁴ and the self of persons is refuted by the fivefold or sevenfold

reasonings.¹ Both selves are refuted by stating the sign of dependent-arising.² [228] I think that it would be suitable for “both also” [in the root text to be understood as] either drawing in the [unstated reasoning] of the lack of being singular and plural or as including the [reasonings] that have preceded it.

Extensive Explanation of Reasonings Refuting Inherent Existence

[This section has two parts: reasonings refuting a self of phenomena (other than persons) and reasonings refuting a self of persons, together with an elimination of errors.]

Reasonings Refuting a Self of Phenomena

[This subsection has four parts: (1) the diamond slivers, (2) the (simultaneous) refutation of production of the four extremes and production of the existent, the non-existent, both, and neither, (3) the refutation of production of the four alternative types, and (4) the reasoning of dependent-arising, along with an elimination of error.]

THE DIAMOND SLIVERS

Because production from self, other, both, or without cause does not exist, inherently existent production does not exist.

that is both existent and non-existent, or an effect that is neither existent nor non-existent. The refutation of production of the four alternatives refutes inherent existence while analyzing both causes and effects. Finally, the reasoning of dependent-arising refutes inherent existence through analyzing the entities of phenomena. See Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 192–3.

¹The fivefold reasoning comes from Nāgārjuna’s *Treatise on the Middle Way*. Nāgārjuna’s commentator Candrakīrti extended it to seven lines of inquiry. These reasonings refute inherent existence through analyzing the relation between a phenomenon and its basis of designation.

²This means that in addition to the other stated reasonings, the reasoning of dependent-arising is also used to refute either the self of persons or the self of phenomena.

¹The other Buddhist schools are regarded as falling to the extreme of permanence because they do not deny “enough”; they still, in some way or another, retain the idea of a “pointable” existence.

²The *conception* that persons and other phenomena exist in that way exists, but the *referent object* of that conception—inherently existing persons and other phenomena—does not exist. The Prāsaṅgika school holds that the two selflessnesses (the absence of persons and other phenomena existing in that way) are not distinguished and do not differ in terms of the imagined self, or in more technical terms, in terms of *mode of apprehension*. What is this mode of apprehension? It is to conceive that persons and other phenomena exist inherently. In contrast, the other Mahāyāna systems see a difference in coarseness and subtlety between the two conceptions of self and, accordingly, the two selflessnesses.

³In this context, “refuted” is understood not in the external sense of persuading somebody else they are wrong but internally by the meditator in the sense of searching for the self and not finding it.

⁴The four reasonings used to gain access to phenomena’s lack of inherent existence are (1) the diamond slivers; (2) simultaneous refutation of production of the four extremes and production of the existent, the non-existent, both, and neither; (3) the refutation of production of the four alternatives; and (4) dependent-arising. Diamond slivers—also called reason refuting the four extreme types of production—refutes inherent existence in the context of analyzing production. The simultaneous refutation of production of the four extremes and production of the existent, the non-existent, both, and neither refutes inherent existence in the context of analyzing what is produced by those causes—an inherently existent effect, an utterly non-existent effect, an effect

The subjects, things that have causes, are not inherently produced because of not being produced from self, other, both, or without cause, for example, like a reflection.

Regarding the mode of establishing the reasons individually, if [things] were produced from themselves [their re-production] would be senseless and endless, that which [already exists in something] is not [produced from] it, causes and effects [229] would always be seen, it would contradict worldly perception, and all objects and agents [of production] would be one.

If a sprout were produced by way of its own nature acting as its cause, since prior to the sprout the nature of the sprout would already have been established, the need for production in its own time would be senseless.²

If it were produced again even though it was already produced, since all things would necessarily be that way, the later and later continuum of the sprout, becoming a sprout, would be endless. In that case, seeds would also be similar to that, whereby that which is a sprout would be a continuation of a seed because it would become a sprout without discarding the nature of the seed. [230]

Therefore, causes and effects like seeds and sprouts would be seen to be permanent and simultaneous and would contradict worldly perception that sprouts are produced upon the destruction of seeds. Since [if the Sāṃkhya's theory of production were correct, effects such as sprouts] would be their own producers and objects produced, all objects and agents would be established as one.

If things were produced from [what is naturally] other, then darkness would arise from a flame, and all would arise from all, both causes and non-causes.

Also, if that sprout were produced by that which is inherently other than it, since dependence is not suitable in that which is inherently other, [the seed that is its cause], would be an unrelated cause, and if it were produced from one unrelated [cause] it would have to be produced from everything. Therefore, darkness would arise from fire, and everything that is and is not an effect would arise from everything that is and is not a cause.

¹In the most important Mādhyamika text commenting on Buddha's thought, Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way*, Nāgārjuna begins by saying, "There is never production anywhere, of anything, from itself, from others, from both, or without cause." Gelukbas add "inherently" to his terms because conventionally, things *are* produced by other things.

²The Indian Sāṃkhya school holds that things *are* produced from themselves in the sense that the effect (such as a sprout) exists unmanifestly within the cause (such as a seed).

Because [cause and effect would be] other, they could not be one continuum; [they would be] like wheat and barley. [231]

Also, seed and sprout would be established as inherently other, due to which it would be unsuitable for them to be one substantial continuum; they would be like wheat and barley [which are different].

Causes and effects would have to be simultaneous, but because it is not so, what production is there of another from another?

Since that which is inherently established is unsuitable to be a newly arisen fabrication or to become another entity, once a seed and sprout are established as different, [232] they must exist simultaneously,¹ and because [simultaneous existence of cause and effect] does not exist, there is no production of another from another at all.

Refuting temporally different others is wrong. [Using] a mass exactly the same, etc., are also wrong. [231]

This production [from] other, accordingly, necessarily refers to production from another thing that is established from its own side, and someone's calling the refutation of the mere earlier seed and later sprout as being other, the "coercion of being identical," etc., is very mistaken.²

Because the four extremes are not asserted and because production from other is said to be non-existent even in the world, its assertion here is a dance of the insane.

In general, in the Prāsaṅgika system, production of the four extremes is not asserted, and production [from] other is refuted extensively with special emphasis. It is explained that [production from other] does not exist even in the conventions

¹The seed and sprout must exist simultaneously, because otherwise, one would exist when the other does not, and that would mean that they were produced; they cannot be produced, because they would then not inherently exist. But if they do exist simultaneously, then they cannot possibly be related as cause and effect. This reasoning is circular because it depends on accepting "otherness" as "lack of relation," and once that is accepted, this further point is unnecessary.

²The root text is difficult to understand, but the commentary is clear: P. rāsaṅgikas are not talking about mere production from other, but about inherent production. About this reasoning, some would say that this kind of refutation is just a refutation where because of the way terms have carefully been defined, the result is predetermined. Jamyang Shayba thinks that this criticism is unjustified; inherent otherness would have to mean no relation. And "no production from other" must mean that.

of the world. Therefore, Daksang's saying that production [from] other is asserted in this system [233] is like a dance of the insane.¹

Because there is no [production] from self and other separately, production from both is refuted.

Because separately there is no production [from] self and no production [from] other, production from both is also refuted.

If things were produced without cause, exertion would be senseless. It would contradict perception. All would be produced from all.

If something were produced without cause, planting seeds for the sake of fruit, striving at buying and selling, etc., would be senseless and would contradict the perception of undecieved worldly valid cognition.

[Also, it would absurdly follow that] in order for something to produce an effect from itself, it would not need to be the cause of that [effect]. Therefore, if something were produced from what is not [its] cause, everything would be produced from everything. [234]

SIMULTANEOUS REFUTATION OF PRODUCTION OF THE FOUR EXTREMES AND OF THE EXISTENT, NON-EXISTENT, BOTH, AND NEITHER

If things are produced from others, consider [whether the effects are] existent, non-existent, both, or neither. What use [are causes] for [something already] existent?

Regarding reasoning that refutes the four extremes, production from other does not exist, [for] one should consider whether something truly existent, truly non-existent, both [truly existent and truly non-existent], or neither [truly existent nor truly non-existent] is produced. Therefore, what already exists does not need production.

The non-existent lacks object and agent. These [reasonings] refute its being both. What [would causes] do for what lacks both?

¹Strong condemnation indeed! But to Gelukbas, it is extremely important to understand that inherent existence (in this case, the production of one inherently existent thing from another) does not have legitimacy in any way, not even in the conventions of the world. It may appear to worldly people that things inherently exist, but there is no valid cognition that can establish such things, just as although a mirage appears to be water, there is no valid cognition that establishes the appearance as actual water.

Since what is non-existent in the sense of never occurring is devoid of [being either] an object or an agent, it cannot be produced. That which is both existent and non-existent is eliminated by the fallacies that arise in both [of the two latter positions], and how could that which is truly established and devoid of both, that is, that is neither, or devoid of, both, be affected by causes? [235] The statement of the first two of these reasons is the reasoning that refutes production of existents or non-existents.

REFUTATION OF PRODUCTION OF THE FOUR ALTERNATIVES

Things are not truly produced by causes. One does not produce one; nor many, one; nor one, many; nor many, many.

The subject, [functioning] things, are not produced by truly existent causes, because ultimately one cause does not produce one effect, ultimately many causes do not produce one effect, ultimately one cause does not produce many effects, [236] and ultimately many causes do not produce many effects.¹

Because it is established that one produces one, and because the others are suitable, not affixing here a qualification of what is negated is mistaken.

Candrakīrti's proves in *Clear Words, Commentary on (Nāgārjuna's) "Treatise on the Middle Way"* that conventionally one [cause] produces one [effect], and because the other three [alternatives for production] are also suitable [conventionally], in this system refuting [production] in general without affixing a qualification ["ultimately"] to the object of negation is a mistake.

The great Foremost Being [Dzongkaba] only briefly indicates the reasonings here, but he says in his *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* that for a more extensive [rendition] one should take whatever is appropriate [in Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way*] on the occasions of the analysis of the sources, the analysis of the constituents, etc. In particular, this latter [reasoning on production of the four alternatives] is indicated by way of the refutation at the end of the first chapter [of Nāgārjuna's *Treatise on the Middle Way*], that the individual and many pieces of woolen cloth [237] are ultimately produced by the individual and many threads. Dzongkaba says in his *Essence of Eloquence* that if one understands the reasonings of the great charioteers, it enhances the mind greatly. Therefore, one should be respectful, remembering the kindness of the Supreme Omniscient Lama [Jamyang Shayba's] stating [the reasons] here.

¹The Indian source for this reasoning is the Svātantrika-Mādhyamika Jñānagarbha's *Discrimination of the Two Truths*. It analyzes single or multiple effects from single or multiple causes.

THE KING OF REASONINGS: THE SIGN OF DEPENDENT-ARISING

Because here there are no phenomena that are not dependent-arising and because dependent-arising [means] only “existing through meeting,” “existing through reliance,” and “existing dependently,” all phenomena are not able to set themselves up and are not established from their own side. Profound and vast, eradicating the two extremes, this is the king of reasonings. [238]

When one ascertains that in this system, phenomena that are not dependent-arising do not exist, then “dependent-arising” is [that is, means] that all phenomena are unable to establish themselves and are not established or existent from their own side because:

- they exist through meeting with their own parts or bases of designation;
- they are established or exist through relying on, for instance, the conceptual consciousness that posits them;
- they arise or are established in dependence on, for instance, causes and conditions.

The predicate of the probandum and the sign respectively suggest the profound [emptiness] and the vast [dependent-arising], whereby both extremes of permanence and annihilation are simultaneously eliminated.¹ Therefore, this is explained to be the king of reasonings.

Therefore, [asserting] that the ultimate is “able to establish itself” is [like wanting] to eat space; no one takes “validly established” and “able to establish itself” as synonyms.

Therefore, [to say] the ultimate is able to establish itself is like fancying that space is food and wishing to eat it, [239] whereby there is no one among the four schools who asserts that the meaning of “established by valid cognition” is “able to establish itself.”²

¹In the syllogism, “Phenomena do not exist inherently because of being dependent-arising,” the predicate of the probandum is “not exist inherently” and the sign or reason proving the thesis is “dependent-arising.”

²Dakṣaṅg is the target of this criticism. Both Dakṣaṅg and Dzongkaba agree that objects do not exist as they appear. For Dzongkaba “valid certification of objects” opposes habitual assent to appearances; for Dakṣaṅg “valid certification of objects” reinforces habitual assent to appearances. At minimum, the two authors mean different things by the term “valid certification of objects.” As a practical matter, each author’s whole system needs consideration, rather than focusing solely on differences regarding one point in isolation.

*Reasonings Refuting a Self of Persons*THE SEVEN-FOLD REASONING¹

An own-powered self does not exist because [the person] is not the aggregates, and not [an entity] other than [the aggregates], not the base of the aggregates, and does not [ultimately] depend on the aggregates. [The person] does not [ultimately] possess the aggregates, is not the shape [of the aggregates], and is not the collection [of the aggregates], just as [the collection of parts is not] a chariot. Apply [this analysis] to all phenomena.

The subject, the person, does not exist as an own-powered self, because it is not the aggregates that are its basis of designation. If it were, then it [absurdly] follows that:

- it would be impermanent such that its continuum would be utterly annihilated²
- the [selves] would be plural
- the assertion of a self would be senseless³ [240]
- memory of [former] lives would not be feasible⁴
- either there would be many selves, or the aggregates would be one

[The person] also does not exist as a [completely] *different* entity from those [aggregates] that are [its] basis of designation. In that case it would follow that:

- it would not have the character of the aggregates⁵
- it would be permanent.⁶

¹This sevenfold analysis comes from the root text and auto-commentary of Candrakīrti’s *Entrance*. It is based on a fivefold reasoning used by Nāgārjuna in the twenty-first chapter of the *Treatise on the Middle Way*.

²It must be remembered that the object of negation, the conception of self that we are said to hold innately, is a self that is permanent, partless, etc. Regarding that conception, these are all absurd consequences of equating self with the aggregates of body and mind.

³That is, if the self and the aggregates are the same thing, there is no need to use the concept of self.

⁴This is because the self would have no connection to its previous aggregates.

⁵In other words, it would not be produced, disintegrate, etc.

⁶It could only be permanent, because the aggregates include all impermanent phenomena.

- it would be something that is apprehendable separate from the aggregates.
- object and agent would not be feasible.

[The person] is also not established by way of its own entity as the *basis* of the aggregates.

It also does not *depend ultimately* on the aggregates over there. If it did, since they must be different, there would occur the faults expressed regarding difference.

[The person] also does not inherently *possess* the aggregates. [241] Whether it possesses [the aggregates] within one entity or separate entities, those [faults] occur that are expressed regarding sameness and difference.

Because the [person] is not form,¹ the *shape* of the aggregates also is not it.

If the *basis of designation* were the phenomena designated, then object and agent would be one. Therefore, [the person] also is not the *collection* of the aggregates. It is like, for example, a chariot.² In accordance with this position, this should be applied to all phenomena. A statement omitting the latter two of these reasonings is the fivefold reasoning.³

ELIMINATION OF ERROR CONCERNING THE REFUTATION OF A SELF OF PERSONS

Although they assert that on some occasions there is valid establishment [with] the three modes appearing similarly and that there are just [similarly appearing] reasons, because they do not [assert] self-powered valid [establishments], they do not assert autonomous [syllogisms]. That autonomous [syllogisms are asserted] in this system is mistaken. [242]

Although on some occasions of Prāsāṅgikas stating [signs] amongst themselves the validly established common appearance of the three modes and mere correct

¹The person is not the form aggregate because the person is designated in dependence on any of the five aggregates.

²The example of a chariot is one that has been used since almost the beginnings of Buddhism and is used by Candrakīrti in the seven-fold reasoning. If we try to determine what exactly is something like a chariot, we find ourselves asking whether "chariot" should be equated with its parts, or whether it is something distinct from them, whether it is the collection, etc. None of the possibilities is without its problems, which can then lead us to understand that a chariot is something just imputed in dependence on experiencing certain parts but which is neither the same as nor different from them.

³The fivefold reasoning is used by Nāgārjuna in the twenty-first chapter of the *Treatise on the Middle Way*.

signs are asserted,¹ because there is no autonomous valid cognition, i.e., signs, autonomous signs are utterly not asserted. It is easy to understand that Daksasāṅg is mistaken in saying that there is autonomy in this system.

The Detailed Explanation of the Presentation of the Two Truths of this System

Basis of the Division

The basis of the division is objects of knowledge. When divided, there are the two truths. More are not [needed], and if there were less, they would not [all] be included; [therefore,] the count is limited to those [two].

The basis of the division into two truths is objects of knowledge. When those are divided, they are definitely enumerated by way of entity as the two, conventional truths and ultimate truths, because there is no need for more than those, and if there were less, [all objects of knowledge] would not be included.²

Meaning of the Divisions

Because [if the two truths were different entities,] it would be unsuitable for [ultimate truths to be] the mode of subsistence. [243]

¹For a Prāsāṅgika, even though a conventional phenomenon appears to exist inherently to the valid consciousness that certifies the existence of it—such as with an eye consciousness looking at a pot—that eye consciousness is not competent to certify an object's mode of existence, and thus it is not certifying the appearance as inherently existent. Only a reasoning consciousness analyzing the ultimate is competent for that certification. For their part, the Svātantrika school holds that a valid consciousness certifies whatever appears to it, and hence, they think inherently existent things exist conventionally. For this reason, the three modes (*śūdrāḡam mātun inag ba*) of a syllogism have "common appearance" for two Prāsāṅgikas in the sense that both parties agree that the validly cognizing consciousness that certifies the three modes, etc., does not also certify the inherent existence of it. "Merely" (*nam*) eliminates that the valid cognition is autonomous (*rang ygyud*). The three modes of a syllogism do not have "common appearance" for a Prāsāṅgika and a non-Prāsāṅgika in the sense that the parties do not agree regarding the extent of certification for the validly cognizing consciousness that certifies the three modes.

²It is important to note that "truths" does not refer to propositions but rather to objects themselves. Everything that exists is either a conventional truth or an ultimate truth.

The Sautrāntika-Svātantrika-Mādhyamika's Own System

IDENTIFICATION OF THE OBJECT OF NEGATION

If something were truly established, it would have to exist for the perspective of a reasoning [consciousness] because [that which is sought] is true establishment. [197]

If something were truly established, it would have to be existent in the perspective of a reasoning consciousness analyzing the ultimate because that reasoning consciousness investigates of whether or not something is truly established; what it is seeking is true establishment.¹

That which exists for that [reasoning consciousness] is not necessarily truly established, like reality. Although objects are found by a reasoning consciousness, what is able to bear analysis by that [consciousness] must truly be truly established because [that reasoning consciousness] analyzes for true establishment. Bearing analysis by a reasoning consciousness is true establishment, the object of negation here.

However, if something exists in the perspective of a reasoning consciousness, it need not be truly established, like the reality that is found by that [consciousness] without being truly established. For that reason, although objects found by a reasoning consciousness exist, [198] if something is able to bear analysis by that [reasoning consciousness], it would have to be truly established.²

consciousness that observes the consciousness, but that is obviously unnecessary here.

¹If something "truly existed" it would have to be findable when sought by a reasoning consciousness. There are two ways one conceives phenomena to be truly established. Jamyang Shayba says we might or might not have an "artificial" conception (one taught) that conceives that phenomena are able to bear analysis by a rational consciousness analyzing the ultimate. But we definitely have an "innate" conception that phenomena have a mode of abiding not established as posited by the force of conventional valid cognition; in other words, they seem to exist from their own side without having to be posited this way. *Great Exposition of Tenets*, Gomang 501.22-502.2.

²A wisdom consciousness analyzing the ultimate searches for a truly established object. It does not find it, but instead "finds" the absence of true establishment, i.e., emptiness. This does not mean that emptiness *itself* truly exists, for emptiness itself is not able to bear analysis by a reasoning consciousness when it is analyzed to determine if it is truly established.

REASONINGS REFUTING THE OBJECT OF NEGATION

Because it is easy [to prove] a similar example possession the sign and predicate of the probandum, [Bhāvavivēka] mostly stated signs of negative phenomena, i.e., observations of a contradictory object. For example, his statement, "Because it is a sense power, the eye does not ultimately see forms, as is the case with an ear sense power" and so forth.

Because they are easy to prove, if one indicates a similar example that is both the sign and the predicate of the probandum, most statements of syllogisms are statements of signs that are observations of contradictory objects.¹ For example, a statement such as, "The subject, the eye, does not ultimately see forms because of being a sense power, as is the case with, for example, the nose sense power."² [199]

THE TWO TRUTHS

Objects of knowledge [are exhaustively divided into] the truths.

Objects of knowledge are definitely enumerated as the two: conventional truths and ultimate truths [or highest object truths].³

[In the term "highest object truth,"] "highest" is a non-contaminated awareness. "Object" is that which is found by that [awareness]. Because they are not deceptive, they are truths (*satya*).

"Highest" in the term "highest object truth" refers to a non-contaminated awareness—an exalted wisdom consciousness—realizing non-true existence.⁴

¹Bhāvavivēka accepts the three types of reasons used by Dharmakīrti (effect, nature, and non-observation). The point here is that the *main* reasonings used for realizing the absence of true existence use reasons that employ the observation of a contradictory object. In the example, the sign uses the object, nose sense power, which is contradicted by the eye sense power.

²Bhāvavivēka argues that if the eyes were ultimately established as seeing forms, there would be no way to distinguish between the eye sense power seeing forms and the ear sense power *not* seeing forms. This is because if something were to ultimately exist, it would not be posited through the force of appearing to an awareness the way it does; it would have to exist through the force of its own objective mode of subsistence. There would be no valid cognition that could differentiate between sense powers seeing and hearing.

³All existents (=objects of knowledge) are either conventional truths or ultimate truths and thus, "definitely enumerated" as one or the other. Although use of the word "truth" seems to indicate different types of propositions, it refers to phenomena themselves.

⁴This is the mind of a Superior directly realizing emptiness.

sūtras such as the *Sūtra on the Heavily Adorned*, the *Sūtra Unraveling the Thought*, the *Descent to Lañkā Sūtra*, and the *Kaśhyapa Chapter Sūtra*, they are, respectively, regarded as the Mādhyamika and Cīramātra systems.¹

The Object of Negation

It is agreed that not being posited [through] appearance to a non-defective awareness is the object of negation.

The two Svātantrika-Mādhyamika systems agree that the establishment of any phenomenon without its being posited by the power of appearing to a non-defective consciousness [208] is the principal object of negation to be refuted.²

Kamalaśīla's *Illumination of the Middle Way* says, "All false things that [the consciousness conceiving true existence] sees are called 'mere conventionalities.'" "Sees" [means] all the falsities of [wrong] conceptual consciousnesses or the things of conceptual consciousnesses for which [the object of] the mode of apprehension does not exist.³ They are said to be concealers, i.e., obscuring ignorance. Therefore, do not think that they are valid cognitions. Therefore, "only concealers" in this [context] is the ignorance in the face of which [phenomena] are posited as truths. Later, [in *Illumination of the Middle Way*,] "conventional" in "exists only conventionally" must be taken as valid cognition.

The thought of Jñānagarbha's *Discrimination of the Two Truths* is that the non-appearance of the object of negation—true existence—to sense consciousnesses [209] has the meaning that:

- the sense consciousnesses do not conceive true existence
- true establishment for the perspective of a reasoning consciousness [does not appear to sense consciousnesses]

¹These sūtras have some passages that accord with Mādhyamika, some that accord with Cīramātra. While Saurāntika-Svātantrika holds that the non-existence of external objects was not taught at all, Prāsaṅgikas say that Buddha taught that tenet for the benefit of certain people not ready for the teaching about non-inherent existence.

²In other words, phenomena are validly established only by valid cognitions. These are sense consciousnesses that are not affected by "superficial causes of error," such as a mirage, and conceptual consciousnesses that accurately identify their objects. Therefore, the conception that phenomena truly exist, meaning that they exist independently, is the ignorance that must be eliminated.

³An ignorant consciousness conceives of things as truly existent. Therefore, the object of the mode of apprehension of such a consciousness is a truly existent thing. That is a "false conventionality."

- [sense consciousnesses] do not conceive [objects] to exist as they are displayed [by ignorance].¹

Because of being set forth in the *Descent to Lañkā Sūtra* and the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*, they mostly state signs that are non-observations of related objects. For example, "because of being free from being either a truly established singularity or plurality, forms, etc., are not truly established, like reflections."

At the time of refutation, they mostly state signs that are non-observations of related objects because these are set forth in the *Descent into Lañkā Sūtra* [210] and the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*. For example, it is stated, "It follows that the subjects, things such as forms, etc., are not truly existent because of being devoid of being either truly established singularities or truly established pluralities—for example, like a reflection."

If something is truly established, it is definite as [either of] those two, thus the entailments are established. Regarding the property of the subject, [things such as forms] are not singular because of having parts, nor many because [a truly established] oneness does not exist.

If something is truly established, it must definitely [be established as one] of the two modes of establishing, therefore, the entailment that is established. Regarding the mode of establishing [the reason as] a property of the subject, [things] are not truly established singularities because of having parts. They are not truly established pluralities because truly established singularities do not exist.

One needs to think well, investigating how in the Svātantrika system [211] if something is merely posited by an awareness, it does not need to be independent, but if something is *not* merely posited by the power of appearing to a non-defective awareness, it becomes independent. Doing this, one needs to strive at a method of gaining ascertainment regarding this Mādhyamika reasoning.

The diamond slivers, the refutation of production of the existent and the non-existent, the refutation of production of the four alternatives, and the sign of dependent-arising are chief.

Moreover, the diamond slivers, the refutation of production of the existent and non-existent, the refutation of production of the four alternatives, and the sign of dependent-arising are taken as the main proofs of non-true existence.²

¹Objects *do* appear to truly exist. However, sense consciousnesses are not conceptual consciousnesses and, therefore, do not *conceive* of true existence.

²These are described extensively in the Prāsaṅgika chapter.

